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## FirstCare Awards McMurry University Nursing Scholarship

**AUSTIN, Texas** (February 27, 2018) – In late 2017, [FirstCare Health Plans](#) awarded a \$5,000.00 scholarship to a well-deserving nursing student at [McMurry University](#) in Abilene, Texas. Both FirstCare and McMurry University are recognized pillars of the Abilene community, and these two entities have maintained a solid relationship for over 25 years. This was the second scholarship award FirstCare presented to a McMurry nursing student in the last two years.

“Here at FirstCare, we believe that all Texans and our communities should be healthy and that health care should be accessible to everyone,” said FirstCare President and CEO Darnell Dent. “We value education and are proud to invest in the Abilene community we serve.”

Scholarship recipient Yazhmeen Branch was selected by McMurry University from a pool of qualified students enrolled in the Patty Hanks Shelton School of Nursing, a consortium of McMurry and Hardin-Simmons University. McMurry’s Financial Assistance Office considered both financial need and academic success, selecting Ms. Branch for the one-time scholarship award. Hailing from Amarillo, Texas, Ms. Branch is not only a nursing major, but an on-campus resident assistant, and an active member in a number of on-campus activities such as the Campus Activities Board and Alpha Psi Alpha.

Dent went on to say, “FirstCare is honored to support McMurry University with this scholarship gift—awarded to a deserving student, like Ms. Branch, in a health-related course of study. Congratulations, Ms. Branch!”

When asked about her pursuit of her nursing degree, Ms. Branch said, “It was the focus on patient care that drew me to the field.” She is planning for a future as a Registered Nurse, and going back to school for her master’s degree to become a Family Nurse Practitioner. “I would like to research neurological diseases, especially those impacting our elderly population,” she said.



*Pictured (left to right): Lisa Harp (Regional Executive Director, FirstCare Health Plans), Yazhmeen Branch (scholarship recipient), Tim Sechrist (Director of Student Financial Services, McMurry University)*

(more)

**About FirstCare Health Plans**

*Our mission is to provide access to high quality, affordable health care through strong partnerships in the communities we serve. Since 1985, we've been serving the health care needs of members across North, West, and Central Texas. Today, our service area includes 143 counties, with local offices in Abilene, Amarillo, Lubbock, and corporate offices in Austin, Texas. We offer a wide range of HMO, PPO, HSA, and ASO products through a variety of programs, including small and large employer plans; state, federal and teacher plans; government programs; and the Health Insurance Marketplace. With the support of our owners, Covenant Health in Lubbock and Hendrick Health System in Abilene, we serve over 172,000 members. For more information, please visit [FirstCare.com](http://FirstCare.com).*