

# Committed to Social Justice

“Don’t forget your roots. Give back when you have the opportunity. Believe in yourself.” These are the lessons impressed upon me by my family, and they continue to guide my life today. Growing up in an impoverished California neighborhood, I saw firsthand the hardships of being poor in America, including the damage that can be caused by substandard medical care. I decided from an early age to commit my life to issues of social justice and health care equity.

As the first in my family to graduate from college, I took courses in public health, psychology, and criminology. I worked in community policing, volunteered with after school programs, and was employed in a public defender’s office. I was exposed to nursing for the first time during my clinical volunteer opportunities in a local hospital. I always knew I liked working directly with people, but I found that it was much better to be bedside than to sit behind a desk all day! I love being able to give support to people when they are going through tough times.

As a nursing student at Johns Hopkins University, I am finding ways to give back to the community. I volunteer with Programa Salud, working with Baltimore’s Spanish-speaking population to provide health education and information on how to access health care. And I have been chosen for the Fuld Leadership Fellows Program in Clinical Nursing, where I work with a nurse mentor from the Johns Hopkins Hospital to analyze ways to improve the “RxBot” medication distribution process. The “RxBot” technology helps Hopkins pharmacists prepare medications, providing the speed and efficiency needed to support more than 12,000 patients per day.

Having scholarship support means that I can focus all of my efforts toward academic study and volunteer work in the community. There are so many opportunities here at Hopkins for growing, learning, giving back, and showing appreciation of where I come from through service to others. By being a nursing student at Johns Hopkins, I know that I am able to make a difference in people’s lives.

— Karin Ragudo  
Accelerated  
Class of 2007



The Elizabeth Bietsch Brizendine Scholarship was established in 2003 by a bequest from Mrs. Elizabeth Bietsch Brizendine, who worked at Johns Hopkins Hospital after graduating from the Johns Hopkins Hospital School of Nursing in 1945. She was an avid quilter, antique lover, and had a strong interest in water culture and the preservation of this priceless natural resource. A resident of Baltimore, Mrs. Brizendine was dedicated to the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing and its mission to educate extraordinary nurses.

Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing ■ 525 N. Wolfe Street ■ Baltimore, MD 21205 ■ [www.son.jhmi.edu](http://www.son.jhmi.edu)

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