HCC Foundation awards $210K in scholarships

HOLYOKE, MA – After Doris M. Kemble died in 1990 from cancer, her mother, Abbe, established a scholarship in her memory through the Holyoke Community College Foundation. Kemble had been a beloved member of the HCC nursing faculty, and her mother wanted to make sure her daughter’s legacy continued.

Alexandra Clark

It does.

Since 1998, more than 60 HCC students have been awarded the Doris M. Kemble Nursing Scholarship. This year, one of three annual recipients is Versaviya Okhrimenko of Westfield.

“The scholarship means I can go another year at HCC and focus more on my studying and nursing skills rather than worrying about my financial status,” said Okhrimenko. “It means I can finish my nursing degree and reach my dream. It is honestly the greatest gift I have ever received.”

This spring, the HCC Foundation awarded nearly $210,000 in scholarships to 200 incoming, current and transferring HCC students and will set a record for the number of scholarships it distributes for the 2020-2021 academic year, 233.

Because of COVID-19, students need the money more this year than ever, says Amanda Sbriscia, HCC vice president of Institutional and executive director of the HCC Foundation. The number of applications for scholarships this year increased 22 percent, from 391 to 479.

“HCC students are always remarkable, but they have demonstrated incredible resilience this semester,” Sbriscia said. “Many are working, but some have lost their jobs. Still, they are raising children, planning to transfer to four-year schools, changing careers, and blazing a path that for some no one in their family has taken. When so much of our students’ world was unknown as a result of a global pandemic, it was important to ensure they could still count on the HCC Foundation for scholarship opportunities that would inspire them to continue working toward their educational goals.”

Over the years, the HCC Foundation, the nonprofit fundraising arm of the college, has provided more than $3 million in student scholarships while also investing in classroom equipment and technology for select academic and student support programs.

Typically, the Foundation hosts a scholarship reception in May where scholarship recipients can interact with the donors responsible for their awards. But this year, of course, the reception was cancelled because of COVID-19 restrictions.

Instead, students were invited to record personal videos that were sent directly to donors.

“Thinking that someone is trusting me and investing in my career – thank you so much for that,” Okhrimenko said in her video. “Through this award, you’re helping a plain girl like me to become a nurse and save lives.”

Below is a list of HCC Foundation scholarship recipients for 2020-2021:

Agawam: Christine Briggs, Mary Diaz, Danielle Eickelberg, Taylor Provost, Fereshet Yosef, Alina Yovenko.
Amherst: Fatima Amamiah, Murley Friedrick, Tyler Page, Margaret Schwarz, Xinheong Wu.
Arichboro: Shawn Viveiros.
Bechtortown: Kathreen Collado, Katrina Griffin, Garre Hussey, Terice Kelly, Jonathan Muhamen, Laura Marks, Shelbi Moore, Joshua Morrison, Samantha Teshcke.
Bosn: Annaelle Clough.
Brookfield: Johanna Bensen.
Chicopee: Lauren Bailey, Alexandria Bombardier, Cynthia Burgos, Evelyn Cruz, Joni George, Melissa Jenkins, Symuye Kirea, Tigge Koruka, Felicia LaPointe, Nakita MacDonald, Jordan Maroon, Sabrina McCullough, Jennifer Perez, Michael Polanco, Adam Randolph, Jacob Raymond, Brandon Ricardo, Annilsa Rizzo, Christopher Royster, Natalie St. George.
Easthampton: Noelle Fournier, Maya Grindrod, Sylvia Knight, Isabel Navarro, Melissa Rodriguez, Tish Schultz.
Enfield, Conn: Jeneny Baez.
Feeding Hills: Ashley Ugolini.
Florence: Brent Biage, Enette Clandon-Toliver.
Granby: Andrew Brunelle, Tianna Dwinell, Peggha Motaedd, Hannah Sudbury.
Hadley: Andrew Gnatek, Kimberly Russell.
Hamden: Brittany Brideau.
Hatfield: Leah Wilson.
Hayden: Alexandra Pinschmidt.
Huntington: Alexandra Clark.
Indian Orchard: Danielle Bailey.
Leeds: Vanessa Openda.
Ludlow: Jude Blake, Audrey Pilon, Krystal White.
Mauso: Dawn Rogers.
Northampton: Alla Alatassi, Todd Cumings, Maxvell Faynell, Elisabeth Laidone, Avery Rae Melz, Audrea Marschon, Kya Stillson.
Palmer: Jenna Barfield.
Russell: Katrina Conway, Jordan Cooper, Lynn Mann, Jodie Paradis.
Southampton: Ashley Dalesiio, Shelley Mather, Suzanne Surgen.
Southwick: Rachel Diamond.
Thornridge: Jennifer Mason.
Three Rivers: Salina Aguilar, Samuel Farinloye.
Ware: Morgan Orszulak, Natasha Sawabi, Margaret Sullivan.
West Springfield: Lissette Antonomarchi, Chelsea Bergeron, Michael Bonifalla, Christian Castillio, Bumaa Mufata, Maurice Ramogi, Mollyan Ryder, Melina Tzambazakis, Kristen Tzambazakis.
Westfield: Kara Adamsite, Torina Alavle, Nicole Argio, Grace Cannady, Caleb Cerd, Isha Davila, Masijin Gehmold, Michael Gottardi, Ziproorah Irri, Jaime Mason, Versaviya Okhrimenko, Kylee Pellegrini, Svetlana Shalygo, Dana Shambo, Olivia White.
Westonban: Jessica LaFortune, Isabella Sacharcy.
Wilbraham: Elizabeth Busker, Veronica Muchau, Piper Smythe, Destyni Watkins.
Worthington: Ann McGinley.