

# Scholarship

## Scholarship Success Story



### **Kim Taylor-Hammer's Story**

#### 2018 Recipient of the AAUW Healdsburg Branch SRJC & Garden Scholarships

I was honored to receive your request for an update on my education and career, and nearly so surprised that it has already been 5 years since I was awarded this scholarship. Time truly does fly when you're having fun and, it turns out, when you're achieving your dreams.

Following my attendance at SRJC, I was accepted into the Sonoma State University BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) nursing program, where your scholarship allowed me to focus as much attention as possible on the challenging coursework and busy schedule of a nursing student, while raising my two amazing kids. The intensity of the two-year program culminated in two simultaneous preceptorships; my Public Health preceptorship in home health nursing and my Nursing preceptorship in Labor and Delivery. Then, as you know, in March of 2020 another lesson in resiliency had our class scrambling to find a way to complete our contact hours virtually and graduate among the peak chaos of the pandemic with a distinct lack of both pomp and circumstance. Graduate, I did, however, managing somehow to do so with honors.

Shortly after my graduation, my father was diagnosed with stage 4 kidney cancer. I stayed at my parents' home in Salem, Oregon for the next few months putting my home health preceptorship to good use caring for my father while I studied for the NCLEX (the RN exam). By the end of the summer 2020, I had obtained my RN and PHN licenses and my father was in remission. Today, he is fully recovered, although down a kidney and has returned to life as usual.

Although I had fully expected to become a labor and delivery nurse, I think one lesson this pandemic has taught me is to not cling too tightly to my plans, because the universe sometimes has something so much better waiting for us. I was hired almost immediately by a private practice OBGYN in San Francisco as a women's health advice nurse. I absolutely loved it, and really enjoyed the patients I spoke with, giving advice on everything from breastfeeding to ectopic pregnancies. As much as I enjoyed the job, I dearly missed patient care and wanted to work closer to home. I started my dream job in March of 2022 working for the County of Sonoma as a Public Health Nurse for the Community and Family Health Home Visiting program. I get to work with clients who really need the support, helping pregnant people and parents of kids under age 5 in their homes. I offer education, nursing skills, and empathy to my clients as well as connect them to community resources for a variety of needs including diapers, housing, substance use programs, mental health care, and food. I love going to work every day, feeling like I'm doing good for people that need help, and have used my experience in childbirth and breastfeeding many times to help women breastfeed and care for their babies. If that wasn't enough, the job allows me great flexibility in hours, working from home, and an incredibly supportive environment committed to my growth and longevity as a Public Health Nurse.

Without being hyperbolic, I can tell you that I am now working at my dream job and am no longer a single mother. My partner Sean and I recently moved in to a three-bedroom house, my two girls who so kindly dealt with their mom's crazy schedule are now thriving in 6th and 9th grade, and we are all happier than ever. I am now, for the first time in my life, able to think about what I want out of life, and how I want my life and my future to look instead of simply surviving or treading water. I would not be where I am today without my education, and my education was greatly supported by your generous scholarships. For that, my gratitude is unceasing, and my life a testimony to the good you are doing.

With my Deepest Gratitude and Respect,  
Kim Taylor-Hammer