



# RNFBC NIGHTINGALE

Registered Nurses Foundation of BC

## Providing sustenance in a war zone

by Alida Fernhout, RN MPH

As a Registered Nurse, my work has taken me from Africa and Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside to my current home in the Northwest Territories. But while the work has been worthwhile and rewarding, I’ve sometimes wondered whether I was really making a difference.

My experience a few years ago in South Sudan showed me the answer is a definite yes, although the impact of my contribution can often be of the intangible sort.

In 2011, after a long struggle, South Sudan finally achieved independence. Just two years later, however, tribal warfare exploded. The town of Leer, with 100,000 people, was burnt to the ground and reportedly thousands of Nuer people were killed, women raped, and cattle stolen.

I worked for an NGO serving more than 40,000 people with nutritional clinics in four small villages. We assessed children under the age of five for malnutrition and sent some for further assessment and



John, Alida, and community, South Sudan

distribution of Plumpynut. This is a peanut paste specially formulated to improve a child’s nutrition.

In Leer, I oversaw a program educating mothers and caregivers about hygiene, sanitation, breast-feeding, and nutrition. It involved a lot of sitting on plastic woven mats and talking with girls and women (my colleague John would translate and co-teach).

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## DONORS ENABLE MORE BURSARIES WHILE RECORD NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS EXCEED AVAILABLE BURSARIES IN 2018



Generous RNFBC donors since 1979 continue touching many lives through the nursing care and leadership of motivated bursary recipients. In 2018 donors allowed more qualified applicants to receive bursary support for their nursing education. Thank you for supporting excellent nursing care across British Columbia.

<b>Bursary Applications</b>	310	610	781	1017
	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Bursary Awards</b>	124	138	221	282

Nursing education will enable meaningful and lasting differences for many people who need care.



I could demonstrate my work by reporting the number of topics covered and caregivers that sat on our collective mat, but I struggled with the feeling of whether I was making any difference. I often felt like I had to justify my existence with my “talking job” when such extreme circumstances created great material needs. Even my own NGO asked me “what exactly are you achieving?”

Fortunately, the answers came from the South Sudanese themselves. I sat with a group of displaced chiefs one day talking about digging wells, latrines, and feeding children. One of the chiefs shared, “It’s nice that you do all these things, but what is most important to us was that you just showed up. We thought the world forgot about us. We are so happy to just have you in our presence.”

A group of women told members of a peacekeeping NGO, “More than food, more than clean water, more than clothes or blankets, we want to talk. We want to be able to share our pain and our trauma. This is what you can do to help us. Help us to heal.”

It was profound hearing this from people who were literally on the brink of starvation. What they wanted more than material goods and proper nutrition, was healing in the context of relationship and community.

Several months later I learned that my presence had made a sustainable impact. I had been feeling sullen



and discouraged since my team had been evacuated. There had been no time for goodbyes or closure. But I kept in contact with my South Sudanese colleague, John, who had later escaped safely.

Months later, John bumped into a young Nuer woman. Upon learning that he and I had worked for the same NGO, she asked him, “Do you know Alida?” He replied, “Yes, I know Alida. But how do you know Alida? You’ve been away in Kenya for five years!” She explained that her younger sister had regularly attended one of our remote nutrition clinics. She talked frequently of “Alida, who came to our village.”

Her memories were not of how much food was distributed or how many children were assessed. None of her memories were about numbers, reports, or statistics. Her memories were of how Alida sat on the mat and talked to everyone.

Relationship and community in the context of nutrition. It’s not only food that you have to feed to a broken and hungry people.

**Alida is a grateful bursary winner and loyal donor to the Registered Nurses Foundation of BC. With the generous support of RNFBC donors, Alida was able to complete a Master of Public Health (MPH) at UBC and a Diploma in Tropical Nursing at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine in England. Both of these studies were essential to her in securing humanitarian employment overseas.**

**Thank you Sharon Toohey**



Sharon Toohey has now completed her third term on the RNFBC Board of Directors. Her contributions, particularly her skilled oversight of the funding and donor contributions, will continue to make a lasting difference to the Foundation and benefit future nursing bursary recipients. After increasing-ly senior administrative positions, Sharon previously retired as President, BC Children’s Hospital & Sunny Hill Health Centre. Her number of citations include the Award of Excellence in Nursing Administration from the College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia in 2008. The Board and RNFBC members wish to express our deep appreciation for her nine years of volunteer service and leadership. Thank you, Sharon, for making such an important difference.

**Welcome Sherry Hamilton**

Sherry Hamilton, BSN, MBA, is the Chief Nursing & Liaison Officer for the Provincial Health Services Authority providing leadership for professional practice strategies and nursing initiatives in collaboration with local & provincial stakeholders, as well as providing leadership for other programs and services. Her nursing career has spanned across BC communities where she has worked in clinical practice, operational leadership and professional practice.

More recently, she co-led the development of the Health Services Researcher Pathway through the BC Nursing Research Initiative. The Board of Directors welcome Sherry Hamilton to her volunteer role as chair of the audit and finance committee with the Registered Nurses Foundation of BC.

**FEATURED BURSARY**  
**The Patricia Wadsworth Graduate Bursary**

Pat was born and raised in Vancouver and was a descendant of founders of both our city and our province. A graduate in 1955 of the five-year combined nursing program at UBC and the VGH School of Nursing, BC has benefited greatly from her passion. Registered Nurses Foundation, Nursing at VGH and BC Health are just a few organizations who were lucky enough to have her on their team! As a woman pioneer in nursing and health care administration in BC, many distinguished contributions were recognized during her lifetime.

**Bursary Criteria**

To be awarded to a RN currently enrolled in a program of graduate studies leading to a Master’s or Doctoral degree with an emphasis on **Nursing and Health Care Leadership/Administration.**





## Tips for Giving – Did you know how...

- 1. MONTHLY GIVING** is an efficient and lower cost way of making your gift and spreading out steady support for RNFBC bursary recipients. **MONTHLY GIVING GUARANTEE:** you can start, update, or discontinue your monthly giving amount at anytime by contacting us.
- 2. GIFTS OF SHARES** may have extra tax planning benefits for you – directly transferring appreciated shares as a charitable gift may create additional tax savings for you because you receive tax credits based on the full market value of the shares and also eliminate capital gains tax owing. The same does not apply if you sell the shares first and then donate the proceeds.
- 3. ESTATE GIVING** can make a lasting difference - If you are considering an estate gift to support nursing bursaries, contact the Registered Nurses Foundation of BC (RNFBC) to help ensure how your future gift can be applied to make a lasting difference in a way that meets your wishes.
- 4. TAX CREDITS** lower your actual cost of your donation

Gift Amount	Approximate Cost after Tax Credits*		
	Cost	Cost Per Month	Cost Per Day
\$1000	\$610	\$50.83/month	\$1.67/day
\$365	\$253	\$21.08/month	\$0.69/day

\*Approximation with current tax guidelines. Consult a qualified tax advisor about your circumstances.

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### CREATING A NAMED BURSARY

A named bursary can be established when a donation fund achieves \$25,000 or greater at the Registered Nurses Foundation of BC.



### DO YOU KNOW A RNFBC BURSARY RECIPIENT?

### ARE YOU A PAST BURSARY RECIPIENT?

Calling all past bursary recipients and friends of the Registered Nurses of BC Foundation to help us gather stories and celebrate past recipients' involvement in nursing. Help us connect with our extended family of hundreds of bursary recipients to learn more about people making a difference with their nursing education.

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### CONTACT

**Legal Name: Registered Nurses Foundation of BC**

**Charitable Registration # 11911 4544 RR0001**

Suite 506 - 595 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC V6C 2T5

**Office** 604.739.1944 | **Email** support@rnfbc.ca | **Web** www.rfnbc.ca | **Donate Online** rnfbc.ca/donate

For a confidential conversation about naming a bursary, making gifts through your estate plans, or other tax smart gifts, please contact us.

**“Nursing is all about touching lives, and lives touching yours along the way” – author unknown**