Longhorn Nursing STARTS HERE Fall 2016



Message from the Dean



Can you juggle?

Tcan't, but I'm learning. Fast.
Because when your university president describes The University of Texas at Austin as "the university of what's next," you need to be able to stay on top of whatever *is* next. While others may tout what's new, we're

actually seeing what's beyond that materialize before our eyes.

We are continuously experiencing change. For instance, as many of you know, the School of Nursing has been surrounded by construction projects for close to two years, and much of it is still going on as the new Health Care District takes shape and the first cohort of medical students moved into the neighborhood in June. Surrounded by so many shiny new buildings only serves to point out that our own is showing its age, but we are making progress. Work has been completed on the exterior landscaping and new sidewalks have been added along Red River Street.

Changes in the courtyard have also been made. We have witnessed the ancient take on new life by taking delivery of a number of attractive benches and tables that were custom made for us using wood from the massive live oaks that once stood in Centennial Park next door. We appreciate the support of the Provost's office and donors in making the revitalization possible.

Still, major renovations are needed in order to provide the most optimal learning environment for our students. Efforts are underway to reconfigure classrooms, enhance student-gathering spaces, and maximize existing lab and clinical teaching areas. It is only with the support of you, our friends, that we can continue to grow and excel.

As a nurse and an educator of student nurses, I have come to appreciate the impact that interprofessional education makes on our ability to deliver safe, quality care. So, I am encouraged — no, make that thrilled — about the many promising partnerships

with business, technology, medicine and pharmacy, to name a few, being forged on this campus. Just a few years ago, such collaborations were few and far between since many of us were working feverishly, albeit singly, on our own agendas to bring them to pass. Today we are enjoying an increase in collaborative efforts and events.

For instance, our St. David's Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research in Underserved Populations brought together experts in architecture, population health, engineering and communications for their annual research conference "The Physical Environment's Influences on Health," which focused on building — literally — healthier environments.

The City of Austin, recognizing that many in our community still struggle to obtain the health care they need to live healthy, fulfilling lives, awarded our Center for Transdisciplinary Collaborative Research in Self-Management Science a \$3 million, six-year grant — the first ever of its kind awarded by the City — to aid our partnership with local community organizations to provide health care to underserved populations in Austin.

Neither of these would have been possible without a strong spirit of collaboration with individuals and groups across campus, the community and the state.

I continue to marvel at the talent and intelligence of our faculty and students. They're the reason we can say we are the University of What's Next. And as you read this magazine, you, too, will discover how the UT Austin School of Nursing is leading the way in education, research and service so that safe, person-centered health care is accessible to all.

Alexa K. Stuifbergen, 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

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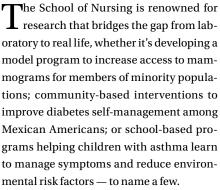
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At the University of What's Next, What's New in Nursing?

RESEARCH

"What starts here changes the world" is a phrase The University of Texas at Austin often uses to describe the transformation that results from the groundbreaking research taking place and innovative teaching and learning techniques being used every day at this world-renowned university. Changing the world is, however, a tall order. It means being able to turn great ideas into life-changing reality, constantly keeping an eye on the future, always asking "What's next?"

Helping homeless youth become their best possible selves



Nursing research at the UT Austin School of Nursing continues to make a difference in peoples' daily lives. One such study is a new intervention for homeless youth that takes a more positive approach to this population.

Statistics show that the number of homeless youth is on the rise. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 34 percent of the total homeless population is under 24 years old. It's an issue that has a lot of people asking, "Where do you start to help these kids?" According to Lynn Rew, EdD, RN, AHN-BC, FAAN, and professor at UT Austin School of Nursing, you start wherever they are.

Dr. Rew, whose work on the sexual health and health behaviors of adolescents has received more than \$3 million in research funding from the National Institutes of Health since 1999, has designed a study to help homeless adolescents, some of whom have aged out of foster care, make better, possibly life-changing choices that could eventually get them off the streets and into more productive lives. She is quick to acknowledge that merely staying in touch with this transient population is a challenge, but one she's prepared to meet.





Her current research project "An Intervention to Promote Healthy Behavior in Homeless Youth" is funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and will test an intervention consisting of six 30-minute sessions during which youth between 18 and 23 will be asked to imagine and describe their best possible self and set goals to help achieve that.

"The intervention is based on the theory that we all carry in our minds our most wonderful, possible self, but also a feared self," Dr. Rew, the Denton and Louise Cooley and Family Centennial Professor in Parent-Child Nursing, said. "We know they

are likely to be involved in two specific behaviors: substance abuse and risky sexual behavior, and so we help them think about their own behavior and ask if they think they are moving toward their best possible self. If not, we ask them what they'd like to be doing and then to visualize how they might move toward that during the next few months."

At the same time, the research teams will teach participants to set manageable goals. For instance, if the participant would like to stop drinking as much, they will be asked to come up with a short-term goal they think they can attain. Because homeless youth tend to make short-term decisions ("What do I need right now?"), Dr. Rew knows she and her team will have to help them create manageable goals initially.

The study is a double randomized control trial of four groups, two of which will be given a pre-test and the other two not. She anticipates this helping the researchers know whether or not the intervention has a significant effect



on the outcome by understanding what effect, if any, the pre-test makes on the participants' responses.

The intervention is delivered by iPad at two sites: a homeless shelter near the UT Austin campus and Star House in Columbus, Ohio, and builds on her earlier interventions that also used technology for outreach and follow up. In this case, Dr. Rew's team will track 600 homeless youth for six months by email and Facebook on cell phones, which will be provided to participants.

Dr. Rew's co-principal investigator is Natasha Slesnick, PhD, and professor of Human Development and Family Science at Ohio State University. Karen Johnson, PhD, RN, and assistant professor at UT Austin School of Nursing, is also a co-investigator and will help train graduate students to administer the intervention in Austin.

"We're excited about the study's positive orientation," Dr. Rew said. "We think it will strengthen this population's resilience and optimism. We'll focus on existing strengths and what they have going for them rather than any weaknesses."

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RESEARCH



Nursing research to establish best practices in elder care

In 2003, the Texas Legislature charged the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS), a component of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, with assessing how satisfied people who live in Medicaid-certified nursing homes are with the quality of their care and quality of life. In 2014, DADS, after a competitive process, turned to Tracie Harrison, PhD, RN, CS, FGSA, FAAN and associate professor, to make this research one of the only high-quality, on-going studies of nursing homes in the country.

To date, the assessments are done every other year, with outcomes tracked at the facility level. The DADS has awarded \$650,000 to Dr. Harrison to lead a longitudinal assessment of the facilities and report on quality outcomes in a random sample of more than 1,250 nursing facilities.

"We have trained RN-quality reviewers to work with administrators in the community to gather rigorous assessment data and perform interviews with residents of all ages using a structured survey tool to track resident and facility indicators," Dr. Harrison said. "The information collected will help track nursing home outcomes for the purpose of creating evidence-based strategies for new initiatives to improve the quality of care and quality of life for residents of Texas nursing homes."

To further improve care in Texas nursing homes, DADS held a competitive call for proposals to develop the Center of Excellence for Long-Term Care. The center, which launched in August 2016, was awarded to the School of Nursing and Dr. Harrison to promote positive outcomes and improve the quality of care in long-term care facilities and help residents with dementia live better lives.

The new partnership spearheaded by Michelle Dionne-Vahalik at DADS includes the development of a web-based educational platform for delivering best practices to providers of long-term care, presented as a series of projects addressing a specific topic or area of care. Each project will focus on education for physicians, nurses, pharmacists, direct care staff, residents and their family members, with multiple modules addressing the project's topic or area of care.

The first phase of the project will focus on improving dementia care with modules developed to address the use of antipsychotic medications for residents with dementia with an emphasis on alternatives to the use of these drugs. Research has found that providers in Texas nursing homes prescribe antipsychotic medications to residents more often than most other states despite recent studies showing that these drugs may in fact limit the types of interactions people with dementia may have with their families. Providing alternative interventions that can reduce problematic behaviors while maintaining quality of life is the ultimate goal.

The second phase will focus on resources for nurses transitioning to practice in geriatric care, particularly those who will be working in long-term care settings.

"We couldn't be more excited about this opportunity to work with DADS and the long-term care community," said Dr. Harrison, director of the Center of Excellence. "But more importantly, we believe this partnership will bring about improved care and positive outcomes for patients in Texas nursing homes."

Drawing from her research with people aging with disabilities she added, "The nursing home may or may not be your first choice for residency at any stage of life; however, I want to ensure that once that choice is made in the state of Texas, professional nurses are there to provide the care that promotes independence, community reintegration, and health enhancement whenever and wherever possible."





Helping chemo patients through the fog

T'm not as quick or as bright as I used to be." Ashley Henneghan, RN, MSN and doctoral candidate at the School of Nursing, often hears this type of comment when working with breast cancer survivors with cognitive problems, commonly referred to as "chemo brain."

In fact, it was these types of sentiments that motivated her to study cognitive changes following chemotherapy because it was so apparent that an ability to think clearly and process information relates directly to a person's personal identity, affecting all aspects of his or her life.

"We know chemotherapy is a risk
factor, but we don't
understand, at least
at this point, why
some survivors
who receive chemotherapy experience
persistent cognitive
problems and others
do not."

"Some breast cancer survivors have reported that cognitive difficulties are the most adverse treatment side effect, and although the symptoms may diminish for some, for many, the effects persist long after active treatment is completed," Ashley said. "I conducted a qualitative study to explore the types of stressors that survivors experience during diagnosis, treatment and after the end of treatment



that they feel compromise their cognitive abilities."

The information gathered from these survivors led to the development of her dissertation project "Bio-behavioral Contributors to Cognition in Breast Cancer Survivors," which recently got a boost after receiving a National Research Service Award from the National Institute of Nursing Research, a rare and competitive award at the predoctoral level. The funding will enable her to continue to examine modifiable factors known to contribute to cognitive impairment after chemotherapy, such as physical activity, loneliness

"I am looking at these because we know chemotherapy is a risk factor, but we don't understand, at least at this point, why some survivors who receive chemotherapy experience persistent cognitive problems and others do not," Ashley said. "It is likely that other 'real-life' factors are playing a role," she added.

Because the breast cancer experience occurs within the context of real life, survivors experience a multitude of stressors throughout the cancer trajectory that can negatively impact their ability to function. Cognitive problems can be especially frustrating, embarrassing, and even devastating since, physically, the person appears normal, and others can't see the problems he or she is experiencing, Ashley added.

"Providers should be aware that these stressors vary at different times

during the cancer journey,"
she said. "My hope is that
progress in survivorship
research will lead to
clinical guidelines that
appropriately prevent,
treat, and manage
the unwanted side
effects of cancer
treatment and
improve survivors'
daily functioning
and quality of
life."

EDUCATION

No one questions whether providing quality patient care depends on a well-educated nursing workforce. Research has shown that lower mortality rates, fewer medication errors, and positive outcomes are all linked to nurses prepared at the baccalaureate and graduate degree levels. The School of Nursing is committed to exploring new and innovative ways of preparing a more highly qualified nursing workforce by ensuring that curricula and education processes develop not only clinical competency, but also a more collaborative care delivery.

Revamped undergraduate curricula opens the door to more collaborative learning opportunities

The School of Nursing updated its undergraduate admissions process in fall 2014 so that students could be admitted directly as freshmen into the four-year bachelor's of science in nursing program.



The newly revised curriculum enables students to take nursing courses a semester earlier than in the previous degree plan, which gives them hands-on clinical skills practice sooner than their junior year.

Now students spend more time together, and faculty have more time to work with each cohort as they develop the critical knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to be nurses. From a curriculum perspective, allowing students to start nursing courses a semester earlier, expanding from four to five upper division nursing semesters, is an advantage since nursing requires such intense, high-stakes learning.

"This change allows students to be even better prepared to start their professional nursing careers and provides them with a little more time to develop a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in caring for people," said Gayle Timmerman, PhD, RN, CNS, FAAN, associate dean for academic affairs. "The first cohort from this class of freshman admits will graduate

spring 2018. We are eagerly looking forward to seeing how this will ultimately impact our BSN graduates."

But that is only the beginning. To transform how nursing education is delivered, the School of Nursing, already a driving force behind the implementation of interprofessional education on the UT Austin campus, is partnering with the College of Pharmacy, School of Social Work and the new Dell Medical School to ensure that students are prepared to deliver the best possible health care in teams that understand how to appreciate and to communicate and collaborate with the other disciplines they will work alongside in clinical settings.

For the first time this fall approximately 255 students from nursing, medicine, pharmacy and social work will be taught interprofessional collaborative competencies through a variety of interactive, team-building activities.

"We're excited about this initial group of students learning from each other about their professions and how to work as part of an interprofessional team. This course represents the leading edge of interprofessional education, using innovative educational methods," Dr. Timmerman said. "This is another opportunity for our students to participate in experiences that will develop the leadership and communication skills needed to produce the best nursing graduates in the country.





Program "truly focused on leadership" has no equal in the nation

What happens when a group of School of Nursing faculty sit down together and ask: What does health care really need and how can we provide it? The answer was a resounding "leadership," and the result is the new Leadership in Diverse Health Care Settings (LeaDS) master's degree program, which was offered for the first time this fall.

Designed to respond to a national and local call for nurses to assume leadership positions in diverse health care settings, the program facilitates development of a robust set of competencies preparing the graduate to provide leadership in a variety of patient-centered health care, community and educational settings.

"Teaching nursing leadership is not just one skill that you add to other skills," said Pat Carter, PhD, RN, CNS and director of LeaDS. "It is an all-encompassing skill."

The LeaDS program immerses students in topics such as conflict resolution, project management, and managing and leading change. The program goes beyond exposing them to theoretical concepts and then expecting them to apply those after they graduate. "It is truly focused on leadership.

At this point, there's nothing like it in the entire country," Dr. Carter added.

Students will develop electronic portfolios that they will update and add to as they move through the program and into the workplace. This online depository comprises videos, presentations and papers they have written, and can also serve as a résumé. Graduates of the LeaDS program will be uniquely qualified

to lead change in complex, dynamic and challenging environments.

"Rather than have to build sets of skills on the job, graduates will be able to demonstrate competence and apply the knowledge and skills they have already mastered," said Dr. Carter, associate professor. "We have built into this program both what employers are looking for in nurse leaders and what students need in order to be successful in a complex and



Pat Carter, PhD, RN, CNS, and director of LeaDS meets with students.

competitive health care environment."

"The School of Nursing has been transitioning for some time into more innovative programs and curricula in order to better meet current health care needs," Dr. Gayle Timmerman said. "The LeaDS program is literally leading the way in preparing graduates who are skilled in core nurse leadership competencies and are ready to hit the ground running in order to deliver the best patient care."

Developing innovative partnerships on the journey toward better health

The School of Nursing launched its doctor of nursing practice (DNP) degree program by welcoming the first cohort in January 2016. The new professional doctoral program is designed to prepare graduates for today's increasingly complex health care practice and clinical leadership roles and emphasizes clinical and leadership skills. Graduates are prepared to translate nursing research into

evidence-based standards of care while contributing to health care teams that improve patient outcomes.

"Our DNP program, the first in Central Texas, is helping to meet the demand for more practitioners who are able to provide leadership at the highest levels of health care and for highly prepared clinical faculty for schools of nursing," said Alexa Stuifbergen, dean of the School of Nursing.

"The strong cadre of tenured and clinical faculty we have in place are doing a great job of leading the research and education efforts necessary for a successful DNP program."

More than 15 years ago, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) identified the need for a doctorate for advanced practice nursing and recommended that the DNP become the

EDUCATION



terminal degree for nurse practitioners by 2015. The AACN recognized that the growth in scientific knowledge and sophisticated

technology was contributing to the growing need for clinical career paths that would attract outstanding students and retain nurses in clinical careers.

In 2010 the Institute of Medicine published its report "The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health," which affirmed this need and recommended doubling the number of doctoral-prepared nurses by 2020.

The program is designed for nurses who are employed full time. The 45-hour-long program is offered in a hybrid format, which means that classes meet on campus for a two-day period once a month, and students receive online assignments during alternative weeks. Students complete the program in five semesters.

"Nurse leaders pursuing the DNP are innovators, determined to find creative ways of providing better care to patients," said Jane Champion, PhD, DNP, FNP, FAANP, FAAN and director of the program. "Importantly, these innovations conceptualize DNPs as partners with their patients in the journey toward better health for all."

Service & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Since the time of Florence Nightingale, nurses have reached out to help others, whether on the battlefield, in a clinical setting or at a local health fair. In addition to developing values that are central to the profession of nursing — caregiving, altruism, respect for human dignity, service to society and empathetic understanding — nurses are taught critical thinking and to be quick to identify problems and develop solutions that ensure better health care outcomes. The following are ways the School of Nursing is transforming the landscape of health care delivery for those who need it most.

Collaboration is key to ensuring healthy communities



"As Austin has grown and prospered, not all of its residents have benefited."

The School of Nursing is working alongside community partners Mama Sana/ Vibrant Woman (MSVW) and the Alliance for African American Health in Central Texas (AAAHCT) to ensure that Austin neighborhoods are able to access the care and resources they need. The projects they are collaborating on are addressing health care inequities, thanks to two sixyear grants totaling more than \$3 million from the City of Austin. The health equity grants, the first ever awarded by the city, will address health disparities in underserved populations.

The collaboration is an outgrowth of efforts by the School of Nursing's new Center for Transdisciplinary Collaborative Research in Self-Management Science (TCRSS) and several local organizations to bring attention to a pressing health care crisis among the city's low-income populations

and develop communitydriven solutions.

"As Austin has grown and prospered, not all of its residents have benefited," said Miyong Kim, a professor in the School of Nursing, director of TCRSS

and university associate vice president for Community Health Engagement. "Although several community organizations have long been involved in this struggle to right the wrong of health disparities, funding has always been a challenge. We are grateful to the Austin City Council for recognizing the barriers that many low-income individuals encounter as they try to obtain the health care they need and for providing the funds to help us help them overcome those barriers."

The project with MSVW will afford an opportunity to demonstrate that directly addressing social determinants affects pregnant women's and families' overall health in a fundamental and more sustainable manner. For African Americans in Travis County, who continue to have higher rates of mortality from cancer, heart disease and diabetes, the AAAHCT project addresses chronic disease among African Americans by providing a wellness program in which participants identify specific health goals they want to achieve and then receive individual and group coaching and connections to resources to assist them.

According to Dr. Kim, the School of Nursingwill continue to work with various grassroots community organizations and partners to implement community-driven solutions to underserved communities in Austin to reduce health disparity gaps.

Here come the nurses!

The service is almost over at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in East Austin: The sermon has been given, the choir special sung and announcements made. All that remains to do are the blood tests.

Since 2008, student nurses in the alternate-entry master's of science in nursing program and undergraduates in public health classes have arrived after church services to check congregants' blood pressure, glucose levels and other health issues. The outreach was the brainchild of School of Nursing faculty members Shalonda

Horton, PhD, RN; and Ana Todd, PhD, RN, both assistant professors of clinical nursing, who realized that many church members were not receiving the health care they needed. They also wanted to create additional sites for their students to get required clinical skills experience.

Dr. Horton and Dr. Todd established community partnerships and clinical site agreements first with



Mt. Zion Baptist Church (MZBC) and then Rehoboth Baptist Church. Along with facilitating students learning public health concepts and developing spiritual care skills, these partnerships have allowed students to contribute toward the improvement of overall health among underserved faith-based communities in East Austin.

"Prior to our partnership with MZBC, I had a public health nursing clinical site fall through at the last minute, which meant I had to quickly find another site for my students," Dr. Horton explained. "Since I was already doing health promotion at my church, I thought it would be a win-win situation to have students do their public health nursing rotation in a faith-based setting."

The first group of students conducted community assessments and provided health education to the congregation. Based on the community assessment findings, subsequent groups of student nurses conducted health assessments on the congregation about perceived heath status, or how they rated their own health. They simultaneously measured their blood pressure, blood glucose and body mass indexes. The faculty and students soon discovered that there was a significant disconnect between the congregation's health perceptions and what the objective health measurements showed.

At first, the students saw little, if any, improvement in the overall health of the congregation. Knowing that the church members wanted to lead a healthier lifestyle, the faculty, church health ministry leaders, and students collaborated to implement case management as a strategy to help increase health-promoting behaviors among the church members. Working one to one allowed the students to help them set and achieve personal goals. The number of personal success stories began to grow, and over the years the students have added other health promotion, and education events, such as healthy cooking demonstration classes, disaster preparedness and STI prevention among teens.

The outreach is proving to be successful all the way round: Students get an opportunity to apply what they learn in class and become aware of how faith-based communities can be effective channels for health promotion, and church members see their health improve.

"We had one graduate public health nursing student a couple of years ago who, based on her community assessment findings, expanded the church's Habit for Health program, a health challenge that is culturally and spiritually appropriate for the congregation," Dr. Horton said. "Afterwards, the student, her preceptor and a representative from MZBC were able to publish the findings of her intervention."

Pastors, youth leaders and other church leaders are more than pleased that the program has become so successful. Today, when the students arrive wearing their burnt orange scrubs, the congregation shouts, "Here come the nurses!"

"Students see how their efforts are making a huge difference in the health of underserved populations and how appreciated those efforts are," Dr. Todd said. "They've told us they wish they could help more people, and when they leave, they often say, 'I'm coming back!'"

In addition to gaining clinical experience, the faith-based settings are giving students confidence to address patients' spiritual needs. Research has found that many nurses feel inadequately prepared to provide spiritual care upon graduation. Placing students in faith-based settings during their public health nursing clinical rotation helps to address this issue and assists students in learning how to imple-

interventions.

Dr. Horton and Dr. Todd hope the program will continue to grow and one day be student run.

ment culturally appropriate

"Each semester, our students learn how to provide holistic care, strengthen their own communication and work in nontraditional settings," Dr. Horton said. "They're providing safety nets that prevent individuals from slipping through the health care delivery cracks. They're revamping existing services in innovative - and caring - ways."







How spending time in the ICU led to a career in health care

Audrey Decherd with brother William and her parents Maureen and Robert Decherd.

Audrey Decherd (MSN '12) never expected to spend three months in a hospital intensive care unit, sitting by her mother's bedside as she clung to life after a tragic accident. But as she did, the experience transformed her — and her future.

"I have always had a fascination with medicine but never considered it as a possible career until I was a junior in college," Audrey said. "That fall, my mother was struck by a car while walking through our neighborhood on a Saturday morning. She suffered a traumatic brain injury and was in intensive care for almost three months. It would be another five months before she finally came home."

Those first few weeks in the ICU, however, were life changing.

"I realized that despite the fact that I was living a nightmare, somehow I was completely lit up by the intensive care environment," Audrey said. "Everything the nurses and doctors said I soaked up like a sponge and wanted to know more. Something ignited inside me, and I knew that this is where I belonged."

The Dallas native decided to finish her undergraduate degree in Spanish linguistics at Vanderbilt in Nashville, Tennessee, and then return to university for an advanced nursing degree. She chose the UT Austin School of Nursing's alternate entry master's of science in nursing (AE-MSN) program because it offers individuals with degrees in disciplines other than nursing the opportunity to obtain both a registered nurse license and a master's in nursing degree.

"The fall of my senior year I started my prerequisites for the AE-MSN program because I knew I wanted to go to the UT Austin School of Nursing. It not only has an exceptional nursing program, but it also accommodated my circumstances," Audrey said. "Last, but most certainly not least, I would finally be a degree-holding Longhorn!"

After graduating from UT Austin in 2012, she worked as a staff nurse at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas. Today she is a nurse in the neurology ICU, where she provides bedside care for patients with conditions such as ischemic or hemorrhagic stroke, craniotomies and encephalopathy.

"Everything the nurses and doctors said I soaked up like a sponge and wanted to know more. Something ignited inside me, and I knew that this is where I belonged."

Caring for others is important to the entire Decherd family, and her parents Maureen (English '73) and Robert Decherd are deeply committed to supporting education. In 1993, they created the Decherd Foundation to support secondary and higher education as well as improving parks and urban centers in Dallas. Their gifts to the School of Nursing have gone to facilities upgrades, including supporting the recent space-planning process and the renovation of a large, theater-style classroom. Indeed, their example of generosity is a large part of

the reason Audrey wanted to give back to the School of Nursing.

"Through the years, my parents have been role models for me in many ways," she said. "I can say for sure that their philanthropic efforts have been a great source of inspiration to me."

As a nurse, Audrey believes that the foundation's donations to the School of Nursing will provide not only an excellent nursing education, but also be the means by which students are prepared for the clinical environment from the first moment they walk in. Citing the school's dedication to interprofessional education, in which students of nursing, social work, pharmacy and medicine are taught to work together as members of a team, she is confident that by the time they are employed, these students will understand the importance of collaboration, whether in acute, long-term or community care

After going through the long and difficult time of her mother's recovery, Audrey came to appreciate the role nurses play in providing safe and effective patient care. After attending the UT Austin School of Nursing, she came to understand the value of an excellent nursing education.

"Nursing is such a critical job in the world we live in, and we can't afford not to support nursing education," she said. "It's the foundation and basis upon which nurses grow into experts in their field. It's one thing to teach nursing students enough in order to pass their board examinations, but a really exceptional nursing institution prepares its students for a virtually seamless transition from the student role to the provider role."

School of Nursing highlights

From the beginning of the term in September through convocation in May, faculty, staff and students stayed busy. The Back to School ice cream social has become an institution, as is the twice-a-year disaster drill. The inaugural career fair had 196 students and 30 employers in attendance. This year's 40 Hours for the Forty Acres fundraiser astonished everyone by the amount raised and the number of new donors. All in all, it was a very good year at the UT Austin School of Nursing.









- Andria Brannon, director of development, during 40 Hours for the Forty Acres fundraiser
 Students participate in a disaster drill
- 3. Students came well prepared for the career fair
- 4. Lots of fun playing with puppies during finals week
- 5. Back to School cookies and coffee





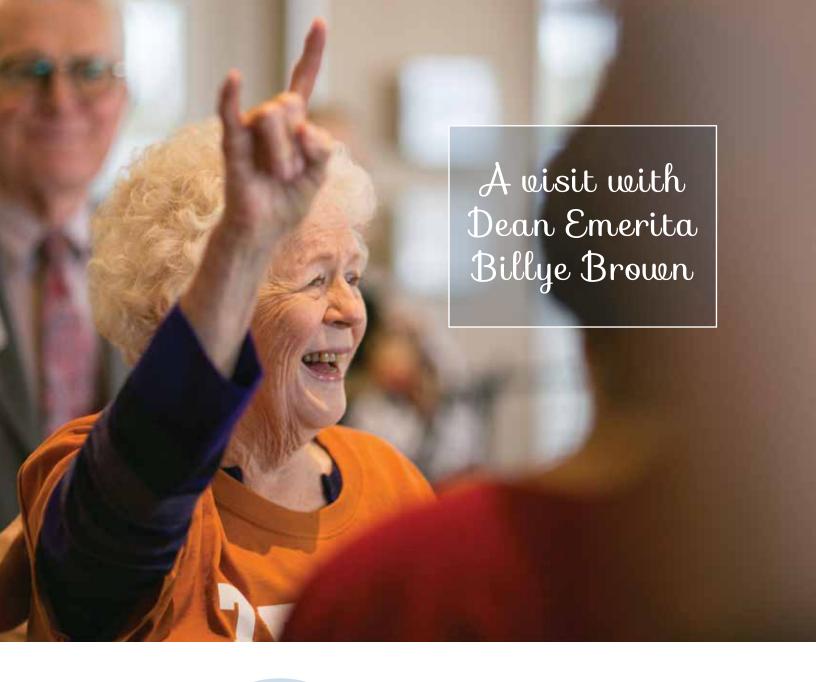






- Students receive their pins at the White Coat
 Ceremony
- 2. Jimmy Eaddy, our beloved security guard, retired
- 3. Back to School ice cream social
- 4. Spring graduation with Dr. Carole Taxis (center)
- 5. Looking proud at spring graduation





n Monday, Nov. 23, 2015, the School of Nursing celebrated former dean Billye Brown's 90th birthday. During the festivities, she was also named dean emerita. In attendance were current and former faculty and alumni — many from across the nation. Also in attendance was the School's special friend and longtime supporter Ms. Luci Baines Johnson.

"I love the School of Nursing with all my heart, and this honor is a warm and wonderful embrace that means the world to me."



Dean Alexa Stuifbergen presents the Dean Emerita pronouncement to Dean Billye Brown

Longhorn Nursing: What did being named dean emerita mean to you?

Brown: It was a wonderful surprise to be named dean emerita of the School of Nursing. I don't remember my response when Dean Stuifbergen announced it; I had not expected it, but I was very pleased. The School, students and faculty have always been most important to me. Before, during and even after my time as dean, I continue to evaluate any action I might take by questioning myself about what impact would it have on the School. I love the School of Nursing with all my heart, and this honor is a warm and wonderful embrace that means the world to me.

Ln: What are some of your favorite memories from the School of Nursing?

Brown: I have memories of students from each of our programs that have made tremendous contributions to the profession of nursing. I am proud of that. Some of my memories are regrets, like I regret that our current dean, Dean Alexa Stuifbergen, was never in one of my classes. But I am proud she was in school while I was dean.

Some people know that shortly after I received this honor, I had a stroke. I am nearly fully recovered from that now,

and I was honored to have so many of the nurses, especially those who were former students, take such good care of me. Like receiving this honor, having that community of nurses bring their skills to caring for me truly brought my experience as dean full circle. It was wonderful to see and be connected to so many and to experience what wonderful and expert nurses they have become.

Ln: What is the best part about being a dean?

Brown: Having a position in which you have the privilege of seeing individuals, faculty members and students grow professionally and helping others grow and develop. Also being a proud ambassador for The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing, locally, nationally and Internationally.



Ms. Luci Baines Johnson and Dean Emerita Billye Brown celebrate Brown's 90th birthday.

Student **Update**

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Future of Nursing Scholarships

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Future of Nursing Scholars program was created to increase the number of nurses holding PhDs by providing financial support, mentoring and leadership development to nurses who commit to earn their PhDs in three years. The UT Austin School of Nursing is one of 32 schools of nursing in the nation to receive this grant.

Jonas Nurse Scholar Program Scholarship

The Jonas Nurse Leader Scholars at the UT Austin School of Nursing were made possible by a grant from the Jonas Center for Nursing and Veterans Healthcare, a scholarship program dedicated to building the effectiveness of America's professional nurses, and generous matching funds by School of Nursing donors. Scholars receive two years of support, attend a scholar leadership development conference, complete a web-based leadership development component and work with a designated faculty mentor.



Carolyn Phillips, MSN, RN 2016 RWJE Scholar

Carolyn received a bachelor of science in nursing from the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing and a master's of science in nursing from the University of New Mexico College of Nursing. She is a board-certified acute care nurse practitioner and advanced certified oncology nurse practitioner. Carolyn has pursued research in cancer survivorship in addition to her clinical practice and received the Innovative Ideas in Healthcare Award from SVH Support in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She used the grant to build the infrastructure for the Community Nursing Research Center at the community oncology clinic in Santa Fe. To date, four community oncology nurses are actively pursuing their research interests with the mentoring and support from nurse scientists from the University of New Mexico. She also created Songs for the Soul, a program that helps oncology, palliative care and hospice nurses address compassion fatigue by combining the healing effects of expressive writing, storytelling, and music to facilitate a deeper exploration of the nursing experience. Carolyn is a member of the Oncology Nursing Society, Sigma Theta Tau International, the International Society for Nurses in Cancer Care and the American Holistic Nursing Association.



Davika Reid, MSN, RN 2016 RWJF Scholar

Davika is a first-vear doctoral student who received her master's in nursing in public health at UT Austin in 2016. As a neonatal intensive care nurse with a passion for public and global health, she has focused her research on increasing access to health care services for vulnerable populations. As a nurse volunteer at the Volunteer Healthcare Clinic and through collaboration with the Texas Association of Charitable Clinics, she has worked to provide training on legislative advocacy to clinics across the state through a training program for health care executives that was held at the State Capitol, Throughout her career. Davika has served as a preceptor and mentor to new graduate nurses and has been a Capstone/Integration preceptor and teaching assistant to both undergraduate and alternative-entry students at UT Austin. She is a member of Sigma Theta Tau, serving on the leadership succession committee of the UT Austin chapter, the Texas Nurses Association and the American Nurses Association. Through her Robert Wood Johnson Foundation fellowship, Davika seeks to become a well-rounded nurse leader, innovator and influencer to make health care more welcoming and equitable for those who need it the most.



Kimberly Lewis, MSN, RN 2016-2018 Jonas Scholar

Kimberly is a research specialist RN at the Seton Network. She earned a bachelor's degree in nutrition science from UT Austin and a master's degree in child health nursing and teaching in the School of Nursing's alternate entry-MSN program. She decided to become a nurse after volunteering at Dell Children's Medical Center in both the NICU and the Children's Blood and Cancer Center, where she witnessed the impact of exceptional nursing care on the lives of patients. She has worked in pediatric critical care, clinical research, home health and outpatient settings. Her dissertation topic is related to inflammation and nutrition in pediatric chronic conditions with a current focus on children with juvenile arthritis. Kimberly is a member of Sigma Theta Tau International. Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, Young Women's Alliance. UT Austin Graduate Student Assembly-Academic Affairs Committee and the Seton Nursing Research Council. In her free time, she enjoys playing volleyball and traveling with her 11-year-old daughter, Violet.



Kari McDonald, MSN, RN 2016-2018 Jonas Scholar

Kari graduated in 1987 from Texas State University (formerly known as Southwest Texas State University) with a bachelor's degree in music with a concentration in voice performance and an alternate-entry master's of science in nursing with a parent/child focus in 2006. Kari worked as a labor and delivery nurse prior to teaching for nine years in an accredited associate degree nursing program in Austin. Kari returned to the School of Nursing to work on a PhD in nursing and her primary dissertation and research focus is LGBTO adolescents and mental health. She has participated in alobal mission work in West Africa and continues to contribute to medical mission work, targeting the education of clinic workers and community health assistants. Her current mission focus is in Uganda where she will work with a new fistula clinic. Kari is a member of Sigma Theta Tau International (Epsilon Theta Chapter), the Association of Nurses in Graduate School. the National League of Nursing, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network.



Nicole Murry, BSN, RN 2016-2018 Jonas Scholar

Nicole is pursuing a PhD in nursing with a focus on health literacy. As a nurse educator in neonatal intensive care, Nicole observed that when the delivery of health information was tailored to meet the needs of parents, which often included clear verbal and written communication, patients and parents fared better. When she transitioned to a position working with health care leaders across the state, Nicole learned that meeting the health literacy needs of patients is a common challenge among health care organizations. Committed to system-level solutions to address the health literacy needs of all patients, her dissertation will result in the development of a tool designed to measure health care organizational attributes related to patient health literacy. When she is not busy with research, she enjoys working with the next generation of nursing students as an assistant instructor at the School of Nursing.



Amanda Simonton, BSN, RN 2016-2018 Jonas Scholar

Amanda is a third-year doctoral student who received her bachelor's in nursing from UT Austin. She is also a first-year master's student in the psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioner program. Her research focus is mental health promotion with an emphasis on reducing substance abuse and improving recovery from addictive substances. Her professional goal is to become a tenure-track faculty member within a top-tier researchoriented nursing school. She wants to contribute to leading-edge research, health care policy changes and the education of an expanding population of graduate-trained nurses. Amanda currently works as a teaching assistant/ graduate research assistant at the School of Nursing and is a nurse in the Seton Psychiatric Emergency Department at University Medical Center Brackenridge Hospital. Amanda is a member of Sigma Theta Tau, the Southern Nursing Research Society and the Association of Nurses in Graduate School.



What's Next in Building for the Future

— Andria Brannon, Director of Development and External Relations

1973 was an interesting year in health care innovation and policy. The insulin pump was patented, enabling greater freedom for diabetics; Lasik eye surgery was perfected, revolutionizing vision for millions over time; *Roe v. Wade* was upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States, ushering in a new era in reproductive health; and the American Academy of Nursing was initiated by the American Nurses Association, recognizing excellence in nursing scholarship and practice.

On The University of Texas at Austin campus, health care innovation and policy merged to create a gleaming new facility solely for the education of nursing students. Previously relegated to a creaky and dilapidated leftover World War II barracks on the corner of Speedway and 24th Street, the School of Nursing moved to its own technologically advanced, efficiently designed and solidly built home on Red River Street. During the past 43 years, health care has undergone monumental changes, and the Nursing building has stood witness to it all.

Now, the building needs a significant dose of innovation to keep pace with the rapidly changing health care environment, the educational requirements of today's students and the transformational creation of Austin's Health Care District. Surrounded by new construction, the School of Nursing could not be more strategically positioned to take advantage of opportunities for faculty and students, research collaborations, and a teaching and learning conversion.

Alumni visiting the School for a tour are surprised to find students sitting in the very same seats they did 30 years ago. Faculty, staff and students find themselves navigating snaking strands of power cords and surge protectors in classrooms to allow enough access to power for the laptops, iPads and handheld devices that are part of today's learning structure. The School is in need of significant renovations and upgrades and must rely on the generosity and vision of donors and alumni to make it all happen.

An ambitious plan was launched in 2014 when the School's leadership engaged the services of Jacobs

Consulting to evaluate current spaces and building configurations and envision an upgraded, updated place where healers can come to learn to heal. Assessed needs include: larger classroom spaces throughout; renovated tiered classrooms in the building's basement level; enhanced and up-to-date technology; creation of a gathering space for not only those in the School of Nursing, but also new neighbors in the Health Care District on the unused west side terrace of the building; reequipped and redesigned simulation and skills labs; and a reconfigured front entry that will integrate the School

more fully to neighboring buildings, public spaces and community engagement.

All of this takes support — your support. Through partnerships with The Decherd Foundation, the UT Austin Office of the Provost, and University Project Management and Construction Services, small pockets of work have already started. However, additional funds are needed. To that end, naming opportunities are available for classrooms, common spaces, the above mentioned terrace, and other key areas within (and without) the building. In addition, a non-endowed Facilities Fund has been initiated to provide the dean with the flexibility to address smaller projects as they are scheduled.

Your investment in nursing education will enable the innovation critical to moving into the next decade and beyond. Make a gift today by contacting Sergio Delgado, assistant director of development, at 512-471-2628 or sdelgado@nursing.utexas.edu.

The School of Nursing building needs a significant dose of innovation to keep pace with the rapidly changing health care environment.







Renditions by Jacobs Consulting.

Around the School

Faculty

Carol Delville, PhD, RN, ACNS-BC,

assistant professor of clinical nursing, was named a UT Austin Senior Provost Fellow. The Provost's Teaching Fellows program is designed to enhance faculty collaboration across disciplinary and institutional boundaries and support specific faculty-led projects to improve teaching and learning.

Tracie Harrison, PhD, RN, FNP, FAAN, associate professor, and **Bo Xie, PhD,** and associate professor, have been named fellows of the Gerontological Society of America, the nation's largest interdisciplinary organization devoted to the field of aging.

Sharon Horner, PhD, RN, FAAN,

associate dean for research, and Dolores V. Sands Chair in Nursing Research, was elected president of the board of directors of the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists.

Dean Alexa Stuifbergen met with alumni at the International Conference on Health Promotion for People with Disabilities:

A Multidisciplinary Approach in April at the Taipei Medical University College of Nursing in Taipei, Taiwan, where she gave two keynote presentations.

Gayle Timmerman, PhD, RN, CNS, FAAN,

received the Texas Clinical Nurse Specialist Researcher of the Year award from the Texas Clinical Nurse Specialists.

Linda Yoder, PhD, MBA, RN, AOCN,

FAAN, president-elect of Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses, was inducted as AMSN president at the 25th annual convention in Washington, DC. AMSN has 11,500 members and represents medical-surgical nurses, the largest body of nurses in the nation.

Retired

Carolyn Mueller, PhD, RN, assistant professor of Clinical Nursing

Linda Murphy, MSHEd, BSN, RN, instructor in Clinical Nursing

Sarah Peters, MSN, RN, instructor in Clinical Nursing

Jimmy Eaddy, front desk guard for more than 20 years



Carolyn Mueller, PhD, RN, and Sarah Peters, MSN, RN

Alumni

Marissa Adams (BSN'10) was named a University of Delaware's Jeanne K. Buxbaum Scholar.

Dolores M. Alford (MSN '61) received the Texas Nurses Association's Leaders and Legends of Texas Nursing Award.

Shirley Davidoff, RN, MS, FNP-C (BSN'84) was named Texas Nurse Practitioner of the Year at the TNP annual conference in Dallas, Texas.

Jean McSweeney (PhD '90) was the lead author of the article "Preventing and Experiencing Ischemic Heart Disease as a Woman: State of the Science" published by *Circulation*, a scientific journal published for the American Heart Association.

In Memoriam

Morris Atlas - benefactor

Mark Wendell Callis - alumnus (BSN '96)

Kelly T. Czarnecki - alumna (BSN '85)

Loyd W. Dreher - benefactor and husband of former assistant dean Mitzi Dreher

Patricia Orner Felger - friend and wife of Advisory Council member Charles Felger

Odessa K. Geary - alumna (BSN '76)

Dr. Dorothy (Dotty) L. Gordon - former faculty member

Jenny L. Greer - alumna (BSN '79)

Dr. Linda Hughes - alumna (PhD '93)

Dr. Barbara K. Kearney - alumna (MSN '87, PhD '95)

Janet D. Mack - alumna (BNS '79)

Ruth M. Maendl - alumna (MSN '76)

Dr. Reuben R. McDaniel - joint faculty (School of Nursing/McCombs School of Business)

Della M. Thompson - alumna (BSN '84) **Myrtle E. Walker** - benefactor and friend

Joe Jamail – 1925-2015

"Joe Jamail died at his home, asleep on Dec. 23, 2015. Joe loved the law, his life, his friends and his family." — Houston Chronicle

The newspaper obituary for Joe Jamail was simple and straightforward — and belied the transformational impact of his generosity on the School of Nursing. For more than 20 years, Mr. Jamail and his wife Lee Hage Jamail (also deceased) supported nursing education by establishing four endowments in Nursing, one of which is a scholarship fund that to date has provided financial support to more than 500 nursing students. As the single largest individual donor to the School of Nursing, the effect of his willingness to invest in nursing education has benefitted hundreds of thousands of patients cared for by the Longhorn Nurses he supported.



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 and foundation giving), the Society honors philanthropic investments to the future of nursing. To learn more about making a gift, visit nursing.utexas.edu/support/ways_golden.html

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Vinh T. Nguyen



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