Renewal, Commitment, and the Promise of the School of Nursing

Every spring, the UVA Lawn comes alive. The early blooms on the pink saucer magnolia tree outside Pavilion IX hint at what awaits us—and remind me of renewal, commitment, and the promise of nursing here at UVA.

Renewal

President Sullivan and our faculty, staff, alumni, and students created the Cornerstone Plan, *Uncommon Leadership for the Common Good*, which UVA’s Board of Visitors recently approved. One of the centerpieces of the strategic plan is recruitment of a distinguished faculty. Our faculty is retiring at unprecedented rates, and the national faculty shortage in nursing remains acute. Yet, as you will read in our cover story, what often makes and inspires a Virginia nurse is an exceptional faculty. These individuals guide students in compassionate care that is safe and of the highest quality and act as role models for authentic leadership. Increasingly, leadership at UVA is driven by those who are not only on the cutting edge in clinical matters and asking creative research questions, but who are also calm, resilient, empathic, and mindful—a tall order, for sure. As a dean, my most important work is bringing the best faculty to UVA to join our learning community of caring.

Commitment

Our students are committed to learning compassionate care. UVA students, a total of 750 across undergraduate and graduate programs, are true leaders with creative minds and generous hearts. They are passionate about applying the best evidence for safe, quality care and discovering new knowledge to improve the health of those they serve. Reading in this issue about their student experiences may make you recall your own student days and share our pride in their ongoing dedication and commitment. At UVA the distractions of a major research and residential university are legendary. Even so, our students seem to stay focused, enjoy and direct many of the cocurricular opportunities, and still graduate as highly recruited clinicians and leaders.

The Promise of Nursing at UVA

Thanks to your support, UVA will keep renewing our commitment to students and growing our funding for faculty. If a generous spring (after the toughest winter in memory!) and the magnolia outside my window signal renewal, commitment, and promise, we at the School of Nursing stand ready to continue sending forth the best and brightest to care for the health of all.

I will keep in mind your own generosity and know that you are wishing us well.

Warmly,

Dorrie Fontaine, RN, PhD, FAAN
Sadie Heath Cabaniss Professor of Nursing and Dean
SPRING 2014

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Virginia Legacy is published twice a year
by the University of Virginia School of
Nursing and Nursing Alumni Association.

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On the cover: Students (clockwise from left) Chelsea Hull, Katlyn McQuade, Ashley Munoz, and Alex Wolf. Read what these students have to say on pages 10–12. Photos by Tom Cogill and Coe Sweet.

Above, top: Fourth-year nursing student Darcy Alimenti lives on the Lawn, a unique privilege at UVA.

At right: New faculty member Jessica Keim-Malpass studies young women with cancer and the blogs they write.
Worth Noting

Patient Safety and Quality Care
Top Shannon’s List

Late last year, when Richard P. Shannon, MD, joined the UVA Health System as executive vice president for health affairs, he noted that US healthcare is in the midst of a major transformation. In his next breath, he called for an embrace of changes to come.

“This is an exciting opportunity to learn and reinvent the way we work,” says Shannon. “It’s my aspiration to preside over the safest healthcare system in the country.”

For Shannon, that translates into delivering what patients want and need on time, in the right amount, and without defect, error, or waste. He points to “harm”—events such as infections, falls, and delays in treatment—as the most elementary form of waste in healthcare, costing as much as $1 trillion nationally. Eliminating this waste, says Shannon, will allow for investment in things that are important.

One of those important things, says Shannon, is recognizing that each patient has a personal story. He wants to know the names and circumstances of patients who get infections, fall, or die unexpectedly. A close examination of what went wrong, he says, will help us fix institutional problems—and get things right.

Shannon is also a strong advocate for worker safety and engagement.

“We need to create a safe environment,” he says, “where every worker can say, ‘Yes, I am treated with dignity and respect from everyone in this institution.’”

—RICHARD SHANNON
Kicking the Habit
Nursing Clinics Offer Reliable Approach

Across the University of Virginia and local community, fewer people are lighting up. That’s due, in part, to three dedicated nurse practitioner faculty members and their nursing student partners who are committed to health and wellness.

“We have worked hard to establish NP faculty- and student-initiated programs for tobacco-cessation,” says Dr. Janie Heath, associate dean for academic programs and Thomas A. Saunders III Family Endowed Professor of Nursing. “We are actively involved in three clinics at UVA and in the community. In addition, more than 350 UVA nursing students receive tobacco cessation education each year. To date, we have helped more than 100 participants begin their tobacco-free journeys to health.”

One of those former smokers is Travis Leach, a busy School of Medicine employee with a stressful job. After kicking a pack-a-day habit he had for 37 years, Leach highly recommends the program, especially its holistic approach.

“It’s not just giving you a patch and sending you on your way,” says Leach. “It’s an overall approach that teaches you how to work through cravings and cope with the stresses and anxieties of everyday life. The support groups were really helpful—just being able to talk to others with the same addiction and issues.”

Leach also enjoyed learning specific tactics for avoiding places and situations that triggered a smoking urge, as well as the guided meditations and ongoing support. “Dr. Heath still checks in with me regularly,” says Leach.

For students involved with the program, including second-year BSN student Sally Haines, the experience offers real experience in preventative healthcare.

“The program offers us the opportunity to take vital signs—heart rate and CO...
levels—every week,” says Haines. “Seeing their carbon monoxide level drop as they quit is motivating for the participants. What stuck out to me the most was people’s tenacity to quit. They all have lots going on in their personal lives and the addiction is real. So, it was inspiring to see them stick with it.”

The clinics focus on providing comprehensive and evidence-based smoking-cessation programs that offer specific behavioral, emotional, and biological strategies for success. The participants’ health (blood pressure, heart rate, etc.) is monitored throughout, and the program is designed to contribute to the overall health of UVA students, employees, and individuals from the surrounding Charlottesville community.

Clearly, these clinics that started small are making a big difference.

A little passion about a significant health problem can go a long way to make a difference in the lives of people in our Charlottesville and UVA communities,” says Heath. “All of the NPs involved have our own personal journeys with nicotine addiction, and each of us has more than 20 years of experience in helping people quit.”

Start-up funding for these programs has come primarily from the UVA Parents Committee, Less Cancer Organization, and Heath’s personal research funding. For more information about the UVA clinics, call (434) 243-1021.

E-Cigarettes Raise New Questions

Some people trying to quit smoking look to e-cigarettes. According to Heath, that may not be a wise decision. E-cigarettes—battery-operated sticks made of plastic or metal that release vapor, rather than smoke—still deliver nicotine, along with a questionable chemical mist of diethylene glycol, propylene glycol, and carcinogenic nitrosamines.

Already a $2 billion-a-year enterprise, e-cigarettes come in flavors like pina colada and peach schnapps that may be attracting a new and younger audience, many who were not previously smokers. A Center for Disease Control and Prevention study found that between 2011 to 2012, the percentage of high schoolers who had tried e-cigarettes more than doubled, from 4.7 percent to 10 percent.

The American Lung Association has expressed concern over the potential health risks of electronic cigarettes, and over claims that they can be used to help smokers quit. There is no government oversight of these products and no way to know what chemicals are actually contained in e-cigarettes—or what the short- and long-term health implications of using them or being around them might be.

“I understand all too well the hope for a safe and evidence-based way to break the habit,” says Heath, “but e-cigarettes just are not the way. There is no magic bullet; quitting smoking is incredibly hard to do. Nicotine’s the reason. And at present, there is no evidence supporting e-cigarettes as the best way to kick the habit.”

Heath advocates for large, randomized, controlled trials to understand the short-term and long-term health consequences of electronic cigarettes, along with regulation of the industry.

“Nothing short of full and direct regulation of these nicotine delivery tools will satisfy health professionals like me,” says Heath, “and shielding young people from these perils—as yet largely unknown—is critical.”

Making the Grade

It’s almost official—the School of Nursing awaits the formal letter to affirm re-accreditation for another 10 years from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and the Virginia Board of Nursing. Debriefings with the reaccreditation team were overwhelmingly positive.

“The reaccreditation team’s observations during the October site visit revealed what so many of us already know,” says Dean Dorrie Fontaine, “that ours is an exceptional place. My sincere thanks go to all of our wonderful faculty, administrators, students, alumni, and community members for their important roles in this very collective, collaborative effort. Together, we make the School the special place it is—and every one of us is a critical ingredient to that success.”

Officially recognized by the US Secretary of Education as a national accreditation agency, the CCNE is an autonomous accrediting agency charged with ensuring the quality and integrity of baccalaureate, graduate, and residency programs in nursing.

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Forging New Paths to Healthcare Delivery in South Africa

THE garden hose and the red balloon, stretched and filled to overflowing with water, did the trick.

Tasked with explaining the biology behind hypertension and diabetes to home-based caregivers in rural South Africa, University of Virginia graduate nursing students Meg Wightman and Christina Luckett—along with students from UVA’s School of Medicine and Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy and from the biology program at the UVA’s College at Wise—saw lights of understanding flicker. Filling a garden hose (representative of the body’s arteries) and covering the nozzle to create a high-pressure spray, they demonstrated the effect of overabundant sodium and dietary fat. A repeatedly filled-to-bulging red balloon represented a heart overcome by high blood pressure.

A room full of about 30 home-based South African caregivers, most of whom spoke English only as a second language, nodded their heads and smiled. They understood. And now they’d be able to communicate hypertension’s pathophysiology—along with its remedies, risks, and ways to reduce it—to their patients.

The UVA group, seven students and four faculty, created the curriculum for South African home-based caregivers, in a region with few doctors or nurses and a high incidence of HIV/AIDS, diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. While the monthlong experience offered UVA students a chance to teach the signs, symptoms, risks, and remedies of hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease, equal focus was given to developing the collaborative practice of these physicians-and nurses-to-be. Practicing together, across disciplines—interprofessional education—is a core focus for UVA nursing, especially important as today’s healthcare practitioners frequently work in teams.

“It was great to facilitate a learning experience for a group of learners without regard for professional discipline,” says nursing professor Cathy Campbell. “If students are given the chance, they will collaborate in outstanding ways. That was certainly the case here.”

“The twofold aim of projects like these—the interprofessional component and the crosscultural piece—are critical in the development of compassionate, collaborative clinicians who work together seamlessly,” adds nursing professor Marianne Baernholdt.

In addition to the garden hose and balloon demonstrations, the group also designed an interactive lesson about diabetes, role-played a host of maladies, and outlined and practiced a variety of action plans based on a simulated patient’s symptoms.

The program was supported by UVA’s Center for Global Health, with funding from the Josiah Macy Foundation.

Preserving the Past: President Sullivan Donates Her Mother’s Cape

UVA President Teresa Sullivan (left), shown here with Dean Dorrie Fontaine, has donated her mother’s nursing cape to the School’s Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry. Sullivan’s mother, Mary Elizabeth Finnegan, enlisted in the Army Nurse Corps shortly after Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese in 1941. She served in the European theater in World War II. After the war ended, Sullivan’s mother worked with patients at veterans hospitals. Sullivan’s mother died in 1980.

“Having President Sullivan’s mother’s cape is a very real way for us to engage in nursing’s history,” says Arlene Keeling, Centennial Distinguished Professor of Nursing and director of the Bjoring Center, “and it supports our mission to inform today’s nursing students with lessons from the past.”
Worth Noting

STUDENT IN FOCUS: JANE VON GAUDECKER (MSN ’12, PHD ’14)

Coping with Epilepsy in Rural India

As PhD student Jane von Gaudecker works on her dissertation, part of her mind is on research methodology, while another is thousands of miles away in rural India. It’s there, von Gaudecker found, that women with epilepsy face the daily threat of unpredictable seizures, shame about the disease, and dramatic gaps in treatment.

“In India, there is a strong stigma attached to epilepsy,” says von Gaudecker. “People suffer from lots of misconceptions about the disease. It’s a patriarchal society, and women are reluctant to come forward for appropriate treatment. Traditional Indian culture relies primarily on Ayurvedic medicine, which includes treatment with herbs, massages, special diet, cleansing of the body, meditation, and prayers. Typically, these women do not receive anti-epilepsy drugs.”

The impact is significant. Data shows that approximately 85 percent of people with active epilepsy live in developing countries. As the world’s most populous countries, India and China make up 20 percent of this number. More than 90 percent of the people with epilepsy in rural India live without proper treatment.

Von Gaudecker’s research will examine what it’s like for Indian women to live with these treatment gaps. She will conduct a focused ethnography to understand the daily lives of women living with seizures and treatment gaps. Ultimately, her research could suggest culturally appropriate treatments and advice for Indian healthcare providers who see people with epilepsy, while also aiming to uncover practices in epilepsy treatment from Indian culture that Westerners might find beneficial.

Her research is guided by her dissertation advisor, Arlene Keeling (BSN ’74, MSN ’87, PhD ’92), and a dissertation committee.

“I feel fortunate to be a part of UVa, where I learn about the best research methods and am mentored by the best faculty,” says von Gaudecker. “Talking to Dr. Keeling has been like talking to my mother. She has guided me throughout the program and research process. I also have an amazing dissertation committee. Everyone has been helpful in different ways.”

Von Gaudecker earned her BSc Nursing degree in India and came to UVa as a staff nurse in 2005. She worked in the epilepsy unit at UVa, where she “became passionate” about the topic—and curious. “Research got into me,” she says. “I wanted to know more and to be of help.”

“My dream is to pursue international work,” says von Gaudecker. “I believe that there’s a lot to learn from different cultures.”

IN BRIEF

Two UVA faculty members—Joel Anderson and Edie Barbero—have been listed among “100 Inspiring Nursing Professors to Watch in 2014” in the Online LPN to RN blog. Barbero, assistant professor and coordinator of the Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Program, has been recognized for excellence by the Sigma Theta Tau honor society for her research and work in therapeutic storytelling. Anderson, assistant professor and Roberts Scholar, managed two cancer research laboratories prior to his arrival at the School. He’s also currently the research director at Healing Touch International.

Reba Moyer Childress (BSN ’79, MSN ’91, FNP ’92), assistant professor and director of the Mary Morton Parsons Clinical Simulation Learning Center, contributed to Simulation in Nursing Education: From Conceptualization to Evaluation, which recently received the American Journal of Nursing’s Book of the Year Award for 2013.

PhD student Karen Moss and DNP student Alex Wolf have been named Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence in Healthcare Scholars, a distinction that comes with a $20,000 scholarship from the Jonas Center for Nursing and Veterans Healthcare and matching funds from the School. The Jonas Scholars program, begun by Barbara and Donald Jonas, aims to improve healthcare through nursing, offering grants to advance nursing scholarship, leadership, innovation, and collaboration with other healthcare leaders.

PhD student Neil Peterson earned a Southern Nursing Research Society student award for his work on the health impact of sedentary behavior among young people.
Heath Named Dean at Kentucky

JANIE Heath, UVA associate dean and Thomas Saunders III Endowed Professor of Nursing, will take the reins as dean at the University of Kentucky School of Nursing later this summer.

For Dean Fontaine, Heath’s colleague, long-time friend, and champion, the departure is bittersweet.

“Since 2011, Janie has led our academic programs with poise, developing new infrastructure and innovative partnerships and shepherding our School through a successful 10-year reaccreditation,” says Fontaine. “Her energy, spirit of optimism, and dedication will be sorely missed, although it goes without saying that we wish her well.”

Heath’s expertise in tobacco control led her to Washington, D.C., earlier this year, where she was invited to participate on a panel before legislators focused on e-cigarettes, cessation programs, and cancer prevention. In addition to offering regular clinics to UVA employees and community members hoping to quit smoking, Heath also taught courses in nursing leadership to undergraduate and graduate nursing students. An American Academy of Nursing Fellow with a doctoral degree, Heath is widely published and has received some $12 million in grant funding during her career. Over her career, Heath held administrative positions at Georgetown and Georgia Health Sciences University.

Putting Patients First

For hospitalized patients, a nursing student’s visit can be a bright spot in a long day. For student nurses, interacting with patients is often what drew them to the profession in the first place. Sometimes, you even get a special friendship like the one between Amy Brandt, a patient at UVA Medical Center, and third-year student Stephanie Graefe.

“Stephanie has been kind and extremely attentive, making sure I have everything I need,” says Brandt. “She explains things well and always has enough time for me. She’s competent in her work and good at teaching and interacting with others.”

The two soon discovered another connection. Graefe’s mother, a midwife, helped care for Brandt during the birth of her first child.

During clinical days, Graefe and Brandt frequently talk about Brandt’s daughter, in between more serious conversations about treatment, prognosis, and coping. Conversations like these are part of why Graefe chose nursing.

“Before transferring to nursing, I was pre-med,” says Graefe. “But I realized that I wanted to be at the bedside, spending more time with patients and looking at situations more holistically. When caring for Amy, I cluster my care as much as possible. I know she is a young, independent woman who is still trying to maintain her job and privacy while hospitalized.”

Ultimately, it’s the small but personal connections that make Graefe feel good about her career choice.

“When I get to know my patients, as with Amy, it makes my day more meaningful. I know I am making an impact in their lives. Should problems arise, I know patients handle situations much better when they are surrounded by staff they have come to know. I take pride in comforting patients and guiding them in terms they understand.”

Just Published: Keeling’s New Book on Nursing History

A new book by Arlene Keeling, Centennial Distinguished Professor of Nursing, is just out. Caring Healers: The Nurses of Mayo Clinic presents, for the first time, a history of nursing at the esteemed Mayo Clinic—from its 19th-century roots on the frontier town of Rochester, Minn., to its 21st-century eminence as a leading care and research clinic. Filled with historical milestones, compelling personal accounts, and a plethora of photos and artifacts, Keeling’s book brings the remarkable spirit of Mayo nursing, from the past into present, to vivid life.
Setting the Stage

The UVA Nursing Student Experience

BY CHRISTINE PHELAN KUETER
What, exactly, makes a Virginia nurse?

What is it that makes UVA-educated nurses the exceptional clinicians, teachers, administrators, and researchers they ultimately become? How is it that, no matter where they go—to the front of an expansive lecture hall, to the floor of a legislative body, staffing a clinic in a rural overseas village, or at the bedside of a patient in need—they have fluency and poise even in the most trying of circumstances?

Three words explain the phenomenon: Their student experience.

Clearly, UVA nursing draws individuals who are already ambitious, compassionate, agile thinkers. But once they cross Virginia’s threshold, it’s the rich variety of ideas, skills, and experiences presented to them that add up to excellence. In today’s environment, this translates into an increasingly nimble BSN degree that constantly adjusts to the needs of 21st-century healthcare. It means developing innovative programs to address professional resiliency and the increasing responsibilities of nurses who work in multidisciplinary patient care teams. Ultimately, it means establishing more routes into nursing and advanced degrees to keep pace with demand.

In the end, what UVA offers is more than a degree. Virginia nurses embody the best of the profession because of what is revealed to them, and by whom, during their time on Grounds. They learn from clinicians and researchers at the cutting edge of healthcare practice and theory, professionals who reply to long-held practice standards with curiosity and skepticism. They study with faculty members who look at old issues with fresh perspectives and who value respectful partnerships and dialogue within healthcare teams. They become part of a community sharing in the understanding that exceptional nurses lie at the core of high-quality, safe, and compassionate patient care.

“We’re like stage directors in a way,” explains Dean Dorrie Fontaine. “We set the scenery, provide the script, and advise and collaborate on presentation. Then it’s up to our nursing students to take their roles and run.

“And do they ever.”

Finding Focus

In nursing education today, three novel areas—interprofessional learning, instruction in mindfulness and cultural competence, and intense exposure to the nuts and bolts of nursing research—set UVA apart and infuse Virginia nurses with the kind of confidence that comes from having a broad knowledge base. While other schools offer this kind of instruction as extra-curricular
THE UVA NURSING STUDENT EXPERIENCE

In a word:Passionate

Alex Wolf, DNP ’16

In a way, Alex Wolf couldn’t have been anything but a Virginia nurse.

At 14, he cared for his grandfather who was progressively debilitated by multiple myeloma. He pored over his mother’s nursing textbooks. He volunteered in a local ER, wheeling patients and distributing blankets, and, by the time he was 18, was a tech at St. Louis Children’s Hospital. All the while, Wolf’s uncle, a UVA Medical Center physician, sent him an almost comical variety of UVA mugs, t-shirts, and hats.

But it was the nurses Wolf encountered who always “blew him away.”

By senior year in high school, he was armed with purpose, although, he admits, “it felt a little strange to tell my buddies I was going to be a nurse, because it’s sort of bizarre to have such direction and be so young.”

Before earning his BSN, he worked as an EMT; afterward, he worked in a medical ICU. These exposures to critically ill patients whet Wolf’s passion for research. A night shift colleague urged him to consider an advanced nursing degree, or perhaps even a DNP.

“A what?” Wolf asked.

Fast forward a year and UVA nursing, says Wolf, “just feels right. When I came to Grounds, something in my mind just said, ‘I need to come here.’”

Although he’s just a third of his way through the BSN to DNP track’s three-year program, Wolf leapt in, feet first. He’s working with Medical School students on plans for a new, student-run free clinic. He saw patients at the annual RAM Clinic, in Grundy, Virginia. He’s studied research on palliative care, delirium, and geriatrics, and bonded with his peers. He points to the passions of his professors and student colleagues at UVA as the sparks that have ignited his own. He also believes Virginia’s interprofessional focus offers a fundamental source for those passions, and is an effort that impacts everything nursing and medical students do.

“It’s unique here in the sense of how much UVA values it, focuses on it,” says Wolf. “It’s never just a nursing effort or a med school thing—we all do it together. Working together is a UVA thing. It incorporates the idea that nurses always are working with other people, not independently. At base, it’s all about respect. And UVA has the strongest sense of mutual respect I’ve ever seen.”

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Curricular Close-Up

“It’s incumbent on our nursing faculty to keep content fresh and relevant,” explains Janie Heath, associate dean for academic programs, who shepherded the school through a successful 10-year reaccreditation late last year. “Sometimes that means changes from year to year, semester to semester. We are in constant review and improvement mode.”

That drive for constant improvement led to a complete makeover of the BSN curriculum in 2013. The culmination of three years’ work, the overhaul included changing the sequence of courses and amplifying certain areas while condensing others. Students who entered in fall 2013 will now have two semesters of pharmacology instead of the single semester in the old model. The same is true for courses in chemistry and microbiology.

Other changes include four new REAL courses (representing Research, Ethics, Advocacy, and Leadership) that offer a lively fusion of subjects previously folded into other courses. REAL topics are far-reaching: How do you know when data are clinically significant? What are concrete steps to take to affect legislation? What makes the most effective nurse managers? How do healthcare supervisors nurture happy, resilient nursing staff?

The revamped BSN program also includes a required anatomy and physiology (A&P) lab that introduces students to the simulation lab earlier in their studies and enables them to have hands-on and applied learning in ways they previously hadn’t.

options, at Virginia, they make up the core of a nursing student’s experience.

Practically, that means that every student conducts research—solo, or as part of a team. Every student takes part in interprofessional workshops and practice scenarios with medical students, faculty, and simulated patients. Every student has the option to study abroad, take courses in multicultural approaches in nursing, and receive instruction in mindfulness techniques, along with ample opportunity to practice.

“Beyond classroom learning, UVA nursing aims to mentor the whole person, which really makes what we do here quite distinct,” explains Fontaine. “Our jobs as nursing professors are never static,” she adds. “That’s part of what keeps things so interesting.”
“Already, I can tell which students have had the A&P lab, and which ones haven’t,” says Reba Childress, one of eight nursing professors on the BSN review committee. “It’s heartening to see those changes already—and the very real differences they have made.”

Build It, and They Will Come

While course content is constantly revisited, so too are the degree programs themselves—with the goal of ensuring that programs best serve and prepare new students, and, ultimately, their future patients. To that end, UVA nursing professors have cultivated new degree tracks in response to needs expressed by the community, and, recently, one put forth by the federal government.

When the US military made it known that they wanted their nurses to earn doctoral degrees in a seamless and streamlined route from their baccalaureate degrees, nursing faculty seized the opportunity to develop a novel route to the DNP, the highest clinical degree in nursing.

“We had about six months to pull together a curriculum,” says Heath, who along with nursing professor Audrey Snyder and nursing admissions chief Clay Hysell, spearheaded the new program. “Our military colleagues shared the direction they were going—wanting all of their baccalaureate-trained nurses going for advanced practice degrees to earn the highest clinical degree—and we responded in kind.”

UVA developed its BSN to DNP track to offer a route to a doctorate for advanced practice RNs. The full-time program, which takes three years to complete, has attracted both military and civilian students. With the nation’s growing demand for highly skilled nurses, enrollment in the program is expected to continue to grow and to gain a permanent foothold at UVA.

The same is true for the School’s Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) program, a master’s program for those pivoting into nursing from other backgrounds and professions. A transformative $5 million gift from Joanne and Bill Conway, of Washington, D.C., is allowing the School to double the size of the CNL program to accommodate nearly 100 students each year. To date, the School has added several new CNL faculty and been able to

In a word:

Relevant

“I’ve had a lot of awesome professors. Tina Brashers is incredible. Every disease she talks about, she gives us actual examples of patients. ‘A 35-year-old man comes in coughing, what do you look for?’ She makes it so relatable—and that’s critical in helping us learn to fuse everything together.”

—Kaitlyn McQuade, BSN ’14

In a word:

Dynamic

“The professors are so passionate about what they’re doing. They offer outside help and are invested in each one of us. We’re taking classes that really apply, and we all want to do our level best.”

—Chelsea Hull, BSN ’15
In a word: Collaborative

“We joke that the nursing school is a sorority; you form these incredible bonds, and these people become your sisters and brothers. It’s intense, and not competitive at all. ‘Can I borrow your notes?’ The answer is always, ‘Of course.’ We have a Facebook group and people are constantly posting questions, ‘Can I get help with this?’ and within five seconds someone offers an answer.

“I honestly think that while nursing attracts compassionate, more caring people, the faculty is also always encouraging us to work together, to process together. We’re constantly encouraged to form teams, and, because there’s not a competitive nature to our class, people don’t feel that pressure, and so they help and really get to know each other.”

—Ashley Munoz, BSN ’15

In a word: Confident

“Virginia is the whole package … being part of UVA, of the Health System and the School, gave me a great deal of confidence. Seeing other people be successful—my professors winning awards, my advisor, Karen Rose, being inducted into the American Academy of Nursing, my friends doing great work—it just gave me a lot of confidence and pride in my program.”

—Julia Truelove, BSN ’14

offer special scholarship opportunities for outstanding students in the program. Both UVA’s DNP and CNL programs were the Commonwealth’s first.

“There is no question that nurses with advanced degrees enjoy more professional mobility and occupy more positions of leadership in our clinics and hospitals,” says Snyder, “and the same holds true for military nurses. That the US military is taking an extra step in requiring their nurses to have the doctoral degree, rather than solely a master’s, is impressive. They’re really going several steps beyond.”

McQuade spent last fall studying abroad at the University of Auckland during a semester’s curriculum that mirrored UVA’s third-year focus on mental health issues. She spent her three weeks off from coursework meandering through New Zealand bungee jumping, sky diving, hiking, snorkeling, and generally cramming in as much activity as possible. For McQuade, who’s in ROTC and will become an Army nurse after graduation, her study abroad represents part of the “secret sauce” that goes into her UVA nursing experience—rich in relevance, practical experience, and powerful lessons in cultural healthcare differences.

But some of it too, she explains, is more basic. Having some flexibility in practical matters—when a lab is scheduled or what day of the week clinical hours are amassed—is important, says McQuade, when you spend your weekends doing basic training exercises at the crack of dawn, as ROTC requires. UVA takes care of such details, thoughtfully and competently.

That sense of underlying support enabled McQuade to leap toward exciting opportunities—such as a semester studying in New Zealand, and gaining an understanding of how nurses there manage mental health issues—with eagerness. McQuade’s leap—like so many of the leaps that nursing students take as they tackle clinicals, research, and study and service abroad while at UVA—was possible because of the foundation of experience that fortifies Virginia nurses with the skills, confidence, and poise to do whatever it is they set out to do.

“Everybody’s so involved, and in things many times that aren’t even related to nursing,” says McQuade. “UVA is the place for that, and it really allows you to involve yourself in everything that interests you, not just getting a degree. That’s truly the mindset here.”

Terra Firma

And that “several steps beyond” notion, really, is what Virginia nursing all about. Just ask fourth-year student Kaitlyn McQuade.
An up-to-date curriculum keeps UVA in the ranks of the nation’s top nursing schools and its students among the country’s leading graduates. When the School took on the task of updating the baccalaureate program, faculty went above and beyond to create a curriculum that meets the needs of today and anticipates those of tomorrow.

“An added emphasis on the sciences and earlier hands-on experience help us better prepare BSN students for today’s complex healthcare environment. The R.E.A.L. courses cultivate problem-solving skills and encourage new nurses to take a more active role in shaping the future of patient care.” —KAREN ROSE, DIRECTOR, BSN PROGRAM
A Moment of Quiet Reflection

November 5, 2013 Nursing students participating in a resiliency retreat at UVA-owned Morven estate, led by Susan Bauer-Wu (center), Kluge Professor and director of the Compassionate Care Initiative, along with ER nurse Jonathan Bartels (left), and yoga teacher Esther Lozano (right). Growing evidence shows that resilient caregivers offer safer, more compassionate care.
Impact: Nursing Research

Nursing research affects prevention measures, practice protocols, and policy—at the individual and institutional levels and throughout the nation’s health care system. University of Virginia nurses are leading the way in research that has a direct impact on patient care today and in the future.

Managing Pain during Childbirth
One Choice Does Not Fit All

Think of it as tapping the warrior within: Hispanic women, it turns out, request dramatically fewer epidurals and pain relief drugs during childbirth, when compared to women of other races.

But why?
That’s the question PhD candidate Juliane Milburn wanted to answer. Working under the guidance of Linda Bullock, associate dean for research, Milburn—a nurse practitioner and a professor at Piedmont Virginia Community College—began sifting through more than 7,000 UVA Medical Center records to get the full story.

What she found was startling. Over the past half-dozen years, Hispanic women who gave birth at UVA were 53 percent less likely than all other races to have an epidural during childbirth, and 41 percent less likely to use a combination of epidural and IV medications during labor than all other races. And while previous studies have quantified disparities in certain minorities’ access to pain relief—with the upshot being that white people receive far more pain relief than non-whites do—Milburn’s is the first American study to both quantify and qualify the trend.

“One of the unique features of childbirth pain is that it is one of the few situations in health care where acute pain may be left untreated as part of care management,” explains Milburn, who’s fluent in Spanish and is herself the mother of three, “and for some women, the ability to make that choice is more important than medical interventions.”

That choice appears to be critical for some Hispanics. More than one in five Hispanic women opted for no pain relief during childbirth at all—22.4 percent—compared to 14 percent for all other races. Nearly 45 percent of Hispanic women refused an epidural, compared to 26 percent of women from all other races.

While previous studies have revealed disparities in the utilization of pain relief in general—whites tend to receive the most pain relief in emergency rooms, compared to people of other races and ethnicities, research has shown—Hispanic women, Milburn found, often go medication-free during childbirth by choice. That determination, she found during 17 interviews with a group of Hispanic mothers, was based on a number of culturally based belief systems, including ideal birth standards, religion, their mothers’ and grandmothers’ stories, as well as misconceptions about possible side effects labor relief drugs might have on their infants and themselves.

NUMBERS TO NOTE

22.4 percent of Hispanic women chose no pain relief during labor and childbirth
14 percent of women of all other races/ethnicities opted out of pain relief
45 percent of Hispanic women refused an epidural
26 percent of women of all other races/ethnicities refused an epidural
Managing Mid-Term Pregnancy Stress for Healthier Babies

It’s not just whether you provide pregnant women support; it’s when. For vulnerable women who are depressed, abused, nicotine-dependent, or isolated, the when exerts a worrisome burden on everything from a baby’s birth weight to the length of its gestation.

So says new nursing research from doctoral student Donna Schminkey (PhD ’14), who zeroed in on the concept of “adaptive reproduction”—the relationship between stress, depression, and social support (or lack thereof) and pregnancy and birth outcomes—for her dissertation.

Poring over data from nearly 700 high-risk pregnant women who smoked, Schminkey divided the group into seven gestational categories. She examined answers to questions about health, stress levels, and perceptions about social support. The survey also included a metric to screen for depression and abuse, and data about the babies’ ultimate birth weights and gestation length. From these metrics, Schminkey drew conclusions about the ways the timing of stress, depression, and social support influence a baby’s birth weight and term, and compared abused women to those who were not abused.

Research has shown that abused, depressed women are more likely to bear babies that are small and pre-term. But there are particular points in these pregnancies—between the 24th and 28th weeks—when depression and abuse exert the most negative influence and when interventions might be timed to fight and reverse that effect. Nurses, nurse-midwives, and social workers, says Schminkey, who visit, call, have appointments with, or provide group care for these women must focus their efforts on the mid-pregnancy period. Specific coping-with-stress strategies can be taught early in pregnancy to provide the greatest degree of protection to the unborn child.

“Abuse is toxic,” says Schminkey. “Women need to know that experiencing abuse has a real, adverse impact on the health of their babies.”

Schminkey’s recommendations? Programs that help women and their partners learn strategies for providing good support. Classes and interactions that boost pregnant women’s self-esteem and stress-hardiness. More robust maternity and paternity leave programs, and an understanding that the 24th to 28th weeks of pregnancy aren’t the time to add extra hours or stressful projects.

Additionally, insurance companies could reimburse for nurse-led education and social support programs, and women could have nursing support (through phone calls and home/office visits) during at least the first two trimesters of pregnancy.

“These findings emphasize the importance of providing vulnerable populations with premium prenatal care,” says Schminkey, “including comprehensive, preconception care, early enrollment in prenatal care, group care models, telephone support, and home visiting.”

“Donna’s analysis will enable nurses not only to convey important information to pregnant women about stress and its impact on their babies,” says her advisor, Linda Bullock, “it reaffirms that what nurses offer—care and support and empathy at key junctures in people’s lives—has a very real impact on those they care for.”

Why does it matter? Over the last 10 years, between 16 and 18 percent of births at UVa Medical Center were by Hispanic women. And with explosive growth in Hispanic and Latino populations in the US (with an overall population of 50.5 million at the time of the 2010 census), explains Milburn, it’s critical for nurses to have cultural competence about issues like pain management and childbirth, which, for some groups, is viewed as a necessary and natural rite of passage for which no relief is sought.

“Juliane’s interest in this topic came out of her own clinical practice of working in labor and delivery, her travels to Spanish-speaking countries, fluency in Spanish, and her work as a primary care NP,” says Milburn’s advisor, Linda Bullock. “Her research fills a real gap in our understanding of why these patterns in pain relief exist. Nurses, being there at the bedside, are patients’ best advocates and often serve as primary navigators during their hospital stay. So understanding certain groups’ propensities to have (or refuse) pain relief is part of culturally competent care.”
Sedation and Kids
Gathering Evidence for Best Practice Guidelines

Many doctoral students raise a glass to celebrate the successful completion of their dissertation defense. Nancy Crego’s (PhD ’13) dissertation research continues to bring her applause and accolades long after her successful defense late last summer.

Crego, now a nursing instructor at Georgetown, focused her dissertation research on the nation’s pediatric sedation practices and outcomes. The work earned her the 2013 Excellence in Advancing Nursing Science Award from the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), a competitive annual award bestowed on nursing scholars conducting research with a “real-world impact.”

Crego combed through mountains of data to understand the wide variety of sedation medications used on children. She compared nurse and physician sedation team processes and outcomes, and made recommendations for practice guidelines.

Crego found that when nurses or physicians alone monitored and delivered sedation to children, they had lower odds of experiencing problems than when sedation was managed by nurse/physician teams. She also discovered that practice and medication types varied dramatically across specialties. Crego’s work demonstrated inconsistencies in Board of Nursing regulations and RN standards of care, revealing a real need to establish sedation processes that are evidence based.

Data from Crego’s study will be used to guide sedation practices and streamline how nurses and physicians sedate children to ensure that their practices are the very best, the AACN said, and offered praise for the scope of Crego’s vision and work.

“Her aim to use these outcomes to initiate sedation regulation policy has the potential to make a very timely and important impact on pediatric practice and patient quality and safety,” the reviewers wrote. “Dr. Crego’s dissemination plan is ambitious and timely, as cost and quality are currently major concerns in healthcare.”

According to Christine Kennedy, director of the School’s PhD program, Crego’s nominators—Linda Bullock and professor emerita Beth Merwin—share in her success for their supportive mentorship of emerging scholars. Bullock, in turn, says she couldn’t be more proud of her students’ work.

“The work of our PhD students is grounded in the idea that the big questions nurses face every day have discernable answers that deserve effort, thoughtfulness, and energy,” says Bullock, Crego’s advisor and associate dean for research. “There is nothing easy about nursing care, but when it’s fortified by our very best thinkers and researchers, we truly can impact patient care where it counts. Our students are active participants in the national discussion of important health issues, and the discussions they’re having are affecting change worldwide.”

Data from Crego’s study will be used to guide sedation practices and streamline how nurses and physicians sedate children to ensure that their practices are the very best.

Nancy Crego created data that will be used to guide nurses and physicians in best sedation practices for children.
Dear UVA School of Nursing Community,

Making a difference! Leaving a legacy! Most of us hope when we commit to something that our participation will change things and make them better. With that thought, I have served as president of the Nursing Alumni Association for the past three years. The journey has been fun, engaging, and exhilarating. I have met and worked with extraordinary nursing alumni, students, faculty, and staff. Having the opportunity to connect with dedicated and committed individuals and groups from the nursing community has been an honor and privilege. Our School is blessed with many gifts, including Dorrie Fontaine, a visionary leader as dean, and many talented and enthusiastic staff in the Alumni and Development Office. So, it is with mixed emotions that I write my last letter for Legacy.

With your help, we have accomplished many things during the past three years, including developing a strategic plan, expanding our young alumni and communication initiatives, revising the Nursing Alumni Association bylaws (see below), and finding new and innovative ways to engage and connect with alumni and students. As we celebrate the successes of our past, let’s imagine the potential of our future.

Our incoming president, Judy Etheridge Bilicki (BSN ’81), is a proven leader, a creative thinker, and has a passion for our nursing community. Judy joined the Alumni Council as alumni engagement coordinator in 2011. She has also represented her class as a Reunions volunteer, sat on the Scholarships Committee, and lent her expertise to the Strategic Planning Task Force. Judy is a double ’Hoo with a degree in psychology from the College of Arts & Sciences (’79) and a BSN (’81). I have great confidence that Judy brings with her the leadership and skills that will continue to transform and grow our Alumni Association (see page 20).

Making a difference, changing lives, and giving back are core to nursing. Your continued support of the Nursing Alumni Association through your volunteer time or philanthropic donations enables us to continue meeting our goals, providing scholarship support for nursing students and recognizing faculty leaders. We welcome your involvement in the Nursing Alumni Association and invite you to complete a volunteer form on the webpage nursing.virginia.edu/alumni/update. How will you make a difference? What will you leave as your legacy?

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the president of the School of Nursing Alumni Association. I am looking forward to seeing many of you at Reunions 2014. ■

Sharon Cumby Fay (BSN ’76, MSN ’80)
Annandale, Virginia

BYLAWS UPDATE
At the winter retreat in February, the Alumni Council voted to adopt changes to the current bylaws. To view changes, visit nursing.virginia.edu/alumni/council/bylaws. Alumni members may vote in person at the annual meeting, held in conjunction with June Reunions. Alumni not in attendance can vote online.
Council Welcomes New Leader

**AT ITS WINTER RETREAT**, the Alumni Council elected Judy Etheridge Bilicki (BSN ’81) as the next leader of the School of Nursing Alumni Association. A native of Norfolk, Va., Bilicki holds a bachelor’s degree in psychology from UVA. After receiving her BSN, she held clinical nursing positions with Mount Sinai Medical Center, NYU Medical Center, and John F. Kennedy Medical Center, before moves to New Orleans and Boston and a career transition into fundraising work.

Bilicki currently serves as executive director, campaigns for the Inova Health Foundation, in Falls Church. At Inova, her most recent focus has been managing the comprehensive campaign to support the strategic priorities of the health system.

In addition to her role as the Alumni Council Engagement Coordinator, Bilicki hosted D.C.-area alumni for a ‘Hoos Coming to Dinner event in 2012. She has also served on the Reunions Networking Committee for the BSN Class of 1981, the Nursing Alumni Association Scholarships Committee, and the Alumni Council Strategic Planning Task Force.

Judy assumes the presidency on July 1.

Alumni Scholarship Applications Due June 1

*U*VA nursing alumni returning for an additional nursing degree or certificate at any institution are eligible to apply for the Nursing Alumni Association’s annual $3,000 scholarship. Funding for this scholarship is made possible by generous gifts from alumni and friends to the Nursing Annual Fund. Applications for this scholarship are due June 1. Apply online at nursing.virginia.edu/alumni/resources/scholarships/.

Medical Assistance Available to Nursing Alumni

*T*he Tabitha S. Grier Medical Assistance Fund provides valuable financial assistance to nursing alumni facing medical expenses not covered by insurance, Medicare, or Medicaid. Funding is distributed annually by the Nursing Alumni Association and may be used toward personal medical expenses. Applications are due August 1. Find full details and application forms online at nursing.virginia.edu/alumni/resources/grier-fund/.

Introducing SONYA (School of Nursing Young Alumni)

*A*lumni Council member Allie Tran (BSN ’10) is making it easier for recent nursing grads to connect. Along with Siu Ma (BSN ’11), Katelyn Overstreet (BSN ’11), Kelly Allen (BSN ’12), Monika Criman (BSN ’13), and Mary Lacy Grecco (BSN ’13), Tran coordinated a get-together with recent graduates in Charlottesville. The timing was perfect, as many of the 2013 graduates were starting orientation at UVA Medical Center. SONYA events will reach alumni in D.C. and Richmond soon!

*FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT* the Nursing Alumni Association or nursing alumni events, activities, resources, or to make a gift, contact the Alumni & Development Office at (434) 924-0138 or nursing-alumni@virginia.edu.
Nursing Alumni Service Trip to Burma:
September 2014

Join us for an alumni service trip to Myanmar (formerly Burma), where participants will conduct health clinics in rural areas and at a large orphanage. In addition to other volunteer activities, the group will attend planned sightseeing excursions.

To join us or to learn about trip details, please contact UVA Cavalier Travels at (866) 765-2646 or cavaliertravels@virginia.edu.

Best Day Ever!

On December 30, 2013, the Nursing Annual Fund had its “Best Day Ever!” On that one day, 79 donors contributed $51,435 to the School of Nursing. Whether it was a $20 or a $10,000 gift, all of them combined made it a record-setting day in the history of the annual fund. And that means more support for School of Nursing students and programs.

Help the School of Nursing raise $405,000 this year by making a contribution using the enclosed envelope, giving online at giving.virginia.edu/supportnursing, or by calling Darius Nabors, associate director of annual giving, at (434) 924-0084.

Homecomings 2013

Save the date for this fall!
October 25, 2014
**Reunions 2014** SCHOOL OF NURSING EVENTS

**May 12–14, 2014** Thomas Jefferson Society Reunions
Celebrating the Class of 1964

**Tuesday, May 13** Pavilion IX Open House with Dean Dorrie Fontaine
3:30–4:30 p.m. Pavilion IX, West Lawn

**Wednesday, May 14** School of Nursing Luncheon
Noon–1:45 p.m. Farmington Country Club Ballroom

For more information on nursing alumni events, please contact Karol Kozak, director of alumni & donor relations, at (434) 924-1589 or kkozak@virginia.edu.

To register for the Thomas Jefferson Society Reunion events (including the ones above), please contact Cate Liverman at (434) 243-1886 or cate@virginia.edu.

**June 5–8, 2014** Undergraduate Class Reunions

**Friday, June 6** Pavilion IX Open House with Dean Dorrie Fontaine
4:30–5:30 p.m. Pavilion IX, West Lawn

**Saturday, June 7** School of Nursing Alumni Luncheon
Noon–1:30 p.m. McLeod Hall Patio

To register for the School of Nursing luncheon, tours, or other Reunion events, please contact the UVA Alumni Association at (434) 243-9000 or visit www.virgiuniareunions.com.

Visit [www.virgiuniareunions.com](http://www.virgiuniareunions.com) for registration and complete weekend details on the UVA Alumni Association website.

**AT BOTH REUNIONS**

**School of Nursing Building Tours**
McKim Hall, Claude Moore Nursing Education Building, & McLeod Hall

After both reunion luncheons, time will be allotted to visit the Claude Moore Nursing Education Building and see the renovations in McLeod Hall, home to the Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry. A guided tour of McKim Hall will also be provided.

**DO YOU HAVE** photographs, letters, or other memorabilia from your time as a UVA nursing student or from the early days of your nursing career? Consider donating these items to the Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry to add to your reunion experience and to help preserve nursing history. Contact the Center staff at nursinghxc@virginia.edu or (434) 924-0083.
1950s
BSN Ed ’50 Col. Doris McCraw Cobb was selected to travel to Washington, DC, as part of one of the last Alamo Honor Flight trips. Alamo Honor Flight is part of the Honor Flight Network dedicated to transporting WWII veterans to Washington to visit and reflect at the memorial sites.

1970s
BSN ’73 Martha Raile Alligood received the rank of professor emeritus at East Carolina University. She recently published two books: the fifth edition of Nursing Theory: Utilization & Application, and the eighth edition of Nursing Theorists and Their Work.

1980s
MSN ’83 Amy Friedman Feldman authored the chapter “Guidelines for Breastfeeding” in the 2013 edition of the textbook Pediatric Primary Care Practice Guidelines for Nurses.

1990s
BSN ’87 Lynn Van Dermark of Dallas, TX, was elected chair of the Association of Clinical Research Professionals (ACRP), the primary resource for clinical research professionals in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology and medical device industries. Lynn is the founder and chief executive officer of MedTrials, Inc., and has been a member of the ACRP for nearly two decades.

BSN ’88 Luisa Caterina Kropcho of Norfolk, VA, earned her medical degree in 1998 and completed a general surgery residency in 2005 and a fellowship in breast oncology surgery in 2010. She was an active duty member of the US Navy from 1994 to 2013.

BSN ’90, PhD ’09 Anne Cockerham of Chantilly, VA, has been named associate dean of midwifery and women's health at Frontier Nursing University.

PhD ’94 Sally Reel was named University Distinguished Outreach Professor at the University of Arizona in recognition of outstanding service in demonstrating scholarship-based outreach to the state, nation, and world. Sally was honored for initiating and supporting programs and projects that enhance nursing education, address faculty and practitioner shortages, and improve access to quality health care. She directs the Arizona Area Health Education Centers and is an American Academy of Nursing Fellow. Recently, she was appointed to the National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice of the Health Resources and Services Administration of the US Department of Health and Human Services. In March, Sally was named associate vice president for health sciences interprofessional education, collaboration, and community engagement at the University of Arizona School of Nursing.

BSN ’96, MSN ’00, PhD ’08 Pam DeGuzman received the Virginia Nurses Foundation Leadership Excellence Award for leadership as a nurse practitioner and for showing passionate dedication to advancing the profession of nursing. Pam is assistant professor and Roberts Scholar in the UVA School of Nursing. According to Foundation CEO Janet Wall, Pam was honored for excellence in leadership as a nurse researcher and for her passionate dedication to advancing the profession of nursing.

CERTI ’96 Shelley Yerger Hawkins, of Del Mar, CA, has been named director of DNP and MSN nurse practitioner programs and associate professor of nursing at University of San Diego Hahn School of Nursing and Health Science. Shelley was a UVA School of Nursing faculty member from 1994 to 2004 and served as PCNP program director from 2001 to 2014.

2000s
BSN ’04 Kelly Davison Sicoli is a certified nurse midwife at BirthCare & Women's Health in Alexandria, VA, offering home birth, birth center, and gynecologic care to women of Northern VA, MD, and DC. Her husband, Mark, is a professor at Georgetown University, and they have a 4-year-old son.

BSN ’05 Elizabeth Bradshaw-Mikula was named National Magnet Nurse of the Year after conceiving of and leading groundbreaking research that demonstrates the feasibility of newborn screening for critical congenital heart disease (CCHD) in the community hospital setting prior to discharge. Elizabeth developed the CCHD Screening Program Tool Kit, created an educational website on CCHD screening, and

BSN ’85 Ann Gaffey was selected to serve on the board of the National Perinatal Information Center/Quality Analytic Services. Ann is senior vice president of healthcare risk management and patient safety for the professional liability division at Sedgwick Claims Management Services, Inc.
ALUMNI IN ACTION

CANDACE MOORE (BSN ’75)
ON ASSIGNMENT IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE

“WHEN they told me where I was going, I had to ask, ‘Where exactly is that?’” Candace Moore recalls of her first post as a nurse practitioner in the US Foreign Service.

For her initial assignment, Moore, her husband, and their 15-month-old daughter moved to Niamey, Niger, in western Africa. There, she served as primary health care practitioner for a 300-person community of diplomats, their families, and other American citizens assigned to the embassy.

Despite her lifelong interest in different cultures and background in public health, nothing stateside could prepare her for all she would face working in her new environment, where outside resources were limited.

Although her coursework had not covered the diseases she would see in Africa, Moore felt equipped to face those situations. “When I got to Niamey,” she recalls, “the thing that was most scary to me was that I had never had any tropical medicine experience. My UVA nursing education taught me how to know when I didn’t know, where to find answers, how to communicate well, and how to make decisions.”

Those skills enabled Moore to thrive in the unique and challenging environments presented by working for the State Department.

Serving three-year rotations in eight countries, Moore became a part of each community she served. “Being a nurse practitioner in the Foreign Service puts you in more than the typical expanded role of the profession,” she explains. “In some cases, you are the only one these people have. They come to you with things where they would usually go to their sister or their mother or their best friend.”

What the Moores initially believed would be a few years of service and new cultural experiences blossomed into a career that spanned three decades, representing the United States throughout the world.

After her 2012 retirement from the State Department, Moore wanted to extend her passion for public health and prevention. She now works part time with the Virginia State Health Department’s Refugee Screening process, where she does initial screenings of the political refugee population of Charlottesville. She also continues to work as needed for the US Department of State. Recently, she went to Chengdu, China, for two months to assist with a staffing gap. She also serves on the Nursing Alumni Association Scholarships Committee.

developed an educational video on the topic. Her work in CCHD screening led Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to recommend universal CCHD screening and, to date, 32 states have passed such legislation. Elizabeth is a clinical program manager and coordinator in cardiac research at Children’s National Medical Center Heart Institute and is working with the Virginia Department of Health and the University of Virginia School of Medicine as a content expert and trainer.

MSN ’05 Tara Spears of Lacey, WA, retired from the Army as a lieutenant colonel in December 2012 after 22 years of service. Tara stayed in Washington and continues to work with the military as a civilian trauma program manager for Madigan Army Medical Center.

MSN ’08 Laura Vento was named Nurse of the Year for the University of California San Diego (UCSD) Health System, and recently won the Giving Excellence Meaning Award for California for advancing and leading the profession. Laura is an assistant nurse manager at UCSD and champions evidence-based practice at the bedside.

BSN ’10 Carolyn Lawson Spilman married Jake Spilman in 2013 and relocated to New York, NY. She currently works at Morgan Stanley Children’s Hospital of New York Presbyterian in the pediatric cardiac ICU.

PhD ’13 Nancy Crego (center, surrounded by her UVA mentors) earned the 2013 Excellence in Advancing Nursing Science Award from the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, a competitive annual award for nursing scholars conducting research with a “real-world impact.” (See story on page 18.) Currently an instructor at Georgetown University School of Nursing & Health Studies, Nancy received her award for research on the nation’s pediatric sedation practices and outcomes, conducted as part of her UVA nursing dissertation project.
Dean Rose Chioni (1932–2014)

The Passing of a True Leader

Former University of Virginia School of Nursing Dean Rose Marie Chioni passed away in Charlottesville at the age of 81. Her career was devoted to the education of nurses.

"Dr. Chioni was a nurse's nurse, a true leader, and she will be missed," said Dean Dorrie Fontaine.

Chioni taught at Wayne State University in Detroit, the University of Pittsburgh, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison before taking leadership of UVA's School of Nursing in 1974. During her 14-year tenure, she was instrumental in the development of the PhD in nursing. Graduates of that program now serve in leadership positions throughout the country.

"Dean Chioni left us with very real, very important, very modern ideas that impact the way we educate 21st-century caregivers," Fontaine said. "She established our nursing doctoral program, studied home health care before it was a common concept, and had a keen interest in gerontology and hospice care."

After retiring from her tenure as dean in 1988, she continued to teach and conduct research in those subjects. Chioni retired in 1995.

"Her perspective remains relevant to today’s students, who can pore over the tangibles she left—her correspondence, papers, and journal articles—housed in our Eleanor Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry archives," Fontaine said.

Chioni's deep commitment to quality nursing led her to serve in many professional leadership capacities, including president of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and president of the Virginia State Board of Nursing. She was also selected as a charter fellow of the American Academy of Nursing.

Chioni was born in LaSalle, Ill., in 1953. She earned her BS, MA, and PhD degrees at the University of Minnesota, the University of Chicago, and Ohio State University, respectively.


“A growing number of young women with cancer are writing about their experience with complementary therapies through online illness blogs. ... These blogs allow researchers to understand the complete experience … through personal accounts and substantially contribute to … knowledge surrounding cancer in young adulthood and complementary therapy use.”

—J. KEIM-MALPASS in “Young women’s experiences with complementary therapies during cancer described through illness blogs”


“Despite a large body of research that provides evidence for the efficacy of palliative care, less is known about those who provide it. … Listening to voices from the bedside is a useful way to learn more about the practice and delivery of palliative care.”

—K. R. WHITE in “Voices from the bedside: Palliative nurses’ perceptions of current practices and challenges”
Philanthropy

A Nursing Legacy

Remembering a Beloved Colleague and Supporting Nursing Education

Throughout his career as a nurse, Eric Blum held high standards for himself. When he succumbed to cancer last June at only 48 years old, his colleagues lost a beloved friend who was dedicated to his profession and to his patients.

Doctors and fellow nurses at UVA Medical Center remember Blum—who served most of his nursing career in the Department of Urology’s operating room—as a team player with an innate ability to put his patients at ease within minutes. A research mentor, Blum was committed to applying the latest scientific knowledge and the best practices available to care for surgery patients.

“Eric was always willing to chip in as a member of the team, and he was always concerned first about the patient,” says William Steers, MD, chair of UVA’s Department of Urology. “Eric was a problem solver, a fixer and a beloved member of the urology team. He’s truly missed.”

Blum’s UVA colleagues established the Eric Blum Scholarship to support nurses who want to advance their RN credentials by earning a bachelor’s in nursing (BSN) degree. The RN to BSN program is designed specifically for licensed registered nurses who want to advance their skills in anticipation of contemporary nursing challenges and opportunities. Employees of UVA Health System, particularly male nurses, will receive preference for the award, which will benefit students for years to come.

“This scholarship fund is a testament to how many lives Eric touched, and of everyone’s fondness and respect for him,” says Donna Via (BSN ’83, MSN ’01), surgical services administrator at UVA. “The scholarship recognizes UVA as a place that draws professionals, like Eric, who are passionate about nursing. It will allow us to promote in our nurses the same qualities Eric possessed—doing what’s best for the patient, collaborating with other caregivers, and pursuing opportunities for lifelong learning. Ultimately, that leads to better patient care.”

Blum’s colleagues believe his own health challenges cultivated a sense of empathy that allowed him to quickly forge personal connections with his patients. Blum battled kidney disease and also had a leg amputated about a year before his death. Despite these struggles, Blum had a positive outlook and encouraged other nurses to reach their educational and professional goals.

“Eric cared so much about other people and about nursing,” says UVA urologist Marguerite Lippert. “Eric’s job at UVA, and all that went with it, were everything to him. And he kept supporting fellow employees to move forward with their lives and careers.”

Blum’s family was touched by the generous effort to continue his legacy at UVA. His mother, June, gave a contribution to match the donations given by Blum’s colleagues.

“We were amazed and overwhelmed by this outpouring of respect and love,” says Eric’s brother, Steve Blum. “We hope that this scholarship will help many deserving students complete their BSN degrees, which Eric very much believed was a core part of nursing professionalism. It is a wonderful tribute to his life.”

Third-year BSN student Timothy Honeycutt, a nurse in UVA’s Nerancy Neuroscience Intensive Care Unit, received the first Eric Blum Scholarship.
In the 1970s, clinical instructor Beth Lawton (BSN ’70, MSN ’73), right, used a teaching microscope to study blood cells with nurse practitioner student Barbie Dunn (MSN ’74). Understanding fundamental scientific principles enriches the quality of care that nurses can deliver. In the ’70s, science courses like microbiology were focused mainly on advanced-degree students. Today, nursing students are exposed to the sciences much earlier. The recent revision of the BSN program added enhanced courses in chemistry, microbiology, and pharmacology.

Lawton went on to become a pediatric nurse practitioner who practiced at UVA in a variety of pediatric clinical settings. She currently works as a co-mentor in medical education at UVA’s School of Medicine.

Dunn earned a doctorate in social work and maintained a career-long involvement with the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, serving as its president from 1975 to 1978. She was among the founders of UVA’s Barbara Brodie Scholars program, named in honor of distinguished nursing scholar and UVA faculty member Barbara Brodie. The Brodie Scholars endowment funds scholarships for UVA nurse practitioner and doctoral students.
Calendar of Events

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MAY

4  Doctoral Degree Information Sessions
9  End of examinations, Spring Semester
6–12 National Nurses Week
12–14 Thomas Jefferson Society Reunions: Classes of 1964 and earlier
13  Thomas Jefferson Society Nursing Alumni Pavilion IX Open House with Dean Dorrie Fontaine
14  Thomas Jefferson Society School of Nursing Luncheon and Building Tours
17  Pinning and Hooding Ceremonies, School of Nursing
18  Final Exercises

JUNE

1  Deadline for applying for Nursing Alumni Association Alumni Scholarship
6  June Reunions Nursing Alumni Pavilion IX Open House with Dean Dorrie Fontaine
7  School of Nursing Reunions Luncheon, Alumni Association Annual Meeting, and Building Tours

AUGUST

26  Fall Semester begins

SEPTEMBER

19–20 School of Nursing Advisory Board and Alumni Council Meetings

OCTOBER

25  Homecomings

NOVEMBER

TBD  Zula Mae Baber Bice Memorial Lecture

DECEMBER

16  End of Examinations, Fall Semester

For details on Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry events, please call (434) 924-0083. For details on Admissions Information Sessions, call (888) 283-8703. For all other events, please contact the School of Nursing Alumni & Development Office at (434) 924-0138. For a full list of School of Nursing events, please visit www.nursing.virginia.edu/calendar.