



Eastern-in-the-News



40 & 8 AWARDS NURSE TRAINING SCHOLARSHIPS TO FOUR EASTERN STUDENTS

Moorefield, WV — Nov. 29 — Four area nursing students will find their paths to a new profession paved a little smoother thanks to a special group of veterans who place a high value on their merciful calling.

“This year, we had our regular two scholarships,” said Tom Denney, Chair of the Hardy County 40 & 8’s Nurse Training Scholarship Committee, “that award \$500 to each student each semester.”

Each year, the 40 & 8 *voiture* (or chapter) 1623 sells its one-of-a-kind ham sandwiches at the county Fireman’s Bash to raise the funds for area nursing students.



40 & 8 Awards Four Nurse Training Scholarships To Eastern Students: The Hardy County 40 & 8 *voiture* (or chapter) 1623 recently awarded partial scholarships to four nursing students at Eastern WV Community and Technical College. “This year’s class at Eastern looks like a real good group of students,” noted Tom Denney, chair of the veterans group’s Nurse Training Scholarship Committee. “It was very hard to select the scholarship recipients from so many strong applications.”

Committee members and scholarship winners, from LEFT: Benny Miller, *Correspondant* (secretary), Rig; Freda Lough, Maysville; Gary Evans, *Commissaire Intendant* (treasurer), Rig; Mary Harrington, Lost City; Bob Cross, Dorgan; Karissa Marshall, Wardensville; Laura Schmidle, Moorefield; Tom Denney, Chair, Nurse Training Scholarship Committee, Moorefield; and Eastern President Charles Terrell.

“We sold 3,000 ham sandwiches this year,” Denney recalled proudly. “So we had some extra money left over, and we decided to give two additional, smaller scholarships for this first semester.” If they raise sufficient funds, he said, the veterans plan to continue with all four scholarships in spring semester.

During the last seven years, Denney and his fellow Hardy County 40 & 8 *Voyageurs* have steered more than \$11-thousand towards relieving the critical nursing shortage that, according to the West Virginia Nursing Leadership Institute, is “currently being felt in all sectors of West Virginia health care.”

“If you spend a little time in the hospital, you certainly appreciate the nurses,” Denney said. “And there are so many living veterans now, from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq and Afghanistan, that we really need more of them.”

A combat veteran of Vietnam and of the first Gulf War, Denney caught malaria while in the service, and has since survived a heart attack. “When I was in the hospital in Winchester,” he recalled, “the nurses were so good to me.

Strong Students

“They can’t do everything the doctors can, but they probably do more. They really work so hard, and they take good care of you,” he emphasized, “and it’s something I feel we need. So I think our scholarship program is probably the most important thing we do.

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the scholarship recipients from so many strong applications.”

Benny Miller, a member of the scholarship committee, who lives in Rig and serves also as “Correspondant” —or secretary — of the local chapter, agreed. “They’ve all got the heart for it,” he said.

Maysville’s Freda Lough, and Moorefield’s Laura Schmidle, each won the top \$500 scholarships this semester. Lost City’s Mary Harrington, and Wardensville’s Karissa Marshall, each received \$250 from the veterans.

“This scholarship is a huge blessing,” said Schmidle, a four-year Air Force veteran who already holds a bachelor’s degree in Criminal Justice.

“After you have kids, it changes your view on the world,” she observed. “I wanted something flexible so I could be there for my kids, and still where I could help people. Nursing gives me the ability to do that.”

With three young children to take care of, Schmidle said, she and her husband, a West Virginia state trooper, “can’t say enough for the veterans — they paid for my books.”

As a first-year student Schmidle is still “testing the waters” of nursing possibilities. “I enjoy a certain level of stress, and I think I would like to work in a hospital. Something that’s a little faster pace,” she said, “maybe in an emergency room, or in a critical care department.”

Very Rewarding Work

After Freda Lough gets her associate nursing degree and RN license, she wants to continue working at the Veteran’s Administration clinic in Petersburg, she said.

“I’ve been an LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse) for 13 years,” Lough said, “and the last ten of them at Grant Memorial Hospital.” She’s been working at the hospital’s VA clinic since 2002.

“Working as a nurse is pretty cool, and very rewarding. And you see a lot of things that LPNs are not allowed to do, so

you have to hunt down an RN to do it, even though he’s your patient,” she noted. “And then I thought: well, I can do that.”

A 1989 graduate of Hampshire High School, Lough earned her LPN at the Mineral County Technical Center in 1997. And ever since her son started kindergarten two years ago, she’s been working to go back to school to qualify for her RN. Eventually, she wants to study towards a Bachelors degree in Nursing, and perhaps even a Masters, she said.

Originally, from Huntington, Mary Harrington’s journey to Nursing began after a months-long family medical problem brought her into close contact with the hospital setting, with doctors, and especially with nurses. The care that she saw nurses providing impressed her, “and it motivated me into a different career path,” she said.

At the same time as she took care of that medical issue, her absence from the workplace cost her a good job at a car dealership. “So at the unemployment office, they asked me if I had ever thought about going back to school,” Harrington recalled. “And that’s when I began to think about finding not just a job, but a career.”

Eastern’s Support Services

Harrington, a 1990 graduate of East Huntington High School, had wanted to return to school for some time, “just to get an education,” she said. “Because in today’s world, it’s hard to get a decent job without a college degree.

“So I came into Eastern and talked with Patty Goldizen (the college’s Learner Support Program Coordinator) and Amanda Sites (Director of Financial Aid). And they figured out I could do it, and afford to do it. And this scholarship helps a lot,” Harrington emphasized.

She spent the next two years, first as a part-time student, then fulltime, “getting nursing pre-requisites out of the way. So I’ve already had my Human Anatomy, my English, my Nutrition and my Medical Terminology classes.

“That helps me,” she pointed out, “because the ones just coming in from high school are taking 19 credit hours this semester. And that’s a lot, when you’re in a nursing program that takes most of your attention.”

For Karissa Marshall, who graduated from East Hardy High School in 2009, entering Eastern’s nursing program seemed like the logical next step. “I did Eastern’s Phlebotomy class the summer before last, so I had some background in the field,” she said, “and I thought I’d give it a try.”

Marshall, who lives with her parents, works weekends at the Cacapon Restaurant in Wardensville. “That job helps put me through school, makes my car payment and pays for my auto insurance and gas.”

So for her, too, “this scholarship is a great idea. Because we have a lot of expenses,” she explained. “We go to Morgantown a couple of times, and to the Finan Center in Cumberland, and our uniforms are really expensive. So it helps with a lot of that stuff.”

Fund Needs Donors

The 40 & 8 would have “liked to have given scholarships to them all, “said Committee Chair Denney, “but we just don’t have the funds.” Denney remains hopeful that local residents will take up the cause and donate an endowment to the scholarship fund so that the committee can provide more scholarships each year.

“I’ve been hoping there’s some retired nurses who might want to prop up the scholarship fund with a big private donation,” he said. (Anyone interested in donating, he said, can contact, or send a check to: Tom Denney, Chair, Forty-and-Eight Nurse-Training Scholarship Committee, 402 Maple Avenue, Moorefield 26836.)

Other members of the Nurse Training Scholarship Committee include Rig’s Gary Evans, “Commissaire Intendant” (treasurer), and Bob Cross, of Dorgan.

Formed in 1920 as an American Legion national honor society of veterans focused on community service, the “40 and 8” organization (also known as “La Société”) welcomes membership applications from all American Legion Members, all honorably discharged veterans and all currently serving American military personnel.

The organization takes its name from the wooden boxcars used in France to transport [American “Doughboys”](#) to the front during World War I. Bearing a “40/8” symbol on its side, each boxcar (or voiture) could hold either 40 men or eight horses at a time. To honor its origins in the experiences and sacrifices of those American soldiers, the society still uses French terms for its officers, member chapters and ceremonies.

For more information about Eastern’s financial aid opportunities, programs of study, workforce training and community education, call 304-434-8000; or toll free: 877-982-2322; or check the College’s website: “www.eastern.wvnet.edu”.

Serving the residents of Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, Pendleton and Tucker counties, Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College, and fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, is a comprehensive and equal opportunity community and technical college bringing the resources and assets of Education That Works to the families, communities and employers of the Potomac Highlands.