

vanderbilt nurse

FALL 2006

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embracing
diversity

Remembering the past
and looking toward the future



dean's note

As I write this, I'm in the refurbished living room of Godchaux Hall. Our living room, which still contains the glass cabinets for our artifacts, is now an architectural hallmark for the school. Some of you will remember the wooden floors which we restored. Frances Edwards (M.S.N. '76, B.S.N. '53) reminded me that dances also used to be held here!

We have been busy and have a lot to share with you. After two years, the Godchaux Hall renovations are officially complete. Everyone has moved into their new offices. The remaining faculty has all vacated the basement of Medical Center North and the triple-wide trailer, and I am permanently located on the first floor of our "new" building. The six floors, plus the basement, have been completely overhauled and updated to better serve our students, faculty and staff. We have

included some pictures of the new Godchaux Hall in this issue and encourage you to visit our Web site to see more.

We are moving forward on several projects. We are working closely with the Pan American Health Organization to take our relationship to the next level of collaboration. We took Chancellor Gordon Gee on a road trip throughout Middle Tennessee to visit community health and VUSN practice locations. We are starting expansion and renovation of our Vine Hill clinic. We had wonderful attendance at the 2006 Graduation Ceremony this May and just recently at our pinning ceremony. Our VUSN students continue as ambassadors to the community via many projects and activities. We have worked with VUMC, with our Lipscomb student externships as well as the hospital nursing staff's pursuit of Magnet Recognition status by the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

In this issue we also take a look at three important topics that impact us all: diversity, obesity and cancer. You will learn about the incredible story of Inez Bramley who attended VUSN in the 1960s, and in a separate article, you can look inside VUSN's approach to diversity today. We also introduce you to a program that brings the public school system, VUSN faculty and VUSN nursing students together to make a difference in promoting healthy eating and exercise in children. Lastly, what is the best way to teach realistic expectations and coping skills to patients, family members and friends of cancer survivors? VUSN researchers have developed a multimedia guide that confronts these tough topics on the road to recovery.

I hope there is something in this issue for everyone to read and enjoy. E-mail me any comments or suggestions at colleen.conway-welch@vanderbilt.edu.

Colleen Conway-Skelch

Nancy and Hilliard Travis Professor and Dean of the School of Nursing

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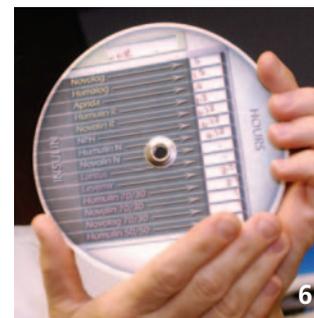
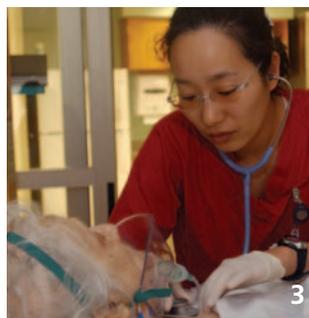
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VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY SCHOOL
OF NURSING MISSION AND
VALUES STATEMENT

We value excellence and innovation in preserving and advancing the art and science of nursing in the scholarly domains of education, research and practice. These values are pursued through the integration of information technology and faculty-student interactions and transactions, while embracing cultural and academic diversity.



vanderbiltnurse

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From left, Peter Buerhaus, Ph.D., Andrea Higham of Johnson & Johnson, Curt Selquist of Johnson & Johnson, and Colleen Conway-Welch, Ph.D., Dean of the School of Nursing.

THE JOHNSON & JOHNSON CAMPAIGN FOR NURSING'S FUTURE RAISES \$350,000 FOR TENNESSEE

To help ease Tennessee's growing shortage of nurses, a statewide coalition of hospitals, nursing schools and nursing organizations recently joined Johnson & Johnson for the Promise of Nursing for Tennessee gala.

More than 425 local nurses and health care professionals attended the event to celebrate the nursing profession while raising \$350,000, with 100 percent of the proceeds going toward regional nursing school grants, faculty fellowships and student scholarships.

"Tennessee is experiencing a nursing shortage that will only intensify as the demand for health care increases," said Peter Buerhaus, Ph.D., senior associate dean for Research and Valere Potter Professor of Nursing. "In spite of employment growth within the nursing profession, we continue to face a projected shortage due to the expected growth in population coupled with a soon-to-retire baby boomer generation – currently the largest portion of the nursing workforce."

According to a 2004 report issued by the Health Resources and Services Administration, Tennessee will experience a projected shortage of more than 13,000 registered nurses this year, increasing to more than 35,000 by 2020. Current projections show that the state will be able to meet only 53 percent of the demand for RNs by 2020.

In January 2006, the Campaign for Nursing's Future accepted the Ron Brown Award for Corporate Leadership on behalf of Johnson & Johnson. This award is the only presidential award to honor companies for the exemplary quality of their relationships with employees and communities.

Johnson and Johnson has invested more than \$23 million in its campaign for the nursing shortage. Peter Buerhaus is in charge of the evaluation component of the campaign.

– KATHY RIVERS

Medical Reserve Movement Gaining Momentum

VUSN's Stephen Guillot, director of the National Center for Emergency Preparedness, and VUSN student Courtney Baxter attended the Medical Reserve Corps National Leadership and Training Conference in Dallas, Texas.

"This was the first time we had all gotten together under one roof since Katrina," said Guillot. "We talked a lot about lessons learned that will help all of us prepare for future events."

U.S. Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona was the keynote speaker addressing a group of more than 500 gathered from municipalities throughout the country. The four-day event included updates and discussion groups in the areas of infectious disease, disaster medicine, hurricane response, crisis communications and successful collaborations among agencies.

"It was wonderful to talk with other public health officials and learn more about how the Medical Reserve Corps movement is gaining strength and serving a vital role," said Baxter.

During the event, attendees learned the Medical Reserve Corps program is

one of the five finalists for the prestigious Mitretek Innovations Award in Homeland Security, an award given by Harvard University identifying and highlighting effective government and private-public partnership solutions to homeland security concerns. The Medical Reserve Corps also reported it surpassed its 2006 goal of 20 percent growth reaching more than 400 units nationwide.

"It was refreshing to hear about all the accomplishments that units are making, both individually and nationally as a program," said Baxter. "It reminded me that we are working toward a goal and it's exciting to think we are rapidly reaching milestone after milestone."

– KATHY RIVERS



Left to Right, Front Row: Courtney Baxter, Elizabeth Fitch, Susan McNabb

Left to Right, Back Row: Stephen Guillot, U.S. Surgeon General Richard Carmona, Jennifer Price

For more information about the conference, visit: www.medicalreservecorps.gov.
For more information about the Middle Tennessee Unit, visit: www.mtmc.org.

Lipscomb extern Young Joo Hwang checks on a patient in VUMC's neurology ICU.

DANA JOHNSON



Schools Unite to Train Nurses

VUSN and VUMC nursing administration have been working together closely this summer to provide the David Lipscomb University B.S.N. students with their first externship opportunities.

In January 2006, VUSN welcomed its first class of 32 David Lipscomb students into an intensive VUSN program. When the students complete the program they will receive a B.S.N. from their home institution. VUMC pays for the difference in tuition between the two universities and offers loan forgiveness for students who agree to work at VUMC for two years after earning their B.S.N.

"The Lipscomb students are energized and are becoming more invested in VUMC with the level of hands-on education we're able to offer with programs like this summer's externship," said Linda Norman, D.S.N., senior associate dean of faculty at VUSN.

This summer, 17 of the Lipscomb students were accepted into the VUMC extern program with a total of 41 slots. The program is an intensive, eight-week session of job shadowing in one clinical area within the Medical Center. The goal is for students to learn nursing fundamentals and gain experience dealing with patients.

"You ask a student nurse about what scares them the most and they will say 'how to talk to patients and their families,'" said Debiante Peterman, Ph.D., M.S.N., R.N.C., director of nursing education and development.

"The program was designed to be a good recruiting and educational piece to give students an idea about what patient care options are available to them as

nursing graduates," said Betsy Bond, B.S.N., a consultant who has administered VUMC's externship program for more than a decade.

The students are placed in one of several different clinical areas such as the operating room, inpatient care, outpatient care, etc., for the entire session. Bond also developed three, all-day learning events throughout the session to give students a chance to debrief, focus on specific interventions and to rotate to other clinical areas.

Lipscomb extern Young Joo Hwang who worked in the Neurology ICU said, "It's been wonderful. It brings theory and lecture to life by giving hands-on experience."

She added, "At first I was scared about dealing with patients, and then I realized the more I talked to them, the more comfortable everyone is. They are just normal people."

Peterman explained that it can be very difficult for instructors to stuff an incredible amount of theory and clinical skills into the final two years of a B.S.N. program.

"We're all taking a critical look at how we can get students in front of patients sooner," said Peterman. "You can pass the nursing state boards without having good clinical skills, but when you want to provide good care to a patient you will need to have had excellent hands-on clinical experiences."

Each year, one-third of VUMC's new nursing hires are recent graduates. To recruit and orient nurses costs anywhere from \$65,000 for a general acute care nurse to \$100,000 for a critical care nurse. The extern program is just another innovative way to get nurses prepared for success in nursing through the collaboration between VUMC and VUSN.

"They want to be here," said Bond. "They are fresh, excited and soaking the clinical experiences up like sponges."

— KATHY RIVERS

The newest members of the Iota Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International were inducted in May. Pictured from left to right: Lisa Hockersmith, Cindy Barrett, Suzie Csorna, Cory Mueller, Pam Schwartz, Brandee Madden, Tori Garcia, Danielle Levison, Martha Goodyear.



MARY DONALDSON



HUTCHISON HONORED WITH BECKY CULPEPPER AWARD

Sarah Hutchison, R.N., VUMC's Trauma Unit manager, was honored as the first recipient of the Becky Culpepper Award. The joint VUMC/VUSN honor was presented by Chief Nursing Officer Marilyn Dubree, Dean Colleen Conway-Welch and DeMoyne Culpepper (Rebecca's daughter) during Nurses Week activities in May. The award recognized Hutchison for her continued excellence in leadership and commitment to nursing education. She has mentored her staff and opened many doors for young health care providers to enter the world of trauma nursing.

VUSN Showcases Community Health Partnership at Mercury Courts

Vanderbilt Chancellor Gordon Gee, escorted by VUSN Dean Colleen Conway-Welch and the school's senior associate deans, recently visited a VUSN-run program at Mercury Courts, a former motel refurbished as apartments for people who would otherwise be homeless. VUSN's involvement underscores the university's commitment to excellence in education while also providing a valuable service to the community.

"We offer our residents a period of grace to help them build themselves back up," explained Rusty Lawrence, executive director of Urban Housing Solutions, the area non-profit that operates the 170-unit complex.

Carol Etherington, M.S.N., assistant professor of Nursing, has been heading a community health program for several years. VUSN nursing students complete their community health clinical rotation at

this site each semester. Many of the students have not worked closely with this underserved population who can be very difficult to connect with. Etherington points out that many of the Mercury Courts residents have been living in the margins of society and have had some traumatic event derail them, such as substance abuse or depression.

"We as people and health care professionals need to bridge the issue of fear between an 'us versus them' mentality," said Etherington. "When you get over the fear of our differences, you can make a huge impact on someone's life."

The program includes an annual health and wellness fair, cooking demonstrations, shopping trips for improved nutrition and sessions on chronic health issues such as diabetes.

"We come to Mercury Courts in time of desperation, and the help we receive is irreplaceable," said resident Max Hensley.

- KATHY RIVERS

Rusty Lawrence (far left) shows Chancellor Gordon Gee and the VUSN leadership around Mercury Courts.



NEIL BRAKE

Godchaux Hall Completes Phase One of Renovations

Renovations to Vanderbilt University School of Nursing's historic Godchaux Hall are complete. Staff and faculty have recently moved into refurbished space that reflects VUSN's growing offerings, particularly in the area of research. This is the first major renovation in more than 30 years to the Vanderbilt landmark originally erected in 1925 as a dormitory for 100 nursing students, along with a library and faculty offices. The outside structure has remained intact as construction crews have been working for several months to completely overhaul the building's interior.

"This project allows us to create a fully equipped research space with dry labs and offices to further expand our research efforts," said Colleen Conway-Welch, Ph.D., Dean of VUSN. "This beautiful new space has generated great enthusiasm and created an environment where our research mission will flourish."

VUSN's expanding doctoral program has relocated on the sixth floor next to a new rooftop terrace. Research space, exam rooms, behavioral labs, clinical intervention offices, and faculty and staff offices have moved to the fifth floor of the new Godchaux Hall. The Joint Center for Nursing Research, grants management, and other offices are now housed on the fourth floor. The top three floors also have additional conference rooms outfitted with the latest audio/visual technology. The heating and air conditioning system, plumbing, and electrical systems have all been replaced. Other work has included installing a new elevator, asbestos abatement, installing a sprinkler and fire system, and new electronic card access to the building.

The final phase concentrated on the basement and floors one through three. These floors are home to the Dean's office and administration, student services, the Office of Practice Management, the Office of Lifelong Learning, the Neonatal, Family



and Pediatric Nurse Practitioner programs as well as the Middle Tennessee Medical Reserve Corps. The third floor includes a nine-bed simulated lab with an additional critical care bed and critical care crib as well as classrooms. Educational informatics is an important emphasis in the VUSN curriculum so the building will have the latest educational equipment and wireless technology.

While most of Godchaux's interior is new – space, equipment and furniture – VUSN is holding on to its rich heritage by keeping the first floor living room intact. This room has long been a hub of activity for the school and has been updated and outfitted for multi-uses.

Fifty percent or \$1.2 million of the project is being funded by a National Institutes of Health National Center for Research Resources grant written by Peter Buerhaus, Ph.D., R.N., Valere Potter Professor in Nursing and senior associate dean of Research at VUSN. Additional funding was provided by key financial supporters especially the Godchaux family who matched the NIH grant and Nancy Travis and Robert Taylor (in honor of his wife, Ann) who furnished the "living room."

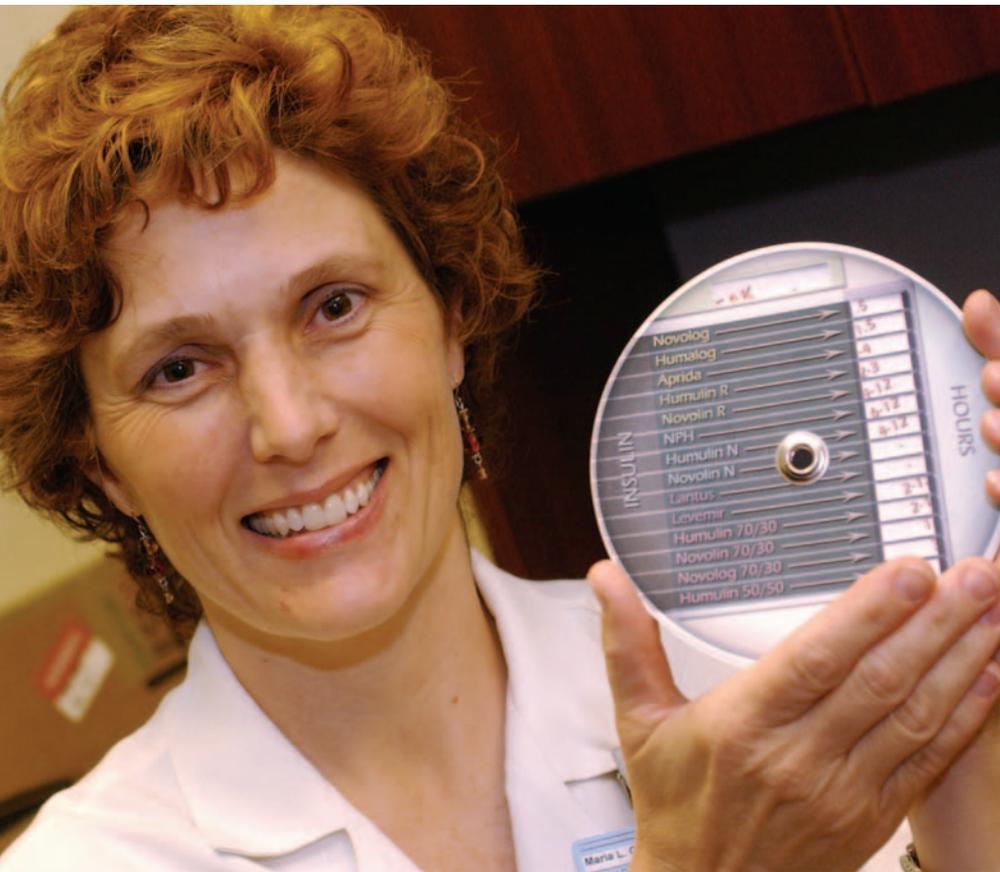
– KATHY RIVERS



PHOTOS BY SUSAN URMY

To see more photos of Godchaux Hall, visit the VUSN Web site at www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/nursing.

**Assistant Professor of Nursing
Maria Overstreet demonstrates
the insulin wheel.**



DANA JOHNSON

VUSN Professor Develops Insulin Wheel

With some cardboard and a pair of scissors, Assistant Professor of Nursing Maria Overstreet created a product that can help health care workers and their patients with diabetes. Overstreet is fascinated about how people learn. She’s constantly trying new ways to engage and teach students in Vanderbilt University School of Nursing’s nursing program. In 2004, she began working on an idea about how to present insulin information differently. Overstreet contacted Stephen Davis, M.D., Chief of Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism, who also

became interested in her idea and worked with her in choosing the most commonly used insulin.

“I was teaching nursing students on the neurology floor of Vanderbilt University Medical Center where we worked with patients and their families recuperating from cranial surgery, strokes and brain trauma,” said Overstreet. “Steroids had been used to assist in decreasing cranial swelling for some patients. The students soon learned that the steroids could also impact glucose and insulin levels. It’s often tricky to properly monitor glucose levels as a student first learning to do so, and I had an idea.”

Overstreet started developing prototypes for what would become an educational tool – “The Insulin Wheel” – a pocket-size reference tool that includes the onset, peak and duration of several different insulin products. Davis worked closely with Overstreet to determine the appropriate insulin products to include.

Later, she shared her homemade version with VUSN students and asked for comments. The students provided helpful feedback that resulted in fine-tuning the Insulin Wheel to include such things as different colors, information on when to mix and where to give insulin.

With the help of Dean Colleen Conway-Welch, Overstreet took the idea to the Vanderbilt University Office of Technology Transfer and Enterprise

Development which has since copyrighted the tool. The Insulin Wheel is in its second prototype phase and will be ready for production soon.

"It's easy for ideas like this to get squelched, but Dean Conway-Welch has really encouraged the process," said Overstreet. "This is an educational tool for nursing, medical and general health care professionals throughout the world, with the potential for several different versions."

Overstreet describes the possibility of developing additional educational tools specifically designed for patients who are diabetic and become pregnant, and those who develop Type 2 diabetes, or of taking

the same "wheel" approach and applying it to other types of patient education, such as with arterial blood gases.

"Working with pre-specialty students – who all come from various backgrounds and have different perspectives of what nursing is or can be – is stimulating. Seeing nursing through their eyes has been a terrific experience that really challenges me to pursue tools such as this one," said Overstreet.

A major book publishing company has expressed interest in Overstreet's invention.

– KATHY RIVERS

VUSN Takes the Next Step in Nursing Simulation

Simulation can take many forms. It enhances the student's experience or simulates "real" or "life-like" situations. It consists of several categories beginning with static, or non-interactive, and ranging up to high fidelity, which is extremely life-like and interactive.

Using simulation lets student nurses experience situations and learn how to make difficult choices without the fear of causing harm to a patient. Simulation engages students in the learning process and helps them have fun while learning. It helps faculty as well, since they can evaluate student decision making and performance in a safe, patient-free environment.

Vanderbilt Nursing students use high-fidelity simulation with the school's Sim Man, a life-like mannequin connected to a computer which simulates scenarios ranging from heart failures to small bowel obstructions. Sim Man speaks, has heart sounds, lung sounds, bowel sounds, actual pulses and blood pressure. The mannequin can urinate and vomit. External monitors can also be attached providing readings for the student to interpret such as EKG, SpO₂, Breathing rhythm, CVP, heart rate and many more. A student may request lab values or even X-rays which the instructor can supply via the computer.

This type of simulation allows every student to experience the complexity of care which can be unpredictable in the clinical setting. Simulation helps to level the field. All students can experience situations as many times as they like or until they feel more confident in their abilities.

In addition to Sim Man, VUSN also has a high-fidelity baby simulator, along with several mid-level simulators, computer-based decision making programs, and task trainers or static simulators such as IV arms. These teaching tools are located in the school's newly designed and rebuilt skills lab for students on the third floor of Godchaux Hall.

– MARIA OVERSTREET, M.S.N., R.N.

VUSN AND VUMC TO STUDY MEDICAL/SURGICAL UNITS

It's a tough balance – nurse staffing, quality of care and cost management. Vanderbilt University School of Nursing and Vanderbilt University Medical Center are teaming up with Boston University's Program for Management of Variability in Health Care Delivery and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to study nurse staffing and patient care issues in the context of controlling and managing costs while delivering quality health care.

Eugene Litvak, Ph.D., professor of the Management Variability Program (MVP), is principal investigator for the project, and Peter Buerhaus, Ph.D., senior associate dean of Research for VUSN and Valere Potter professor, is the co-investigator.

The yearlong project will examine the potential for improving care in hospital medical/surgical units. It will specifically study how changing elective surgeries may smooth the flow and reduce variation. It will also explore variability in hospital patient census, its relationship to service demand variability, its impact on nurse-to-patient staffing ratios, and the amount of care nurses provide at the bedside. This could result in improved patient flow into surgical units and a better environment for nurses caring for patients.

"The project is particularly important because we will concentrate on better understanding the factors that affect the demand for nurses and whether and how hospitals can better manage the workloads of nurses," said Buerhaus.

"Understanding work variability is critical to forming effective solutions for safe and high quality nursing care," said Marilyn Dubree, chief nursing officer for VUMC.

Other hospitals planning to participate in the project include: Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Caritas Norwood Hospital and Beverly Hospital. The latter two are in Massachusetts.

– KATHY RIVERS



DANA JOHNSON

Leading the Way in Pediatric Palliative Care

VUMC sent an 11-member team of parents, physicians, nurses and Child Life specialists to help grow the pediatric palliative care movement throughout the Southeast during the Regional Initiative for Pediatric Palliative Care Conference in Memphis, Tenn.

Directors of the Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt's Pediatric Advanced Comfort Team (PACT), Brian Carter, M.D., associate professor of Pediatrics (in Neonatology), and Mary Jo Gilmer, Ph.D., M.B.A., assistant professor at Vanderbilt School of Nursing, led the team.

"We don't want these children to die an invisible death because no one wants to talk about it," said Gilmer. "We want to learn more about supporting them during one of the most difficult times in a family's life."

The latest statistics show that 50,000 children in the United States die each year

due to terminal illnesses. Four years ago, seven hospitals throughout the country received seed money to start pediatric palliative care units, including Vanderbilt Children's Hospital.

Now VUMC is leading the field and training other health care workers at facilities such as St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital to develop and implement effective palliative care teams. The approach is designed to provide continuous care that begins at diagnosis and can continue for years.

"No one likes to talk about children dying," said Jessica Pasley, an information officer for VUMC News and Public Affairs team whose daughter Jade died of leukemia. "But, we have to talk about it to figure out the best way to handle it for all concerned."

Topics for the conference and breakout sessions included effective methods to integrate pediatric palliative care education into busy health care settings, exploring creative ways for impacting upon

everyday practice in pediatric palliative care and strengthening care teams.

"The biggest thing for me," said Pasley, "was to realize how health care providers want to learn from parents about what to do and what not to do."

She adds, "The health care teams are trying to make improvements so that they treat their patients more like their own loved ones. At the same time, we parents understand that professionals need to protect themselves because they deal with many sick children, not just our own sick child."

VUMC representatives will continue to provide insight and leadership in the area of palliative care to other hospitals throughout the region and the country.

— KATHY RIVERS

Exploring Health Care Solutions in Botswana

Like many African countries, Botswana is in the middle of a health care crisis. The country's socialized medicine system is buckling under the burden of chronic diseases like HIV/AIDS. The most recent statistics estimate there are 350,000 people in the country living with HIV/AIDS, which translates to 37.3 percent of the population. The impact has been devastating with life expectancy falling from 65 years to less than 34 years.

Two of the country's largest private insurance companies invited VUSN's Betsy Weiner, Ph.D., and VUMC's Naji Abumrad, M.D., to Botswana this spring to discuss possible solutions to the situation.

The main focus was sustainable access to care. Weiner, senior associate dean for Informatics at VUSN, and Abumrad, chairman of general surgery at VUMC, toured local and regional clinics and hospitals as well as inner city hospitals with patients positioned four-deep in the halls and saw nurses and physicians handling triple patient loads.

"We talk about surge capacity in the U.S. as it relates to disasters, and how much our hospitals can stretch their resources to meet mass casualty needs, but the nurses in Botswana have practiced under these conditions for the last several years due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in their country," said Weiner.

The tour also included stops at the University of Botswana nursing department and a meeting with Sheila Dinotsho Tlou, Ph.D., R.N., Minister of Health for the Government of Botswana.

"I was honored to have the opportunity to meet a fellow nurse in such a prestigious role," said Weiner. "I had heard

her present at other international conferences about the "girl child" project that she supports for female children with HIV/AIDS."

Weiner and Abumrad spent five days in Botswana in total cultural immersion. They were impressed by the proud people with strong values and saw first hand how the residents depend on their government for a variety of services, including health care.

"At all points during my visit I could sense an instant connection with the nurses," said Weiner. "No matter what country, what affiliation, or which nursing role I observed, I was proud of my nursing colleagues."

– KATHY RIVERS

VUSN UNVEILS E-LEARNING IN HEALTH SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT

Vanderbilt University School of Nursing will be offering its highly ranked Health Systems Management Master of Science in Nursing degree program in an e-Learning environment for working nurses and other health care professionals.

"Health care management is a priority for America's evolving health care industry," said Bonnie Pilon, D.S.N., senior associate dean for Practice. "Today's health care managers and executives require clinical experience, strong communication skill, but business acumen."

This highly interactive program challenges learners to understand current health care system problems, to anticipate and manage changes, and to evaluate new evidence and emerging techniques that enhance management performance. The curriculum prepares individuals for leadership roles in a dynamic health care system.

The online or e-Learning environment allows students a never-before-level of flexibility to learn anywhere throughout the country and at virtually anytime via the Internet. At the same time, the program is designed to facilitate a close connection with faculty and classmates to aid in the learning process.

The Health Care Systems manager is a registered nurse prepared at the master's level. Graduates have the breadth and depth of management knowledge and skills to assume leadership positions across a wide variety of health care delivery organizations.

To learn more about the program, please call (866) 207-7580 or visit: www.msnvanderbilt.info.

Tania Graves, right, translates between Melissa Davis, A.P.R.N., and patient Gaspar Delgado at the Vine Hill Clinic.



DANA JOHNSON

with their two children for several years. Graves was a housekeeping supervisor for Opryland Hotel, but couldn't resist her calling. So, she took additional courses and became a medical assistant four years ago.

"Many people in the Latino cultures don't like visiting a health care clinic anyway and have concerns about insurance and other documents," said Graves. "I talk to them in person or by phone and let them know we can help."

Graves' warm smile and friendly approach has helped her educate the local Hispanic community. Frequently, she receives calls from people who ask for "Miss Tania," callers who have been referred by satisfied clients. When she's shopping in local malls and grocery stores with her family, it's not uncommon to have a former patient recognize her and thank her.

Graves is even teaching the Vine Hill staff Spanish, by focusing on a key phrase each day. She encourages her co-workers and knows this approach can work because that's exactly how she learned English – by working closely with a co-worker for a year.

She ends each visit by saying: "Gracias. Sientase libre de llamarme si necesita algo." Or: "Feel free to call if you need anything."

She really means it. Graves gets calls at home, on the weekends, even during a recent family reunion, and she always makes sure she does whatever she can to help the caller.

Graves enjoys working at Vine Hill and one day would like to become a registered nurse. For now, she sees the difference the clinic makes to the community and is happy to play an important role in outreach to Nashville's growing Hispanic community.

– KATHY RIVERS

Tania Graves Reaches Out to Spanish-speaking Patients

Mi nombre es Tania. Como le puedo ayudar? (My name is Tania. How can I help you?) With a bright smile on her face Medical Assistant Tania Graves greets Spanish-speaking patients at the VUSN-run Vine Hill Clinic each day.

The Vine Hill Clinic staff handles more than 20,000 patient visits each year and a growing number of their clients are Spanish-speaking. Graves knows just how to greet patients and make them feel at ease.

She often meets them in the waiting room to offer help completing paperwork and stays with them throughout their entire appointment serving as translator, assistant, and in many cases, friend.

Raised in Ecuador and encouraged by her parents to study health sciences, Graves moved to the United States with her husband and has lived in Nashville



VUSN nursing students were among those who hosted several community baby showers this summer at local retailers for Nurses for Newborns. The students helped gather diapers, bottles and other baby supplies for the organization that provides a safety net for families most at risk and helps prevent infant mortality.

VUSN Expands Care at McKendree Village

The VUSN-run McKendree Village clinic has recently expanded from two to five days a week. In addition to serving independent and assisted living residents and nearby community members for the past six years, the clinic has recently grown to accommodate the health care needs of the nearly 350 McKendree Village employees and their more than 600 dependents.

"All of these clinics have opened at the request of the employers who want to offer health care access to their employees at a reasonable cost to the company," said Bonnie Pilon, D.S.N., R.N., and senior associate dean for Faculty Practice. "With our employer partners, we've experienced very positive health and financial outcomes over the past three years in this program."

McKendree's Senior Director of Human Resources Rusty Parrish, P.R.H., heard about the success of VUSN's employer-based clinics and contacted the School of Nursing to start discussions for an expanded clinic.

"It is an innovative, effective way to meet the medical needs of our employees, while helping us manage health care insurance premium costs," said Parrish. "Proactive, preventive care health care programs really pay off in terms of keeping employees well, which results in both fewer absences and fewer insurance claims."

The facility is located on the 42-acre McKendree Village campus. In addition to Nurse Practitioner Kei Berg, who sees patients two days a week, the clinic has added Nurse Practitioner Jennifer Hanley the other three days a week, and a full-time medical assistant, Ladonya Moore.

The clinic provides residents with on-site access to health resources such as regular monitoring of any health issues such as high blood pressure, flu shots and other preventive care, and informal conversation with a caring, knowledgeable provider about any health concerns. There is no co-pay for employees and their dependents with Cigna insurance.

"We view the clinic as another benefit for our employees and an additional service available to our residents," said Parrish. "It ties in well with our quality, loving care and wellness philosophies."

– KATHY RIVERS



VUSN CELEBRATES 10TH ANNUAL BIKE RODEO

Vanderbilt University School of Nursing hosted the 10th Annual Bike Rodeo in May. The event teaches children to practice bike/wheel toy safety skills by trying out a series of simulated, neighborhood bike-riding environments.

Led by Patti Scott, M.S.N., R.N., nurse practitioner at the VUSN-run clinic located at Fall-Hamilton Enhanced Option Elementary School in Nashville, faculty, students and corporate sponsors hosted more than 75 children and their parents. VUSN faculty and staff also donated new and gently used bikes for a raffle.

According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, 70 percent of children age 5 to 15 (27.7 million) ride bicycles and the fatality rate for bicyclists in that age group is nearly double the rate for all bicyclists.

– KATHY RIVERS

Above: Volunteers help fit children with bike helmets.

Below: Children start the obstacle course.

Tom Jaselskis, M.D., discusses a patient's condition with VUSN students Tiffany Lantham and Holly Bechard during a clinical rotation at the Wilson County Public Health Department.



DANA JOHNSON

VUSN Students Learn in Wilson County

VUSN student education occurs in various clinical settings. The Wilson County Public Health Department handles more than 21,000 patient visits each year and is an ideal place for VUSN students to learn in a real-life setting.

As a VUSN Instructor in Nursing who teaches community health, Shannon Cole wanted her students to see first hand what services were provided at local health departments.

"I developed a love for public health while working for several years at the Montgomery County Health Department," said Cole, M.S.N., R.N. "I wanted our students to understand what public health services are offered in the Mid-Cumberland Region, since they mimic services provided across the United States."

As of this spring, 140 VUSN students rotated through the health departments that make up the Mid-Cumberland Region.

Several years ago, public health departments primarily handled health issues of women, infants and children



DANA JOHNSON

VUSN students get real-life experience interacting with patients of all ages.

along with immunizations. The burdened health delivery system has resulted in public health departments now providing primary care – in many cases to people who are working, but have no health benefits.

The Wilson County Health Department has experienced a shift in the last several years, including the last six months with changes in TennCare. Public health department workers see the gamut of health care issues including chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and lung disease.

“The traditional role of public health is that we’re responsible for making the whole community healthy,” said Paula Campbell, director of the Wilson County Health Department. “I think it’s important that student nurses understand the role of public health in the community.”

On one recent day, Tiffany Lathum, an adult cardiovascular care first-year student, and Holly Bechard, a pre-specialty student, were working in the Wilson County Health Department job shadowing Tom Jaselskis, M.D.

“It’s one thing to read about a disease in a book, but it’s totally different to put a face on the person with the disease,” said Lathum. “You get a better idea of the disease process and of how the patient understands the disease process.”

“It’s really helpful to follow around different health care providers and get a feel of how they interact and see how the provider personalities mesh with the patient. As an observer, you get a much better perspective,” said Bechard.

Jaselskis has been full time with the health department since leaving a successful private practice. He was drawn to public health for several reasons.

“I think it’s important to walk your faith everyday – not just Sunday,” he said. “In private practice, I always wanted to do more for those who were uninsured or underinsured, so I came to public health to fulfill a greater need in the health care system.”

“Dr. J” is a favorite of the health department staff and VUSN students because he takes time to listen to his patients and builds trust. He asks the students for their observations and feedback after each patient visit.

“You have to be empathetic to the patient. You have to meet them where they are, and gear your interactions to them,” said Lathum. “So if they are hesitant in speaking to you, you have to try different styles to make them feel comfortable.

“Students can learn a tremendous amount here because we are dealing with limited resources, and that requires an enormous amount of creativity and understanding about how to make the most of what is available,” said Jaselskis. He added, “My goal is to give the students a richness to what we’re looking at and do it in a supportive environment.”

“The students have had overwhelming positive responses to their rotation in the public health departments,” said Cole. “I am grateful to all the nursing supervisors across the Mid-Cumberland Region for making this rotation possible.”

– KATHY RIVERS

VUSN LAUNCHES NEW SHELBYVILLE CLINIC

The Vanderbilt University School of Nursing’s clinical practice arm signed on another employer-based clinic at Sanford Corporation’s Shelbyville Plant, maker of Sharpie Markers, Uni-bal and Paper Mate products.

“Manufacturing employees seem to universally feel like companies are taking away their benefits year by year, but Sanford added a benefit of major value to the employees and their families – convenient, high quality care with no copay,” said Caroline Portis-Jenkins, A.P.R.N., clinical director of Employer Health/VandyCalls.

Like with its Lewisburg and Maryville locations, 600 to 1,000 Sanford employees will be able to receive primary care, and occupational health services, pharmacy/prescription management and wellness and preventive care at the nurse-practitioner run clinic. As a result, the company expects to better manage employee health care costs and increase productivity due to less time needed for off-site health care appointments.

“We are really excited about starting the clinic,” said Howard Broadfoot, Shelbyville plant manager. “Our plant is in a rural area, and it’s difficult to see a doctor. Now our employees can walk across the hall to take care of 90 percent of the things they used to have to go to outside health care providers for, and it won’t cost them anything.”

– KATHY RIVERS





dare



TO ACHIEVE

“I dare you to achieve something that will make the future point to you with even more pride than the present is pointing to those who have gone before you . . .”

WILLIAM H. DANFORTH – I DARE YOU

It's a story of a book, a holiday card and a remarkable woman who has spent her whole life refusing to give up. A bright-eyed Trinity High School salutatorian in Athens, Ala., Inez Jackson was thrilled when her principal handed her a gift on graduation day in 1940. “I Dare You” was a red leather-bound book about the size of her palm, but it contained huge ideas that challenged its new owner to set high goals and overcome all obstacles. The book became the guiding force in her life. 

STORY BY KATHY RIVERS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY TAMARA REYNOLDS

After moving to Nashville, marrying and starting a family, Inez Jackson Kelly graduated from Meharry in 1954 as a licensed practical nurse and wanted to pursue her baccalaureate in nursing.

“I love people, and I wanted to help them better,” said Inez Bramley (having taken her second husband’s last name). “As an LPN, you can do many things, but I wanted to do more.”

In 1960, she applied to Vanderbilt University School of Nursing and was denied entry since the school was not approved by the Board of Trust to admit African-American students at that time. This was the same year of the Nashville lunch counter sit-ins, aimed at integrat-



ing downtown lunch counters, and four years before the Civil Rights Act was passed by Congress.

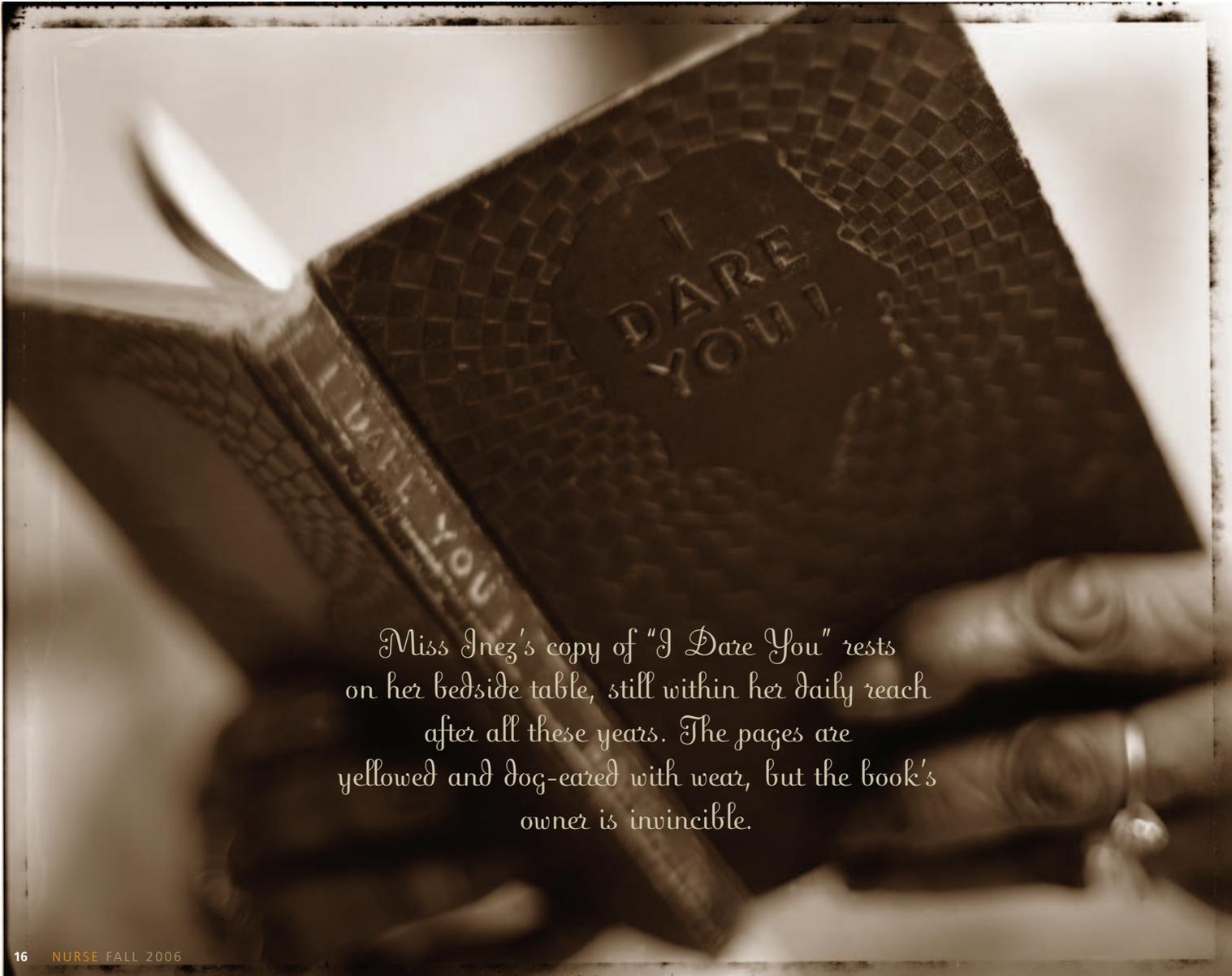
In 1965, she was granted admission as one of the first African-American

students to enroll at VUSN. When she started classes, she faced many additional hardships and was treated as an outsider.

“It was a hostile environment,” recalls Bramley. “No one spoke to me.”

Despite daily obstacles, she still loved learning and earned strong grades. When her husband became ill during her first year, she made a very difficult decision to withdraw from school. She was told she couldn’t be readmitted. Even so, she didn’t give up her dream of becoming a registered nurse and graduated from Tennessee State University in 1970.

(continued on page 18)



Miss Inez’s copy of “I Dare You” rests on her bedside table, still within her daily reach after all these years. The pages are yellowed and dog-eared with wear, but the book’s owner is invincible.

VUSN STUDENT **MONIQUE ORNELAS**

preparing for possibilities

As a Vanderbilt undergraduate studying child development and cognitive studies, Monique Ornelas was a research assistant on several projects. During one interview for a comprehensive study on childhood depression, a 12-year-old boy shared his horrible secret about brutal sexual abuse. She felt helpless.

Ornelas wanted to get involved and to make a difference. She heard positive things from friends already in the VUSN program and realized it would give her an opportunity to work with kids sooner than other options. So she enrolled in VUSN as a Psychiatric Mental Health student and earned the Harold

Stirling Vanderbilt Merit scholarship, a highly sought-after academic scholarship.

Ornelas's father came to the United States from Mexico as a boy and went on to serve in the U.S. Army with several different tours of duty. The family moved to Japan for four years when Ornelas was a young teen. Living in Japan taught her to celebrate different cultures and to realize people are really more alike than they are different.

While she is a proud Mexican-American, Ornelas can't stand labels. Her parents have instilled in her, and her two siblings, life lessons about hard work, reaching goals and overcoming obstacles.



She said she is honored to learn beside such phenomenal men and women in the program. Ornelas says associate professor Judy Sweeney has been "amazing" and "my saving grace" through the ups and downs of an intense first year. She understands that diversity is an important issue for VUSN and would like to see even more students of color enrolled in the program in the future.

Ornelas believes earning a M.S.N. will open up countless possibilities. She wants to counsel kids with chronic diseases and do more research – in pursuit of a Ph.D. – to help educate nurses in effective coping strategies.

Note: Ornelas (pictured on this page) and Marilyn Harris (page 19) were two of 142 pre-specialty students who "crossed the bridge" into their specialty education during a standing-room-only ceremony at VUSN in July.

Pioneers in diversity and health care



A Crow Indian from Montana, Susie Walking Bear Yellowtail, R.N., helped bring modern health care to her own people and to end abuses in the Indian health care system, such as the sterilization of Native American women without their consent. She traveled throughout North American reservations to assess the health, social and educational problems faced by Native Americans.



Martha Minerva Franklin, R.N., was the catalyst for collective action by black nurses in the early 1900s. She helped found the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses (NACGN) which promoted the standards and welfare of all trained nurses and strived to break down racial discrimination in the profession.

“Miss Inez,” as her patients and colleagues called her, went on to serve a long career in the Nashville health care community at Bordeaux Hospital as the first African-American nursing supervisor and later as a nurse manager at area nursing homes.

Despite her successful career, raising two accomplished children and being a proud grandmother of five, there was always an open wound when she thought about her Vanderbilt experience.

Then, for the first time in 40 years, Miss Inez received what everyone involved now calls a “magic holiday card” from VUSN. Termed “magic” because VUSN Dean Colleen Conway-Welch, Ph.D., has sent holiday cards for at least 22 years, but Bramley never received one until December 2005.

Conway-Welch received what she describes as a beautiful letter from Bramley explaining her experiences in the ‘60s, and immediately contacted her to listen, learn and see the original letters from the school.

The healing process had begun.

Miss Inez was honored during a special ceremony with her friends, family, VUSN faculty and VUMC nurses during Nurses Week in May. In her remarks, Conway-Welch called Bramley a pioneer in nursing and a role model to nurses, and named an annual minority scholarship in her name.

When presenting Miss Inez with the bronze replica of the doors to Godchaux

Hall, Conway-Welch said, “This has special meaning because those were the doors you could not come through 46 years ago.”

“Coming to the school for the ceremony was such a different feeling,” said Bramley. “Everyone was smiling, was helpful and happy to see me.”

Miss Inez is considering becoming a member of the VUSN Centennial Committee for the school’s upcoming celebration in 2008 and will be a guest speaker for the Vanderbilt/Fisk undergraduate program.

Conway-Welch said, “She is a shining example of perseverance, grace and a life committed to physically and spiritually caring for others.”

“I never imagined that something that had such a bad beginning could

have such a good ending,” said Bramley. “I never thought this would happen.”

Miss Inez’s copy of “I Dare You” rests on her bedside table, still within her daily reach after all these years. The pages are yellowed and dog-eared with wear, but the book’s owner is invincible. She overcame obstacles, and even in her 80s, is blazing a new path for future VUSN students. **VUSN**

NATIONAL SAMPLE SURVEY OF REGISTERED NURSES (NSSRN)

Comparison of R.N.s from 2000-2004

	2000	2004
White (non-Hispanic)	86.6 percent	88.4 percent
Black (non-Hispanic)	4.9 percent	4.6 percent
Hispanic	2.0 percent	1.8 percent
Asian/Pac. Islander	3.7 percent	3.3 percent
Native American	0.5 percent	0.4 percent
Two or more races	1.2 percent	1.5 percent

Reported by the Health Resources & Services Administration (<http://bhpr.hrsa.gov>)

VUSN STUDENT **MARILYN HARRIS**

finds her calling

First-year student Marilyn Harris has always been drawn to helping people. As a physician's office assistant, she easily gained the trust of patients. Harris wanted to make a bigger difference, so she enrolled in VUSN's Family Nurse Practitioner Program in August 2005.

Despite earning a master's degree in Biology and completing many Psychology graduate courses, Harris has found her calling in nursing. She had different options, but chose

VUSN because of its tremendous reputation.

"Completing my training at Vanderbilt would lend a certain prestige to my degree," said Harris. "I wanted to get my education in an intense and time-efficient program."

She feels the program schedule works well for her, a wife and mother of two young children. She describes the VUSN administrative staff as "warm and inviting."

"The passion of my professors makes me want to learn more, retain it and put it into practice," she said. "I love that I can learn something on Monday in the classroom and put it into practice on Thursday."

She also appreciates VUSN's holistic approach to nursing. She recalls using

VUSN lecturer Theresa Inott's advice about asking problem patients to talk more about themselves and their concerns. Harris did just that with a recent patient. He opened up to her about concerns he would lose his assisted living home spot, and then she was able to better help him.

"I am pleased that VUSN is working to increase the number of minority nurses and I am proud to be a part of this effort," said Harris, who is scheduled to complete her degree in August 2007. She hopes to serve in a clinical setting after graduation and later work toward a Ph.D. in nursing and becoming a VUSN faculty member.



ANNE RAYNER

Q + A

an interview with
jana lauderdale



ANNE RAYNER

In the context of your work at VUSN, what is the definition of a minority?

To me "minority" refers to a group few in numbers. I tend to use the term "cultural diversity." I look at culture in a much broader sense to include not only ethnicity but religious groups, gender and sub-cultures such as the homeless, the disabled, or gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender, just to name a few. When thought of in these terms you realize how far reaching the implications of the term "cultural diversity" really are.

How important are minorities in the history of nursing?

Minorities in nursing really paved the way for the rest of us. It was through their commitment, role modeling and perseverance that we were able to follow in their path. Two inductees into the American Nurses Association Hall of Fame are excellent examples

of minority nurse pioneers – Susie Walking Bear Yellowtail, the first American Indian Nurse, and Martha Minerva Franklin, who founded the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses.

How important are minorities to the future of nursing?

As a nation whose diversity is growing as we speak, it is critical to increase the number of practicing nurses from diverse backgrounds in order to mirror the populations we are caring for now and in the future.

What is VUSN's commitment to recruiting minority students?

The School of Nursing, as well as the university at large, is very committed to increasing diversity in both the area of students and faculty. When it happens, we all win. Having students of differing backgrounds in our classrooms enriches content discussion, allows for a new world view, enhances the culturally different student's own cultural identity and teaches us all the importance of valuing differences. In the past five years, VUSN has remained fairly stable at 11 percent to 14 percent minority enrollment and our goal is to increase that number each year.

How is VUSN addressing retention?

It's not enough just to recruit minority

students. We must retain them too, so VUSN has built in academic support systems. Dr. Carolyn Bess offers the Academic Enhancement Program to all students needing assistance in the areas of testing and study skills, time management and referrals to university resources as appropriate. I handle faculty cultural competency training in the areas of practice and education. This academic year, my office will be initiating a series of focus groups with minority students for the purpose of identifying and discussing issues related to their education at VUSN. This way we can identify any challenges our students face earlier so that we may address them and find solutions.

What are the best methods of recruiting these under-represented groups? We use a variety of recruitment methods including marketing in nursing journals, targeting institutions with high numbers of diverse students who do not have access to nursing programs; attending local, state and national conferences for culturally diverse nurses such as the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA), the National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN), and the National Alaska Native American Indian Nurses Association (NANAINA); and marketing via our VUSN Office of Cultural Diversity Web site.

We also try to make our culturally diverse students comfortable by hosting campus visits and luncheons designed

to introduce them to current ones in an effort to network and connect with like students, and we encourage participation in student nursing organizations as a way to network and get to know others. Also, all submitted VUSN training grants request funds for recruitment of minority students since this is such a need in nursing.

Do minority students have different obstacles in pursuing their education? Diverse students can have many obstacles to overcome such as under preparedness, if coming from a disadvantaged educational background or financial needs and lack of family support, which we see many times when it involves students coming from rural areas such as Indian reservations. International students may face challenges in speaking and writing in English. Another challenge can be traditional academic reliance on standardized test scores (MCAT, DAT, GRE) as predictors of success.

What initiatives does VUSN have to attract culturally diverse nursing students?

We have a couple of new initiatives for African-American students, our largest group of students of color. VUSN and Fisk University have entered into a partnership for the purpose of offering a baccalaureate degree in nursing awarded by Fisk University. The students complete the nursing prerequisites at Fisk, then come to VUSN to complete the upper-division

nursing courses at Vanderbilt. We have just admitted our first cohort of Fisk students and are looking forward to having them with us in January.

Second, we have initiated a new student chapter of the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA). Rolanda Johnson, Ph.D., R.N., who is heading up the Fisk/VUSN partnership, is the president of the chapter and will be encouraging our black students, via meetings and socials. The chapter will be initiating a mentoring system between current and new students, which we believe will prove particularly helpful.

We are also fortunate to have two admissions counselors and the Director of Financial Aid, who are African-American, which helps to create a comfortable, welcoming environment for students.

Are there increased opportunities for financial aid and scholarships, for minority students? VUSN Scholarships are highly competitive but include the Goldstein Scholarship, the Hearst Scholarship, and a new offering this year – the Inez Bramley Scholarship.

Do minority students have different obstacles in obtaining nursing positions? With the nursing shortage, any qualified nurse is in high demand; however, for minority nurses (male and female), the demand is even greater.

What is the one lasting message you would like all our readers to know about this issue? The recruitment effort is like a chameleon, changing as needed. In order to ensure we provide what we market in our recruitment efforts, we must practice it. We are constantly striving to improve the programs we offer. In doing so, cultural diversity is one aspect we are watching to closely through creation of classrooms and clinical experiences that celebrate diversity. We learn new ways to better ourselves every day. It's an ongoing process, that is challenging and, when executed well, very satisfying.

Jana Lauderdale is VUSN's Assistant Dean for Cultural Diversity. A Native American, she is a registered nurse and holds a Ph.D. in transcultural nursing. She has extensive experience working with Native American populations and program design focusing on minority nursing education issues.



building bridges

A ROADMAP TO RECOVERY



Hope is the most valuable commodity to a cancer patient. As advances in medical diagnosis and intervention result in more cancer survivors, there is a growing need for guides to help people through the recovery phase. Vanderbilt University School of Nursing's Kathleen Dwyer, Ph.D., R.N., Vaughn Sinclair, Ph.D., A.P.R.N., and Anne Marie Flores, Ph.D., P.T., are spearheading a new multimedia resource for cancer survivors to aid in the road to recovery. Working closely with specialists from Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center, groups such as Gilda's Club, and more than 20 cancer survivors and their families, the team has put together a new resource to help cancer survivors.

STORY BY KATHY RIVERS

ILLUSTRATION BY CURTIS PARKER

Pictured below:

Here are just a few of the participants interviewed in Roadmap to Recovery.



You need to understand the cancer as best you can. Educate yourself.

— THOMAS, SURVIVOR'S HUSBAND



I can now enjoy the small, little things in life.

— BONNIE, SURVIVOR



Hope is what human beings live for.

— GRAHAM, SURVIVOR

“Interpersonal issues relating to cancer survivorship are poorly studied,” said Medical Oncologist Barbara Murphy, M.D. “Kathy’s research in this area is providing us with data about which we have precious little.”

Roadmap to Recovery is a DVD/workbook that starts with a patient’s last day of treatment and walks them through the first year of recovery. It covers issues such as stress, maintaining a positive outlook, cancer challenges, boundary issues, managing cancer and treatment-related side effects, communication and support systems – many of which can be difficult or not talked about – all of which are important bridges to build for a successful recovery process.

“We designed the project around cancer survivors telling their own stories and sharing their own experiences,” said Dwyer. “We wanted to discuss issues that would resonate no matter what kind of cancer someone had.”

Like watching a gripping documentary, the viewer meets men and women who have had cancer and their loved

ones. The interview subjects are completely unscripted and very passionate about their different views on their fears, challenges and coping regarding what they have been through. Barbara Murphy, M.D., Nancy Yelton, A.P.R.N., and Felice Apolinsky, L.S.C.W., of Gilda’s Club Nashville each provide professional commentary woven throughout.

“People work toward the end of treatment, and it takes as much energy to go through the first three to six months after treatment as it does to go through the treatment itself,” said Murphy.

The stories are engaging because they are real. They are people who have opened up their lives and have shared experiences to help others. Many mention that it is relatively easy to focus on the goal of getting through treatment, but after treatment, many survivors don’t have goals. They expect to immediately feel like they did before treatment and have unrealistic expectations about their recovery. The DVD includes interviews with patients and cancer survivors of different genders and ages.

Footage includes spouses, sons and daughters and a teenage grandchild describing their new roles in helping their loved one.

“This program promotes acceptance of what can’t be changed while positively addressing what can be changed – expectations, attitudes, relationship issues and problem-solving skills,” said Sinclair.

A teenage granddaughter explains how she tried to help her grandmother. She said, “I would give her massages. When her neck hurt, I would rub it for her. I would massage her feet. I would talk to her.”

One of the most difficult issues to deal with is the shifting roles in families. For those cancer survivors who are used to being a family leader, it can be hard to let others help. For others, overprotection can be an issue.

The wife of a male survivor said, “I wrapped my wings around him like a mother hen. I was so used to that role, that when he starting feeling better, I didn’t realize how I had to become his wife again.”

The program covers issues such as stress, maintaining a positive outlook, cancer challenges, boundary issues, managing cancer and treatment-related side effects, communication and support systems – many of which can be difficult or not talked about – all of which are important bridges to build for a successful recovery process.

First-hand accounts from cancer survivors are the next best thing to participating in an actual face-to-face support group which can be difficult to attend due to geography, logistics or social reasons, according to many survivors. This program was designed to overcome those barriers. Survivors and their loved ones can participate in the privacy of their own home, at any time. Survivors share perspectives, advice and insight into some of their dark moments. The underlying concept is to normalize the experience as

much as possible, to help the physiological and psychological healing.

“My priorities before being diagnosed were very work-oriented,” said Steve, a cancer survivor interviewed in the DVD. “I have made a lot more effort to spend time with my family since my cancer.”

Dwyer’s group has also developed an accompanying workbook which reinforces key messages from the DVD. Each section includes a “reflection point” worksheet that helps the reader connect the dots between the workbook/DVD

information and using this information in their own lives.

“Some people think about changes they want to make, but it’s just sort of floating around in their head,” said Dwyer. “The reflection points provide a guided opportunity to think about the information and how it applies to a person’s life.”

The 246-page workbook is for both patients and caregivers. The information can be used as background or for those who prefer reading instead of visual learn-

VUSN Ph.D. Students Make a Strong Research Impact

They came from opposite sides of the world – one from the People’s Republic of China and the other from Brownsburg, Ind. Yet, these two students had several things in common: determination, creativity, humility and perseverance – qualities necessary to be successful in completing VUSN’s Ph.D. in Nursing Science Program.

Hongxia Liu, Ph.D., M.S.N., R.N. and Laura C. Hein, Ph.D., R.N., NP-C recently completed the rigorous requirements for the Ph.D. in Nursing Science Program and became part of the prestigious list of students who have graduated from the program since its inception in 1993. As part of the requirements for a Ph.D. degree, students must complete research of an independent character that extends the knowledge of the discipline of nursing.

The value and benefit of Hongxia Liu’s dissertation research project, “Coping and Health-related Quality of Life in Renal Transplant Patients,” was recognized at the national conference for AcademyHealth. In 2004, she was awarded the Best Student Poster at the 2004 AcademyHealth Annual Research Meeting. Liu’s research has also been published in the peer-reviewed scientific journal, *Clinical Transplantation*, and several of her abstracts were presented at international and national scientific meetings. She is currently exploring career opportunities at several universities.

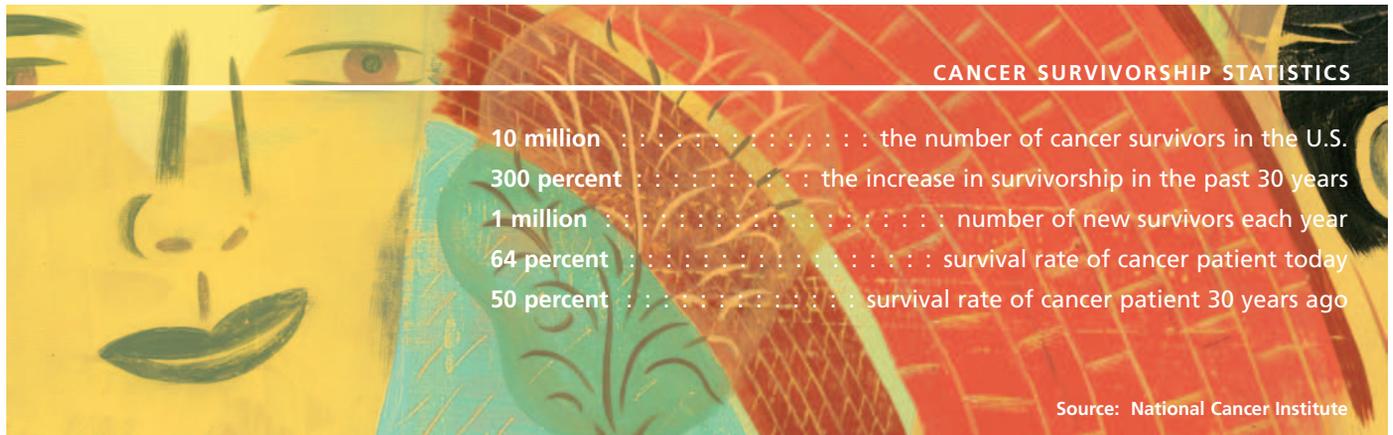
Laura Hein’s dissertation research project, “Survival among Male Homeless Adolescents,” involved locating and interviewing homeless adolescents across six states and resulted in a wealth of new data about youth that will contribute to the community and public health field. Hein successfully managed her doctoral studies while teaching at both Middle Tennessee State University and the University of Maryland. Recently, she accepted a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Illinois at Chicago where she will continue her work in health disparities and special populations.

– IRENE MCKIRGAN



KATS BARRY

Pictured here:
Laura Hain (left) and Hongxia Liu on VUSN graduation day.



“All of the stories our participants tell have a positive angle embedded in them. You realize that despite everything, they are able to maintain a sense of hope.”

ing. Dwyer’s team has gone to great detail to make sure the workbook is helpful to all those who use it. Images are gender and ethnic neutral and copy has been combed through by Karen Stroup, Ph.D., a patient advocate and cancer survivor, to ensure it contains helpful messages in a sensitive way.

Dwyer and Sinclair hope the learning tools will be a catalyst that helps patients and their caregivers talk about the often hard-to-discuss issues. Those who have tested or heard about the materials see it as a conversation starter.

“It’s an awful lot of work to try to mind read,” said Apolinsky. “The solution is really beginning to communicate with each other and putting words to those needs.”

“All of the stories our participants tell have a positive angle embedded in them,” said Dwyer. “You realize that despite everything, they are able to maintain a sense of hope.”

This study would not be possible without collaboration between VUSN and VICC. “Our two worlds have met to

bring in very important perspectives which are much richer together than on their own,” said Murphy.

VUSN faculty member Dwyer has spent her professional career studying aspects of chronic illness, first focusing on rheumatoid arthritis and more recently on cancer. In 2000, VUSN started collaborating with VICC, and together the organizations have been building a base of information that led to this current study.

VUSN faculty member Sinclair has developed and implemented interventions for women with rheumatoid arthritis and multiple sclerosis prior to working on this project. **VUSN**

Roadmap to Recovery was made possible through a grant entitled, Beyond Cancer: Fostering Transitions Post Treatment, funded by a grant from the National Cancer Institute and a Research Supplement for Underrepresented Minority Researchers awarded to Kathleen Dwyer, Ph.D., R.N. [5 R21 CA100120-02] and [3R21CA100120-01S2]

the power of recovery



MARY KELTON SMITH:

Nurse, survivor and advocate

When Mary Kelton Smith was recovering from her mastectomy, her then 3-year-old son James gently patted the side of her chest and said: "Momma, it's going to be OK." Support like that helps cancer patients through the recovery process and is a key message in Roadmap to Recovery.

Smith is a cancer survivor who decided she wasn't going to let cancer turn her into a victim of despair. She was going to conquer it.

She watched her two older sisters die from the devastation of breast cancer, so when she was diagnosed in December 2000, the young wife and mother was scared, but determined. After her mastectomy and radiation treatments, she attended a handful of support groups, but didn't find what she was looking for. She learned about Sisters Network Inc., a national survivorship organization dedicated to raising awareness of breast cancer in the African-American community. She founded the

Nashville Chapter in March 2001, which has grown to 65 members.

Smith points out that breast cancer is less frequent in the African-American community, but when diagnosed, black women are more likely to die from it. She cites reasons such as fear, denial, social stigmas and irregular health care checkups.

Ann Marie Flores, Ph.D., P.T., introduced Smith to Kathleen Dwyer, Ph.D., about a year ago. A registered nurse at Vanderbilt's Children's Hospital, Smith jumped at the chance to provide feedback during the final stages of the Roadmap to Recovery project and to suggest future applications to reach the African-American community.

Smith wants to help grow the project. In May 2006, Dwyer submitted a grant proposal to extend the Roadmap project to the African-American breast cancer survivor community. The project is a collaborative effort between Vanderbilt University School of Nursing,

Meharry Medical College, the local Sisters Network Inc. chapter, community physicians and African-American breast cancer survivors.

Smith's vision includes more people of color and tweaking the information to reflect the women and their families she sees. Smith said, "Cancer turns your whole life upside down, and friends and family need to be involved and listen. No cancer patient should have to suffer in silence."

— KATHY RIVERS

For more information log on to www.sistersnetworkinc.org or e-mail Mary Kelton Smith at mksdivcab@yahoo.com.



VUSN Helps Combat Childhood Obesity

live it!

This spring, Vanderbilt University School of Nursing teamed with Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt to help area students embrace healthy lifestyle choices through "Live It! Go For the **Red, White and Blue.**"

Twelve middle schools in Davidson and Williamson Counties embarked on an eight-week healthy lifestyle pilot program targeted to fifth and sixth graders. The program focused on activities chosen by the students and included incentives and rewards for those who followed a healthy lifestyle and attained or maintained a healthy weight.

Last year, Tom Cook, Ph.D., R.N., assistant professor of Nursing, led the Children's Hospital's health assessment for all 130 Metro Davidson County public schools. The Live It! Go for the Red White and Blue program grew out of the findings from the health assessments – such as only 23 percent of middle schools were found to be at "top of health" and a mere 5 percent of middle schools were at "top of nutrition."

"The school health assessment pointed to areas where students would benefit from health focused programs," said Cook. "A team from Vanderbilt worked with a team from Metro schools and put together an ambitious program for several middle schools."

"Vanderbilt Children's Hospital is excited about leading a program that will help improve the health of children, said Mary Kate Mouser, director of Children's Health Improvement and Prevention. "It will give us a baseline for where our fifth and sixth graders stand on a national level."

STORY BY KATHY RIVERS
PHOTOGRAPH BY ISTOCK



DANA JOHNSON



DANA JOHNSON

“I think we made a huge difference and filled a void that would have been difficult for the middle school teaching staff to fill.”

Waist circumference (the standard in measuring obesity in children) measurements and the Body Mass Index of each student were taken throughout the eight weeks. Students were given a pedometer to count their steps. Students were encouraged to take as many steps as possible, with 10,000 steps a day (five miles) as a goal.

Each school customized activities according to school-specific needs. Parents, students, teachers and school cafeteria staff received literature and program objectives. Students tracked their progress on a special Web-based and paper program created by Children’s Hospital called Track It. The funding for Track It was provided by the Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies.

Cook will study the data gathered to see if the program is reaching its goals. He

hopes it will show that obese students did not see an expansion of their waistlines, and that perhaps they decreased a bit. Each school in the study had a team consisting of members from Vanderbilt School of Nursing students, Vanderbilt Sports Medicine staff and Vanderbilt Nutrition interns.

“It’s a collaborative program that benefits everyone involved,” said VUSN Instructor Sharon Jones, M.S.N., R.N. “Our students get real-life experience and the middle school students learn how to live a healthier life. I’m so proud of my VUSN students. They did a great job and the project would have been impossible to do without them.

More than 30 nursing students were involved in the program. One team of six School of Nursing students taught several classes at Croft Middle School about making healthy food choices at breakfast by cutting back on sugar intake. When the VUSN students asked what the children had for breakfast that day, answers included donuts, Pop-Tarts, and cereal with sugar. Some had skipped breakfast.

Sydney Newsome, a pre-specialty student, and her fellow students used those responses as a starting point to talk about better choices. The VUSN team blind-folded select students and taste-tested standard versus low-sugar peanut butter and apple juice. Most students could tell the difference, but agreed that the lower-sugar option tasted good enough that they would choose it again. The nursing students described low sugar foods as “rocket fuel” that would keep their energy up all day.

Two weeks later, the same team of VUSN students talked and taught an

exercise lesson. Since most fifth and sixth graders idolize various sports celebrities, the VUSN students used them as examples to encourage the students to exercise more. The VUSN students used a circle training approach, by setting up different stations that included core muscle strength, cardiovascular exercises and stretching techniques. The kids learned new exercises at each station and tracked steps on their pedometers.

“This experience made us think about how to best reach the kids, and for some us, it forced us to come out of our comfort zones,” said Newsome. “Our group of VUSN students worked together very well. Everyone made important contributions to the presentations, and we all supported one another.”

Croft Middle School physical education teacher Jane Norris hopes this program will begin to instill lifelong habits in the students.

“I’m hoping the students will increase their physical activity and make better food choices,” said Norris. “I hope the habit will become a lifestyle. Any

extra exposure we can give our students thrills me.”

The Vanderbilt students and interns participating in the program gain valuable real-life experience out of the classroom, and are integral to the success of the program.

“The key to this program is having a number of resources coming together,” Mouser said. “Each brings their own expertise, and we all learn from one another. This program wouldn’t be a success without everyone’s support and enthusiasm.”

“I think we made a huge difference and filled a void that would have been difficult for the middle school teaching staff to fill,” said Newsome. “The kids loved having us there, but best of all, the kids would tell us things like: I told my mom what you said about eating a healthy breakfast.”

Live It! Go For the Red, White and Blue was sponsored by Nashville Coca-Cola. The program will expand to other schools in the future, and will target an additional grade each year. **VUSN**

Childhood Obesity on the Rise

Childhood obesity is a growing epidemic around the world. The rate of childhood obesity has increased dramatically, and minorities are affected more than other groups.

Children who are obese or overweight pave the way for chronic diseases in adults. Excessive eating and lack of exercise are behaviors learned in childhood that can form the backdrop for chronic health issues in adulthood.

In addition to physical health concerns, overweight

children often experience social discrimination. They are frequently teased by peers which can lead to low self-esteem, eating disorders, social phobias and even clinical depression.

Research shows that the increase in weight among children and adolescents is more environmental than it is genetic. Behavioral interventions that address healthy eating and physical activity in children and their families have the potential to improve the future health of Americans. Health-promoting behaviors adopted during childhood may persist into adulthood, helping protect against chronic disease.

Research that includes families, schools and other environmental and contextual components is more successful than programs that do not include these elements. The interventions that appear to work best use a public health approach (all children), are multifaceted, and include parental involvement, health education, changing negative behavior patterns and participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

We are currently working to develop grants that focus on healthy lifestyle interventions in children that include the use of technology for reporting eating and activity behaviors. These grants will follow the child from home to school and will actively involve the child’s family.

– TOM COOK, PH.D., M.S.N., R.N.

TENNESSEE CHILDHOOD OBESITY STATISTICS

15 percent are overweight.

18 percent are at risk for becoming overweight.

82 percent ate fruits and vegetables fewer than five times per day.

66 percent did not meet currently recommended levels of physical activity.

Source: 2005 Tennessee Youth Risk Behavior Study

NATIONAL CHILDHOOD OBESITY STATISTICS

17.1 percent of children and adolescents are overweight.

Childhood obesity has increased from **11 percent to 19 percent** in recent years.

Adolescent obesity has increased from **11 percent to 17 percent** in the same period.

Source: Center for Disease Control’s National Center for Health Statistics

To use the CDC’s BMI calculator for adults and children, log on to: cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/index.htm.



POSCH



GILMER

2006 VUSN FACULTY AWARDS

VUSN is proud to recognize those individuals who received 2006 Faculty Awards:

David Posch, M.S., chief operating officer of Vanderbilt Medical Group – Dean’s Award for Outstanding Service to Faculty and Students

Mary Jo Gilmer, Ph.D., M.B.A., R.N., director, clinical management specialty – VUMC Faculty Nurse Award

Peter Buerhaus, Ph.D., R.N., senior associate dean for Research and Valere Potter Professor of Nursing – Deans’ Award for Recognition of Faculty Achievement in Scholarly Endeavors

Randolph Rasch, Ph.D, R.N., director, Family Nurse Practitioner Program – Ingeborg Grosser Mauksch Award for Excellent in Faculty Mentoring

Barbara Petersen, Ed.D., R.N., associate professor of Nursing – Excellence in Teaching Award for Teaching in the Lecture or Small Group Setting

Jennifer Scroggie, M.S.N., A.P.R.N., assistant professor of Nursing – Excellence in Teaching Award for Teaching in the Clinical Setting

Maria Overstreet, M.S.N., R.N. – assistant professor of Nursing – Excellence in Teaching Award for Educational Innovation

Mazo Freeman, administrative assistant to Frist Nursing Informatics Center – School Life Staff Award

GRANT AWARDS

The CDC Foundation School Health Index funded a VUSN school health mini grant – one of only 47 grants funded out of 600 applicants. Patti Scott is the project investigator, but the grant is the result of work on behalf of all the school health center nurse practitioners, including Clare Sullivan, Anne Williford and Roberta Bradley.



CONWAY-WELCH APPOINTED TO FEDERAL BOARD OF REGENTS POSITION

President George W. Bush recently announced the appointment of Vanderbilt University School of Nursing Dean Colleen Conway-Welch, Ph.D., as a member of the Board of Regents of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences is an academic health center located at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md. The university consists of a school of medicine and a graduate school of nursing that trains physicians and advanced practice nurses for careers in the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force.

The curriculum concentrates on military medicine and public health during peace and war. The university relates education, research and service to activities such as military medicine, disaster medicine and military medical readiness.

Conway-Welch is particularly interested in issues of communication and collaboration between military and civilian nurses in natural and man-made disasters.



PILON WINS TPCA LEADERSHIP AWARD

Bonnie Pilon, D.S.N., R.N., senior associate dean for Practice, received the Tennessee Primary Care Association’s Logan Beasley Leadership Excellence Award which is given to an individual who works to improve health care access for all Tennesseans.

Pilon and her staff oversee 11 employer-based clinics, school clinics and community clinics which handle more than 17,000 patient visits each year. The VUSN-run clinics also include the Vine Hill Clinic, located near the State Fairgrounds, and the West End Women’s Health Clinic nurse midwifery practice.

Pilon has served in her current position since 1999. She oversees clinical areas that are the practice arm of VUSN and has spearheaded the school’s health systems management program. She has served in leadership roles at hospital systems in Florida, Alabama and Texas, and has consulted for organizations such as IBM and PhyCor, Inc.

FACULTY NEWS

Beverly Byram, M.S.N., F.N.P., spoke at the National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day in Washington, D.C., this spring. She also spoke about utilizing nurse practitioners in HIV/AIDS care at the Ninth Annual AIDS National Conference in Barcelona, Spain.

Mary Dietrich, Ph.D., Mike Vollman, Ph.D., R.N., Cathy Taylor, Ph.D., R.N., Joan King, Ph.D., R.N., Jeff Gordon, Ph.D., and Sarah Fogel, Ph.D., R.N., have been named members of the Vanderbilt University Graduate Faculty and the Vanderbilt School of Nursing Doctoral Program Committee.

Anne Moore began a two-year term as Chair of the Board of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health, which establishes guidelines for practice and education for women's health nurse practitioners.

Joan E. King, Ph.D., R.N.C., program director for the Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Program, has been reappointed for a four-year period to serve on the American Nurses Credentialing Center's ACNP Expert View Panel.



Rebecca Ingle, B.S.N. '75, M.S.N. '82, a member of the VUSN practice faculty, recently won the Tennessean newspaper's Vision

of Nursing Award. Ingle was nominated by a Amber Zinck, a patient with Immune Thrombocytopenia Purpura, whom Ingle has been working for more than a year. Amber describes Ingle as "very comforting with a genuine, caring smile and always ready to listen and answer questions I may have."



James Pace, D.S.N., M.Div., is serving as Interim Vicar at St. Anselm's Episcopal Church on Fisk/Meharry Campus in Nashville. He also presented a session on Palliative Care: Implication for Stephen Ministers at Christ Episcopal Cathedral, also in Nashville. Pace was recently named evening chaplain for the department of Pastoral Care at VUMC/VCH. In this role, he provides pastoral care to

patients, patient's family as well as health care staff. Chaplain Pace will continue to coordinate the ANP Palliative Care Program and promote the joint M.S.N./M.Div./M.T.S. degree programs offered through the Divinity and Nursing schools.

Iris Padilla, Ph.D., successfully defended her dissertation at UT Memphis. She is one of VUSN's Vine Hill Family Practitioners and also teaches in the family nurse practitioner program.

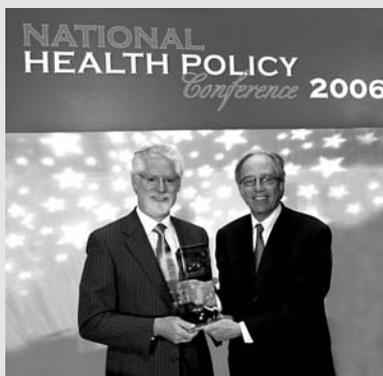
Randy Rasch, Ph.D., R.N., was elected as Chair of the Membership Committee for the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties. His term began in April and runs for two years.

Sheila Ridner, Ph.D., M.S.N., is on the Board of the Lymphatic Research Foundation and will serve as program chair for the National Lymphedema network's

professional conference in Nashville in November. She is also on the medical advisory committee and research committee for the group. Ridner is the Special Interest Group Coordinator for the Lymphedema Management SIG for the Oncology Nursing Society.

Cathy Taylor, M.S.N., R.N., Dr.Ph., was the lead author on "Clustering of U.S. Women Receiving No Prenatal Care: Differences in Pregnancy Outcomes and Implications for Targeting Interventions," published in an issue of *Maternal and Child Health Journal*.

Michael Vollman, Ph.D., R.N., has been appointed to the Research Steering Committee for the Vanderbilt Institute for Integrative Health and to the Research Task Force for the American Association of Heart Failure Nurses.



BUERHAUS WINS HEALTH SERVICES IMPACT AWARD

Peter Buerhaus, Ph.D., R.N., (pictured with David Helms president of AcademyHealth) and **Jack Needleman, Ph.D.**, received the first Health Services Research (HSR) Impact Award presented by AcademyHealth for their work that established a relationship between hospital nurse staffing and adverse patient outcomes. The award was presented at the 2006 National Health Policy Conference in Washington, D.C.

Buerhaus, Valere Potter Professor and senior associate dean for Research at VUSN, and Needleman, associate professor at UCLA's School of Public Health, helped inform the discussion and passage of the Nurse

Reinvestment Act, which was signed by President George Bush just two months after their groundbreaking study was published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

The HSR Impact Award was presented by AcademyHealth, a leading non-partisan resource for health research and quality, in recognition of outstanding positive impact of health services research on health policy or practice.

NEW VUSN FACULTY



Mary Dietrich, Ph.D., M.S., is a research associate professor and statistician in the Schools of Nursing (Primary) and Medicine (Secondary, Psychiatry) at Vanderbilt. With more than 20 years of statistical consulting experience in broad-based social and biological sciences research, Dietrich brings extensive experience with techniques used to measure and analyze complex multidimensional systems and outcomes from a wide variety of intervention protocols, including community-based development programs.

She earned her doctoral degree in statistics and measurement from Vanderbilt University (1996) for work that focused on the longitudinal modeling of parental functioning systems (including maternal, child and environmental characteristics) in high-risk populations. She was the recipient of the Hardy C. Wilcoxon Award for the most distinguished doctoral dissertation in any area of psychological inquiry.

She is currently a co-investigator or consultant on several NIH-funded research studies working collaboratively with colleagues to oversee data collection, data management and data analysis, and contributing to manuscript and report preparation.



Sheila H. Ridner, Ph.D., M.S.H.S.A., M.S.N., joined the faculty in January 2006 as an assistant professor in the School of Nursing. She earned her Ph.D. in Nursing Science from Vanderbilt University in 2003 and completed a Postdoctoral Fellowship at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing in 2005. Ridner's research focuses on managing symptoms that occur with cancer treatment, specifically on lymphedema (arm swelling) that occurs after cancer treatment. She serves on both the Research and Medical Advisory Committees for the National Lymphedema Network, is a member of the Board of Directors for The Lymphatic Research Foundation and serves as the Oncology Nursing Society's national coordinator for the Lymphedema Management Special Interest Group.

VUSN FACULTY PURSUING DOCTORAL AND POST DOC DEGREES

Susie Adams, associate professor of Nursing, A.P.R.N., B.C. Psychiatric Mental-Health Nurse Practitioner program director Ph.D at University of Kentucky in Lexington. Dissertation title: Factors Associated with Retention of Previously Incarcerated Women in a Community-Based Residential Treatment Program (Survival Analysis)

Susan Cooper, professor and assistant dean Faculty Practice D.N.P. at University of Kentucky

Terri Donaldson, instructor in Nursing, M.S.N., R.N. Acute Care Nurse Practitioner D.N.P. at University of Tennessee, Memphis

Maria Overstreet, assistant professor of Nursing, M.S.N., R.N. Ph.D. at University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Geri Reeves, assistant professor of Nursing, M.S.N., A.R.N.P., F.N.P. Family Nurse Practitioner Ph.D. at University of Kentucky

Cathy Reisenberg, instructor in Nursing, M.S.N., R.N. Family Nurse Practitioner Ph.D. at VUSN

Mavis Schorn, assistant professor of Nursing, M.S., C.N.M. Nurse-Midwifery program director Ph.D. at University of Kentucky

Dawn Vanderhoef, lecturer in Nursing, M.S.N., R.N. Psychiatric Mental Health Ph.D. at University of Tennessee, Memphis

Cindy Waller, instructor in Nursing Health Systems Management Ph.D. at VUSN

Jennifer Jordan Barham, M.S.N. '99, has been named Cardiovascular Nurse Practitioner with Cardiovascular Institute of Mississippi in McComb, Miss.

Michael Briley, M.S.N. '94, was chosen for a nationwide ad campaign by Staples and Home Depot to represent their newest medical product. He also recently graduated from University of Tennessee, Memphis with his D.N.P.



Donna Finto-Burks, M.S.N., '86, was appointed Employee of the Year by the Middle

Tennessee Mental Health Institute early this year. Recently she was also named Employee of the Year for the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities. She was selected due to her "dedication, innovation and commitment" to her work.

Jennifer McMurry Jordan, M.S.N. '99, and John Barham welcomed John Logan on

March 25, 2005. They live in Liberty, Miss.

Karen Larimer, B.A. '86, M.S.N. '91, is the recipient of an Albert Schweitzer Fellowship. The fellowship augments her Ph.D. program of study in nursing so that she can develop health care programs for underserved communities. It is awarded by the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship Program in Chicago.

Cara Gentile Stone, (M.S.N. '98) was recently married and moved to St. Kitts in the West Indies to become an assistant professor of Maternal Child Health Nursing at the Robert Ross International University of Nursing. She is teaching "Nursing the Childbearing Family."

Shannon Taylor Wilson, B.S. '97, and M.S.N. '98, and her husband, Brad, welcomed their first child, Taylor Elizabeth, born on March 27. Shannon, Brad, and Taylor reside in Columbia, S.C., where they enjoy the babysitting services of both sides of the family.



Members of the first class of the Maternal Infant Graduate Program recently celebrated the 25th anniversary of their graduation. Susan Elliott, Shannon Perry and Derenda Hodge are pictured above. The other three members of the class are Susan DonLevy, Phyllis Stoddard and Cindy Griggs.

it's our anniversary

VUSN will be celebrating our 100th anniversary in 2008. Preparations and planning are well under way, and we need your help.

If you have any memorabilia such as a cap, gown or other keepsakes, we would like to borrow them. Please contact Mindy Schuster at (615) 322-1177 or mindy.schuster@vanderbilt.edu. If you have an interesting story or special memory you would like us to know about, please contact Kathy Rivers at (615) 322-3894 or kathy.rivers@vanderbilt.edu.

IN MEMORIAM

Helen F. Bigler, Ph.D., former associate dean of VUSN until 1991 died recently at her home in Kansas City, Mo. Bigler entered nurses training in 1947 in Walla Walla, Wash., as a nurse cadet and then enlisted in the naval reserve in 1948. She was called to active duty in 1951 and served in Guam. She received a master's degree from the University of Washington and a doctorate from Boston University.

Margaret Stevens Haire, who graduated with her B.S.N. in 1929, died in June.

Martha Ruth Jones, Major, U.S. Army (Ret.), B.S.N. '43 died recently in Durham, N.C. Major Jones was born in Alabama and was raised in Columbus, Ga. She graduated from Vanderbilt University School of Nursing in 1935. Ms. Jones joined the U.S. Army in 1943 and served in a field hospital in Iraq. She left active service as a first lieutenant in 1945 and was promoted to

Major while in the reserves. Major Jones worked as the head nurse at the VA hospital in Batavia, N.Y., for many years. Following her retirement, Major Jones lived in Auburn, N.Y.. She moved to Durham due to health reasons in 1986.

Eleanor Wolff Tumlin, B.S.N. '47 passed away on April 10. She was from Anniston, Ala., but had lived the last 10 years in Birmingham.

SEND ALUMNI NEWS AND

PICTURES TO
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VISIT US ON THE WEB
vanderbilt.edu/nursing

"Tomorrow is your future," said Colleen Conway-Welch, Ph.D., Dean of the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing, to master's-prepared graduates during commencement ceremonies last week.

VUSN students officially completed their advanced practice nursing education at Vanderbilt in August of last year, and most are already working in health care in a variety of different areas. Even so, nearly 100 graduates from the school returned to campus for graduation and investiture of the academic hood ceremonies.



Top right: 2006 Founder's Medalist Michael Gooch, surrounded by A.N.C.P. graduates.

Middle right: Renee McCleod (former program director) and Terry Witherington, M.S.N., R.N., pediatric nurse practitioner program director, present the academic hood to Lisa Lachenmyer.

Bottom: Dean Colleen Conway-Welch leads the faculty procession.



PHOTOS BY KATS BARRY





Left: Shanita Coleman-Dockery, a family nurse practitioner already working at the Vanderbilt Student Health Center, embraces a faculty member.

Below: Lindsey Erikson and Sarah Halberg, two of the five students who attended VUSN as part of the U.S. Air Force program.



More than 200 Vanderbilt University School of Nursing students received their professional pins of Nursing at a ceremony in early August and were congratulated by a crowd of more than 1,600 family members and supporters.



Left: After the official ceremony, Anne Fleuren gets a hug from her mother.

Top: Victor Czerkasij and Grace McCoy celebrate during the reception.

Below: Candace Harvey is pinned by her grandmother, Jean Harvey, R.N., from the Nashville General Class of 1944.

pay it [forward]

Kathryn (Summers) Skinner, B.S.N. '56, thinks there's something special about a Vanderbilt University School of Nursing educated nurse. She's a great example of just that.

Skinner went on to earn her M.S.N. in psychiatric community health nursing at the University of Tennessee, Memphis. She has had a full career and held many positions, but her favorite was serving for 21 years at Methodist Hospital in Memphis. She dedicated most of her career at Methodist working as a nurse counselor, focusing on supporting and counseling with nurses for the purpose of retention.

She retired from her position in 2000, and now works part time for the Memphis Mental Health Institute, the state acute care hospital. She stays busy as the proud mother of four adult daughters and three grandchildren. She's an avid hiker and even convinced one of her children to accompany her on a recent rafting trip through the Grand Canyon.

"Vanderbilt University School of Nursing has made some pretty significant contributions to my life. I'm very grateful



for the foundation it gave me in nursing. I'm proud to be a graduate of Vanderbilt and made good friends that have lasted 50 years."

Skinner is a strong proponent of professional nursing. "I feel obligated to support what I consider to be one of the most important institutions that prepare nurses to be leaders in our profession. There's something special about a Vanderbilt nurse."

An active supporter of VUSN, Skinner has chosen to "pay it forward," helping other young nurses pursue their education. The Pay It Forward Scholarship was established in 2004 by alumnae Bette Brotherton and Doreen Wise. It is awarded with the recipient's full understanding that, given time and opportunity, the recipient(s) will, after graduation, provide financial, emotional, and/or moral support to other nursing students seeking to further their education. To learn more about making a planned gift to VUSN, call the Office of Planned Giving at (615) 343-3113.