

History

Elmira College has a long history of educating nurses that dates back to 1930 when the College established a program in conjunction with Arnot Ogden Memorial Hospital to grant a Bachelor Degree with a major in nursing. The short lived program graduated its first class in 1936 and its last class in 1939 when the program became a 2 plus 3 program. Students studied at Elmira for the first two years followed by three years of study at Columbia Presbyterian School of Nursing in New York City, Mary Hitchcock Hospital School of Nursing at Dartmouth University or Yale School of Nursing. This program lasted twenty years, ending in 1959.

In 1974 the College undertook the development of a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in nursing. Following State approval, the program accepted students in 1979. This Registered Nurse (RN) degree completion program represented a new type of educational offering tailored to meet the educational needs of registered nurses and the local health care community for nurses with baccalaureate preparation. The program was unique in that it was one of only six programs of its type in New York State and the only one in this region. The first class graduated in 1981 and the program received initial NLN accreditation in 1983. Nurse education at Elmira has enjoyed continuous accreditation from NLN or NLNAC since that time.

In 1988 the program was expanded to include a four year basic baccalaureate program for individuals with no prior nursing experience. The new program blended the best of the established RN degree completion program with a creative and forward looking entry level curriculum.

The program has grown in size, support and sophistication. In 2000, Rho Gamma, Elmira College's Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing was chartered at the biennial convention in San Diego, California. Since 2001 three endowed funds restricted to the Nurse Education Program have been established. Norman and Lois Crane Bosworth scholarship for a nursing student was implemented in 2001. Dr. and Mrs. Edward Grandt endowed a commencement award for nursing excellence in 2002 in honor of Dr. Kathleen Sward, the first director of the current Nurse Education Program. The annually held Anita B. Ogden Memorial Symposium was endowed in 2002 to bring to the College internationally known experts in complementary health therapies. Dr. Ogden was the Program Director until 2000.

Graduates of the program are highly respected, regularly recruited in the region and are employed in some of the most prestigious health care institutions that include Duke University Hospital, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Massachusetts General Hospital, and Sloan Kettering Cancer Institute. Many graduates have pursued additional education and are administrators, educators, midwives, nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, and researchers.