

The University of Saskatchewan (USask) College of Nursing takes pride in recognizing the passion, resilience, and commitment of our undergraduate students. Their curiosity, compassion, and dedication to learning enrich our college community and reaffirm the vital role nurses play in healthcare. The following spotlights showcase five students currently studying in our Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program across Saskatchewan and Post Degree Bachelor of Science in Nursing (PDBSN) program in Saskatoon.

**BRIANNA ZURBURG**

Rooted in her hometown of Humboldt, Saskatchewan, Bachelor of Science in Nursing student Brianna Zurburg is building a career grounded in compassion and community. Zurburg maintains a strong connection to her hometown and spends much of her time outside of school and working with family doing activities outdoors. At home, her family's five puppies keep life busy and have helped her to develop skills that she has carried into her nursing education.

Her diverse healthcare background in pharmacy, dentistry, and nursing have helped shape her decision to pursue a career as a registered nurse. Her time as a continuing care assistant at a local nursing home helped strengthen her communication skills, reliability, and commitment to compassionate patient care.

"Having had the opportunity to see healthcare from multiple perspectives has confirmed that nursing best aligns with my values," said Zurburg. "Working in the nursing field offers the opportunity to combine scientific knowledge, hands-on care, and advocacy, while building meaningful relationships with patients and families."

One of the highlights of her time in the BSN program has been learning alongside the group of students at the Muenster distributed nursing site. "Learning in a small cohort of 11 students has allowed me to build strong relationships with my peers, who have become like family," said Zurburg. "The lectures have strongly prepared me for clinical and simulation experiences, allowing me to apply theory in practice."

Now in her third year, she says she is proud of the growth she has experienced. She notes significant improvements in her confidence, communication, and clinical skills, as well as her ability to connect classroom learning to real-world patient care.

Following graduation, she plans to begin her career as a registered nurse and continue building a strong clinical foundation. Although she is keeping her options open, she is particularly interested in the areas of pediatrics, intensive care, emergency, and surgical nursing.

"I look forward to learning and continuing my professional development, so I can provide safe, compassionate, patient care throughout my nursing career."



Bachelor of Science in Nursing student Brianna Zurburg. Submitted.

**OLABIMPE SIGBEKU**

As an international student from Nigeria and only daughter in a family of five, Olabimpe Sigbeku, a third-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing student at the North Battleford distributed nursing site, grew up naturally taking on a caregiving role within her family.

Growing up in Nigeria exposed her to significant gaps in access to quality healthcare, particularly for children in rural areas. "Seeing the limited access to care, especially for children, deeply impacted me," said Sigbeku. "When I learned of the opportunity to study outside of my home country, I was excited to gain the knowledge, skills, and global perspective needed to make a meaningful difference through healthcare."

Her choice to pursue a BSN degree came from a desire to care for her family and to address the gaps observed in healthcare growing up, particularly in pediatric and mental health care in rural areas of Nigeria.

"I wanted a profession that allows me to support individuals and families not only physically, but emotionally and culturally, and nursing provides that in a holistic approach," said Sigbeku.

One of the most meaningful highlights of her time at USask has been her personal and professional growth. "I am proud of how I've adapted to a new healthcare system and academic environment, while developing strong assessment, communication, and critical-thinking skills," said Sigbeku. "Successfully applying theory to practice in clinical settings has reinforced my resilience and commitment to safe, patient-centred quality care."

After completing her nursing program, Sigbeku plans to begin her career as a registered nurse, continuing to strengthen her clinical skills, while contributing meaningfully to patient care. Long term, she hopes to use the education and experience she has gained to improve access to quality healthcare, particularly for children and under-served populations in rural areas, while continuing to grow into leadership and advocacy roles within the nursing community.



Bachelor of Science in Nursing student Olabimpe Sigbeku. Submitted.

**MARCUS DUMUK**

Marcus Dumuk, a third-year BSN student studying at the Muenster distributed nursing site, knew from a young age he had an interest in the healthcare field. Dumuk immigrated to Canada from the Philippines with his mother in 2006. As Dumuk grew up, he was taught strong values of selflessness and responsibility, resulting in an early interest in caring for others, paving a path towards a career in healthcare.

"I have always enjoyed caring for people, however that may look," said Dumuk. "Pursuing my BSN felt natural and I believe it aligns well with my strengths and values as a person." Dumuk was also drawn to nursing because of the variety of opportunities the profession offers. He values the versatility having a BSN degree provides and the doors it can open.

One of the biggest highlights of his time in the BSN program has been seeing his growth as a person and as a future nurse. "Looking back and reflecting on the past two years has been incredibly gratifying," said Dumuk. "This program has given me such a sense of identity and purpose that I have never experienced before."

After graduating, Dumuk hopes to work in the emergency department, where he can thrive in a fast-paced environment and care for patients across a wide range of clinical situations.



Bachelor of Science in Nursing students Marcus Dumuk and Ainsley Clark. Submitted.

# UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

## JOSIE DOERING

Josie Doering is a Post-Degree Bachelor of Science in Nursing student, originally from a rural town outside of Renfrew, Ontario. She grew up on a farm, an experience that facilitated her appreciation for the outdoors and an active lifestyle.

Doering completed her first undergraduate degree at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

Outside her studies, she enjoys spending time with friends and family, staying active through sports, and travelling whenever she can. Family plays a central role in her life and have provided significant support through her academic journey.

Doering chose the PDBSN program because of the satisfaction she feels when engaging in learning that is hands-on, fast-paced, and challenging. Her biggest inspiration came from her grandmothers' career in nursing.

"I was drawn to the profession because it allows me to contribute to helping people and communities in meaningful ways, while applying what I have learned to real-life situations," said Doering.

One of the greatest highlights of her time in the PDBSN program has been sharing her experience with the class of 2028 cohort. "It has been exciting to get to know everyone and learn alongside such a supportive group," said Doering. "I am proud of the sense of community we have built so early in the program."

As she continues her studies, Doering remains open to the many possibilities within the nursing profession. "I am excited to grow into the field, develop my skills, and find a place where I can make a meaningful difference."



Post-Degree Bachelor of Science in Nursing student Josie Doering. Submitted.

## VANESSA CRUTHERS

Vanessa Cruthers is a nursing student in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program, balancing her studies alongside life as a single parent to four children. As a mature student living in southern Saskatchewan, Cruthers said the availability of USask's distributed nursing sites has made pursuing a nursing career much more accessible.

"Without the option to study at a distributed nursing site like Swift Current, continuing my education wouldn't have been possible," said Cruthers. "The flexibility and support have made it possible for me to succeed, while raising my kids."

Cruthers said her background as a parent and caregiver has strongly shaped how she approaches nursing. Years of navigating health and social systems, often under pressure, have helped her develop empathy, patience, and problem-solving skills that translate directly into her learning.

Choosing nursing felt like a natural fit for Cruthers, who has always been drawn to supporting others. She values the combination of science, compassion, and advocacy that pursuing nursing provides. Nursing gives her the opportunity to make a real difference, particularly in communities that need it most.

"Nursing has felt like a natural fit," she said. "It gives me the opportunity to understand why things are the way they are."

Cruthers' proudest accomplishment during her time in the program so far has been returning to school, while raising her family on her own. She credits the College of Nursing with helping her develop resilience, confidence, and strong clinical skills.

Looking ahead, Cruthers plans to continue her education, with the goal of earning a master's degree, and becoming a nurse practitioner and remaining in rural Saskatchewan. She hopes to give back to the communities that raised her and provide comprehensive, community-based care that patients can trust and feel comfortable with.

"I want to give back to the communities that raised me," she said. "USask has made it possible for me to balance my education with work and raising kids while doing it."



Bachelor of Science in Nursing student Vanessa Cruthers. Submitted.