ADDRESSING DIVERSITY IN TODAY’S WORLD

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Nursing student honors civil rights legacy
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

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I am finishing up my first year as interim dean and have loved leading the team in moving forward the initiatives of the School. Our faculty continuously provide curricular innovation, participate in cutting-edge science and clinical practice as well as stand-out in leadership capacities.

Our students and alumni come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences which brings interesting and diverse perspectives to the SON communities. Our students actively engage in quality research projects with faculty and in community service projects through the SON’s student organizations. They consistently amaze me with their nursing accomplishments. Several of these amazing students and alumni are highlighted in this issue of the Pulse. Their work is inspiring and impressive and a testament to their experience, expertise and commitment to excellence.

I hope you enjoy reading about our inspiring faculty, students and alumni. Happy Spring!

Gary Moore

Interim Dean
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The United States needs nurses. An estimated 125,000 nursing positions are
open nationwide. That number is projected to rise to 1 million in the next decade.
OU's School of Nursing is taking steps to address this need, and you can help. In
partnership with local health care organizations, we actively recruit faculty and students
for our programs. Applications and admissions have risen by 40 percent, but much
more can be done to ease the current and future nursing shortage. The development
of scholarships and distinctive campus, online and satellite programs will serve as an
important catalyst for future growth. This will also provide important incentives in
attracting, retaining and graduating students into the ranks of professional nursing.
Please consider a gift to the School of Nursing. For more information about gift
opportunities to the School of Nursing, please contact Colette O'Connor at (248) 364-8723 or oconnor@oakland.edu.

Consider a gift that gives back
AWARD WINNERS
The winner in each category will receive $1,000
and a bronze statue of Florence Nightingale.
Administration
Anne Ronk - Beaumont, Royal Oak
Advanced Practice Nursing
Susanna Sirianni - Sinai-Grace Hospital
Education and Research
Carla Groh - University of Detroit Mercy
Long Term Care/ Rehabilitation
Theresa Duller - Beaumont, Royal Oak
Nursing in the Community
Cathy June - Detroit Receiving Hospital
Oakland University Distinguished Alumni
Marlene Mullin - Hope, Inc., Michigan Council of Nurse Practitioners
Staff Nurse Practice
Jeffrey Wolff - Harper University Hospital
Michelle Wood - Oakwood Hospital, Taylor
People's Choice Nominees
(Winner will be announced at the awards banquet on May 7th)
Janette Bell - Beaumont, Royal Oak
Michael Clark - Henry Ford Hospital
Geraldine McCormick - St. John Providence Hospital

Get your tickets today.
Tickets to the awards program are available by contacting Ashley Samson in the School of Nursing by
phone at(248) 364-8725 or by email at
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Nursing in the Community: Doris Neumeyer - Beaumont, Troy
Oakland University Distinguished Alumni: Marie Doherty - Beaumont, Royal Oak
Staff Nurse Practice: Kelly Hendrix - Beaumont, Royal Oak
Staff Nurse Practice: Nancy Whitt - Beaumont, Royal Oak
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MEET OUR STUDENTS
#THISISOU
Student profiles in the School of Nursing

By Sandra Beckwith

TRANSFER STUDENT FINDS HER ACADEMIC HOME

“I was in and out of hospitals when I was young, so I learned the difference between a good nurse and a bad one pretty quickly,” says Adrian Williams from Farmington Hills. “That’s one reason I wanted to become a nurse. I want to be the one who makes a tough situation easier for a patient.”

Williams, 21, transferred to OU after spending a year at Tennessee State University and deciding it was too far from home. Getting accepted into the nursing program presented a few challenges, since it’s competitive and priority goes to students already enrolled at the University.

“My advisor recommended that I re-take some classes to get more OU credits and take required courses like microbiology outside the nursing program,” she says, adding that the quality guidance was typical of what she encountered once she was accepted into the nursing program.

“The faculty and staff really want you to learn and to be the best nurse you can be,” she says. “They’re always willing to help, whether it means staying late or working with me one-on-one so I understand a concept I’m struggling with.”

Williams originally planned to get a master’s degree and be a nurse anesthetist, but now that she’s been exposed to other areas through her clinical experiences, she’s not yet sure what will be the best fit for her. She particularly enjoyed working with senior citizens at a nursing home.

“They have so much wisdom,” she says, “and they were so open to working with us.”

During her medical-surgical rotation, she had an opportunity to watch a bypass operation.

“That was sweet!” she says.

While she describes the OU program as “intense,” the former basketball player manages to work 20 hours a week at the nearby outlet mall and occasionally coach a high school JV girls’ basketball team. Williams also manages to squeeze in time with her beloved grandmother.

“It felt so good to see how proud my mother and grandmother were when I was accepted into OU’s nursing school,” she says. “They congratulated me on not giving up even though I had to overcome a few obstacles to get in. Now that I’m here, I know I’m in the right place.”
FORMER VET TECH SAYS THE SKY’S THE LIMIT WITH NURSING

Licensed veterinary technician, Angel Gracey-Thomas, 36, is studying nursing after 15 years in her current field because nursing offers more room for growth in a wider range of workplaces.

“The sky’s the limit with nursing,” she says.

To make sure she learns about those career options, she has been an active participant in the annual career path program that allows successful practitioners to talk about their professional journeys.

“Listening to those role models and being a part of the discussion has always lifted me up,” she says.

Now in her fourth year of the program, Thomas hasn’t let challenges that range from parenting a 7-year-old, providing emotional support to her husband while he attended law school in another city, or her part-time job managing a veterinary office slow her down. In fact, she took full advantage of as many growth opportunities as she could, even taking a part-time summer job assisting a professor with nursing informatics research.

The position involved presenting the research study to nurses, delivering and retrieving surveys, and learning how to use statistical software. The experience has had a lasting impact.

“Long term, I’d like a job in nursing informatics. I’d enjoy integrating technology with nursing care in a hospital setting,” she says, adding that she’s already “the computer geek” at the veterinary hospital.

Short term, she’s interested in working in an intensive care unit.

“I’ve worked in emergency veterinary medicine and like the complicated, in-depth care that’s required,” Thomas says.

Going back to school in her 30s hasn’t been easy for Edwards, but she found her niche with other older students who were also mothers.

“Friendships weren’t the priority that they were the first time I attended college years ago, but it was important for me to find people I could relate to,” she says. “They understand what you’re going through, especially when you’re a parent working on a second or third career, and the support really helps.”

The experience has taught her a lesson she shares with her son.

“I tell him repeatedly that if you want something badly enough, you’re going to keep doing what you need to do to get it, no matter how tired you are or how impossible it seems,” Thomas says. ■
TIMING WAS RIGHT FOR A NEW CAREER

If it’s meant to be, it’s meant to be, no matter what you might do to keep it from happening. That’s how it seems with Kiralynne Butler-Edwards, anyway. Now 35, Edwards intended to go to medical school after getting a biology degree at Tuskegee University way back when.

“Around my junior year, I got tired of school and decided to get a job when I graduated instead,” she says.

She stayed in the medical field, though, taking a job in Charlotte, N.C., as a pharmaceutical sales representative. She returned to her home state of Michigan in 2005, working at a university as an enrollment adviser and recruiter. When she was laid off from that job in 2012, Edwards was at a crossroads.

“I asked myself, ‘Should I look for a job, or should I go to nursing school?’” she says, adding that she had been thinking about a nursing career for some time.

Once Edwards confirmed that her university severance package could be applied to nursing school prerequisite courses at that institution, she knew it was finally time to pick up where she left off at Tuskegee and become a nurse. It was just a matter of selecting the right school.

“I got the best feel from OU,” she says. “I liked the nursing program and the personnel, and a friend who had recently graduated from OU highly recommended the university.”

Initially apprehensive about being a student again after so many years away from the classroom, Edwards “took it one day at a time,” she says, and paced herself. Taking the prerequisites before enrolling in the Accelerated Second Degree Bachelor of Science in Nursing program was helpful.

“By the time I was in the core program, I was well-adjusted,” she says.

Edwards especially appreciated how the OU program gets students into the field immediately, while they’re still taking classes.

“It really helps you grasp concepts quicker,” she says.

Edwards graduated last December (2014). After passing the nursing board exam, she expected to choose between two job offers – one on the neuroscience medical-surgical floor of a hospital, another, in a hospital cardiac intensive care unit.

“The accelerated program was intense, but doable. You make short-term sacrifices for a long-term benefit. Those sacrifices are well worth it,” she says with the wisdom that often comes with experience.

BILINGUAL STUDENT FINDS COMMUNITY

Born in Los Angeles but raised in Waterford, Jorge Garcia almost didn’t enroll at OU.

“When I was a high school senior, the OU nursing school had rolling admission with a three-year waiting list, so it didn’t look like an option for me. But when the school switched to competitive admission just before I started college, I knew I had a shot at it,” Garcia explains.

He first became interested in a nursing career after shadowing a male nurse as part of a high school health sciences program. More specifically, Garcia was originally interested in anesthesia, but the 21-year-old sophomore might be heading in a different direction now.

“I’ve realized that there are so many more options that I didn’t know about,” he says. “I might work as an RN for awhile, and then get a master’s degree so I can work in hospital administration.”

OU was a good fit for the bilingual student, who often speaks Spanish at home with his parents. When weighing options, he preferred the scholarships offered at OU, the nursing school’s reputation, and proximity to home – it’s just 20 minutes from
PALESTINIAN MOM BRIDGES CULTURAL DIVIDE

Julianna Kishek, 40, experienced firsthand the importance of diversity in a health care setting while she was doing a clinical rotation that’s part of the nursing degree program.

Kishek, who has lived in the U.S. for 18 years after emigrating from Palestine soon after graduating from college and marrying, had only been in her hospital rotation for two weeks when she was approached about helping staff advocate for a Middle Eastern patient. Health care providers wanted to provide pain medication for the patient, who was suffering from Stage IV pancreatic cancer and a broken shoulder, but the family resisted and became hostile.

“By integrating the family’s cultural beliefs with the health care system’s goals, I was able to help the family see how accepting treatment would be good for the patient,” she explains. “I helped them to talk with someone who knew their culture, too,” she says.

It was a pivotal experience for Kishek, who recently received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree (2014).

“I never expected to make that kind of a difference so soon,” she says.

Kishek went through the Accelerated Second Degree program; she also has a bachelor’s degree in biology from Birzeit University in Palestine. She hopes to work for a few years before returning to school to get a doctorate that will allow her to do evidence-based research, an interest she developed while helping an OU instructor write a research paper. That will wait, though, until her three teenage sons become more independent.

“I have been very busy being a student and mother,” she says. “This year, I put everything aside to focus on my kids and coursework. School was very hard and stressful, but praying helped. My spirituality helped me get over many obstacles.”

Once she passes the nursing board exam, she’s open to a range of job possibilities.

“I enjoyed all of my clinical experiences and feel like I’m well-prepared to head in any direction, whether it’s pediatrics, obstetrics, or something else. I have a natural instinct for helping patients, so as long as I’m helping people, I don’t mind where I work,” she says.

As Kishek often introduced her classmates to her special herbal tea blends, Palestinian foods and homeopathic remedies, she will likely bring these gifts with her as well.

“I like building bridges between cultures,” she says.
Michael Heuninckx, with his nursing compassion and entrepreneurial spirit, wants to help novice nurses feel more confident in their roles.

Two really: One to help new nurses prepare for the moment they experience their first hospital emergency code blue call; and the other to work preventatively so that his patients don’t need such a call, or even a trip to the ER.

The SON alumnus and student, who works in the emergency room at William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, and is completing the MSN in the Family Nurse Practitioner track at OU, wrote the book “Code Blue! Now What?” because he saw a gap in available literature.

Although code blues can happen without any warning, that’s often not the case, says Heuninckx, whose book takes place at the fictitious Code Blue Regional Hospital and Medical Center and addresses various scenarios to prepare a nurse before and after a patient codes, and how a nurse might be able to intervene and advocate for a patient before a patient’s condition goes downhill.

Heuninckx wrote the book specifically for nurses in their last year of nursing school or first year of their career. Chapters cover topics and strategies including leadership, teamwork, and knowing your workspace.

Heuninckx describes it as what he would teach new nurses if he were their preceptor.

“Become familiar with the crash cart, because you don’t want the first time that you see it and touch it and know it to be the first time you need it,” says Heuninckx, who stresses the importance of mastering from-the-door assessment, as well as constant rounds, prepping patients, and creating useful “policies” to follow. The book also has a designated twitter handle and hashtags that correlate with each chapter to enable nurses to interact with others reading the book.

The entrepreneurial Heuninckx, who also writes for two nursing websites, is also hard at work on another new project: the Household Health podcast. The free podcast will tie in with Heuninckx’s plans to focus on primary care preventative work as a family nurse practitioner and will address the many health issues individuals and families face, from preparing to start a family to geriatric concerns and challenges.

“Its main focus is going to be connecting healthcare professionals with people that want to improve the overall health of their household,” says Heuninckx, who aims to launch the podcast this spring on iTunes.

“People want to learn. I don’t believe that people actively choose to be unhealthy.” It’s all part of Heuninckx’s goal to do everything he can to keep his patients out of having to go to a hospital by preventing or at least managing chronic diseases that can lead to even bigger problems.

“I’m on a mission,” he says.

For more information about Code Blue! Now What?: Learn what to do when your patient needs you the most! visit codebluenowwhat.com. Also available at Amazon.com.
Michael Heuninckx, BSN, RN, is on a mission. Two really: One to help new nurses prepare for the moment they experience their first hospital emergency code blue call; and the other to work preventatively so that his patients don’t need such a call, or even a trip to the ER.

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NURSING STUDENT GROUPS HELP CREATE LEADERS

Former lifeguard is quick to help

By Rene Wisely

As a former lifeguard at Disney’s Typhoon Lagoon in Orlando, Tiffani Kasperski (May ’15) is quick to jump in to help. In her second year, Kasperski became immersed in the Student Nurses Association of Oakland University (SNAOU), one of two student nursing groups that helped her take her education to a higher level.

Classmate Johnny Player (Dec. ’15) did as well, but he also joined the second group, the National Black Nurses Association of Oakland University, which is open to any student.

Now Kasperski and Player have taken on leadership roles in those associations and are making an impact on Oakland University and their fellow future nurses.

The desire to make a difference is what drew Kasperski in to the 600-member SNAOU in the first place.

“I love being active and was excited to take on the mentor role,” she said. “I like giving tips and tricks that would have helped me as I was just starting out in school. It’s also a good way to find buyers or sellers for the books you need for class.”

SNAOU’s mission is to expand on classroom learning, as well as provide leadership opportunities to the students. They also participate in service activities, as well as political events at the university, state and national levels. Every encounter is a networking opportunity and a means to expand their social circle.

Within a year of joining, Kasperski mentored many and became SNAOU’s fund-raising chair. The next year, she became its president.

Now she has her hands in everything. While helping secure auction items for a March bowling gathering, she was busy helping set up a January fundraiser at CoolYo Frozen Yogurt Fundraiser where SNAOU received 15 percent of all sales, which will help pay for the pinning ceremony for graduating nurses.

There is even a formal or “nurse prom,” as Kasperski pointed out, in November.

Player, who recently moved from president to vice president of the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) at Oakland University, is juggling multiple projects as well.

The purpose of his 63-member association is to give Oakland University nursing students an opportunity to promote unity among minorities and other students by providing a support system. It also helps members increase their networking skills and hone their ability to work with others by hosting community events that discuss health risks that affect minorities.

Blood pressure screenings, sickle cell and diabetes education, and blood drives are just some of the community health programs Player has helped facilitate.

“Anytime I can give students an opportunity to practice nursing, like take blood pressures or draw blood, I try to arrange that as part of our community event,” he said. He also co-sponsors events with SNAOU.

While Player believes he’s helped others via these gatherings, he knows he’s impacted his own life the most by leading the group.

“I wasn’t always the most organized person, but I have to be now,” said the accelerated nursing student. “I also have to think critically, practice time management, plan ahead, prioritize and make sacrifices. I quickly realized that is exactly what being a nurse is like, ready to make all those decisions. It’s great training for being a nurse.”
As a former lifeguard at ... 
program coordinator at berishaj@oakland.edu.  
Tiffani Kasperski and Johnny Player

GATHER TO CELEBRATE

The 8th Annual Nurse Practitioner Networking and Preceptor Appreciation 
night was held on March 5th at Meadow Brook Hall. More than 60 nurse 
practitioner faculty, students, and preceptors gathered to celebrate 
the profession and introduce the School of Nursing’s first awards for 
outstanding preceptors. Dr. Basil Abdo and Sharon Armstrong. Were 
nominated by their clinical students and received this year’s honors.

Dr. Basil Abdo and Colleen Meade Ripper, Interim Director 
of the NP & Program Full Time Adjunct Instructor.

A COMPREHENSIVE NEW GUIDE FOR NURSING

Lisa Chism, DNP, is an SON alumni. Her book, The Doctor of Nursing 
Practice: A guidebook for role development and professional issues, 
Third Edition has just been released. This book shows how those 
interested or who have obtained a DNP can best leverage their 
education and apply to their clinical practices.

FORENSIC NURSING PROGRAM WILL BEGIN 
ACCEPTING STUDENTS FOR FALL 2015 
(pending President’s Council approval)

Oakland University will be the first university in the state of Michigan, 
and one of few in the nation, to offer formal, academic education 
in the specialty of Forensic Nursing. Beginning Fall 2015, the OU SON will offer nurses the option to pursue a Master of Science in 
Nursing- Forensic Nursing (MSN-FN). The MSN-FN degree is a 38 credit hour program that can be completed in 28 months of study. 
The Forensic Nursing program prepares graduates to practice globally 
as a forensic nurse examiner with the ability to sub-specialize in a 
specific area of forensic nursing if desired. Graduates may practice in a 
variety of forensic nursing areas such as sexual assault, interpersonal 
violence, child/elder maltreatment, death investigation, and emergency 
preparedness and disaster management.

For program questions, contact Dr. Kelly Berishaj, Forensic Nursing 
program coordinator at berishaj@oakland.edu.
The launch process was lengthy and required writing bylaws and following various procedures but the hard work has already paid off, said Dr. Nicole Clark, a full-time SON adjunct instructor, who is co-faculty advisor of the group with Deborah Tierney, an SON adjunct assistant professor.

Clark was struck by how quickly it brought the NP community at OU together.

"The first two semesters of the NP program are mostly online and by joining the chapter, it has given students an opportunity to meet one another and get feedback and insight from other students that are further along in the program," Clark said.

The November kick-off meeting drew nearly 40 members, helping the chapter earn a membership award from the Metro Detroit Chapter of MICNP. It came with a monetary prize, which was put in the group’s general fund for future events.

Tierney said the final push to get it off the ground came directly from students, who are motivated to get the most from their OU education.

The chapter expects to hold journal clubs, pharmacology updates, skills workshops, board certification exam preparation, as well as networking and social activities to benefit students at all levels of the NP program.

Both advisors have already noticed growing awareness of the importance of health policy and advocacy with the NP profession. Several have already visited Lansing to make their voices heard by Michigan’s legislature.

"In class we talk about politics and advocacy but they get hands-on experience by taking part in some of the activities MICNP hosts," Tierney said.

The advocacy aspect is what lured family nurse practitioner student Peg Kennedy (Dec. ’15) to take a leadership role, becoming OU chapter’s first president.

"I felt naïve about MICNP’s advocacy role in the legislative process and I wanted to understand more, so I figured I probably should get involved," said Kennedy, a clinical lecturer for SON.

It has already paid off in multiple ways. She believes she’s learning important job skills, she said. "This role as president has forced me to accept tasks that may put me in the center of things, perhaps behind a microphone to give a talk," she said. As graduation date nears, she knows that can only help strengthen her resume.

It’s also given her a fresh outlook on how the student chapter helps lift Oakland’s presence in the community.

"By having a presence at various MICNP events, we can demonstrate Oakland University nurse practitioner students’ commitment to growth, professional development and involvement in the advancement of our profession," Kennedy said.

For more information on Oakland’s MICNP chapter, please contact Deb Tierney at dmtierne@oakland.edu or Nicole Clark at clark238@oakland.edu.

Instructors Nicole Clarke and Deb Tierney (unavailable for photo) have been instrumental in providing additional leadership skills for advanced practice nurses through the MICNP chapter at OU.
NURSE PRACTITIONER GROUP FINDS A NEW HOME AT OU

Empowering students and fostering leadership has long been a hallmark of Oakland University

By Rene Wisely

The School of Nursing took steps in late 2014 to underscore that commitment by creating its very own campus chapter of the Michigan Council of Nurse Practitioners (MICNP). The group provides resources to improve a nurse practitioners’ (NP) practice environment. It does this through education of its members and the larger community, as well as legislative advocacy and promotion of NP services.

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THE CRITICAL ROLE OF DIVERSITY AWARENESS IN NURSING EDUCATION

By Alice Rhein

Consider a nurse who is uncomfortable performing cultural assessments so she avoids them. She administers insulin to a diabetic patient, but leaves behind a tray of culturally forbidden food. The patient will not eat even if a new tray is ordered, the timing for the next injection has already been affected. In addition to the pain and stress that occurs from these inappropriate actions, this lack of cultural awareness also negatively affects the metabolic rate and insulin needs.

As healthcare providers, it is particularly imperative to consider a patient’s perspective, history, background, culture and be knowledgeable regarding health disparities and factors influencing health with various cultures, races and ethnicities. It is no longer enough to understand the science of disease and how to treat it, nor is it enough just to be respectful to patients; nurses must also be culturally competent to deliver optimal care. While an individual’s outlook is shaped through their views, beliefs and experiences, it is often a challenge to understand how someone with different views, beliefs and experiences might react to an event or situation.

Mohammad Rustom, Director of Multicultural Health and Language Services for Oakwood Health System and a 2014 Nightingale Award for Nursing Excellence runner up says, “Nursing education, diversity and quality of care are intertwined pillars of healthcare. Lack of knowledge in the various aspects of diversity can seriously affect the quality and equality of care.”

Diversity awareness prepares nurses to address these critical healthcare issues by giving them the tools to create positive and personal interactions with patients, families and co-workers to ultimately improve healthcare outcomes. At Oakwood, all healthcare professionals are expected to maintain cultural sensitivity and understand how cultural differences can affect patient care. A diverse patient population calls for healthcare workers who are culturally competent and incorporate what they have learned about their patients into their care. They also need to be aware of hidden biases that may affect their relationship with patients, or co-workers. Demand for healthcare services by minorities is increasing and insufficient culturally competency can affect patient outcomes and jeopardize patient safety.

“Diversity goes beyond knowing the values, beliefs, practices and customs. There are many other aspects of diversity in healthcare that are vital for any cross-cultural communication between patients and healthcare providers,” says Rustom. “Cultural diversity, religious affiliation, language, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, socio-economic status, geographical location, are but few of the aspects of diversity. All these aspects can help increase access to healthcare, especially for underserved minorities.”

Data from the 2010 U.S. Census indicated that ethnic and racial minority groups comprised nearly one third of the total population, and it is forecasted that this number will reach fifty percent in 2040. Not all current healthcare settings reflect this diverse population and may fall short in delivering the most cost-effective, highest quality care for optimal health outcomes and emotional well being. Hospitals seek to hire nurses who are best qualified to serve their patient population, and are equipped to serve a diverse population.

What this means for current nursing students is an increased knowledge of different cultures and the effects of cultural...
differences in clinical encounters and outcomes of care.

Oakwood Health System serves residents who are primarily, but not solely, of European, African American, Hispanic, or Middle Eastern heritage. In order to best serve community members, Rustom is charged with verifying that healthcare providers at Oakwood are well versed in understanding values and beliefs, maintaining environments that are inclusive and recognizing cultural and faith-based differences. He ensures the sustainability of the language access plan and operations for the organization. Rustom also addresses the competence and compliance of legislative, regulatory and accreditation mandates, and oversees practices to ensure patient safety and high quality care to the limited English-speaking patients.

Rustom continues to foster an integrated multi-cultural approach that incorporates policies and behaviors to enable individuals to work effectively in a cross-cultural environment. In addition, leadership is hiring and promoting qualified employees from culturally diverse communities. From collecting demographic data and language preference information to providing adaptive care to patients with the help of a nationally recognized Clinical Language Services program that offer cultural and linguistic services, Rustom is ensuring that patients and families are able to communicate effectively with healthcare providers.

His additional goals for Oakwood and the larger healthcare community are to promote an environment of advocacy to diversity and inclusion issues, increase health literacy, and eliminate healthcare disparities for the underserved groups of patients.

“Cultural diversity and awareness are the foundation of quality care,” says Rustom, who was awarded the Nightingale for his commitment to enhancing diversity awareness. “Through it, we can achieve higher levels of quality of care for diverse patients. On another scale, cultural awareness can equip us with various new skills and behaviors and broadens our understanding of our behaviors as well as others.”

Mohammad Rustom advocates for diversity and inclusion issues in the hospital and in the community.
STUDENT TAYLOR MOORE HONORS CIVIL RIGHTS LEGACY

Winner of the Keeper of the Dream Award

By Rene Wisely

Whether she’s living in her dorm in Vandenberg Hall or from her parents’ home in Pontiac, Taylor Moore (’16) finds inspiration on the home front. Last August, while at home on campus, where she is a resident advisor (RA), she overheard others talking about scholarship and award opportunities.

The Keeper of the Dream Award, which pays tribute to the civil rights legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., piqued her interest. She read more about it and realized she fit the criteria to a T.

And so did the award committee, as she was one of five who won the 2015 Keeper of the Dream Scholarship Award presented on Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The scholarship awards range from $2,500 to $5,000.

She had to fill out an application, submit a resume and write a 500 word essay to be considered.

Moore was recognized for demonstrating strong leadership in breaking down cultural stereotypes and in promoting interracial understanding.

Not only is she an RA, where she frequently starts a dialog about inclusion and keeping an open mind, but she’s also recently moved from vice president to president of the National Black Nurses Association (See related story on page 10), which gives nursing students an opportunity to promote unity among minorities by providing a support system.

Taylor’s achievement puts a spotlight on minorities by providing a support system. “Taylor is a dynamic person who is passionate about becoming a nurse,” Thomas-Powell, an adviser to SON.

“Taylor is a dynamic person who is passionate about becoming a nurse,” Thomas-Powell said. “As president of NBNA of OU and a resident assistant for the nursing living community floor in the residence halls on campus, she is a positive role model for other students.”

Moore has left an impression on those outside of the community as well. She works on campus in the summer with Camp RN, an OU program which exposes middle school students to campus life and to the field of nursing.

Moore is helping create a similar three-day mini camp for Pontiac children. She wants the exposure to come at a nominal cost for them.

“It was important to me that they are children from Pontiac, because that is where I am from and I wanted to show them that they can break their own barriers and succeed,’ Moore explains. This is in the same spirit in which Moore’s great grandmother helped her succeed.

“She was an activist, a business owner and a campaigner who got others elected, yet she was a small woman and an African American who never let her demographic, her height or the fact that she was a woman hold her back,” she said. “She used her voice.”

After the Keeper of the Dream Award, Moore vows to use her own voice more.

“I can do great things and the award gives me a bigger platform to make a statement,” she said.
CULTURAL SENSITIVITY SIMULATION DAY
REALISTIC SCENARIOS WITH VULNERABLE POPULATIONS HELP
NURSING STUDENTS IMPROVE THEIR COMMUNICATION SKILLS

As the general population continues to age, the need for nurses to become competent in the management of older adults experiencing multiple, medical and mental illnesses is essential.

The combinations of normal age-related changes, co-morbidities, and cognitive impairment increases the vulnerability and the complexity of caring for this population. Therefore, the need to provide undergraduate nursing students with clinical experiences that foster competencies in the management of patients experiencing mental illnesses along with medical problems is important. The challenge however, is finding clinical experiences where students are able to practice these competency skills in a safe and structured environment. As a result, Dr. Karen Dunn and Dr. Riley-Doucet developed realistic simulation scenarios of patients experiencing medical and mental health problems. Within each simulation, students are provided scripts that they role play, one student is the nurse and the other a patient. This allows for the dialogue that is missing when using mannequins, but essential for diagnosing both mental and medical conditions.

The purpose of these simulation scenarios were to foster competencies in the assessment and management of medical and psychiatric symptoms. The first simulation sessions went very well with the next sessions to happen in early April. Much information regarding what students know and where improvement is needed within the curriculum was identified. Most importantly, the students found the use of simulation scenarios to be beneficial and an effective clinical teaching/learning strategy.
When Judith Fouladbakhsh, PhD, RN, accepted a position at the School of Nursing last fall to create a graduate program in integrative medicine, she brought her love of caring for the homeless population.

As a community health nurse, helping homeless populations is a cause that is close to her heart. Fouladbakhsh worked with South Oakland Citizens for the Homeless several years ago to develop the program that brings senior nursing students to the Welcome Inn Day Center for the Homeless at Starr Presbyterian Church in Royal Oak. There, the students provide health care services and assistance to the seasonal shelter, which is open from mid-December to mid-March.

“Starting from scratch, Fouladbakhsh created the structure, forms, records, and protocols for the program that also includes yoga, healing touch therapy, and reflexology. Program development included collaborating with the Beaumont Medical Center to establish a system for providing necessary medical screenings, appointments, treatments, and medications.

So, rather than leave it behind, she brought a piece of it with her.

Fouladbakhsh has introduced this program to the faculty and students at OU.

“As soon as I came on board in the fall, I recruited a volunteer health team to provide medical services to the guests in the program,” she says.

**NURSING STUDENTS VISIT WEEKLY**

But Fouladbakhsh got more than that. In addition to volunteering to provide medical assistance, Janith Beres, a School of Nursing special instructor, quickly offered to incorporate weekly shelter visits into the clinical rotations of her sophomore nursing students. They now visit once a week to do health assessments and develop their interpersonal skills.

Sometimes, the timing of their visits is fortuitous, as it was one recent afternoon when a guest who had just been discharged from the hospital collapsed while talking to a student. A quick call to 911 got him back to the hospital for further treatment.

“This situation really underscored for the students the importance of having onsite medical care available for the people using the program’s services,” Fouladbakhsh says.

“Nursing student involvement is critical for us,” says Jason Morgan, Welcome Inn’s executive director. “Having the OU students here regularly to listen, make referrals, and help guests understand the health care system makes a big difference.”

**ONE OF ONLY TWO WARMING CENTERS**

Founded in 2003, the Welcome Inn Day Center is one of two daytime warming centers for homeless people in Oakland County. The seasonal shelter offers warmth, food, clothing, and a place to shower while also providing transportation, case management, and access to services offered by counselors, housing coordinators, and mental health professionals. The goal is to provide temporary support until guests can live independently.

“I’m so pleased that Oakland’s nursing students have an opportunity to serve these people,” Fouladbakhsh says. “This rotation exposes them to the realities and breaks down a lot of pre-conceived notions about who is and isn’t homeless.”

Morgan believes it helps expand their horizons, too.

“Many college students don’t have experience with the broader spectrum of issues that people are dealing with daily. Getting tangible experience with our guests is very valuable for them in many ways,” he says.

Oakland’s participation has exceeded her expectations, Fouladbakhsh says, since she didn’t expect to expand student participation when she joined the OU faculty.

“It’s such a win-win for everyone involved – the students, the shelter, and its guests,” she notes.

“It’s a tremendous value for the folks here,” adds Morgan.
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MEET DNP GRADUATE, HEIDI GOOD
Expanding her role as an advanced practice nurse

By Amy Johnson

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Degree is the terminal degree for nurses in clinical practice and eventually will become the minimum preparation for certain advanced practice nurse positions. Oakland’s DNP program was the first in Michigan and was designed to prepare nurse leaders for clinical practice and to assume leadership roles in a variety of settings.

DNP students learn to integrate the science and theory of nursing practice with scientific and theoretical knowledge from other disciplines, to incorporate effective communication skills based on professional standards and demonstrate appropriate ethical use of research methods to improve practice, but how does this translate to their careers?

Heidi Good graduated from Oakland’s 38-credit, post-master’s DNP program in 2014. Since then, Good has elevated her role as an advanced practice nurse in senior centers and assisted living environments. Completing the degree allowed her to build upon her previous graduate education as well as increase knowledge of research and evidence-based practice as well as in quality improvement, leadership, health policy, advocacy, informatics and interprofessional collaboration.

“My goals for enrolling in the DNP program were to increase my knowledge in order to strengthen my practice and improve patient health outcomes…and I believe my expectations were exceeded,” said Good. “I chose Oakland because of its excellent reputation as being a pioneer DNP program in the state of Michigan and its flexibility with part time and full time enrollment. This program offers a workable balance of face-to-face interactions as well as scheduled online class discussions.”

While most of the courses are taken online, the two three-day intensive on-site days provide students the opportunity to connect with classmates, thus providing a solid support system. The flexibility of the program allowed Good to work full time, maintain a household, a marriage and stay involved in the lives of her three young children. One of the highlights of the program for Good was the leadership course in Washington DC which brought her closer to legislative and advocacy processes.

Good adds, “The variety of experiences and research expertise of the School of Nursing’s faculty was also very helpful as they provided different perspectives in a variety of areas. They not only guided the program, but provided the mentorship and support I needed to successfully and competently complete the program.”

Good’s mentor, Cheryl Riley-Doucet, PhD, RN, FGSA, worked closely with Good on her final project. Riley-Doucet was impressed with Good’s passion, enthusiasm and research skills. “I first met Heidi when she approached me to act as chair for her final research project. From the start, Heidi showed great passion and enthusiasm for her research. She had a solid framework and direction for her research which made is easy to help her plan the research design and implementation. She is very committed to improving the quality of care for elders in long term care facilities and progressing the role of the nurse practitioner as a change agent in the delivery of care to this patient population. I’m looking forward to collaborating with Heidi on future translational research projects.”

Good’s final project was submitted to a professional journal, was accepted and will be published in an upcoming issue.

For more information on the School of Nursing’s DNP program, please contact Patrina Carper via email at carper@oakland.edu, phone at (248) 370-4253 or visit www.oakland.edu/nursing.
GO RED

By Ashley Samson

No matter where their career may take them, there is one health issue that is likely to touch the professional lives of nearly every graduate of the School of Nursing: heart disease. As the number one killer of American men and women alike, the health epidemic is certain to touch many personal lives as well. About 1 in every four deaths or about 600,000 Americans die from heart disease each year.

February is American Heart Month, and groups representing every aspect of the Oakland University community partnered with the American Heart Association to raise awareness about this health issue on the Oakland University campus by hosting the first annual Go Red campaign on Campus between February 12th and 17th.

“College campuses are critical places to begin raising awareness about this issue,” says Interim Associate Dean and Go Red Co-chair Deana Hays. “The habits that people build in their twenties and thirties have a direct impact on the likelihood that heart disease will become a part of their lives later on. Many people may not even know that they are heading down that path or that they may be at risk, so raising awareness about this issue is really important among young people.”

The School of Nursing, the William Beaumont School of Medicine, Graham Health Center, Employee Wellness and Campus Recreation teamed up to offer events across campus which kicked-off with an event in the Oakland Center on February 12th where students, faculty and staff could stop by and have their blood pressure checked and get information on nutrition, weight loss, smoking cessation, and, of course, free heart healthy give always. Other Go Red events included the “Stayin’ Alive Hands Only Heart Workshop” featuring speakers who coached attendees on how to handle cardiac issues if they arise along with personal stories from speakers who have suffered sudden cardiac distress themselves. By making information about this growing epidemic available to such a broad section of the campus community and giving them resources to make changes, OU is taking the first step in combating one of the 21st century’s greatest health challenges.

Accelerated Second Degree student, Nick Starr, checks the blood pressure of SON Events Coordinator, Ashley Samson.
PRACTICING WITH CARE

By Cara Catallo

“The world’s gotten really complicated,” admits Claudia Grobbel, DNP, RN, assistant professor at Oakland University’s School of Nursing. Grobbel recalls a time when nurses found quiet moments to be bedside with patients, talking or even playing cards, getting to know them a little, connecting to make a hospital experience go more smoothly.

That kind of therapeutic intention may be harder to come by these days when fostering a relationship with a patient often takes second place, explains Grobbel. Nursing's evolution into a highly technical and scientific occupation means much of the field’s earlier caring practices became more assumed, says Grobbel, a caring sciences scholar who wants to ensure that SON students enter the workforce workforce equipped for truly compassionate care along with the scientific knowledge they obtained.

In October, Grobbel participated in the 20th International Caritas Consortium about Caring Science: From Illness to Creating Health and Well Being – for Self, System and Society. The annual think tank of national and international scholars from clinical practice and academia took place last year in Dearborn, where leaders in the field discussed how to bridge the gap, starting with education. Grobbel presented her model “Emancipatory Education & Pedagogy for Caring Science” and led a discussion.

Grobbel’s research builds upon the work of Jean Watson and other theorists who hope to create an operational model of relationship-based care and how to teach nurses to incorporate it into clinical settings along with other basic needs, such as collaboration and safety.

“If you look at how our courses read – chronic care, medical care, pediatrics, nursing research – they’re very scientific topics. We weave the caring part into it, but there’s not a standard for it,” she explains.

Grobbel, along with fellow faculty Carrie Buch, PhD, RN and former faculty Ron Piscotty, PhD, RN created The Caring Studio Experience, or The Caring Studio, where SON undergraduates come together to learn, discuss and expand upon different caring modalities, including caring for self, colleagues, and patients and their families.

The 2011 pilot program of 34 students was a success. The SON continues to test the program – the third session begins next semester with the SON Crittenton cohort – and Grobbel hopes to expand the course and eventually include it in the curriculum.

“Nurses intuitively understand some of this, but naming it and explaining it and practicing it makes it more important,” Grobbel adds. “They want to be part of that experience when people are ill and vulnerable and helping them improve on their own health journey. These are tools that will help them.”

That means having to look at healthcare differently and finding a way to effectively convey to patients that nurses are on their side, says Grobbel. Intentionally honing that caring ability might help nurses consider its importance alongside more obvious tasks at hand like dressing changes and filling out forms.

“It’s about patients and quality. If you’ve done something that’s good and right and ethical for the patient then it’s all good,” Grobbel says. ❑
SON STUDENTS IMPACT PUBLIC HEALTH

By Alice Rhein

If disaster strikes, mobilizing health care workers is an essential job of public health departments. Even when there are solid plans in place through county emergency preparedness programs, the need for people to fill various roles is great.

In recent months, both the Oakland and Macomb County health departments partnered with SON to have nursing students aid in community education and disaster preparedness.

Macomb County Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Andrew Cox said that after a county survey indicated that residents felt a lack of knowledge about what to do in a disaster, he looked for ways to fill this gap. “We applied for special funding through the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and were able to receive a challenge grant to offer presentations and education.”

With this, Kara Marsh, Volunteer Coordinator at Macomb County Health Department, and SON instructor Kim Holka, MSN, created a program to teach 5th grade students how to be prepared for common and uncommon disasters.

“The goal was to create a program so children understand that emergency preparedness applies to them,” said Marsh. Holka, a member of the Macomb County Medical Reserve Corps, was already familiar with community resilience programs, and suggested that nursing students could fill a vital role. With Marsh and Holka using a train-the-trainer approach, OU nursing students in the traditional and RN to BSN programs completed their school based clinical by teaching 5th graders what to do in a disaster.

“It was a perfect match that we have the nursing students assist the health department in reaching its goals while aligning an assignment based on the Essentials of Baccalaureate Education,” said Holka. In one semester, 95 nursing students were able to reach 900 5th graders in Macomb County.

SON students also participated in an Oakland County initiative designed to prevent infant deaths. According to Lynn McDaniels, Chief of Community Nursing Services for Oakland County Health Division (OCHD), the knowledge gap in the community about safe sleep strategies for infants is widespread.

“One of the most preventable types of infant deaths is when infants die due to suffocation because they are not put to sleep in a crib, by themselves, laying on their back,” said McDaniels. “Too many infants die because of unnecessary crib items like blankets, bumpers and toys in the crib or because infants are in a non-infant bed with others.”

Kim Holka and Jane Kessler, a public home health nurse who visits high-risk moms and babies in Oakland County, created another train-the-trainer program to allow SON students to educate day care providers and anyone who takes care of infants.

The OCHD staff trainers worked with OU students, identified community partners, and distributed educational materials. In 2013, the first year of the initiative, Kessler and Holka helped train 89 SON students who then were able to educate nearly 400 caregivers throughout the county. To date over 300 nursing students have received training since 2013.

“It takes time to develop trusting interprofessional relationships with experts from the community. This in turn provides evidence-based practice guidelines for our nursing students to implement best practices while improving the health of our community,” said Holka. “This is a win-win for our communities demonstrating teambuilding through collaboration.”

L to R: Michele Maloff, RN, Patricia Vranesich, RN from the Oakland County Health Division and Kim Holka, MSN, RN, Full Time Adjunct Instructor at Oakland
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BOOK


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