Kapow! Super Content in Nursing Education

College DAISY Awards

Unique Jobs: The Magic Yarn Project
Don’t miss these great alumni events (2018–2019):

2018

9/26 Alumni Career Night, 3228 WSC
10/19 Homecoming Service Project, 3228 KMBL
10/23 Speed Luncheon, HC

2019

1/29 Alumni Career Night, 3228 WSC
3/7 6th Annual Night of Nursing, nightofnursing.com for locations
3/16 Campus Wig Workshop, WSC Ballroom
4/11 College Reception, San Diego Town and Country Hotel
5/02 Women's Conference Luncheon, KMBL Patio

Email nursingpr@byu.edu for event details.

Kapow! Super Content Advances in Nursing Education
Nursing students who learn how to use electronic health records, TeamSTEPPS, and end-of-life training modules gain super skills to prepare them for professional practice. See how the BYU College of Nursing has implemented these tools in its curriculum.

Taking the Initiative for Inspiring Learning
Read about a student who teamed up with a professor to create an assessment tool for nursing homes, write training video scripts, and present details at a leadership conference.

Unique Jobs: The Magic Yarn Project
Discover the career path one alumna oncology nurse took that has made a difference to thousands of volunteers and childhood cancer survivors around the world.

The College of Nursing at Brigham Young University recently updated its mission, vision, and values statement to better align with the mission and aims of the university. They now reflect principles that nursing faculty, staff, students, and alumni can understand, support, and emulate in their careers.

BYU COLLEGE OF NURSING MISSION STATEMENT

Guided by the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we exemplify the Healer’s art by leading with faith and integrity, advancing the science of nursing and healthcare, promoting health and wellness, alleviating suffering, and serving individuals, families, and communities.

While the principal components of the college’s vision remain the same, the opening phase has been changed from focusing on a community of scholars to reinforcing the idea that individuals associated with our programs should reflect the teachings of Jesus Christ. The Savior taught the gospel, and our efforts must focus on his instructions, love, and example. The idea of holistic nursing is not new; in fact, Florence Nightingale recognized the importance of caring for the whole person. She became one of the first nurses in Western medicine to encourage a patient’s preventative and self-care. Our college is no different. For the past 66 years, we have encouraged students, faculty, and alumni to take a “mind-body-spirit-emotion-environment” approach to healing.

This magazine features stories on how our nursing curriculum is improving patient care by expanding to include topics such as electronic health records, team communication, end-of-life care, and empathy through a poverty simulation. It also highlights the college DAISY recognition awards, a unique alumna nursing job to support childhood cancer survivors with a yarn wig service project, and more inspiring learning experiences with nursing students and faculty members.

The publication also highlights the scholarly works of Ryan Rasmussen and Dr. Katreena Merrill, and it includes a faculty spotlight on Dr. Shelly Reed as well as tributes to some devoted faculty members that are retiring or leaving the college. The number of college alumni events continues to expand each year; we now offer seven activities for your participation: the annual Night of Nursing in March, bimannual alumni career nights in September and January, a wig workshop for The Magic Yarn Project in March, the BYU Women’s Conference luncheon in May, the alumni service project in October, and a college reception as part of the Western Institute of Nursing annual conference—next year in San Diego on April 11! I encourage you to engage with our social media channels for college updates and event information.

Thank you for being a great example and for sharing ways you bless others through nursing. I enjoy hearing your feedback or success with career, family, or academic achievements (nursingpr@byu.edu).

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Decades ago, having one superhero on the big screen was impressive and made for a blockbuster picture. The hero would show viewers how impressive their powers were at solving problems. However, during the past few years, major film studios have combined multiple comic book characters onscreen for epic battles and sensational results. These movies depict how teamwork, communication, and unique skills can solve any problem in the universe.

The nursing curriculum is no different. Laying the foundation for a culture of teamwork, new technology, and compassion requires embedding easy-to-use techniques into existing structures. It must become a way of life, not just another short-term initiative. Over the past sixty-six years, the College of Nursing at Brigham Young University has implemented new content in its program that, on its own, makes for improved learning. But when multiple concepts combine, the result is an advanced nursing education.

Below are a few of the pieces of "super content" the college uses to make a difference.

TEAMSTEPPS TOOLS

Many nurses know that Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety (TeamSTEPPS or TS) is a teamwork system developed by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and the Department of Defense to improve communication and teamwork in healthcare. While studies have validated its clinical use, research on how to incorporate it into a nursing program is limited.

The Emory University School of Nursing reported in 2010 that they had 213 students complete a four-hour TS training. The results demonstrated that exposure to teamwork concepts and skills improved knowledge and attitudes despite limited exposure (bit.ly/2IaTQXK).

To make the instruction more significant, faculty members at the BYU College of Nursing wanted to learn if TS content could be incorporated into their nursing program (more than a one-time training). Assistant teaching professor Dr. Michael Thomas became certified as a TS master trainer and incorporated the TS system into his class on communication for nurses. He also wrote a university mentoring environment grant to get his teaching assistants for the class and other nursing faculty trained as TS trainers.

Thomas asked students to complete reading assignments, watch video presentations, and apply TS tools to various scenarios. The materials focus on improving teams through five key principles: team structure, communication, leading teams, situation monitoring, and mutual support. Each area contains tools and strategies that can be utilized effectively in nursing simulation to teach students vital communication techniques.
room, her father suggested they first check when they reached the emergency department. The pulmonary embolism (PE) was confirmed, and her grandfather’s condition was corrected. She still couldn’t shake the feeling something was wrong. After talking with her grandfather further, she thought that the symptoms pointed to a pulmonary embolism (PE). She thought the PA would order some tests and thought it was probably just an infection. Later in her gerontology semester, she learned that pulmonary embolism is often mistaken for an infection.

Before the start of the 2017–18 academic year, Thomas brought in national instructors for a two-day faculty TS Master Training session. The Program has over forty faculty, adjunct faculty, and clinical staff completed the certification. In June, a research group comprising Thomas, assistant teaching professor Stacie Lespie, and four nursing students—Amber Anderson (fourth semester), Kapri Beus (sixth semester), Camryn Shavecroft (fifth semester), and Sara Durrant Weeks (BS ’18)—presented their success and findings at the American Hospital Association annual conference in San Diego.

Usually attendees at these types of conferences are hospital representatives who are trying to implement specific techniques in their hospitals. However, by learning the tools now, nursing students can get further ahead and be leaders to those around them through their example in using these skills.

ELNEC COMPONENTS

Across the nation, there is growing concern that inadequate time is given to education on palliative care for chronic or life-limiting patients, especially with the increasing geriatric population.

To address the issue, associate teaching professor Karen H. de la Cruz became a certified End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) trainer and then integrated the ELNEC principles into the BYU College of Nursing curriculum. As a result, content was included in many courses to strengthen palliative care knowledge, increase student confidence to care for dying patients, and apply the principles to future careers.

“Throughout the classes of the six-semester nursing program, students are taught and reminded of various components of the palliative care core,” says de la Cruz. “Topics that include assessing physical needs, such as pain, symptoms, or functional status; items that address psychological and psychiatric needs, including depression, anxiety, grief, and bereavement; and, of course, social needs and spiritual needs.”

During the 2017 fall semester, the college introduced the ELNEC Undergraduate Online Curriculum as a voluntary, noncredit certification course for second- and third-semester nursing students. In just one year of implementation, more than 200 students began the six interactive online training modules.

“Unlike other healthcare profession- als, nurses have the patient’s knowledge to spend time at the patient’s bedside and are able to get to know the patient and family and their goals of care, explain different treat- ment options, and advocate for them,” says de la Cruz. “These principles prepare students to offer support that promotes quality of life by anticipating, preventing, and treating suffering.”

Nationally, over 9,000 students at more than 200 schools of nursing have completed or are completing the curriculum since the launch of the modules in January 2017. Utah was one of four Cambia Health Foundation–funded states that allowed students to use the training at no cost. BYU is among the eight schools in the state to take advantage of the grant. The initial funding year is over, but the college administration is looking at other value of the material. They plan to con- tinue offering the certification to students and supplement the fees from college funds (rather than require the $29 cost per person per year).

“In addition to the module training, we will continue to look for opportunities to enhance palliative care content into our curriculum with additional items such as case experiences, ethical and legal impli- cations, and ways to strengthen nursing leadership.”

VETERANS COURSE

Men and women of all ages might be vet- erans, and they have had a wide range of experiences and face a variety of health challenges. How do nurses best learn to care for them? Since 2005, the BYU College of Nurs- ing has offered a class exclusively focused on military veteran care—a class that was among the first of its kind in the U.S. Developing empathy for and emo- tional understanding of their patients is one clinical aim of the college’s public and global health nursing course. Designed and implemented by teaching professor Dr. Kent D. Blad (MS ’99)—a veteran himself—this course teaches students to safely and competently care for the vet- eran population.

The college’s accrediting body, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Edu- cation, established a national initiative to enhance the level of veteran nursing edu- cation nationwide. Upon hearing of Blad’s success, they asked the college for support.

Blad believes that what veterans need most is to be understood. “Learning who they are and what they have experienced will help a nurse to better care for them,” says Blad. “We shared our syllabi, class assignments, learning activities, books, and video resources, all to help elevate the level of veteran care education nationwide.”

To become even better caretakers, a dozen senior nursing students each spring spend a term learning military culture from its best teachers: the veter- ans themselves. “These students sit down with veterans and listen to their stories,” says Blad. “They visit several areas of military importance to further immerse themselves in this culture, such as the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, the VA War Related Illness and Injury Study Center, Arlington National Cemetery, and multiple veteran memori- als and museum visits.”

The college also cosponsors a Utah Honor Flight each May that allows
Regardless of the nursing syllabus, students learn that nurses must be better listeners—not just to their veteran patients, but to all in their care. Sometimes the hardest wounds to heal are not the visible physical wounds but the unseen wounds; every effort made to help veterans heal emotionally, spiritually, and mentally will increase their quality of life.

Electronic Health Records

Besides the didactic areas mentioned above, one area that continues to expand is the nursing program’s clinical labs and use of simulation to reinforce classroom techniques.

Since the fall of 2016, the college has incorporated electronic health record (EHR) software for nursing program semesters one through five and the graduate program year one. As students complete their labs in the Mary Jane Rawlinson Geertsen Nursing Learning Center (NLC), they record what they did in the EHR system.

"Students do not spend time searching for a piece of information in a paper chart," says Colleen Robertson Tingey (AS ’82, BS ’88), NLC supervisor. “With EHR, they glance over the patient’s summary boxes or view related documents in the chart. Most important, we teach the process of charting so they can input descriptions of treatments and patient reaction.”

To teach these concepts, the college selected an EHR system called MedAffinity. It can be adapted to new curriculum content, ideas, and standards, which means that the system does not dictate the way the program must be used.

The NLC also created standardized patients within the system. As cases unfolded from one semester to another, data and documents related to that patient become available in the system. The information can be reset for each lab so students from each class have the same experience and opportunity to complete the scenarios.

Assistant professor Dr. Deborah O. Himes (BS ’91) sees additional benefits in teaching students how to document their work beyond just their legal protection. “In a sense, learning how to chart well makes you a better nurse because you think about the outcomes you have to chart when you get to the end,” says Himes. “You do a care for a patient, and you go back to chart it, and you can evaluate how it went based on how the patient reacts.”

College administration realizes that using EHR turns static simulation scenarios into a truly interactive environment as faculty and simulation staff can assess a student’s charting along with the rest of the simulation experience.

ECG: The Outbreak of Success

by Steven Tibbits

Usually a visit from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a reason for concern. However, last March, the CDC representatives who visited the College of Nursing at Brigham Young University were not responding to an epidemic; instead, they were meeting with associate professor Dr. Beth Luthy (MS ’09) and assistant teaching professor Lacey Eden (BS ’02, MS ’09) to discuss their work on vaccine awareness.

“We came to [Provo] to highlight [BYU’s nursing] faculty as vaccine advocates and what do they’re doing to prepare future leaders to be vaccine advocates and what they’re doing for risk communications and vaccine-hesitant parents,” says Jennifer Hamborsky, a health education specialist at the CDC and one of the primary authors of the CDC’s famous “Pink Book,” a handbook that provides physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, and others with the most comprehensive information on routinely used vaccines and the diseases they prevent.

The CDC—a federal organization described as the nation’s health protection agency—is well known for responding to disease outbreaks such as the Zika and Ebola viruses. However, the CDC’s work includes many other facets of public health, including promoting vaccinations among Americans.

Initially the CDC came to highlight Luthy and Eden as recipients of the CDC’s Childhood Immunization Champion Award. (Luthy received the Utah honor in 2016, and Eden in 2017.)

In 2015, Luthy was appointed by President Obama to serve on the Advisory Commission on Childhood Vaccines, and she serves as its interim chair. Eden played a critical role in the passing of Utah House Bill 308, which requires parents who choose to exempt their children from vaccinations to complete an educational module (developed by Eden and several nursing students) that teaches about the risks associated with being unvaccinated.

After touring the Mary Jane Rawlinson Geertsen Nursing Learning Center (NLC), the CDC realized there was a whole immunization team at BYU. The scope of their project expanded to obtain footage for a separate project they were working on that highlights nursing schools across the country that instill the importance of immunizations in nursing students.

Some of the topics captured that day include the college’s birthing simulator, the high-fidelity manikins, a classroom situation, lab procedures, and pediatric scenarios. All of the footage shot was in the NLC— with various students and faculty members participating—and incorporated something about immunizations.

(Note: The college will share links to the materials once they become available.)

“The expected outcomes are that there will be several video resources for health-care providers and there will also be video resources that will go into an undergraduate nursing curriculum, IRUN (immunization resources for undergraduate nursing),” Hamborsky says.

The interviewing also included a special focus on Eden’s Best for Baby mobile app as well as her immunization-exemption module (see the spring 2016 magazine for related stories) and a children’s book written by Luthy about the importance of vaccinations (see the spring 2014 magazine). All are hopeful that the visit will produce meaningful results in the world of vaccination promotion.

“Beth and Lacey are clearly superstars, and the facility is wonderful and state of the art,” says Hamborsky. “It is great to have the opportunity to share their work—not that it hasn’t already been, but we’ll be able to highlight it nationally.”

“It was surreal to be interviewed by the leaders of the immunization world,” Eden says. “I had a feeling of validation that all of our hard work is making a difference.”

Luthy feels similarly. “Thanks to the efforts of so many people in the College of Nursing, I believe the College of Nursing is definitely on the radar of the CDC.”
Nursing the Impoverished

BY CALVIN PETERSEN

It is no secret that poverty is a big problem. The American Council on Science and Health went so far as to call it “the world’s deadliest problem.” In fact, nearly 29,000 children under the age of five die every day because of poverty, according to UNICEF. As global leaders struggle to find solutions, nursing students at Brigham Young University have found a unique way to develop understanding and compassion for the impoverished.

An Exercise in Empathy

As they learn the Healer’s Art, fourth-semester nursing students at BYU gain Christlike empathy for their patients by participating in a poverty simulation. First conducted by Missouri Community Action, the simulation creates a community of more than 20 volunteers who act as bank tellers, pawnbrokers, grocery store cashiers, schoolteachers, mortgage collectors, and other community personnel. Eighty students populate the simulated community as they role-play the lives of low-income families. Associate teaching professor Gaye Ray and Provost Community Action executive director Karen McCandless organize the simulation every semester.

Before the 2018 winter semester simulation, Ray told students, “We hope that by inviting you to walk in the shoes of the impoverished, in a small way you will understand what it is like to have a short amount of money and an abundance of stress. We hope you will be more sensitive to the feelings of those who are living in crisis and more thoughtful in your future career.”

Students participating in the activity randomly become members of 16 different families. Each family was given a packet with information describing the family’s situation and its members, based on real-life stories and people.

Family members only had a few minutes to make sense of the transportation passes, identification cards, bills, and money that spilled from thick manila envelopes before the whistle blew. Then the first of four 15-minute simulated weeks began. And chaos followed.

The Boling Family Strikes Out

As students raced to their jobs, school, the bank, the grocery store, and other community stations, five students role-playing as members of the Boling family quickly realized how stressful the poverty simulation would be.

To begin with, because 42-year-old Ben Boling (portrayed by Shelby Benally) recently lost his job, the family barely had money to purchase transportation passes so that 39-year-old Betty Boling (portrayed by Amy Goodfel), 16-year-old Barbara (portrayed by Amy Goodfel), and 10-year-old Bart Boling (portrayed by Jane Goodfel) could get to her full-time job.

Luckily the school bus picking up the Boling’s three children—pregnant 16-year-old Barbara (portrayed by Amy Sutherland), 8-year-old Brian (portrayed by Jane Goodfel), and 10-year-old Bart (portrayed by Joanna Oster)—was free. However, after only a week, Ben had a stroke and was hospitalized for the remainder of the simulation. To make things even more stressful, Barbara was expelled from school, and the two boys were suspended for cheating.

Betty tried to put on a brave face as her family fell apart around her.

The last three weeks of the simulation were hard. At one point, Barbara was taken by the sheriff to juvenile hall for possession of illegal drugs. Then the electricity was turned off because Betty could not make the payments: “This is so stressful,” said Betty. “I feel like I am the only one taking care of things. I work full-time, so I do not have time to buy food and pay bills, my husband is out, and I have three kids.”

In the final week of the simulation, the sheriff arrived to take Betty to jail for defaulting on a bank loan. Barbara tried to cash Betty’s last check to make bail, but the bank refused to help an underage customer. Barbara looked around frantically, hoping for some aid in a hopeless situation. Then the whistle blew a final time, and the event ended.

Although the simulation may not have been real, the stress was real, and every student came to know, if just for a moment, part of what it feels like to be impoverished.

“Overall, nursing student empathy increased significantly as a result of poverty simulation participation,” concluded Ray. Ray’s research suggested that students had specific impactful moments during the simulation, whether from their assigned roles, from the extreme behaviors they observed, or from their interaction with community resources. Nevertheless, Ray does not expect a three-hour simulated experience to change students’ perceptions or understandings of poverty completely. He hopes that students become sensitive to, and more aware of, some of the struggles of the impoverished.

The poverty simulation taught BYU nursing students that, while they may not be able to solve the “world’s deadliest problem” of poverty overnight, they can help solve the health challenges of their patients today. “Even though we can’t change their whole world with just one act,” said Lauren Young, “we can do something.”
Taking the Initiative for Mentored Learning

By Jonathan Schroeder

Fifth-semester BYU nursing student Jeana Escobar has never been afraid to take initiative. At the age of 16, Escobar performed her first surgical operation after her dog developed a tumor on the scruff of his neck. Before her parents could stop her, Escobar went to her dad’s tool bench, found some sharp tools, and took the tumor out herself (much to her parents’ dismay and the vet’s amazement).

Now years later, Escobar’s initiative has led her to a new project—a unique mentored-learning opportunity to develop a post-fall assessment tool for nursing homes.

It all started in Escobar’s second-semester gerontology course. Associate teaching professor Dr. Blaine Winters paused during the lecture to mention he was interested in writing a paper on post-fall assessments. “Whenever a patient falls in a medical setting, you need to do a thorough assessment to make sure they are okay before you put them back into bed,” Escobar says. “But often in a long-term care facility, the person who finds the patient does not have the proper training to conduct those assessments.”

She continues, “In high school, my teacher always talked about the importance of getting involved in your discipline during college. It is the best time because you have time and you have plenty of opportunities to interact with professors. The only thing holding you back is yourself. So when I heard Blaine mention this paper, I knew I needed to take advantage of this opportunity.”

Within a few weeks, Escobar was hired as a research assistant and began meeting with Winters and assistant teaching professor Tracy Dustin, her new mentors. Together, the three of them sifted through dozens of studies and academic articles for information on post-fall assessments. Much to their surprise, only four articles have been published on the subject over the past two decades. The team made a decision that none of them had anticipated: instead of just writing a paper, they would develop a standardized post-fall assessment tool.

The post-fall assessment tool they developed considers the advanced trauma life support (ATLS) program as well as other post-trauma assessments. It makes providing better patient care straightforward for long-term care facility staff. And while some college projects seem like busywork, Escobar says she has enjoyed being fully involved in this opportunity.

“The professors serve as mentors and are so supportive,” Escobar says. “They make me feel like I am an equal member of the team. I do not feel like it is their project and I am just a footnote somewhere, helping them file papers. I am equally involved with them, and they value my input.”

After the development of the tool, Escobar, Winters, and Dustin worked with the College of Nursing media team to create training videos explaining the tool to long-term care facility personnel. The videos are part of a training campaign introduced at care facilities in Utah and expand to provide more healthcare nurses to eliminate confusion. The videos at the Utah Nurses Association Conference in September.

THE COLLEGE OF NURSING’S MENTORED-LEARNING PROGRAM

As announced in 2016, the college began a mentored-learning campaign to raise money so that faculty can receive in-house grants to fund mentoring of students through various projects. This funding benefits students as they are mentored by faculty to advance the discipline and ensures the quality and commitment of the next generation of nurse scholars. Donations—large and small—have been made by kind alumni and friends of the college. The campaign has reached 38 percent its goal and continues to grow; please consider making a donation online at give.byu.edu/nursing.
By Jonathan Schroeder

For the past five years, Night of Nursing has been a highly anticipated event for nursing students and alumni alike. This year was no exception. In March, more than 425 BYU alumni and friends of the College of Nursing at Brigham Young University came together to network, reminisce, and—uniquely, this year—hear from a former nursing faculty member, Barbara Perry (left). With participants at 40 different locations across the nation tuning in to hear her remarks, this year’s gatherings became the largest college-sponsored alumni event.

Many alumni may not be aware that Sister Perry, a distinguished nursing professional, is a graduate of the LDS Hospital School of Nursing and spent 15 years at LDS Hospital in Salt Lake City. During that time, she became the head nurse for the labor and delivery unit, which averaged 500 deliveries per month (about 17 babies per day).

“Because of my preparation and experience in obstetrics, it was always a special blessing to be there with family and friends as ‘new life came,’ ” she recalled. “It never became routine, and it was always a thrill.”

She later accepted a teaching position at BYU, where she taught associate-level nursing courses for four years. During this time, she met and married Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

“I will be forever grateful for my nursing education and experience that allowed me to provide the necessary care for my dearest parents,” Sister Perry said. In the years following her marriage, she used her nursing skills to care for not only her late husband but also her parents, who required extensive care during the final years of their lives.

“I wish you success in your careers as nurses, for those who are already nurses and for those who are becoming,” she concluded. “It’s a great profession, it gives you a lot of opportunities for different work experiences, different time shifts, and it will bless your lives. I pray that you will go forward and enjoy and appreciate the blessings of such a profession.”

This event allowed university and nursing alumni and friends to join in small groups around the nation to learn about current college happenings, to network, and to reminisce about campus experiences.

Many volunteer hosts for the evening noted how easy it was to sponsor their event because of the love they received from the college with almost everything needed to produce their gathering: marketing materials, host guide, and door prizes with raffle tickets.

The next Night of Nursing is Thursday, March 7, 2019. There are two ways to participate: Host. Let us know if you are willing to host an event in your community by emailing nursingsg@byu.edu. Attend. In February 2019, visit nightofnursing.com to view location details.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2018 HOSTS:

AE Northwest AR Chapter/Taggart Barron
AZ Phoenix Chapter/Diane Oakes
AZ Tucson/Cheryl Stewart (BS ’84, BS ’89)
CA Anaheim/Mariellen Serrone (BS ’79, BS ’84)
CA Bakersfield/Dan Moyes (BS ’72, MS ’86)
CA Fresno/Joan Goss (BS ’76)
CA LA North Chapter/Steve Bush
CA Sacramento/Susan Manning Hawkins (BS ’73)
CA Silicon Valley Chapter/Tina Hill
CO Denver/Craig and Nancy Tibbitts
DC Washington Chapter/Sarah Jensen
FL Southwest Chapter/Doug Lewis
ID Boise/Tammy Burt Hampton (BS ’95)
ID Chubbuck/David P. and Chasle A Adams (both BS ’75)
ID Idaho Falls/Kevin McEwan
MK Chaska/Melissa Heinonen (BS ’07)
MO St. Louis Chapter/Byron Goodrich
NC Apex/Emily Vest Covey (BS ’08)
NE Lincoln Chapter/Aaron Robinson
NE Omaha/Paige Romero (BS ’14)
NM Albuquerue Chapter/Jared Rounsville
NV Elko Chapter/Julie Billin
NV Las Vegas/Tracey Bates Long (BS ’86)

425
nursing
alumni

On March 1, 2018, 425 College of Nursing alumni, students, and friends gathered in 40 locations around the United States.

ONE EASTERN UNITED STATES HOST EXPLAINED how their group was meant to come together that night.

During the evening, group members shared how they use the Healer’s art in their homes. The spouse of an alum who recently moved to the state told of the story they had with trying to get pregnant and about her two difficult miscarriages. She talked about how her husband was able to care for her and help her in ways that she wouldn’t have thought of herself.

Later in the evening, as most of the guests departed, another alumna thanked the woman who discussed her pregnancy issues. She told how she recently had a miscarriage at 17.5 weeks and was still struggling to find peace. It was traumatic, and medical professionals did not help her through the experience, leaving her feeling empty and confused.

Four nursing alumnae revealed that they had all had miscarriages. Two are labor and delivery nurses and have cared for patients who had lost a baby in utero. One is an FNP and practices in an OB-GYN clinic doing women’s health.

“It was very clear that our [Night of Nursing] group was meant to be together,” says the host. “Because one person shared her story, it allowed someone who was struggling to open up, and we were all able to comfort her through our experiences. The night did not fix her struggle or pain, but I hope that she felt love and support from all of us, and I feel that she did.”

Another interesting note is that several people did not want to come to the activity, and they almost chose not to attend. But they came, and we had a great night together,” says the host. “I learned once again that God is in the details of our lives through the experiences that happened tonight. I am sharing this because I want others to know that what we are doing is making a difference and bringing people closer together and closer to Christ.”

Feedback from each event was similar, as alumni shared experiences of how the activity seemed to strengthen them—best friends reuniting in Texas, answers to prayers in Nevada, a job prospect in Utah, business opportunities established in California, and so on. Story after story reflects on the value of alumni coming together to network, reminisce, and have fun.
Compassionate Individuals Receive College

DAISY Awards

By Calvin Petersen

The College of Nursing at Brigham Young University partnered with the DAISY Foundation to recognize assistant teaching professor Gaye Ray and nursing student McKenzie Weir for their extraordinary compassion.

The DAISY Foundation is a nonprofit organization, established in 1999, by the family of Patrick Barnes. He died from complications of immune thrombocytopenic purpura, an autoimmune disease, at the age of 33. The Barnes family decided to do something positive to honor him. After his death, they founded DAISY—an acronym for diseases attacking the immune system—to thank the nurses who cared for him and recognize exceptional nurses around the world.

DAISY Faculty Award

Associate teaching professor Gaye Ray received the DAISY Faculty Award with nominations from four different individuals. Their reasons for why she is deserving center on her compassionate personality.

“Nothing feels better than when Professor Ray is proud of you. The day is a little brighter after talking with her,” said McKenna, a BYU nursing student. Other students had similar things to say about Ray.

Ray’s compassion and empathetic personality are what make her such a remarkable nurse. She is kind, generous, and always putting her patients first. She is a role model for her classmates and a shining example of what it means to be a compassionate nurse.

“I certainly never intended this cause to become such a huge part of my life and for my family and me to sacrifice so much for it, but it is worth it,” says Christensen. “Not only are we serving these children and their families by bringing them joy, but we are bringing happiness into the lives of so many volunteers with the opportunity to create a little magic for children around the world who are going through so much.”

By Calvin Petersen

BYU alumna Holly W. Christensen (BS ’06) smiled in wonder as the assembling of the last yarn wig finished and The Magic Yarn Project’s largest-ever wig workshop came to a close.

“No one leaves these workshops without a smile on their face or without feeling like their simple act of love will make the world a better place,” said Christensen, a cofounder of The Magic Yarn Project.

The nonprofit organization began in 2015 when Christensen, a resident of Palmer, Alaska, discovered that the daughter of her BYU nursing classmate Rachel Gammon Mecham (BS ’06) had lymphoma.

Shortly before that, she had been praying for something to help her feel more comfort, peace, joy, and purpose in her life (despite having three life-threatening diseases attacking the immune system). She followed this practice with peers, classmates, and people she meets at church. “If I didn’t have someone’s name important, and she follows this practice with peers, classmates, and people she meets at church. “No one leaves these workshops without a smile on their face or without feeling like their simple act of love will make the world a better place,” said Christensen, a cofounder of The Magic Yarn Project.

She sincerely cares about each person and does not act like she is better than anyone else. "Kayla, the nursing student who nominated Weir, wrote, “Kenzie is always the one in class to keep things in perspective and reminds those that struggle that they are not cut out to be nurses. She follows up on personal situations and offers support to her peers—perhaps the poster child for seeking and giving help.”

The College of Nursing congratulates Gaye Ray and McKenzie Weir for this significant recognition.

Unique Jobs: The Magic Yarn Project

Crafting Yarn Wigs for Children Battling Cancer

By Calvin Petersen

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The College of Nursing congratulates Gaye Ray and McKenzie Weir for this significant recognition.
Melissa Scott Swensen (BS ’99) received the President’s Volunteer Service Award from Second Lady Karen Pence in April. Swensen serves as an American Red Cross volunteer nurse at the National Intrudig Center of Excellence in Fort Belvoir, Virginia, where she helps wounded combat veterans who suffer from PTSD or TBI. She is also completing a psychiatric DNP at George Mason University, all while being a mother and the spouse of five.

Dr. Beth Cole, former college dean (2007-2012), celebrated her 75th birthday in March.

Judy W. Hunter (BS ’74) is reaching 45 years as the labor/delivery nurse manager for Utah Valley Hospital (formerly Utah Valley Regional Medical Center). She has also served for 44 years as a Life Flight-registered nurse for high-risk obstetrics and as an out-reach educator for the fetal heart monitoring program of the Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses.

Sandra Rogers (BS ’74) has served as BYU international vice president for more than 19 years. Last March, she was recognized on campus with the Alice Louise Reynolds Award. She is currently a quality specialist with responsibility for the Office of Patient Experience with Intermountain Healthcare, which has focused on establishing exceptional patient outcomes, safety, and patient care experiences.

Beth S. Vanderwalker (BS ’95) was invited to present at BYU-Utah’s Power to Become conference in February and spent two days speaking with healthcare and nursing students about her career, finding passion, and nursing.

Chorisse Marie Davis (BS ’97) recently celebrated her 20 years working for University of Utah Health. She is currently the business operations director for perioperative and trauma services, but she started at the university as a capture data clerk in the main operating room, gradually taking on advancing roles.

Tiffany Noss (BS ’97) graduated in May with an MSN degree with specialties in nursing education and care management from the University of Utah College of Nursing.

Jared W. Ollerton (BS ’98) is a nurse anesthe- tist at Madison Anesthesia in Rexburg, Idaho.

Ellen Larson Laccoarde (AS ’82) reached 20 years of employment with University of Utah Hospitals and Clinics as an RN nursing supervisor at Park Center in Orem, Utah.

Heidi V. Ferguson (BS ’90) is a 22-year lactation support volunteer with La Leche League International, as well as a public health nurse with the Utah County Health Department.

Marci Madruga Kuhn (BS ’93) is celebrating her 19 years. Last March, she was recognized internationally as a registered nurse for her work with the Alice Louise Reynolds Award (now known as the 19th floor Award of Honor) and was promoted home health from her wheelchair. She is a caring person who was known for her smile, and she worked at the University of Utah Hospital (then called LDS Hospital) for 35 years. He completed his career at the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System until his retirement in March 2013. Stanley, 69, died January 2018.

Carol Bissegger Pia (MS ’84) was instrumental in making sidewalks and buildings more accessible. Years later, Lana started a nonprofit business and was instrumental in making sidewalks and buildings in Utah more wheelchair accessible. As her health improved, she returned to nursing and promoted home health from her wheelchair. She became the nurse educator for the new physical rehabilitation center at Utah Valley Hospital until 2001 and then directed the auto-educational laboratory (pre-nursing simulation lab) for the BYU College of Nursing until she stopped working in 2004. Lana, 77, died March 2018.

Bonnie Varell Criddle Stricklan (AS ’71) is a nurse anesthetist at MedStar Washington Hospital Center in Washington, DC, and recently completed certifications for CRRN, ABLs (burn), and ATCN (trauma). From January to March of this year, she volunteered as a nurse on board Mercy Ships—an international charity that sponsors a large non-governmental fleet of hospital ships—where she worked along- side plastic surgeons and orthopedic sur- geons to fix basic bone malformations and cleft palates, perform burn scar revisions, and remove benign facial tumors.

Katie Bates (BS ’10). Alice (A-hui) Fetzer (BS ’14), and Ashley A. Langford (BS ’11) recently started the nursing master’s pro- gram at Brigham Young University.

Camil R. Schil (BS ’12) completed a law degree last year from Brigham Young Uni- versity focusing on geriatric nursing. She is driv- en to make a difference in healthcare by acting as a liaison between the clinical, legal, and ethical viewpoints, as well as by finding interdisciplinary solutions to complex healthcare issues.

Jennifer Stephenson Harlos (BS ’08) graduated in May with an MS in nursing with an emphasis in critical care. While at BYU she met and married Devon; they have two children and 21 grandchildren. She spent most of her career working as a labor and delivery nurse. Judith, 73, died January 2018.

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Alumni Updates

The following life sketches are not vetted and were obtained from online obituaries; they are meant to highlight the nursing influence each offered as college alumni.

Lana Brown (BS ’63) has been a nurse at BYU, Utah Valley University, and LDS Hospital for many years. She is currently the business operations director for the Office of Patient Experience with Intermountain Healthcare. She became director of rehabilitation at LDS Hospital until her MS became too severe. Years later, Lana started a nonprofit business and was instrumental in making sidewalks and buildings in Utah more wheelchair accessible. As her health improved, she returned to nursing and promoted home health from her wheelchair. She became the nurse educator for the new physical rehabilitation center at Utah Valley Hospital until 2001 and then directed the auto-educational laboratory (pre-nursing simulation lab) for the BYU College of Nursing until she stopped working in 2004. Lana, 77, died March 2018.

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Retiring Faculty

Debbie Edmunds, MSNED, RN, CNE
Assistant teaching professor Debbie Edmunds has helped hundreds of students along the pathway to nursing. Now, after eight years of teaching at the College of Nursing, Edmunds is leaving to serve another mission (Philippines) and spend more time with her 18 grandchildren. Edmunds never planned on becoming a nurse; her childhood dream was to become a teacher. That dream got put on hold after she met Gary Edmunds in a high school production of The Fantasticks. They wedded shortly after graduation in 1974.

She spent the next two decades raising the couple’s seven children while her husband worked in the construction industry. Her experiences raising children sparked an interest in nursing, especially after she delivered a baby who was stillborn.

In 1994, Edmunds returned to school and began working on an associate degree in nursing at Salt Lake Community College. Edmunds went on to earn a bachelor’s degree from BYU and a master’s degree in nursing education from the University of Utah.

After working as a registered nurse, Edmunds got a job as a childbirth educator at Intermountain Healthcare, and her passion for teaching resurfaced. She taught as a clinical instructor at both the University of Utah and Utah Valley University. Then, in 2007, she was approached with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity: organizing a licensed practical nurse (LPN) program for Mound Valley Applied Technology College.

Edmunds went on to serve as director of her LPN program for four straight years. During that time she learned about teaching at BYU. In 2010 she began at BYU as a clinical instructor, and she became a full-time faculty member in 2012.

In July 2016, Edmunds began a twelve-month leave of absence to serve an LDS mission with her husband in Fiji. While there, she made dozens of connections with nurses and hospital directors that eventually provided the basic framework for the college’s global health practicum in Fiji.

“It’s been such a blessing to me to know that I’ve been an instrument in the Lord’s hands to help people fulfill their dreams,” Edmunds says of her BYU experience. “Being at this university has been wonderful. It’s a great environment with devoted faculty and amazing students. It’s something that I will dearly miss.”

Goodbye to a Veteran Nurse

Ron S. Ulberg, MSNED, RN, CCRN
To colleagues and students alike, the name Ronald Ulberg is synonymous with passion. During a profession spanning more than two decades, Ulberg combined his two passions—nursing and veterans. In December 2017, Ulberg retired from Brigham Young University.

Ulberg’s nursing career started in 1988 when he became a licensed practical nurse after attending classes at Salt Lake Community College. He went on to get bachelor’s and master’s degrees in nursing from the University of Phoenix.

In 2002, Ulberg began working at BYU as an adjunct clinical instructor, helped chiefly as they applied their skills in a hospital setting. He became an assistant teaching professor in 2005 and an associate teaching professor in 2011. Throughout his teaching career he inspired students with a love of nursing and a desire to help others.

“The students seemed to connect with him and appreciated his approach,” says teaching professor Dr. Kent Blad.

Blad and Ulberg, who served together in the military, directed the veteran clinical practicum for their public and global health nursing course. The class focused on helping students understand the culture and lifestyle of military veterans and included an Honor Flight to Washington, DC.

In Ulberg’s military background, he worked as a nurse in the 144th Evacuation Hospital of the Utah Army National Guard, which deployed to Saudi Arabia in Operation Desert Storm. His experiences motivated him to help nursing students gain increased empathy and respect for those who serve their country in the armed forces.

Ulberg’s nursing career was doing clinical oversight for EMEDS training. In this role he instructed hundreds of National Guard and Army Reserve medical personnel on how to provide support in war zones. She also worked with Homeland Security to train national disaster-relief organizations on how to respond to every kind of disaster, from hurricanes to hostage situations.

Throughout her career Wing took on new nursing roles, including beginning as a simulation instructor at BYU in 2007. In 2015, Wing took a short break from teaching to serve as a mission nurse for the LDS Korea Seoul Mission.

Wing’s plans for retirement include working with several organizations to teach medical education in developing countries. “I’ll be leaving the university, but I’m not leaving nursing,” she says. Wing has worked with Healing Hands for Haiti and IVUmed in past humanitarian efforts and intends to resume those efforts.

Furthermore, Wing will continue to volunteer regularly at the Provo Food and Care Coalition. She and her husband also want to serve another mission.

Reflecting on her experience as a nurse, she says, “What made my nursing career worthwhile was the opportunity I had to serve people every day. I love that experience of giving of myself. There’s a reward that comes from caring that’s far greater than monetary rewards.”

Taking to New Heights

Debra K. Wing, MSNED, RN, CNE
From extreme sports and nursing to humanitarian work, assistant teaching professor Debra K. Wing is not afraid of trying new things. Now, after teaching at the College of Nursing for 11 years, she will again embrace something new—retirement.

Growing up, Wing watched her two older sisters study nursing and begin their careers. She wanted to become a nurse as well. However, in her freshman year at BYU, she decided to study business instead at Stevens-Henager College. She married Kelly Wing on February 12, 1980.

After graduating with her business degree, Wing spent the next 10 years as a businesswoman. “I always felt something was missing,” she says, “so, with very small children, I went back to nursing school and finished my bachelors’.” To help pay for her nursing degree, Wing joined the Air Force alongside her husband.

One of the things Wing enjoyed most about her military nursing career was doing clinical oversight for EMD’s training. In this role she instructed hundreds of National Guard and Army Reserve medical personnel on how to provide support in war zones. She also worked with Homeland Security to train national disaster-relief organizations on how to respond to every kind of disaster, from hurricanes to hostage situations.

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New Appointment

Ronald S. Ulberg, MSNEd, RN, CCRN
Goodbye to a Veteran Nurse

The College of Nursing recently appointed a new chair to lead its alumni association board.

Curtis C. Newman (AS ’83) of South Jordan, Utah, will oversee the volunteer committee and support the alumni networking efforts of the college. He currently serves as director of care management for the Union Pacific Railroad Employees Health Systems and spent the last 35 years with University of Utah Health as its director of specialty services, risk management, or clinical operations roles. His education includes an MBA with a focus in marketing from Brigham Young University and a juris doctor degree from University of Idaho College of Law. Newman joined the alumni board in 2013.

“The future of nursing at BYU is bright,” says Newman. “As my generation prepares to pass the baton to the next generation of nurses, I look forward to adding these new students to our rolls and reconnecting with current nursing alumni.”

The outgoing chair is Jean M. Bigelow (AS ’80, BS ’82) of Murray, Utah. She is a quality consultant for the Intermountain Medical Center Office of Patient Experience.

Under her leadership the college alumni board has expanded the number of opportunities for alumni to network and connect in events such as the annual Night of Nursing (alumni gatherings in local communities), the semiannual Speed “Nurseworking” Luncheons, the homecoming alumni service project, a wig workshop for The Magic Yarn Project, and a board-sponsored luncheon during BYU Women’s Conference.

Bigelow believes the greatest honor of serving as the chair was the gift of being associated with an organization committed to blessing lives in the manner of Jesus Christ. Additionally, she had the opportunity to speak at each college convocation and welcome students into the association, as well as celebrate their receiving a nursing pin.

The college alumni board meets each month during the academic year (either in person or via a conference call) and considers ways to expand the association’s influence with nursing alumni. If you would like to be part of this group, please contact nursingpr@byu.edu for details.
The Faith to Do His Will

By Erica Ostergar, University Communications

Associate professor Dr. Karlen (Beth) E. Luthy recently spoke at a BYU devotional about having faith even during times of suffering.

To begin her address, Luthy invited attendees to go on a journey with her by remembering a time when they were surviving a difficult trial. She taught that the pain and suffering of our trials are a part of what Jesus felt when He entered the inhospitable conditions of the Garden of Gethsemane to suffer for all mankind. Jesus submitted Himself to the Father’s will even though it meant He would suffer. So, Luthy asked, “How can we have the faith and the strength to follow the Savior’s example, willingly submitting to our Father’s will even when we are in the throes of despair?” She shared two tips.

Understanding the Purpose of Suffering

In order to submit to His will, Luthy said that we first understand the purpose of suffering. Humans are conditioned to avoid suffering. Humans are conditioned to avoid pain, anguish, misery, and torment, and then, because we know what it feels like to be wounded, we have compassion for others who are suffering and can help to heal them,” said Luthy. “Essentially, our loving Heavenly Father uses times of suffering to transform us into an instrument in His hands—that instrument, armed with a newly developed nobility of spirit, is compelled to help relieve the suffering of His children.”

Trust in the Lord

Luthy also recommended trusting in the Lord. He is good, and He can guide us through our struggles. “It may seem a little messy from our limited and earthly perspective, but Heavenly Father knows exactly how to guide us to a better destination,” said Luthy. Luthy shared a personal story about a time she suffered and had to trust in the Lord. When her son Michael was born, she and her family went through a painful experience. At birth, Michael’s bile ducts were damaged, which led to problems with his liver and caused him to need intense medical care. The family had to move. Michael had a failing liver, then a severe infection, and was even in a coma for a time. Before another surgery, Michael’s father gave him a blessing and turned his fate over to the Lord. Luthy and her husband trusted in the Lord, even if it meant sending Michael home to Him. They knew God was good. And in the end, Michael didn’t need the surgery. He began to stabilize and eventually recovered. This experience of suffering, however, helped Luthy realize that she needed to have faith in God.

Luthy concluded by saying, “When you are asked to take a journey to the lowest part of the valley, to your own personal Gethsemane, have faith. Don’t stop believing. Keep on going! And always look for the sweet spring of living water to sustain you during the most troubling times.”

This article is adapted from Luthy’s devotional address, given June 12, 2018. The full text is available at speeches.byu.edu.

A Lifelong Goal of Serving Others

By Mindy Longhurst

Associate teaching professor Dr. Shelly J. Reed (AS ’81, BS ’84) grew up on a farm in southwestern Idaho. Even though she is from a small town, she always had big dreams to become a nurse and help people. This attitude and approach sum up the way she conquers life—with positivity and by using her life to bless others around her.

As a 16-year-old, Reed had an experience that shaped the course of her life. While she was volunteering at a local hospital, one of the doctors invited her to see a baby being born. Reed says, “We got to see the delivery, and it was the coolest thing I had ever seen. I just knew that I wanted to be a labor and delivery nurse after that. I was certain of my career path after seeing the birth.”

Since then, Reed has continued to learn about nursing while helping others. She is an instrument in His hands. Armed with a newly developed nobility of spirit, [we are] compelled to help relieve the suffering of His children.”

Reed learned Spanish as an adult and has been able to teach with teams in Ecuador, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Guatemala. “It is difficult,” she says, “but I have prayed hard to have the gift of tongues. Although I wouldn’t say I received it, the Lord has helped me throughout the process.”

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Outside of the college, Reed has served on several humanitarian trips teaching maternal and newborn classes with teams from the LDS Church’s Humanitarian Department. She learned Spanish as an adult and has been able to teach with teams in Ecuador, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Guatemala. “It is difficult to instruct in Spanish because I learned it a little later in life. Plus, medical language is very technical and can be hard to teach in Spanish,” she says. “But I have prayed hard to have the gift of tongues.”

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Throughout a successful career, Reed continues to focus on the amazing experience she had as a youth; that one opportunity has led to her doing marvelous things in the world of nursing. Reed even has a goal of attending 60 LDS temples before she turns 60. Although a few years away from her deadline, she has already visited 58 temples and should finish her goal in 2019. Reed loves being able to serve in the temple for those who have passed on, especially for her ancestors. It is fun for her to realize that she spends most of her “me” time on family history and going to the temple.

She is married and is the proud mother of seven children and grandmother of four. Throughout a successful career, Reed continues to focus on the amazing experience she had as a youth; that one opportunity has led to her doing marvelous things in the world of nursing.
Merrill and Raymond studied the nicotine level of ingredients in EC solutions.
Faculty Achievements

College of Nursing faculty members continue to showcase their dedication to and expertise in the healthcare industry through a variety of achievements and publications. Following are a few notable examples of what they have accomplished.

**PRESIDENTS DELIVERED**


Two 1250 graduate mentoring awards were presented to teaching professor Dr. Kent Blad and assistant teaching professor Dr. Craig Nuttall for work on projects with graduate students.

Four $120,000 university and college mentoring environment grants (MEGs) were awarded to assistant teaching professor Stacie Hansaker, assistant teaching professor Dr. Neil Peterson, assistant teaching professor Dr. Michael Thomas, and assistant professor Dr. Julie Valentine to support the identified initiatives in the nursing program curriculum.

The college also completed his doctorate of nursing practice from the University of Utah in April. Teaching professor Dr. Shari Palmer obtained a Fulbright U.S. Scholar grant and will spend the 2018-2019 school year working on projects with Paraguay.

Dr. Julie Valentine will serve as the chairperson for the national title IX committee of the International Association of Forensic Nurses.

The college earned a gold-level Healthy Workforce Award for the 2018–2019 school year working on projects with Paraguay.

Dr. Eden Luttrell, Macintosh, and Ray, along with graduate students Sarah Davis, Kaye Ray, Chelsea Schultz, and Katie Hill, were selected by the United Nations Foundation to represent the UNICEF, she received the Excellence in Teaching Award from the BYU College of Nursing. She earned a gold-level Healthy Workforce Award for the 2018–2019 school year working on projects with Paraguay.

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Watch a video from the event at nursing.byu.edu

Nursing Class of 1958
60-Year Reunion
May 2018