

## MARY TAMVEKENJI STUDENT UPDATE

Date: March 14, 2026

Dear ISTEPup Scholarship Committee,

I am writing to provide you with my last year academic update and to express my profound gratitude for your continued support. It is a precious thing to me that an entire academic year has passed since I was awarded this scholarship. Your investment in my education has been the cornerstone of my journey, and I think of your generosity often, especially during challenging moments in my studies. Because of you, the heavy burden of tuition fees has been lifted, allowing me to focus entirely on becoming a competent and compassionate nurse.

I am pleased to report that my studies are progressing very well. I am currently in the second year of my Bachelor of Science in Nursing program, in my fourth semester. This semester has been particularly intense, but incredibly rewarding. We have been delving deeper into complex medical-surgical nursing, STIs, HIV and AIDS, Community health nursing, and entrepreneurship in nursing. While the workload is significant, I have not experienced any major academic difficulties. The solid foundation I built in my first year, despite the financial worries, has prepared me well for these more advanced topics.

The last year, encompassing my third and fourth semesters, has been a period of immense growth, both academically and personally. The start of my second year (Semester 3) marked a turning point. With my tuition fees secured by the ISTEPup scholarship, I felt a weight lift from my shoulders. I was no longer a student constantly worried about finances; I could finally be just a student, fully immersed in the world of nursing.

Semester 3 was our second deep dive into the clinical setting. We began our hospital rotations, and it was both exhilarating and terrifying. However, my clinical instructor was incredibly supportive, and I quickly learned that the core of nursing is compassion and communication. I was able to apply the theory I had learned in class—like administering vaccine to under five children, providing family planning methods to women and management of patients with emergency conditions in the outpatient department context. It was in that hospital ward that my dream of becoming a nurse solidified into a concrete goal. I wasn't just studying to pass exams; I was studying to be someone's advocate and caregiver.

This current semester (Semester 4) which is about to end in April has built upon the clinical experience. We are now learning more about managing patient with surgical conditions, administering ARV medications, and understanding STIs and their management. Currently we are at clinical area to apply what we learnt in class to the real patient. A significant highlight was our medical-surgical nursing module. It challenged my preconceived notions and taught me the importance of holistic care—treating the person, not just the illness. I find myself thinking more critically and asking more questions during lectures.

Looking ahead to the next academic year (my third year), I am both excited and apprehensive. The curriculum will become even more demanding, with a greater focus on specialized areas like pediatric, obstetric, and psychiatric nursing. Our clinical hours will also increase significantly. My plan is to approach these challenges with the same dedication I have now. I intend to seek out additional learning opportunities, perhaps by volunteering for health awareness campaigns in the local community during the holidays. My ultimate goal for the coming year is to continue building my confidence and competence at the bedside, ensuring that by the time I graduate, I am a nurse who my future patients can trust completely. I know it will be tough, but I feel prepared and I am incredibly motivated to succeed.

My final exams for the fourth semester are currently underway and will conclude in mid-April. Therefore, I do not have my final results available at this time. I expect to receive my official semester grades by the first week of May 2026. I am confident in my performance and will, of course, share my results with you as soon as they are released.

As requested, I have attached a picture of me in my school uniform. It was taken on campus a few weeks ago, between lectures. Every time I put on this uniform, I am reminded of the path that led me here and the incredible support system, including the ISTEPup scholarship, that makes this journey possible.

Thank you once again for believing in me and investing in my future. I will continue to work hard to make you proud.

With sincere gratitude and warm regards,

Mary Tamvekenji

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