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Iroquois Healthcare Association Awards \$249,000 in Scholarships to Essential Healthcare Workers for Second Year

The Iroquois Healthcare Association is distributing scholarship awards to essential health care workers to continue their education.

(Clifton Park, NY) - The Iroquois Healthcare Association (IHA) received a grant from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation (MCHF) to support the second year of a scholarship fund directed at providing workforce relief to the healthcare industry. The program is helping 28 hospitals in Upstate New York give back to their employees, and invest in their futures.

The scholarship fund amounts to \$249,000 and is designated to help low-income and/or diverse hospital workers looking to earn a degree or certification in one of the following areas: RN, LPN, respiratory therapist, surgical technologist or medical technologist.

Staffing shortages lead to staff burn out, limit access to care, and have threatened the ability of hospitals to provide a full complement of services to their community. IHA regularly collects workforce data, and in our most recent staffing survey we found that the vacancy rate for registered nurses was 19.5% in CY 2022.

Last year, IHA awarded 125 hospital workers across Upstate New York a total of \$264,000. Of these employees, 61% of award recipients used the scholarship funds toward becoming an RN. Over 40% of the awardees did not have education past a high school degree or equivalent, and are now working toward an advanced degree in health care.

One scholarship recipient on how the funds helped her; “My husband works out of town, and I have a son who is a Type I diabetic who depends a lot on me to take care of him. I had to decrease my hours at work so I could do what I needed to for my family. The school I attend is a private online learning school. The cost is more than your typical Community College. I chose this school because it allows me to continue my education and molds around my schedule. Having this scholarship awarded to me made a world of difference financially and emotionally. I truly appreciate this opportunity!”

“We are incredibly grateful to the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation for allowing us to provide this program to our hospitals, which allows them to give back to their employees who have worked so hard over the past three years,” said IHA President and CEO Gary Fitzgerald. “Unfortunately, staffing shortages aren’t going away. We have to close the gaps and fill the pipeline so that we have



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essential workers in the future. This scholarship program is one way to do that and to encourage future health care workers to continue their education.”

About the [Iroquois Healthcare Association](#): IHA is a regional healthcare trade organization representing 54 hospitals and health systems, spanning over 28,000 square miles, across 32 counties of Upstate New York. IHA is the leading resource for facilities and professionals bringing quality health care to the region. IHA represents the unique needs of rural, small community safety-net providers to large, academic medical centers in Upstate New York’s urban areas through advocacy, education and information, cost-savings initiatives and innovative business solutions.

About the [Mother Cabrini Health Foundation](#): The MCHF is a private, nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve the health and well-being of New Yorkers, bolster the health outcomes of vulnerable communities, eliminate barriers to care, and bridge gaps in health services. Named after a tireless advocate for immigrants, children, and the poor, the Foundation funds programs and initiatives across New York State that provide either direct healthcare services or address the social determinants of health.