

Alfred University pioneers New York's first program in patient-care management

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Angelina Asbery-Holmes spoke on behalf of the students in the care managers' certificate program.

Alfred University, known as the 'pioneer college of Western New York,' marked another milestone Wednesday with the awarding of the first-ever post-baccalaureate certificates in patient-care management to 34 students in a New York City-based program.

The students, all members of 1199 SEIU healthcare workers & union, are "pioneer graduates of Alfred University's care management program," said Dr. Jay Cerio, dean of External Programs for Alfred University.

W. Richard Stephens, provost and interim vice president for Statutory Affairs, told students, "You had to have a passion to devote time and energy to pursue this certification."

His comments affirmed those by Florence Wong, director of 1199's League Training & Upgrading Fund, who noted that each of the students had "accepted a challenge" in February 2017 when they enrolled in the classes that took them five months to complete and included a week spent on the Alfred University campus. "You are all working adults who had to balance work, family and course work" to complete the certificate. "I admire you and I congratulate you for your success."

Going forward, she pledged "We will work with you, support you and encourage you. We will help you get (new) jobs, and help you work on your master's degrees."

Angelina Asbery-Holmes, speaking on behalf of her classmates, said "I would like to thank everyone here for the opportunity" to participate in the first-of-its-kind program in New York State. "That's pretty powerful, as far as I am concerned. I am so very proud of all of us."

The students were taught at different sites, but all came together for the week on the Alfred University campus. "It was such a wonderful time," Asbery-Holmes said, "getting together, learning about each other, (forming) friendships and collaborations."

She expressed the students' appreciation for 1199 "for putting the program together," to the Center for Integrated Teacher Education (CITE) for bringing the partners together and to Alfred University, particularly Cerio and Dr.

Robert Bitting, associate dean of External Programs, for developing and teaching the curriculum.

The innovative program curriculum “was designed to provide the knowledge and skills training required for the new healthcare job title of care manager... in direct response to the healthcare industry’s expressed need for additional healthcare workers who have the knowledge and skills in behavioral health required to articulate, coordinate and manage patients with multiple care needs. The Alfred University program meets guidelines established by the National Academy of Certified Care Managers.

A second cohort will begin the program in January 2018.