

SHOI Testimony
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Good Morning. My name is Lori Swain. I am a Scholars for a Healthy Oregon recipient and a Certified Nurse-Midwife at Legacy Silverton Medical Center.

My roots are in rural southern Ohio, where I grew up. My family had insurance, but in rural Ohio, I quickly perceived the difference that access to quality health and maternity care can impact the trajectory of a life. I got married; we had babies, and I stayed at home to care for three tiny humans. When the girls were older and we had found our heartland in Oregon, my interest in women's health and the state of maternity care in the US continued to grow. I began to seek out more training and experience to improve the quality of maternity care for as many women as I could.

First, I became a childbirth educator. Then, I became a doula (a professional labor support person) and began supporting individual families through their birth experiences. As a doula, I was able to witness birth in tertiary care centers, smaller community hospitals, at home, and at birth centers. I saw huge variability in the quality of care that women experienced from evidence-based, person-centered, family-centered care to cookie cutter, rote care that was often more about the provider than the woman giving birth.

Soon, I found myself researching nurse-midwifery programs and taking pre-requisites for nursing school, discovering that the only nurse-midwifery program in our state happened to be the country's top program. I studied harder.

I was awarded the SHOI scholarship in 2014, and began graduate study in the Nurse-Midwifery program at OHSU. I graduated with my Master's in Nursing last June, passed the midwifery board exam & got my license in July, and began working as a Certified Nurse-Midwife at Legacy Silverton Medical Center in August. I am part of the first cohort of SHOI recipients to have graduated and found employment serving rural and underserved communities in Oregon. As a Nurse Practitioner, we have a much faster turnover than the MD students, so it's exciting to be out and serving in my community.

At Legacy Silverton, we care for women and families from all over Marion County. Our families live in Woodburn, Mollala, Mill City, Scotts Mills, and Canby. Approximately 55% of our patients are insured by OHP or CAWEM, and about 20% of them are Spanish speaking – which is representative of our population in Marion County. Now, because of SHOI, I am a Certified Nurse-Midwife serving my neighbors in Marion County, working to be improve the state of maternity care in our country, one woman at a time. I love my job, I love the midwifery team that I get to partner with – striving to provide individualized, person-centered, respectful care to all we serve. As a new grad, I am so fortunate to have landed in a place where I feel like I could stay for years. Thanks for helping to make this possible. I hope many more students will have similar opportunities because of SHOI funding.