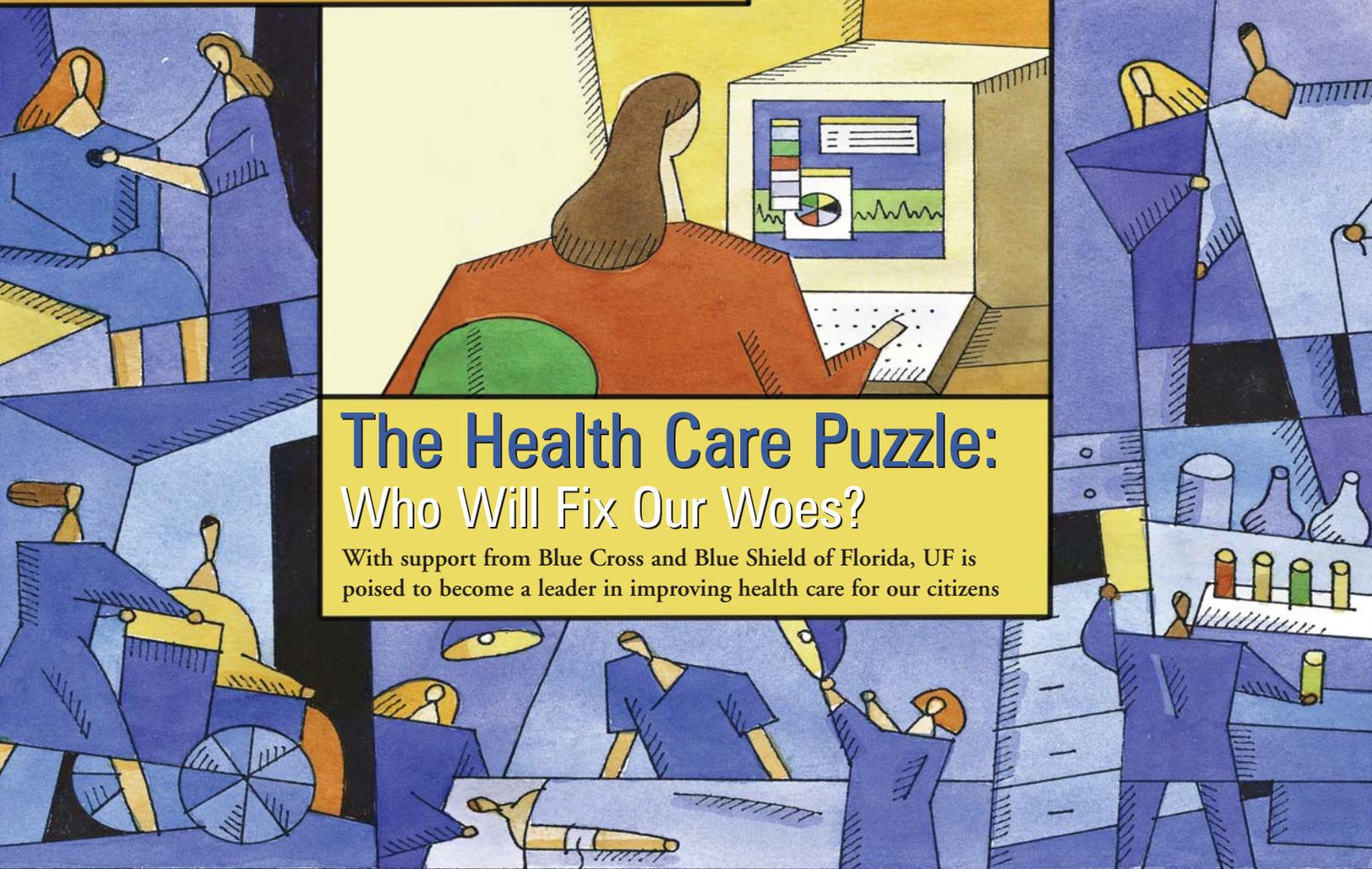


# NURSE

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE ALUMNI OF THE UF COLLEGE OF NURSING



## The Health Care Puzzle: Who Will Fix Our Woes?

With support from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, UF is poised to become a leader in improving health care for our citizens

The nation faces serious problems related to health care access, safety, quality and cost. Recent reports by several national study groups, including the National Academy of Sciences Institute on Medicine, have documented problems with safety and the quality of care received by patients in the nation's hospitals. Florida faces the same challenges, and initiatives are underway to evaluate and improve the quality of care provided to patients in Florida hospitals.

To address these issues, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida has established a \$3.5 million endowment at the University of Florida to open the BCBSF Center for Health Care Access, Patient Safety and Quality Outcomes. The new center will be housed in the colleges of Nursing and Public Health & Health Professions and will work to significantly improve the health of Florida's citizens. The endowment will total \$6.7 million with state matching funds.

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According to studies conducted by Dr. Linda Aiken and published in the *Journal of American Medical Association* (2002, 2003), redesigning care systems, adding qualified providers and enhancing the educational level of providers can reduce errors and improve quality of care. These steps, and others, prevent patient deaths and reduce suffering while also saving hundreds of thousands of dollars in unnecessary health care costs.

“The University of Florida is grateful for the generosity of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida and its dedication to improving Florida’s health care,” said UF President Bernie Machen.

Through this center, UF leaders and BCBSF hope to address the unique health-care issues that affect Florida’s quality of life and economic viability. Critical issues include access, the nursing shortage, patient safety and medical errors. Florida also faces unique challenges due to rapid growth, the large elderly population and the diverse and international composition of its residents.

“...unique health-care issues affect Florida’s quality of life and economic viability.”

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida

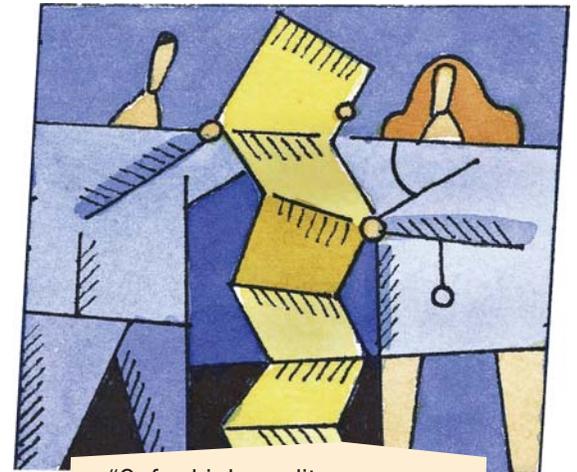
Center for Health Care Access, Safety and Quality Outcomes at the University of Florida will work to significantly improve the health of Florida’s citizens by designing new care delivery models and evaluating their effectiveness.

There will be a particular focus on developing approaches that help address the current nursing and overall health profession workforce shortages. Strategies that attract and retain well educated nurses, and use them efficiently in Florida’s hospitals will be developed and evaluated.

“This initiative highlights the positive impact that we can make when business and government work together to benefit the residents of our state. With this new Center, the state is positioned to become a national leader in health care delivery, demonstrating that safe, high quality care can be provided, and that health care costs can be reduced by preventing medical errors, complications and unnecessary hospitalization or re-hospitalization,” said Dean Kathleen Ann Long, Dean of the UF College of Nursing.

The center will support evidence-based research on topics such as attracting and retaining well-prepared nurses to maximize patient safety and quality care outcomes, and financing and delivering health care in a fiscally responsible manner to people who are underserved. These steps, and others, can help to prevent patient deaths and reduce suffering while also saving hundreds of thousands of dollars in unnecessary health-care costs.

“Florida is facing many challenges in the effort to provide safe, high-quality health care for all of our citizens,” said Robert Lufano, MD, chairman and CEO of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida.



“Safe, high quality care can be provided, and health care costs can be reduced by preventing medical errors, complications and unnecessary hospitalization or re-hospitalization.”





*(L-R) CON Jacksonville Campus Director Andrea Gregg, BCBSF Sr. VP of Public Affairs Russ Jollivette, UF VP for Research Win Phillips, BCBSF VP of Public Affairs Catherine Kelly and PHHP's Department Chair Paul Duncan at Enterprise Florida meeting where the creation of the center was announced in January.*

“The BCBSF-UF Center will bring together experts from a variety of disciplines at UF, including health services administration, nursing, health policy, medicine, pharmacy and sociology, to design and evaluate improved approaches to health-care access and delivery.”

In addition to establishing the BCBSF Center, the endowment brings both the Dorothy M. Smith Professorship in the College of Nursing and the BCBSF Professorship in Health Services Administration in the College of Public Health and Health Professions to full chair status. These positions allow for the recruitment of premier faculty members in the fields of health services administration and nursing health policy to conduct research focusing on the nursing workforce, patient safety, and health-care delivery and access.

## Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Receives AACN Corporate Citizen Award

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing recently awarded Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida their Corporate Citizen Award. BCBSF was nominated by Dean Long on behalf of the Florida Association of Colleges of Nursing. The award was presented at the AACN Spring Annual Dean’s meeting.

“Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida has recognized the important role that nurses play in improving health care for our communities, and has created Generation RN (SM), a program focused on Florida’s critical workforce shortage of nurses,” Dean Long said. “This program is the umbrella for public-private partnerships that has focused on building an expanded, stable and culturally diverse nursing workforce in Florida.”

This award, created in 2003, recognizes outstanding contributions made by a private company to support professional nursing education, practice, and research.

Philanthropic endowments have provided funding for recruitment, scholarships, professorships, clinical facilities and special projects at 17 public and private baccalaureate and higher degree nursing programs/colleges in Florida with direct BCBSF gifts totaling \$12 million. With matches or other leveraged grant funds, over \$24 million has been added for baccalaureate and higher degree nursing in Florida between 2003 and 2006.

Shown here are some deans and directors of Florida nursing schools who have benefited from BCBSF’s generosity. They are pictured with Geraldine “Polly” Bednash, Executive Director of AACN and Catherine Kelly, Vice President of Public Affairs, who played an instrumental role in Generation RN and its support of nursing education.



*(L-R) Mavra Kear, Florida Memorial College; Alma Dixon, Bethune-Cookman College; Pegge Bell, Barry University; Jean Wortock, St. Petersburg College; Jean Leuner, University of Central Florida; Catherine Kelly, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida; Pat Burns, University of South Florida; Kathleen Long, University of Florida; and Geraldine “Polly” Bednash, American Association of Colleges of Nursing.*

## 2006-2056: The Next Fifty Years

Thank you for celebrating our 50th Anniversary Year with us in 2006. As a part of that celebration, I had a unique opportunity to look *forward* to the College's and the profession's next 50 years. As many of you know, with the leadership of Professor Jodi Irving we have created a "time capsule" – in fact a beautiful wooden box – to be opened at the time of the College's 100th Anniversary. I had the eerie and challenging task of writing to the dean who will be serving as the College's leader at that time. Here are some of the thoughts and hopes I shared regarding our College and the nursing profession now and in the next 50 years.



KATHLEEN ANN LONG  
PHD, RN, FAAN

The UF College of Nursing recently became one of approximately 80 schools to begin piloting the new Clinical Nurse Leader program to prepare a master's level nursing generalist. This Clinical Nurse Leader is a new kind of nursing professional who will be prepared to effectively coordinate, manage and evaluate care for groups of patients at the point of care in complex health care systems. It is my fondest hope that the vast majority of direct care nurses will hold at least a master's degree or its equivalent long before 2056.

We have also initiated the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree program, a practice doctorate that we expect will eventually replace the master's degree as the appropriate credential for specialized advanced practice nurses, including nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, and clinical nurse specialists. These changes in education have been met with resistance from several groups; however, our national nursing leaders have been persistent and successful in moving forward with these programs. I hope that DNP programs become the standard for advanced practice in nursing, just as professional doctoral degrees have become the accepted degree in other professions such as pharmacy and audiology.

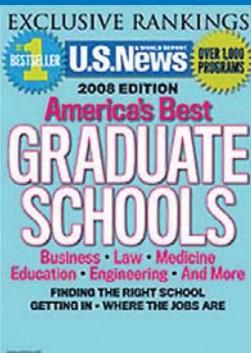
A special challenge we face is meeting the need for culturally competent nursing workforce. Our current undergraduate and graduate classes at UF are more diverse than the U.S. nursing workforce (including males) however, there is more to be done. As our nation grows and changes, our workforce must continue to evolve and adapt to meet those needs. We look forward to a time when we do a much better job of integrating persons from all ethnic and racial groups into the mainstream of the nursing profession.

Nursing research is still relatively "young" in 2006, but continues to grow and gain respect.

Several of our faculty members have significant grants from the National Institute of Nursing Research and other federal, state and private agencies. By 2056, I expect that nursing research will be a mainstay of national health-related research, serving to advance patient care and inform public policy.

UF is the first Florida College of Nursing to have incorporated a nonprofit Faculty Practice Association to support our educational and research missions. Many of the patients with whom we work are underserved, and many of them would otherwise have no access to care. I hope that active faculty practice continues in the future, most especially with a commitment to individuals, families and communities in greatest need of health care.

While it is hard to imagine what the future will hold and what may be happening at the College of Nursing in 50 years, I believe that our current challenges are the harbingers of significant change and opportunity to advance our profession and improve patient care. I have the utmost confidence that the UF College of Nursing will continue to be a home for risk-takers who push boundaries in pursuit of excellence in nursing education, research and practice. That is the heritage of our College and reflects the spirit and aspirations of our founding Dean, Dorothy M. Smith, who began these traditions 40 years before me.



## UF College of Nursing Moves Up in U.S. News & World Report's Graduate Rankings

U.S. News & World Report recently issued the "America's Best Graduate Schools 2008 edition" and the UF College of Nursing continues to be ranked in the top 10 percent and has moved to a ranking of 32 among the more than 440 graduate degree programs in the nation. The College's nurse midwifery track also ranked 12th in the nation.

# Elder Receives Distinguished Mentor Award



College of Nursing faculty member **Jennifer Elder, PhD, RN, FAAN** has been named a recipient of the Spring 2007 Howard Hughes Medical Institute Distinguished Mentor award, recognizing excellence in undergraduate mentoring. Dr. Elder, an associate professor and chair in the department of Health Care Environments and Systems, was one of six awardees at UF and will receive \$10,000 over two years.

Dr. Elder teaches mental health nursing and research at the undergraduate and graduate levels and has spent the last 25 years studying autism and related child neuropsychiatric disorders. With an interdisciplinary team of researchers and clinicians, she has developed and tested a variety of interventions for children with autism.

Dr. Elder has employed and mentored 16 undergraduate students in her research projects. She has also provided research experiences for five undergraduate research scholars and 44 honors students. Dr. Elder's students frequently co-author and present with her at local, state, and national research conferences. Four students have presented internationally.

Her family-focused research program has been funded by four grants from National Institute of Health/National Institute of Nursing Research and examines methods of educating families, enhancing family cohesion, and reducing caregiver stress.

Dr. Elder is a fellow in the American Academy of Nursing and serves as a frequent reviewer for several NIH study sections and three refereed journals.

## accomplishments in brief

**Associate Professor Shawn Kneipp** was invited to join the Editorial Board of the journal *Nursing Research*.

**Associate Professor and Department Chair Jennifer Elder** and her team, which includes two students, recently had their article, "The Gluten-Free, Casein-Free Diet in Autism: Results of a Double Blind Clinical Trial" accepted for publication in the *Journal of Autism and Related Disorders*. Dr. Elder also was invited to join the Editorial Board of the journal *Nursing Research*.

**Assistant Professor Barbara Lutz** was awarded a R15 grant from the National Institute of Nursing Research. The grant will fund a study on matching needs of stroke patients with caregiving resources to improve outcomes. The award amount is \$218,250 for the next two years.

Students **Susan Donaldson, Meghan Bullard, and Erica Hilliard** had a poster abstract selected for Sigma Theta Tau's 18th International Nursing Research Congress Focusing on Evidence-Based Practice, which will be held July 11-14 in Vienna, Austria. The title is "Fathers' Perspectives on Interventions to Help Their Children with Autism." This is a report of a qualitative research project that Susan worked with Meghan and Erica to complete as part of their honors research. **Dr. Sharleen Simpson** graciously provided the group with qualitative methodology consultation. Dr. Elder's autism team also had a paper abstract selected for the same conference. The title is "Novel Approaches and Technology in Training Fathers of Children with Autism."

**Executive Associate Dean/Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs Dee Williams and Associate Dean for Research Ann Horgas** were selected as Faculty Achievement Recognition honorees. They were among only 51 faculty members at UF to be recognized this year.

**Doctoral student Susan Wall** has been awarded a 2006 Florida Nurses Foundation (FNA) Imogene King Research Grant with the Blanche Case Research Fund for her research study, "Evaluating a Children's Medical Services Program for Overweight Children and Adolescents with Hyperinsulinemia or Type II Diabetes."

**Assistant Professor Charlene Krueger** has been invited to review for the journal *Developmental Science*.

**Clinical Assistant Professors Susan Schaffer and Jane Gannon** were speaker representatives at a recent state meeting on the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) and Doctorate in Nursing Practice (DNP) programs. Gannon is also serving on the national committee developing a certification exam process for the CNLs.

**Clinical Assistant Professor Allison McAlhany** was a speaker at a AHEC Healthy Students Healthy Schools conference on "Rash Assessments." This was a conference for school nurses from 12 counties.

**Clinical Assistant Professor Joanne Orrick** has been selected to participate in "Leadership Gainesville" a nine month program to identify, educate and develop community leaders. She also was selected with five other faculty members from UF and Shands to participate in Austria Pharmacy Week, which is a program designed to provide clinical training to pharmacists practicing in Austria.

**Senior nursing student Jill Jurkiewicz**, who has been supervised by Clinical Assistant Professor Nancy Young, has been awarded the Key Award from Shands at AGH. A parent whose child was a patient at the hospital wrote comments about this student and the excellent care she provided to the child and her family. Missy Reynolds, Director of the Children's Hospital at Shands AGH personally presented the award to Jill during her class. She is the first student to ever receive a Key Award.

**Clinical Assistant Professor Anna Kelley's clinical group—Stefanie Resch, Elizabeth Reagan Treece, Jenna Lutz, Abigail Plum, Tammy Melton, Amanda Phillips, Elizabeth Cedeno and Desiree Panganiban**—were nominated for the Key Award at Shands at AGH Hospital. They were nominated by the nursing staff from Labor and Delivery based on "their exceptional care of clients and their ability to make a difference in nursing care on the unit."

**Professor and Department Chair Veronica Feeg** had a paper she co-authored, "Clinical Care Classification (CCC) System Charting Model," presented at the International Congress on Informatics meeting in Korea. Dr. Feeg's chapter ("Approaches to Implementing the CCC: Educating Nurses in Electronic Documentation") in the manual the "Clinical Care Classification (CCC) System" is due out any day.



Doctor of Nursing Practice degree set to change nursing education:

# HOW IS UF PIONEERING THIS INNOVATIVE ROLE?

Q&A with Dr. Karen Miles, Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs

The University of Florida is at the forefront of the changing paradigm of nursing education, with its pioneering of the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) and most recently, the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) programs. The College of Nursing implemented its postmaster's DNP program in Fall 2006 with 17 enrollees. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing recently released its Essentials of the Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice document—a big step toward the accreditation process of DNP programs nationwide. AACN has also instituted a cutoff date of 2015 for the DNP being the entry level to practice for advanced nursing practice.

As the College of Nursing further develops its postmaster's DNP program and transitions to its postbaccalaureate DNP program (slated to start in Fall 2009), Karen Miles, EdD, RN, Associate Dean in Academic and Student Affairs discussed the DNP and UF's role in this exciting program.



Dr. Karen Miles

### Why did the nursing profession and AACN pursue the development of the Doctor of Nursing Practice?

The AACN 2005 Position Statement on the Practice Doctorate in Nursing called for a transformational change in the education for professional nurses who practice at the most advanced level of nursing. This recommendation emerged from multiple factors including the rapid expansion of scientific knowledge required for safe nursing practice; growing concerns regarding the quality of patient

care delivery and outcomes; shortages of nursing personnel which demands a higher level of preparation for leaders who can design and access care; shortages of doctorally prepared nursing faculty; and increasing educational expectations for the preparation of other health professionals.

### Was there a need for nursing to be on pace with other professions with regards to educational preparation?

Absolutely. If you look at other health care fields like medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine, and beyond that to physical therapy, occupational therapy and pharmacy—all of these pro-

fessions have doctorates as entry level to practice. Health care practitioners—including advanced practice nurses—work as a team, and a nursing doctorate will equalize the profession with the rest of these health care fields. Nationwide, employers are clamoring for nurse practitioners with PhDs in nursing, which shows us the hunger for advanced practice nurses with a greater depth of knowledge and critical thinking.

### Explain the importance of the cutoff date of 2015 recommended by AACN.

It is anticipated and expected that 2015 will mark the year that a Doctor of Nursing Practice will be required for all new advanced practice nurses as entry level to practice. The Clinical Nurse Leader, which is advanced generalist preparation, will continue as a master's degree program.

### What are we seeing across the country in terms of implementation of the DNP?

Well we are hearing good things across the country. AACN just released the DNP Essentials, which is a wonderful guide for nursing schools. The implementation of this program is grow-

ing and there are a variety of program options. Currently 31 DNP programs are enrolling students nationwide, and more than 140 are under development.

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**What are UF's plans for the DNP and its implementation?**

Right now, we are offering a postmaster's program for those who already have a master's degree. That program is in full swing; it's 48 credits and lasts approximately 2 1/2 to 3 years for part-time students. I anticipate having a postmaster's program for a while because many master's prepared advanced practice nurses will want to access the program. Beginning in Fall 2007, all of the courses will be offered online, hopefully increasing access to those who cannot come to our Gainesville campus.

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**What about for those students who want to go right into the DNP program directly after receiving their BSN?**

We are planning to begin offering a postbaccalaureate DNP beginning in Fall 2009. This program will be 93 credits and last 4 1/2 to 5 years for part-time students and 2 1/2 years for full-time students. As of Fall 2009, we anticipate there will be no master's degree offerings beyond the Clinical Nurse Leader and Public Health Nursing (currently funded through a grant). However, we have a unique option for those who want to "stop-out" and receive their master's degree. They can stop out after the 5th semester for full-time students or the 8th semester for part-time students and receive their master's degree should they wish to enter practice and hopefully return later to complete the DNP.

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**Finally, why has UF become a leader in the DNP program? What do we want our alumni and students to know about how this program can help to change and improve nursing education and the profession?**

Well, there are so many ways that the DNP can impact education and practice. The DNP can help to prepare future faculty members, who are needed desperately in light of our growing faculty shortage. In addition, the DNP offers the opportunity for those nurses who desire to be expert clinicians, to be educated and recognized as such, on par with our fellow health professions. Nursing is a vital part of our growing and changing health care system, and these highly educated advanced practice nurses, at the doctoral level, will be prepared to improve practice, educate new clinicians, and elevate our profession.

We want our students to understand how UF prepares leaders. From the minute they become Gator Nurses, they need to understand this wonderful opportunity. A Gator Nurse is not expected to simply practice, but to lead in improving nursing and health care.

## INSIDE VIEW: Q&A with two current DNP students



**Jane Houston**  
Nurse Midwife at North Florida  
Regional Medical Center  
BNA – Glasgow Caledonian  
University in Scotland, 1988  
MSN – University of Florida, 2001



**Megan Weigel**  
Family Nurse Practitioner  
at a Neurology office  
BSN – University of Florida, 1998  
MSN – University of Florida, 2000

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**Why did you decide to enter the postmaster's DNP program? What about getting your DNP intrigued you?**

**Jane:** I want to be able to teach students more effectively in a clinical setting and I believe the DNP program will give me this opportunity. The DNP program intrigued me because it was new and I like to stay ahead of the game.

**Megan:** I thought about entering the PhD program, but was more interested in focusing on the clinical aspect of nursing.

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**How has the experience been thus far? Share a little about how you think this will enhance your career and professional experiences.**

**Jane:** It was stressful at first trying to get back into school, but I am enjoying both the program and my colleagues. I have been a nurse for many years and receiving my DNP will give me the opportunity to reach the next step in my career.

**Megan:** Although my experience has been stressful, overall, it has been a positive one. The faculty offers support and encouragement to the students. I believe the program will enhance my career goals by helping me to learn more about neurology in order for me to enhance the scientific base of my practice and improve care for patients.

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**What would you say to someone thinking about getting their DNP?**

**Jane:** Nurses should definitely consider the program. Although it is hard work, it is worth it!

**Megan:** I would tell future students that the DNP program is new and will continue to change and evolve, but is something that one should seriously consider if seeking a higher degree in the nursing field.

# Breast Surgery May Be Linked to Boost in Self-esteem and Sexuality



DR. FIGUEROA-HAAS

Women who undergo breast enlargement often see a sizable boost in self-esteem and positive feelings about their sexuality, a University of Florida nurse researcher reports.

Although plastic surgery should not be seen as a panacea for feelings of low self-worth or sexual attractiveness, it is important for health-care practitioners to understand the psychological benefits of these procedures, says Dr. Cynthia Figueroa-Haas, a clinical assistant professor at UF's College of Nursing who conducted the study. The findings — which revealed that for many women, going bigger is better — appear in the current issue of *Plastic Surgical Nursing*.

“Many individuals, including health-care providers, have

“Since plastic surgery is increasing dramatically, my intention for researching this topic was to evaluate nurses’ attitudes toward cosmetic surgery patients and make recommendations for increasing awareness of the factors surrounding these patients.” — Dr. Figueroa-Haas

preconceived negative ideas about those who elect to have plastic surgery, without fully understanding the benefits that may occur from these procedures,” said Dr. Figueroa-Haas, who conducted the study for her doctoral thesis at Barry University in Miami Shores before joining the UF faculty. “This study provides the impetus for future studies related to self-esteem, human sexuality and cosmetic surgery.”

In 2005, 2.1 million cosmetic surgical procedures were performed, according to the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery. That figure is expected to grow. Consider that the number of breast augmentation procedures alone increased a staggering 476 percent since 2000, according to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. More than 2 million women in the United States have breast implants, and this year more than 360,000

American women will undergo breast augmentation.

Dr. Figueroa-Haas studied 84 women who were 21 to 57 years old, assessing their perceptions of self-esteem and sexuality before and after cosmetic breast augmentation. Study participants had been previously scheduled for breast augmentation and were undergoing the procedure solely for cosmetic purposes. Eligible candidates were mailed a consent form, a demographic questionnaire and pre-tests asking them to rate their self-esteem and sexuality. They were then mailed a similar post-test two to three months after the surgery.

Improvements in the women’s self-esteem and sexual satisfaction were directly correlated with having undergone breast augmentation. Dr. Figueroa-Haas used two widely accepted scientific scales to measure self-esteem and sexuality, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Female Sexual Function Index, which assesses domains of sexual function, such as sexual arousal, satisfaction, experience and attitudes.

The participants’ average self-esteem score increased from 20.7 to 24.9 on the 30-point Rosenberg scale, and their average female sexual function score increased from 27.2 to 31.4 on the 36-point index. Of note, after the procedure, there were substantial increases in ratings of sexual desire (a 78.6 percent increase from initial scores), arousal (81 percent increase) and satisfaction (57 percent increase). Dr. Figueroa-Haas did point out that a small number of participants showed no change in their levels of self-esteem or sexuality after surgery.

With a heightened interest in men’s sexuality issues in recent years, the research sheds light on women’s sexuality, and how plastic surgery can improve and enhance this important area of life, Dr. Figueroa-Haas said.

“So much attention is directed to men’s sexuality issues; we have all seen countless commercials on drugs and therapy devoted to improving men’s sexuality. Unfortunately, very little is discussed regarding women’s sexuality issues,” Dr. Figueroa-Haas said. “I strongly believe that my research shows that interventions such as cosmetic plastic surgery can address these sorts of issues for some women. For example, those women who may have breast changes due to nursing or from the inevitable natu-

## Maren Foundation Gift Supports Nursing Education and Practice

ral aging process. These women may not feel as attractive, which could ultimately negatively impact their levels of self-esteem and sexuality.”

Dr. Figueroa-Haas warned that women should not view plastic surgery as a cure-all for any self-esteem and sexuality woes. In fact, ethical plastic surgeons should screen for this type of behavior and rule out potential patients who may have more serious psychological issues, she said.

“There may be patients who will never be satisfied with their bodies no matter how much surgery they receive or feel that their life will completely change after plastic surgery,” Dr. Figueroa-Haas said. “These are not ideal candidates for surgery and should seek further counseling to address their underlying psychological issues. But for women who seek improvements in certain physical areas, plastic surgery can be a very positive experience.”

Further research should be conducted to assess significant psychosocial issues that may arise after plastic surgery, said Dr. Figueroa-Haas, adding that her study helps call attention to the need for health-care providers to be able to predict outcomes in this specialized population.

“Since plastic surgery is increasing dramatically, my intention for researching this topic was to evaluate nurses’ attitudes toward cosmetic surgery patients and make recommendations for increasing awareness of the factors surrounding these patients,” Dr. Figueroa-Haas said. “Nurses should display compassion and understand an individual’s reason for seeking cosmetic surgery instead of dismissing or stereotyping these patients. This study shows that there are genuine psychological improvements that follow plastic surgery, and these issues must be understood and respected.”



A gift from the Thomas H. Maren Foundation to the UF College of Nursing will support the education of graduate level nursing students and provide care for the underserved patients in North Central Florida.

The gift, which is eligible to be matched dollar-for-dollar by the state of Florida, is for two major endowments, one which will support doctoral student fellowships and the other will provide funding to Archer Family Health Care, the college’s nurse-managed practice in Archer, Florida.

“The University of Florida nurtured my husband and allowed him the freedom to pursue his research,” said Emily Maren, Thomas Maren’s widow and a retired nurse. “Through this gift, we can support nursing education at the University of Florida, and the Maren Foundation believes in nursing and sees the need for it to progress and grow.”

Thomas Maren spent most of his career, much of it in basic scientific research, at UF’s College of Medicine. He was a founding faculty member of the College of Medicine and a chairman of UF’s Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics for 22 years. He gained international recognition for his pioneering investigation of an enzyme called carbonic anhydrase and its role in fluid production and flow in the eyes, brain, spinal cord and lymph system. His research led to the development of Trusopt, an important drug for the treatment of glaucoma.

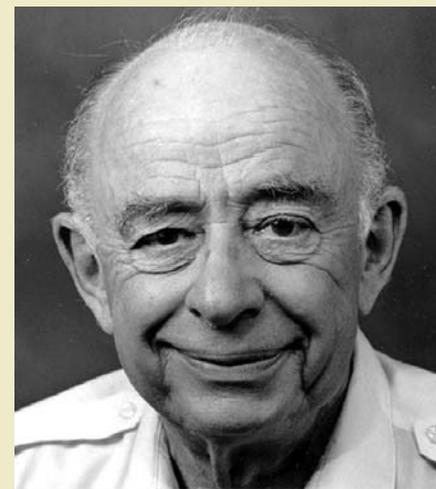
“The University of Florida was always an interest to our family and health care has always been an important aspect to our family,” said Peter Maren, Thomas Maren’s son and a longtime member of the Gainesville community. “In the past the Maren foundation had given gifts to other areas of health care and we recently decided to give to the College of Nursing because we felt it was necessary to help grow the education program due to the shortage of nurses throughout the United States.”

For Emily, nursing captured her later on in life. She decided to go back to school at 39 to pursue her nursing degree and loved the patient care aspect of the profession. After she married Thomas Maren, she began to pursue nursing research, which she found equally compelling.

“This is such a special gift because it helps to benefit future nursing researchers and educators,” Emily Maren said. “And because my husband recognized the value of giving back, we hope that these nurses who benefit from these fellowships choose to give back too, not just with money, but through encouragement and lifelong learning.”

Dean Kathleen Ann Long’s leadership and the College’s work at Archer Family Health Care inspired the Foundation to expand their gift to support the nursing practice, said Peter Maren.

“We are excited about the gift and interested in its progress and the impact it will have on nursing education at the University of Florida,” Peter Maren said.



Thomas H. Maren



# NURSING STUDENTS SPEND SPRING BREAK Exploring Other Cultures

By Katie Phelan

While most students spend spring break relaxing and hanging out with friends, three College of Nursing students decided to learn about the health care system in another culture. Senior BSN students Teneisha Williams, Ashley Raum, and Alexandra Giralt spent a week in the Yucatan Peninsula participating in an international independent study with professors Dr. Carmen Rodriguez and Dr. Sharleen Simpson.



Assistant Professor Carmen Rodriguez holds a young patient.

The students and professors visited nursing students at the Universidad Autonoma de Yucatan (UADY), toured local hospitals and participated in community activities. The students were given the opportunity to learn about the local nursing program by watching presentations and touring the two campuses: Merida, the larger campus, and Tizimin, the smaller campus. The students observed how the program at Tizimin is focused more on the community, working closely with the Mayan population.

Although the UF and UADY nursing programs are similar in some ways, the students saw several differences.

One of the main differences the students noted was the length and compensation of the “service year” UADY nursing students must complete upon graduation.

“The service year is similar to our practicum rotation, only it lasts one year and they are paid a small amount for transportation and living arrangements,” said Raum.

Along with learning about health care, the students were immersed in the Mayan culture. Throughout the week, they enjoyed traditional Mayan music, dancing, food, and activities.

They learned a lot about the Hispanic culture and their health care system. Students were also given the chance to teach the UADY nursing students about UF’s nursing program.



Students attended a traditional Mayan dance performance.

“I am very interested in other cultures and was happy to have the opportunity to learn about the health care system and nursing school of another country. I think that there are so many possibilities for improving our nursing school and the way we practice health care in the U.S. when we look outside the confines of our own system to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of another,” explained Raum.

“I wanted the opportunity to do something different, something exciting. It was a great experience. I really feel like I experienced a little bit of all of the Yucatan in that jam-packed week. I have learned to be thankful for all the things we have in our country, including the basics such as air conditioning and having gloves readily available,” said Giralt.

“Visiting UADY on the Yucatan Peninsula was an opportunity I may never experience again and I am glad I spent spring break exploring another culture. We read in our textbooks about how we should approach people from different countries. I thought that having the chance to observe would teach me a lot more than a textbook ever could,” said Williams.



[top] UF and UADY students and faculty. Teneisha Williams (second from left), Alexandra Girault (second from right) and Ashley Raum (right) with UADY students.

## Faculty Reach Out to HIV and AIDS Patients in Rural Florida

by Katie Phelan

*This is the first in a series focusing on the ways that the College of Nursing provides clinical and outreach services to our communities.*

Although treatments for HIV/AIDS patients have greatly improved in recent years, underserved patients may not always see the benefits due to a lack of primary or specialty health care available in their areas.

College of Nursing faculty members are helping to improve health care for HIV-infected patients by offering their professional services to the rural HIV/AIDS clinics throughout the North Central Florida area.

Among these faculty members are Dr. Joanne Orrick, a clinical pharmacist, and Angela Martin, a family nurse practitioner. Dr. Orrick and Martin are funded through the Ryan White Care Act, a federal program that provides funding to the rural HIV/AIDS clinics. The act was passed on August 18, 1990 to provide patients with HIV/AIDS living in Florida the means to receive improved health care. The clinics are located both within and outside of Gainesville. The counties within the Gainesville area include Alachua, Sumter, Putnam and Columbia.

The Ryan White rural health clinics serve all levels of patients diagnosed with HIV. They also offer financial funding for those patients unable to pay for their medication which provides the opportunity for an improved quality of life. The clinics throughout Gainesville are open six times a month; the other locations throughout North Central Florida are open three days a week, with reduced hours. While at the clinics, patients seek care from both the clinical pharmacist and the nurse practitioner.

The clinics provide specialized care to HIV-infected patients through the support and services they offer. They initiate and manage highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART), treat opportunistic infections, and manage primary care issues because some patients are unable to afford primary care. Many of the patients face challenges of poverty and diabetes, said Martin.

Martin has always been interested in HIV/AIDS and has been working at the clinics since she was an MSN student at the University of Florida. Martin replaced her former preceptor Dr. Dina Trelor as the clinics' nurse practitioner.

"These patients face so many challenges including the social stigma of the disease. Many advances in HIV treatment are being made; patients are living longer and healthier lives. In a way this makes working in HIV care exciting and very fulfilling personally," said Martin.

Dr. Orrick has been working at the clinics for over four years, providing her clinical expertise at the



Gainesville clinics five days a month and four days a month for those sites outside of the area. She initially became interested in infectious diseases while completing a clinical rotation at the Florida Curriculum Aids Education and Training Center. This post graduate clinical experience increased her desire to help patients with HIV. After approaching the Well Florida Council, Dr. Orrick began working at the HIV/AIDS rural practice sites as the on site clinical pharmacist.

Dr. Orrick helps HIV-infected patients learn more about their disease and the medications they are taking. While working at the clinic, she provides patients with personalized regimens that fit their medical needs and helps patients obtain refill authorizations from their doctors in order for them to continue to receive their medications. Along with helping patients, she occasionally takes her students to the practice sites enabling them to complete their rotations.

"I hope that with better understanding of both the disease and the available medications, patients treated at the sites will have successful outcomes which will ultimately lead to longer happier lives," Dr. Orrick said.

## Alumni Council Board Welcomes New Faces

The Alumni Council Board held elections this past November, and elected Maryse Parrino (BSN 1974) as President, and Bonnie Pepper (BSN 1980) as President Elect. Below is a listing of the new slate of officers:

**President:** Maryse Parrino (BSN 1974)

**President-elect:** Bonnie Pepper (BSN 1980)

**Secretary:** Patricia Sassner (BSN 1997)

**Treasurer:** Patsy Love (BSN 1990)

**Ex-officio:** Dr. Ann Lynn Denker (BSN 1973)

**Member-at-large:** Alice Jackson (BSN 1977)

### Regional Representatives

Dee Goff (BSN 1971) – Pinellas County Region

Kelli McCall Crews (BSN 2001, MSN 2005) – North Central Florida region

Karen Hanson (BSN 1966, MSN 1986) – Orlando area region

Russell Jacobitz (BSN 1994) – Gainesville area

**Barbee Geiger (BSN 1974)** served as President for the past two years and did an outstanding job of guiding the Alumni Council Board. Her efforts were tremendous with all aspects of the Council including the Book Awards Scholarship, Silent Auction, and wrapping up last year with the 50th Anniversary. It has been a pleasure to work with Barbee, and she still remains involved with the Council as an ex-officio member. Thank you Barbee for all of your continued hard work and dedication to the CON Alumni Council!

It is with great sadness that we say farewell to **Gus Infante (BSN 1987)** who has served on the Alumni Council Board for several years. Gus and his family are relocating to North Carolina, and with the move and new responsibilities he has stepped down as the South Florida regional representative. We appreciate all of the hard work Gus has given to the Alumni Council and wish him and his family all of the best.



## Watch out Broadway! Gator Nurse alumna stars in “Twilight Time”

UF nursing alumna Vivian Filer (BSN 1976) had a recent starring role in “Twilight Time,” a play written by Richard LaMont Pierce which appeared in the Acrosstown Repertory Theatre in Gainesville. Filer is a well-known community leader, whose many roles include nurse, teacher, storyteller, singer, radio show host, community activist, and now...actress! She played the matriarch, Margaret, in the play. She is shown here (center) with her fellow castmates.

Filer was a recent recipient of a Dorothy M. Smith Nursing Leadership Award for community outreach. Congratulations to Vivian Filer...could a Tony be far behind?

# In Memoriam

The College of Nursing recently bid a sad goodbye to two members of our Gator Nurse family—a veteran faculty member and alumna who both made a tremendous impact both personally and professionally. Our thoughts are with their families and loved ones. They will be missed by all of us.

## **Willamay Whitner** (died in late 2006; birthdate unknown)

Willamay was one of the founding research faculty at the College of Nursing. She was doctorally prepared at Teacher's College in Columbia and came to UF in the early 1960s to help lead the new graduate program and coordinate the beginning efforts of nursing research. Willamay had a continuing career in nursing education and retired as a faculty member at the University of Mississippi. She moved to North Carolina following her retirement, where she lived until she passed away.

As a testament of her impact on students, below is a memory from alumna and College historian Ann Smith (MN 1967)

*When insecure graduate students learned we had to take "statistics" as a required course in 1966, it made the entire class insecure at the word alone. Willamay reassured us with the instruction that we would learn enough at the master's level to be intelligent consumers of research. She told us that a normal curve was three-dimensional like a mound of sand.*

*When I knew her better and was involved in doing a study, I shared with her that I had been teased about working all weekend on the project in which I was so involved. She told me that if I loved doing it—or anything, for that matter—it*

*was not work. I took that beyond my project and have applied it many times to things that I love doing, regardless of the perception of others.*

*I thank her for demystifying research and statistics for us. She helped us gently wade into foreign waters.*

## **Christina M. "Tina" Link** (1951-2007)

Christine M. "Tina" Link, RN, BSN, 55, passed away on Sunday, January 7th after a courageous battle against cancer. She was originally from Massapequa, Long Island in New York and moved to Florida in 1977. Tina graduated from the UF College of Nursing with her BSN in 1993, and served as President of the UF Nursing Alumni Council shortly after. She was extremely proud of her years of service to the College. She worked at Shands Hospital in the Emergency Department. She loved gardening, cooking and nursing. She leaves behind her husband Art; her sisters Louise, Kathy and Elizabeth; her children Chuck 34, Art 30 and Jimmy 26 and her grandchildren David, Chrissy and Kody. Tina's family asked those who wish may send memorial gifts to the University of Florida College of Nursing.



## College Hosts Career Fair with Record Number of Recruiters

The College of Nursing Alumni Affairs office hosted its annual Career Fair on February 2, 2007. Health care agencies from all Florida and as far as Reno, Nevada participated in the event. The agencies were very impressed with our students and commented on how professional, articulate and prepared they were. The Career Fair is held every spring, and is a great networking opportunity for both students and health care agencies. Stay tuned for next year's date.

# Gator Nurses Show Their

# SPiRiT



We all know that 2006 was the year of the Gator, and members of our Gator Nurse family celebrated along with the rest of the Gator Nation! The UF Men's basketball team captured UF's first NCAA basketball championship in April 2006 and the football team won the 2006 National Championship in January. Most recently, the basketball team captured a historic repeat with the 2007 NCAA championship. In addition to its athletics accolades, the University's profile has risen as many more people across the globe continued to be influenced by "the foundation of the Gator Nation!"

Seen here are Gator Nurse students showing their Gator spirit during the "Year of the Gator!" Of course we know it's always the year of the Gator Nurse...

photos clockwise from top left...

- 1 Anne Svercek does the Gator Chomp as she watches the football championship in the O'Connell Center.
- 2 (L) Tara Slominski and Jamie Howard cheer on the Gators in the Nursing block at a football game.
- 3 (L-R) Traci Rae, Tara Slominski, Jamie Howard and Cassidy Murray celebrate the 2006 UF Basketball Championship.
- 4 (L) Kathalina Fabian and Camille Hanson at the O'Connell Center for the BCS National Championship Game.
- 5 (L-R) Sue Reiber, Tricia Datinguino, Stevie Maher and Kristen Guess at Stevie's family's tailgate before the UF-Alabama game in 2006.



## National Champs!

The football and basketball teams celebrate their national championships.



# GO GATORS!!

Gator Nurse alumni and friends...if you have memorable photos of your Gator spirit, please send to Tracy Brown Wright, Editor at [tracyb@nursing.ufl.edu](mailto:tracyb@nursing.ufl.edu)

# Rediscover, Reconnect, Reignite!

## SAVE THE DATE!

This year's College of Nursing's Reunion will be held on **November 2-3, 2007** in conjunction with UF's Homecoming weekend. Come and catch up with old friends and meet new ones. There will be a reception at the Florida Museum of Natural History, Gator Growl, a tailgate brunch and the National Champs stomping Vandy. Be on the lookout for more information soon!



## president's message

Dear Gator Nurses!

I am excited to take on the role of President for the College of Nursing Alumni Council. By serving as President Elect this past year, I had the opportunity to reconnect with fellow Gator Nurses and meet new ones. It was a great year getting to know everyone and participating in all that the Alumni Council does for the College.



MARYSE PARRINO

My goals and vision for the next two years of my term include increasing funds for student scholarships, engaging alumni in fundraising opportunities and increasing attendance at alumni events and participation on the Alumni Council. To accomplish this, we need your help as Gator Nurses.

Because of BarBee Geiger's excellent leadership over the past two years, I have big shoes to fill. With her help my transition to President has been a well informed one.

It all started with an invitation to participate in a nursing reunion weekend personally signed by Barbee, with an addendum stating "Hope to see you there!" Though she was one of my best friends in nursing school, we had lost touch in recent years. I had previously ignored past invitations to Gator Nursing events assuming that I would likely not know anyone in attendance. Her personal invitation prompted me to give her a call and here I am! This type of personal touch is what it takes to build alumni participation in the College of Nursing. If all active alumni would take the time to contact a nursing colleague from their student days and encourage them to participate in the upcoming alumni events, we could double our participation!! If you are interested in learning more about the Alumni Council, please contact Anna Miller, Associate Director of Alumni Affairs at [aemiller@ufl.edu](mailto:aemiller@ufl.edu), or 352-273-6360 for more information

Don't forget that our College of Nursing Reunion will be held November 2-3, 2007. This is a great time to rediscover, reconnect and reunite! I look forward to the opportunity to meet all Gator Nurses! At this time above all others "It's Great To Be A Florida Gator!!" Go Gators.

Maryse Parrino  
BSN 1974  
Nursing Alumni Council President

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