



### **Wally and Mary-Ann Pinkard**

For Wally and Mary-Ann Pinkard, supporting nursing education through the France-Merrick Foundation Scholarship is all about promoting growth in Hopkins nursing students and the communities they serve.

Mrs. Pinkard first became involved in nursing education through her work with underserved communities in Baltimore. “You can’t be around these neighborhoods and not want to get involved,” she says.

Her husband agrees. In addition to his involvement with the France-Merrick Foundation, he also serves as chair of the School of Nursing’s National Advisory Council and is a Johns Hopkins University Trustee. “We’re addressing the nursing shortage by training future leaders,” he says, explaining why funding nursing education is so important for him. “The diversity of interest is very wide among Hopkins nursing students, but very focused—all of the students are really focused and driven.”

That is why the Pinkards believe so much in the school’s building campaign: to help create the necessary space to house an ever-expanding array of nursing programs and partnerships at the school.

Over the last eight years, the Pinkards have met many recipients of the France-Merrick Scholarship. “Many of the students who are at Hopkins nursing have had other careers and decided to go back to school and become nurses,” says Mrs. Pinkard. “For some, the scholarship is the only way they can do this. It is really inspirational to be in a room with all of the students who are at the School of Nursing to follow their dreams.”

### ***France-Merrick Foundation Scholarship***

*Established in 2000 to support students working in the Lillian Wald Community Center and its satellite sites. This gift was part of a \$10 million commitment to the Johns Hopkins University. This foundation is administrated by the Pinkard family, for whom the School of Nursing building was named.*

### **Sheyanga Beecher, accel. '08**

It was my strong interest in research that led me to the field of health care. As an undergraduate student, I combined two of my passions, ecology and travel, to study ants in the Serengeti plains and mites in the Costa Rican rainforests. I found myself yearning, though, for a more direct connection between science and the people it affects.

After graduation, I became a clinical research scientist, working alongside nurses, physicians, and technicians to conduct pediatric AIDS clinical trials in Chicago. I appreciated all of my colleagues, but noticed that nurses spent the most time comforting, educating, and listening to patients and their families.

I began working as an HIV Health Educator, facilitating small group sessions in immigrant Kenyan communities. The job was immensely fulfilling and I began considering ways to integrate my interests in health care and education.

I realized that a career in nursing would be a wonderful opportunity for me to bridge the gap between the world of science and the cultural and emotional world that each of us negotiates daily. I want my understanding of medicine to include a solid awareness of how social factors play into the health of the individual.

My education at the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing is preparing me to provide patient education on HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases that is sensitive to individuals and their cultural context. As a France-Merrick scholar, I am proud to be confronting the serious threat of infectious diseases around the world.



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