

STAYING CURRENT

Executive MBA enhances vision, strategy, achievement

As Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse Executive for the Detroit Medical Center (DMC), Shawn Levitt is charged with driving the next level of nursing service and development.

With more than 25 years in the healthcare industry, she has strong experience in patient care, clinical operations, project management and performance improvement strategies.

That's good for DMC. At the time of her appointment in 2011, then DMC President and CEO Michael Duggan said, "Shawn is strategic, vision driven, and demonstrates that DMC attracts the best, brightest and the most committed."

It's that drive and commitment that led Levitt to enter the Executive MBA program at Oakland University. For Levitt, the program provides a foundation to further develop her knowledge of key business practices that she can apply in the healthcare industry.

"The healthcare industry is constantly changing. Nursing executives need to stay current with national trends and patient needs," she explains. "Oakland's Executive MBA provides tremendous value to me, not just because of the course content, but the ability to connect with other students who are also leaders in their fields."

Levitt says the diversity in her fellow student's background broadens her own understanding.

"I have the ability to meet other healthcare executives, as well as leaders in IT, business, etc., and sit down to listen to their perspectives and learn from each other," she says.



Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer for the Detroit Medical Center Shawn Levitt (center) with fellow OU Executive MBA students.

The 21-month cohort program structure is also a plus, she explains, "Oakland's program takes into consideration that as students who are well into our careers, we are busy and have multiple responsibilities...the course work allows us to manage our time effectively."

Continuing to grow and stay current in the healthcare industry is essential not only for Levitt's success, she says, but for passing on the torch to future leaders.

"I get great satisfaction in ensuring the patients receive quality care, but I also enjoy working with the younger nurses who have tremendous zeal for the profession," she explains. "Mentoring is amazingly satisfying. It is a positive experience to work with nurses who are in line to step up and ensure the succession is seamless."

As the regional chief of nurses for seven hospitals, Levitt says that role mixes business practices with the compassion of nursing in a very positive way.

"I can't be the same type of leader across the board. It's a mix of operations, strategy, statistics, economics, human resources. Everything I do must stay current with the patients and the employee's needs," she says.

"I am a lifelong learner – in my field and in my personal life. The Oakland Executive MBA program helps me stay on top." ■

By Susan Thwing

ABOUT SHAWN LEVITT

EDUCATION: Currently Executive MBA student at Oakland University; also holds BS in Nursing from Wayne State University and an MS in Health Services Administration from Central Michigan University. She is also certified in healthcare quality and managed care nursing, and is a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS: Currently Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse Executive, Detroit Medical Center, a division of Tenet Healthcare Corporation, one of the largest systems in the country. Previous titles include Corporate Director, Medical and Academic Affairs, Detroit Medical Center, Vanguard Health System; Vice President, Chief Operating Officer, Children's Hospital of Michigan.

BOARDS & MEMBERSHIPS: Levitt sits on the Detroit Regional Infant Mortality Reduction Task Force, Oakland University School of Nursing Board of Visitors; Wayne State University College of Nursing Dean's Advisory Board. She is also a member of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, Inforum, The American College of Healthcare Executives, and is a Board member of the Midwest Chapter of the American College of Healthcare Executive.

THE EXECUTIVE MBA AT OAKLAND UNIVERSITY is a premier graduate business program designed exclusively for experienced professionals. Offered in a cohort structure, the fully inclusive 21-month program meets on Friday afternoons and Saturdays to support the lifestyles of busy professionals. Learn more at oakland.edu/emba