

New Brunswick PhD Nursing Scholarship Recipient, Kimberly Wilbur



Becoming a nurse was a decision shaped by a profound desire to make a tangible difference in the lives of others. My parents instilled in me a curiosity and love of learning from an early age. Surrounded by strong, community-minded women—my mother, grandmothers, and aunts—I was drawn to the idea of a career that combined science and compassion, and nursing was a natural fit.

Throughout my education and early career, from hospital nursing, research, and community care, from a diploma to my doctoral work, I witnessed the staggering health disparities facing marginalized individuals. Living with mental illness and substance use disorder, their struggles to access care, compounded by the stigma and misunderstanding surrounding their challenges, highlighted the urgent need for dedicated healthcare professionals in this field.

Choosing to specialize in this area was driven by my desire to advocate for those who are often overlooked. I recognized that effective care for this population required not only clinical expertise but also a compassionate approach that respects their dignity and humanity. My research and practice are guided by the principles that every person, regardless of their circumstances, deserves ethical, safe, and compassionate care.

Teaching at the University of New Brunswick, Saint John, allows me to share these values with the next generation of nurses. By sharing my knowledge and experience I hope to inspire students to approach their future with the same dedication and empathy that motivated me to become a nurse.

Invest in nurses. See the difference in healthcare.