

Longhorn Nursing

Volume Four

THE FUTURE OF NURSING STARTS HERE

Fall 2015

**The Classroom,
the Community,
the World**



The University of Texas at Austin
School of Nursing



Message from the Dean

A WHILE BACK I RAN ACROSS AN ARTICLE IN *THE NEW YORK TIMES* (“A Patient’s-Eye-View of Nurses,” Feb. 10, 2014) in which a highly respected health care professional admitted to not quite understanding certain critical aspects of today’s health care system. Principally, he “had never before understood how much good nursing care contributes to patients’ safety and comfort.”

As a nurse, I’m not surprised by this lack of understanding. I’ve heard this sort of comment from many people working in health care who really should know better, but don’t – until they find themselves on the receiving end of nursing care. Why is that? We’ve all read the articles about nurses routinely ranking in various top 10 lists of the most respected or trusted professions in the nation. For instance, we’ve consistently been #1 in the Gallup honesty and ethics poll.

So why doesn’t the public better understand the breadth and depth of our profession? It would seem that although we nurses are very good at many things, self-promotion isn’t one of them. But that needs to change.

Here at The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing, we understand that nursing forms the backbone of health care. For that reason, nursing education matters – very much. Studies show that lower mortality rates, fewer medication errors and positive patient outcomes are all linked to nurses being fully prepared at the baccalaureate and graduate degree levels. The Institute of Medicine has issued a call to provide a more highly educated nursing workforce to meet the challenging health care needs we face.

We are answering that call.

Our growing success in nursing graduate school programs was recently recognized by ***U.S. News and World Report*** as they ranked us #13 in the nation. I have to confess, it’s one thing to know how great our faculty, students and programs are – quite another for others to broadcast it to the world!

We believe that in addition to rigorous academics, our students reap a tremendous benefit as they attend classes on the campus of one of the most respected public universities in the nation, where innovation and collaboration are not only valued, but nurtured. Here they can attend exciting lectures, take advantage of myriad opportunities to conduct research in nursing and other disciplines, and partake in signature courses and simulation laboratories. These golden opportunities for growth will stay with our students long after graduation.

You can find our graduates in clinical nursing and nursing education, where many have risen to leadership roles and are forging an infrastructure for interprofessional research and health care delivery. You can also find them at the table, so to speak, in government and non-profit agencies, where they are providing a voice for improving patient outcomes.

It is an exciting time to be dean of a school of nursing, and not just any school of nursing, but one that is a leader in interprofessional education and life-changing research interventions. Our scope has grown exponentially over the last few years, and I am confident that our effort to improve nursing education in Central Texas will continue to advance the delivery of equitable health care everywhere.

Alexa K. Stuijbergen, PhD, RN, FAAN
Dean, The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing
Laura Lee Blanton Chair in Nursing
James R. Dougherty, Jr., Centennial Professor in Nursing

EDUCATION, RESEARCH, SERVICE

LONGHORN NURSING

Volume 4

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The Classroom, the Community, the World

“Why do you want to be a nurse?” For many nursing students, that isn’t always an easy question to answer. Some may say it’s because they have a desire to help people, to make a difference in their lives. Others may see opportunities for career advancement in the growing health care field, to travel, to work anywhere in the world.

Whatever the personal reasons one may have for entering nursing, research shows that healthy communities and improved access

to health care are essential to the well-being and stability of the nation. To achieve that, we will need a larger and better-educated nursing workforce, including nursing faculty. The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing is working hard to make that a reality.

Our students are committed to improving health care and making sure that more individuals have access to that care here in the United States and around the world. Here are a few of their stories.

KAITLIN

Undergraduate's research will help children with intellectual disabilities

Finding time to sit and talk about herself isn't easy for Kaitlin (Kate) Galloway. The first semester senior is in Nursing's Undergraduate Honors Program, a rigorous academic program for high-achieving undergraduate nursing majors. She is also a UT Austin junior fellow, participating in a program that recognizes outstanding students and gives them an opportunity to participate in independent study and research with distinguished professors of their choice. In addition, Kate is a mentor in nursing's first-year interest group where she helps a group of first-year students adapt successfully to campus life and

"I HOPE TO IDENTIFY THE CAUSES OF WEIGHT GAIN [IN CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES] AND DEVELOP A TARGETED INTERVENTION FOR THEM."

participates in the School of Nursing's orientation sessions and activities for incoming students.

She recently received a \$3,000 Liberal Arts Undergraduate Multidisciplinary Research award to fund her research project "Multiple Factors Influencing Weight in Children with Intellectual Disabilities."

"I hope to identify the causes of weight gain in this population and develop a targeted intervention for them," Kate said.

To that end, she created a 112-question survey and is currently a quarter of the way through collecting the required 400 responses.

"Kate is a very intelligent, independent and determined young woman," said Dr. Lynn Rew, Kaitlin's research faculty mentor. "She is not afraid to work hard to see her ideas turned into something new and exciting. It's going to be interesting to see how she develops further as a nurse and a new scholar."



Kate Galloway with her mentor Lynn Rew, EdD, RN, AHN-BC, FAAN

AMANDA

Clinical nurse returns to school for more research opportunities

While working on her baccalaureate degree at the School of Nursing, Amanda Simonton had been impressed with what she learned during her public health classes. So much so that she now feels she can make an impact on health care as a researcher and instructor.

"Public health is all about getting ahead of complications," said Amanda, currently a BSN to PhD student. "As a nurse in intermediate care, I saw many cases that might have been prevented with the right intervention at the right time."

Amanda's timing couldn't be better since many national nursing organizations are encouraging more young nurses to pursue a doctoral degree. In order to have longer teaching or research careers, or both, it's important that nurses who are considering advanced degrees start these programs sooner rather than later. The School of Nursing currently has 10 BSN to PhD students enrolled.

During a recent leadership class at which alumni return to talk to baccalaureate students about nursing careers, Amanda was asked why she made the decision to pursue a doctoral degree. She explained how, for her, research will make it possible to have a wider scope and greater influence over a larger number of people.

“AS A NURSE IN INTERMEDIATE CARE,
I SAW MANY CASES THAT MIGHT HAVE
BEEN PREVENTED WITH THE RIGHT
INTERVENTION AT THE RIGHT TIME.”



Amanda Simonton, BSN, RN

As part of her first year in graduate school, Amanda was able to work with Cara Young, PhD, RN, FNP-C, and assistant professor, on adolescent mental health, looking at characteristics of non-suicidal self-injury. She also assisted Karen Johnson, PhD, RN, and assistant professor, in surveying students in alternative high schools in Central Texas to determine what kind of health behaviors they engage in and how health care professionals can work with schools to promote health and success in that population.

“Over the next 10 to 20 years, health care is going to change a lot, and nurses are going to be a huge part of that,” Amanda said. “Ultimately, I want to help my peers see a PhD in nursing as another option for bringing those changes about.”

RODOLFO

Former physician chooses nursing as a better method for health promotion

Not long after moving to Houston, Texas, from Caracas, Venezuela, Rodolfo Aguilar had a bird’s eye view of a U.S. response to a public health crisis as first Hurricane Katrina and then Hurricane Rita roared onto land, damaging everything in their paths. Feeling lucky to emerge unscathed, he quickly volunteered at the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and was put in charge of initiating and running a supplemental food program to ensure that displaced people were getting nutritious food.

For Rodolfo, caring for others comes naturally. That’s why after becoming a medical doctor he opened several clinics to help people in low socio-economic

areas of Caracas. There he trained teams of leaders to provide first aid and initial treatment for the most common ailments in the community — such as diarrhea, dehydration, asthma, and fever — and to stabilize them for transportation to the nearest health care center, hospital, or clinic, which could be as far as two hours away.

“In Venezuela, my work as a doctor was oriented to primary care, teaching, promotion of health and prevention of illness,” Rodolfo said. “After coming to the U.S. and passing the USMLE medical boards, I realized that the type of health care I used to provide my patients and that I enjoyed so much was mainly done by nurses.”



Rodolfo Aguilar, RN

In order to continue a health-promotion model of care, Rodolfo enrolled in the UT Austin School of Nursing's alternate-entry PhD program. From his instructors, he's learning about the significance of evidence-based practice (EBP) and how such practices are needed to modify policies that will ultimately reduce health disparities in society.

"Nursing is one of a few professions, if not the only one, that has historically dealt with health promotion," Rodolfo said. "As a doctor in Venezuela, this was also my focus, so I know it's one of the best ways to curtail disease and keep people out of hospitals. Since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, in which promotion of health and primary and secondary prevention are key, EBP is even more important."

Rodolfo has his sights set on research and teaching. He views his new profession as a way of providing service and making a positive difference in the lives of many individuals — patients and students alike.

"As a doctor or a nurse, I can help a few people at a time," he said. "Through research and teaching, I can help so many more."

Rodolfo was recently elected as president of the Association of Nurses in Graduate School (ANGS), the School of Nursing's official graduate student nursing organization, and has become a mentor to undergraduate and graduate students. He sees these activities as a way to encourage others in their pursuit of education — and happiness.

"Achieving happiness is important for everyone," he said. "The pursuit of happiness is written into the constitution, which is why I'm so glad to be in this country. And nursing is a way of helping others achieve happiness through a better quality of life."

JANET

Multiple sclerosis researcher practices what she preaches

Running, lifting and cycling have helped Janet Morrison balance the rigors of being a doctoral student and research associate at the School of Nursing. She has combined a passion for promoting health through physical activity with her experience as a research associate for Dean Alexa Stuijbergen into a randomized clinical trial investigating the effects of physical activity on cognitive function in persons with multiple sclerosis (MS) for her dissertation. The study has been awarded a National Research Service Award from the

National Institute of Nursing Research at the National Institutes of Health.

Certified in MS nursing by the International Organization of MS Nurses, Janet became a certified inclusive fitness trainer in preparation for working with persons with disabilities. The study will measure the effect of the intervention on cognitive function, physical activity, fatigue and depressive symptoms as well



Janet Morrison, MSN, RN

"PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IS CRITICAL TO HEALTH PROMOTION AND WELLNESS FOR EVERYONE, BUT ESPECIALLY SO FOR PERSONS WITH ... MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS."

as provide pilot data for future studies with larger samples. It is based on and supported by findings in older adults in the general population.

"Currently, there are few programs available to treat cognitive impairment in this population," Janet said. "So far everything I've read and observed suggests that increasing physical activity can have a positive affect on cognitive function."

When she's not in the classroom or working on her research, Janet can often be found running along Lady Bird Lake in downtown Austin. Earlier this year, she ran half marathons in Austin and Houston.

"Physical activity is critical to health promotion and wellness for everyone, but especially so for persons with chronic disabling conditions such as multiple sclerosis," Janet said. "For them, developing healthy lifestyle behaviors is essential to ensuring a better quality of life."



Ya-Ching Huang, MSN, RN,
and Nicole Murry, MSN, RN

NICOLE and YA-CHING

Putting experience to good use in new center for self-management

Furthering its mission to establish and participate in interprofessional education on the UT Austin campus, the School of Nursing recently received a \$2.4 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to launch the Center for Trans-Disciplinary Collaborative Research in Self-Management Science (TCRSS) (See page 11). With a goal of fostering trans-disciplinary research to solve complex health problems, the center is quickly becoming a national model for improving the lives of people with chronic health conditions by helping them learn to better

manage their illness.

To help meet this goal, the School of Nursing has provided funds to support two scholars who, in addition to working on their doctoral degree, will assist Dr. Miyong Kim, the center's director, in promoting meetings and events, preparing materials and announcements, and providing input into the content and design of the TCRSS website. The first scholars are Nicole Murry and Ya-Ching Huang.

As a neo-natal nurse for 10 years, Nicole became interested in health literacy and helping patients gain

access to tools and resources for good health care as they move from the hospital to home.

"The transition from hospital to home is very stressful for most patients," Nicole said. "I wanted to explore how organizations are using health literacy to prepare patients to manage their care and how they might do a better job of making this change less stressful and more successful. But that meant I needed to learn how to conduct research, and that's where the TCRSS Center came in. It is helping me build the skill set I need to conduct this research."

On the other side of the spectrum is Ya-Ching, whose experience has been to help individuals with chronic illness learn how to better manage their symptoms in the community. In the case of patients with diabetes, for example, she helps them learn how to control their diet, schedule exercise time and understand glucose levels. Her patients often are confronted by limited resources and barriers, such as travel and accessibility, for which she attempts to find solutions.

"People with chronic illnesses suffer a lot, but nurses can help with that," she said. "We can help them learn coping strategies in order to obtain a better quality of life."

In addition to her other tasks, Nicole's role as liaison with the Center for Health Communication, another new center on the campus at UT Austin, has been eye-opening. That center, designed to bring together researchers and experts in many diverse

"PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC ILLNESSES SUFFER A LOT, BUT NURSES CAN HELP WITH THAT."

areas of health communication into one unit where they can collaborate, share ideas and innovations, and advance scholarship to improve health, is a natural complement to the TCRSS Center.

"I've learned a lot about the value of communication from this group, and, because of my background, I believe I've helped them understand which proposed projects are more likely to work in a hospital setting and which won't," Nicole said. "You can have what looks like a great idea to help patients, but implementing it in a hospital might be difficult. These are things that need to be discussed and worked through. This is where nursing experience can be so valuable."

WHITNEY and PAMELA

Getting on the doctoral fast track

Whitney Thurman and Pamela Recto are on a doctoral degree fast track after being selected for a \$150,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Future of Nursing Scholars program. The program, which awards each student a \$75,000 scholarship, is designed to develop a new generation of nurse leaders to transform America's health care system.

The School of Nursing will provide matching funds of \$50,000 to each student. These additional funds come from a privately funded and fully endowed philanthropic gift. In addition to financial support, the Future of Nursing Scholars program provides mentoring and leadership development to nurses who commit to earn their PhDs within three years. The UT Austin School of Nursing is one of only 25 schools of nursing nationwide to receive such a grant to increase the number of nurses holding doctoral degrees.

At the completion of the program, Whitney, a clinical instructor at the School of Nursing, and Pamela, a clinical assistant professor at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, Texas, will be prepared to use their research and leadership training to advance their academic careers, contribute to the knowledge and science of academic nursing, and enhance their faculty roles.



“NURSES PLAY A
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Whitney Thurman, MSN, RN



Pamela Recto, MSN, RN

“Nurses play a critical role in our society, helping individuals access health care,” Whitney said. “Because we have relationships with patients that other providers don’t have, it’s important that we have a voice at the table on how to improve the health of residents in Texas. This initiative will help prepare more of us to provide that voice of knowledge and experience.”

Whitney is interested in at-risk adolescents and how community engagement affects their health long term. Pamela’s focus has been in maternal-newborn health, particularly developing health literacy among first-time mothers.

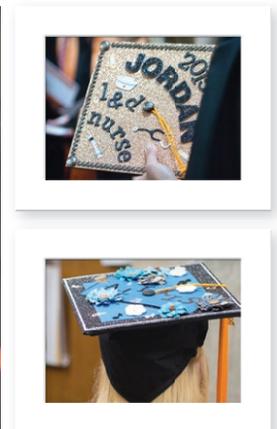
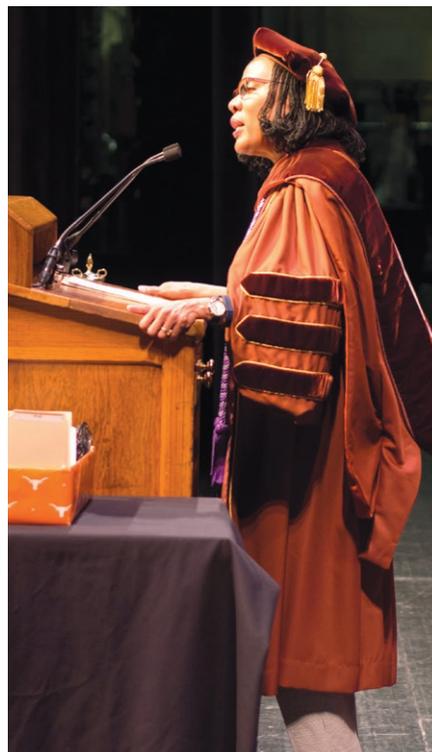
“It’s important that new mothers learn about newborn care as well as prenatal and postpartum care. In addition to teaching students in the clinical setting, I’ve also enjoyed helping them facilitate group sessions at a high school with pregnant and postpartum adolescent mothers,” Pamela said. “As a RWJF Future of Nursing scholar, I plan to strengthen my leadership skills and further develop my research, which is where I see myself making an impact in the future.”

Congratulations to the Class of 2015



“The School of Nursing represents a strong and extraordinary community of excellent students, dedicated faculty and staff, and supportive alumni and friends who are committed to addressing the many significant health care challenges of the 21st century through education, research and service. As a part of this remarkable community, you have worked hard, and the world will be a better place because you have learned how to apply knowledge to both new and age-old health care issues and to bring better information to bear on the problems around you.”

—Dean Alexa Stuijbergen



Top: PhD grads Shalonda Horton and Jiraporn Chontichachalalauk, marshal Diane Tyler, PhD, RN, FNP, FAAN, FAANP
Bottom: keynote speaker Gaurdia E. Banister, PhD, RN, FAAN



1

1. Cassandra Pawelek
2. Michael Esplin, David Walsh, Kayleigh Todd
3. Carla Maya, Taylor Mays, Marilyn McKee
4. Nichole Murray, Jason Morris, Gavin Longway, Kathryn Mettman
5. Dean Alexa Stuijbergen, Dr. Gaurdia Banister
6. Spring 2015 graduates going out to change the world



2



3



4



5



6



Best Graduate Schools: School of Nursing Ranked 13th Overall in Graduate Programs

The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing was ranked No. 13 in the nation in the March 2015 issue of *U.S. News & World Report's* "Best Graduate Schools." The publication's rankings are among the most authoritative and prestigious ratings in higher education.

"UT Austin School of Nursing has long been renowned for excellent graduate programs focused on educating top-notch practitioners, researchers and faculty to meet the growing need for a more equitable delivery of health care. Having these efforts recognized by this prestigious publication is very gratifying," said Alexa Stuijbergen, dean of the School of Nursing. "I am so proud of our faculty, who contribute their knowledge and expertise to the School of Nursing, ensuring that we will continue to excel and grow in the years to come."

In all, more than 50 UT Austin science, social science, humanities and professional programs and disciplines were ranked in the Top 15 nationally according to the rankings, which are based on quantitative and qualitative measures, including GRE scores, student/faculty ratio, research expenditures, job placement success and ratings of academic experts, national faculty members and administrators.

Other UT Austin colleges and schools included in the top 15 are the Cockrell School of Engineering at No. 10, the School of Law at No. 15, and the College of Education at No. 10.

New Center Will Help Individuals With Chronic Illness to Help Themselves



Center for Transdisciplinary Collaborative
Research in Self-Management Science

“Our goal is to develop, test and disseminate innovative self-management solutions to improve the health outcomes of people with chronic conditions.”

The UT Austin School of Nursing recently received a \$2.4 million federal grant to help improve the lives of people struggling with chronic health conditions, which is a major contributor to high health care costs, disability and death.

The P30 grant from the National Institutes of Health, which was one of only two such grants awarded nationwide, launched the School’s Center for Transdisciplinary Collaborative Research in Self-Management Science (TCRSS), a research center dedicated to developing ways people can better manage chronic illnesses, such as diabetes and heart disease.

The center’s researchers will work with patients, health care providers, community agencies and others to conduct studies to identify and overcome barriers to coping with chronic illness. In its first year, the TCRSS Center has facilitated and co-sponsored numerous community engagement activities, including a semester-long transdisciplinary graduate course “Community Participatory Research on Health Disparities” that focused on forming collaborations with community partners to explore innovative approaches to health disparities.

Additional networking events have helped develop sustainable partnerships between community organizations and UT Austin academic departments. Various transdisciplinary training and mentoring opportunities have been instituted for graduate students and faculty.

“Our goal is to create a model national center where we will develop, test, and disseminate innovative self-management solutions to improve the health outcomes of people with chronic conditions,” Dr. Kim said. “Today more than ever, there is an urgent need for the integration of nursing science with other relevant sciences in the development of self-management science. Such trans-disciplinary collaborative research will not only yield cutting-edge science, it will closely fit the actual clinical environment of health care.”

The Center is currently preparing to conduct a School of Nursing-wide wellness survey to assess health and wellness needs among students, staff and faculty, and will partner with student organizations to develop a healthy working environment initiative based on the results of the survey.

Above: Jackie Hecht, MSN, RN, managing director, and Miyong Kim, PhD, RN, FAAN, professor, and center director.



Eating Out No Longer Has to Be a Guilty Pleasure

Gayle Timmerman, PhD, RN, CNS, FAAN, and associate dean for academic affairs at the School of Nursing, has collaborated on the development of an online healthy eating resource for health care providers and restaurant diners with the senior director of Health and Wellness at Darden, one of the leading full-service restaurant companies in the world.

“‘Eating Well While Eating Out’ is designed to provide viable options for restaurant patrons concerned about weight and making healthful dining choices,” Dr. Timmerman said. “Because dining out is so much a part of life in America today, it’s important that health care providers and consumers have a tool to help identify how to successfully eat out and achieve nutrition goals while still enjoying the dining experience.”

Dr. Timmerman has studied how eating patterns affect weight management for more than 20 years. Although her recent study on Mindful Restaurant Eating was designed to help consumers maintain weight when eating out, many participants in the intervention group actually lost significantly more weight, had lower average daily caloric and fat intake, and experienced fewer barriers to weight management. Many of the insights from her research

have been incorporated into the “Eating Well While Eating Out” resource.

The first section of the booklet is geared toward health care professionals and identifies basic clusters of restaurant-eating patterns, providing tips to encourage patients and clients to make choices that will help them achieve their weight control and nutrition goals.

The second section is geared toward consumers and explains the common pitfalls in eating out, such as “Peer Pressure” and “The Special Occasion,” and provides practical steps on how to avoid them. It also lists how to make adjustments that result in healthier options and yet satisfy cravings at specific restaurants.

“I’m pleased that these research results have now become available to a wider audience who are interested in making healthier eating choices,” Dr. Timmerman said. “This is a resource that anyone can try without spending a lot of money and successfully achieve their weight management goals.”

“Eating Well While Eating Out” can be downloaded at utexas.edu/nursing/docs/news/eatingwell.pdf

School Renovations Will Enhance Collaborative Clinical Learning Experiences



Leigh Goldstein, Scott Hudson and Linda Carpenter

The once quiet corner of the School of Nursing's fourth floor erupted into a din of buzzing saws and clanging machinery this summer as the simulation and skills labs situated there received an unprecedented overhaul.

Just in time for the fall semester, the labs have been transformed into a source of even greater learning opportunities, partly as a result of new grant funding and partly to accommodate the School's commitment to interprofessional education.

The grants include \$150,000 from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) under the Nursing Innovation Grant Program: Building Lab and Simulation Capacity, and a \$50,000 curriculum innovation award from UT Austin to develop and launch "Integrated Simulated Nursing Skills Mastery Using Video Peer-to-Peer Team Review," a video-based project designed to increase the amount of time undergraduates can practice clinical skills.

The THECB grant program allows for the development and expansion of nursing skills lab capacity, with a goal of shifting clinical hours from traditional patient care settings to lab activities. The Peer-to-Peer

Team Review is an innovative program that will help undergraduate nursing students master skills and gain confidence in their ability to provide patient care.

"Our goal is to teach students to think like nurses," said Linda Carpenter, PhD, RN, CNE, FAAN, and assistant dean for undergraduate programs. "The THECB grant will help us develop innovations that give students opportunities to practice this thinking. Implementing a simulation training and orientation program for faculty is another critically important part of the project."

The grant will also provide for an expansion of "Hospital Simulation Day," during which students learn to react to various scenarios with other students role playing patients. These activities give more students an opportunity to practice in a realistic situation in a safe and supportive environment under the watchful eye of clinical faculty.

The Peer-to-Peer Team Review program will provide more opportunities for students to practice essential clinical skills by allowing students to videotape themselves performing various skills. Later they will review

and critique each other's performance with an eye toward improvement prior to submitting a final version for grading purposes.

"The difficulty in guaranteeing a full range of experience in outside settings has made learning clinical skills more challenging. We wanted to change the way we do some of our clinical work to allow students not only to perfect, but to master, these skills," said Leigh Goldstein, PhD, RN, ANP-BC, and director of the School's Learning Enhancement and Academic Progress Center. "The Peer-to-Peer Team Review program will help reduce the stress that many students experience during testing."

Another goal of the update was to ramp up to meet the demands of providing interprofessional education — including nursing, pharmacy, social work and medicine — in a

"OUR GOAL IS TO TEACH STUDENTS TO THINK LIKE NURSES."

simulated setting. A major part of the overall renovation was supported by the UT Austin Dell Medical School, which allowed for the enlargement of the simulation lab patient bays to make room for the added disciplines. This included adding a pharmacy area and debriefing rooms, as well as purchasing new mannikins, beds and defibrillators.

The lab was designed around national best practices of interprofessional simulation education, making it one of the finest simulation labs in the country, according to Scott Hudson, MSN, RN, and director of the simulation and skills labs.

"We were able to add state-of-the-art technology such as new data and video systems that will allow us to record and analyze performance and behavioral aspects. This means we will be able to simulate acute clinical settings better than ever before," Hudson said. "Technologically, there isn't a better lab in the country."

Enjoying the Fruits of One's Labor

Family's Generosity Will Benefit Future Generations of Longhorns

Karen Robinson comes from a family of farmers in North Dakota and learned from them the value of hard work.

"My parents worked hard, but they loved what they were doing," Karen said. "It was more than just a job, and they impressed upon me the importance of finding something you love to do and then doing it well."

For Karen, that job was nursing. Since she was a young girl she wanted to become a nurse, and her parents, Howard and Clarine, supported that decision. After completing her baccalaureate degree in nursing at the University of Kentucky, she worked at the Veterans Affairs Hospital in Lexington and eventually transferred to the VA close to home in Fargo, North

Dakota, where she remained for 30 years.

Because they lived in a rural area, her parents especially valued the care they received from local health care providers, Karen explained. And they felt it was important to ensure that health care would continue to be available for people in similar circumstances.

"In small community hospitals, staff have to deal with whatever comes through their door, whether it's a farming accident or delivering a baby," she said. "My parents knew it was important to make sure those doors remain open, staffed with skilled professionals."

Eventually Karen decided to get a doctoral degree and chose the UT Austin School of Nursing where she met and worked with Dean Billye Brown, Dr. Helen Erickson, Dr. Carolyn Kinney, Dr. Eleanor Crowder, Dr. Hurdis Griffith and Dr. LaVerne Gallman.

"I got the opportunity to meet and work with a group of exceptional nursing professors who really helped me see a different perspective," Karen said. "My parents recognized this as well, and it was our joint decision to see to it that future nursing students would receive the monetary support they need."

Before their deaths Karen's parents decided they wanted to establish scholarships at three higher education institutions: The University of North Dakota School of Medicine, the University of Kentucky, and the UT

Austin School of Nursing. She honored these wishes, and at UT Austin the Howard J., Clarine O. and Karen R. Robinson Nursing Scholarship Fund will support full-time students in the traditional bachelor of science in nursing (BSN), second degree BSN students or graduate students pursuing an advanced nursing degree.

Karen still frequently visits the family farm and remembers all the hard work her parents put in there. "Working hard reaps benefits. That's what my

parents always believed," she said. In the Robinson's case, it will reap benefits for generations to come.



Karen Robinson, PhD, RN,
and her parents Howard
and Clarine Robinson

Events

Activities continued apace this year. On September 16, 2014, the School of Nursing held its annual Jack and Laura Lee Blanton Lecture, followed by a reception for Dean Clay Johnston, inaugural dean of the UT Austin Dell Medical School. “Preventing Chronic Disease Across the Lifespan” was the theme for this year’s St. David’s CHPR research conference on April 1. On April 8 and 9, the second annual 40 Hours for the Forty Acres helped raise more than \$13,000 for the School of Nursing. Students, faculty and staff celebrated Florence Nightingale’s birthday on May 6.



1. Former Dean Billye Brown, Advisory Council Chair Mike Oldham, Dean Alexa Stuijbergen and Dean Clay Johnston at the Blanton Lecture and reception
2. Students and staff show their gratitude for the gift of a new school car
3. Dr. Lorraine Walker opens the annual St. David’s CHPR conference
4. Students celebrating Florence Nightingale’s birthday
5. Patty Prado, assistant director of student life, marks rising donation amounts during the 40 Hours for the Forty Acres fundraising event



Around the School — an Update

Faculty

Alexa Stufbergen, PhD, RN, FAAN, and dean of the School of Nursing, was appointed to the National Advisory Council for Nursing Research at the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR), the institute's principal advisory board.

Jane D. Champion, PhD, DNP, FNP, FAANP, FAAN, and professor, was awarded the 2015 "Research in Minority Health" award by the Southern Nursing Research Society.

Sharon Horner, PhD, RN, MC-CNS, FAAN, associate dean for research and Dolores V. Sands Chair in Nursing Research, was chosen by the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists to serve as president-elect of the 2015-2016 board of directors. She also received this year's Outstanding Research in Child and Family Health Award from the Society of Behavioral Medicine Child and Family Health Special Interest Group.

Sheri Innerarity, PhD, APRN, CNS, FNP, and assistant professor, was appointed to a two-year term as vice president of the Texas Nurse Practitioners, an organization dedicated to representing nurse practitioners and improving patient access to quality health care.

Karen Johnson, PhD, RN, and assistant professor, was named a Nurse Faculty Scholar by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and is one of only 12 nursing faculty in the nation to be included in the foundation's final cohort of scholars. The award includes a three-year \$350,000 grant.

Carole Taxis, PhD, RN, LPC, CNE, and associate professor of clinical nursing, has been named a Senior Provost Fellow at The University of Texas at Austin.

Linda H. Yoder, PhD, MBA, RN, AOCN, FAAN, and associate professor, was the 2014 recipient of the Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses President's Award.

Students

Ashley Henneghan, received the American Cancer Society Doctoral Scholarship Award. She will receive \$15,000 over the next two years.

Megan Pfitzinger Lippe, MSN, RN, and assistant instructor, has received multiple awards for the coming year, including a fellowship from the American Association of University Women, Austin branch, a scholarship from Certified Background.com-GNSA, a scholarship from the Foundation of the National Student Nurses Association and a fellowship from Nurses Educational Funds, Inc.

Undergraduate students **Liana Lo Chau, Meghan Lowenfield, Jon Medina and Heather Ward** were selected for the Unrestricted Endowed Presidential Scholarship program. This scholarship is awarded to outstanding students at UT Austin.

David Goen, a student in the master of science in nursing, family psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioner program, received a scholarship from District 5 of the Texas Nurses Association (TNA). The scholarship is provided by the University Area Rotary Club, a partner of TNA.

Santos Escobar, Jr., a student in the School of Nursing's Alternate Entry Master's of Science in Nursing program, received a \$6,000 scholarship from the St. David's Medical Center Healthcare Volunteers.

Transitions

Diane Tyler, PhD, RN, FNP-BS, FAAN, and professor at the School of Nursing for more than 30 years, has retired.



Former President Bill Powers and Tracy Demchuk

Staff

Tracy Demchuk, assistant director, Graduate Academic Services, received the UT Austin 2015 President's Outstanding Staff Award. The award recognizes the contributions of 30 outstanding staff members who have made a significant impact on the university. Tracy was also elected to serve a two-year term on the UT Austin Staff Council.

Alumni and Retired Faculty

Billye Brown, EdD, RN, FAAN, and former dean of the School of Nursing; and alumna **Clair Jordan (BSN '68), MSN, RN**, were recognized as Living Legends at the inaugural Legacy Banquet hosted by the Texas Nursing Association and the Texas Nursing Foundation.

Mary Lou Sole, PhD, RN, CCNS, FAAN, FCCM, has been named dean of the University of Central Florida College of Nursing. She received a doctorate in nursing from the University of Texas at Austin in 1987.

Randolph Rasch, PhD, RN, FNP-BC, FAANP, has been named dean of the Michigan State University College of Nursing. He received a doctorate in nursing from the University of Texas at Austin in 1988.



Annual Giving Goes the Distance

NAMED FOR THE ICONIC LAMP carried by Florence Nightingale, the Golden Lamp Society was established to foster a tradition of annual giving for The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing. By recognizing individuals who make a yearly gift to the School (exclusive of planned giving), the Society honors philanthropic investments to the future of nursing. To learn more about making a gift, visit www.utexas.edu/nursing/support/ways_golden.html.

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