



Dr. Chinnama Baines

2025 Nursing Alumni Award of Distinction

The 2025 Nursing Alumni Award of Distinction is awarded to Dr. Chinnama Baines, a pioneering leader in nursing education, research, and administration. Her career has left an indelible mark on the profession.

Chinnama's journey began in Hazelton and has taken her across continents—from earning her BScN at Madras University to her MScN at UBC, and eventually a PhD in Leadership and Administration. As the first—and still the only—South Asian Nurse to become a Dean in British Columbia, Chinnama has broken barriers with courage and determination.

During her tenure as Dean and Associate Dean at what is now Thompson Rivers University, she provided transformative leadership in developing innovative programs like the 4-year BSN and the LPN/RN Access program. She was a powerful advocate for establishing a degree program in B.C.'s interior—a bold move at a time when degree options were just emerging provincially. This advocacy stemmed from her own experience of relocating for graduate education, and her vision created new pathways for students to pursue nursing education close to home, contributing to a legacy of nurses staying and serving in their communities.

Her influence reaches far beyond the province. Chinnama led international education initiatives in Nepal, building leadership and clinical training programs that uplifted healthcare capacity in underserved regions. Chinnama's leadership has shaped policy and curriculum through her roles with the Nursing Education Council of BC, the Health Sciences Deans Committee, and the RNABC Board. She is a mentor to many and a strong advocate for equity, inspiring others to find their voices and thrive as professionals.

In Kamloops, Chinnama is held in deep admiration by the South Asian community for her leadership as a BIPOC trailblazer. She has created space for others to be seen, acknowledged, and supported, so that the seeds Chinnama planted more than 25 years ago continue to grow in the nurses who walk the path she helped to create. Dr. Chinnama Baines is a truly distinguished alumna and a beacon of courage and inspiration in the nursing profession whose career has left an indelible mark on the profession.