

Pitt | nurse

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
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SHAPING THE FUTURE
Dean
Christine E. Kasper

Leaders are everywhere, from government to the corporate world to local communities. They are the folks who are steering the ship, who are guiding operations, and who others turn to for inspiration and direction.

The nursing profession is no exception. Nurses in leadership roles are influencing health care organizations at all levels and in every setting



“It’s no secret that nursing at every level is a challenging profession, but it’s the nurses who respond, adapt, and emerge victorious who are advancing the profession.”

and discipline. From the hospital bedside to a seat at the executive table, nurse leaders are shaping every facet of health care, inspiring, influencing, and motivating not only nursing staff but other health care workers, schools of nursing, and research.

The demand for change in how health care is defined and delivered has never been more pressing. That’s why the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing created a DNP program concentration in health systems executive leadership. This program has prepared nurses to function in executive leadership and management roles that focus on creating or redesigning systems to meet the demands of the emerging health care market.

The graduates of this program lead some of the best health care systems in the country. They are CNOs and executive directors of quality, clinical informatics, population health, clinical practice hospitals, ambulatory clinics, and nonprofit and governmental organizations. We are so proud of them.

We also are proud of our graduates who want to influence the nurses of the future and have taken on leadership roles at universities and colleges around the world. These graduates are helping to guide the next generation of caregivers, researchers, and leaders.

So what does it take to be a nurse leader? And why do nurses choose to take on leadership roles? This issue of Pitt Nurse magazine aims to answer those questions by talking to some of our graduates who are successfully guiding major hospital systems. We explore the impact they’re making at all levels within their organizations and how they got to where they are today. We also take a look at Pitt Nursing’s health systems executive leadership program, both how it started and the success we’ve seen through our graduates.

In this issue, we also explore the new leadership within our very own walls. It was an honor and a privilege to be named dean of Pitt Nursing. I am thrilled to take over the reins from Jacqueline Dunbar-Jacob, someone who’s left such a profound legacy at the School of Nursing. Dean Dunbar-Jacob’s contributions to Pitt Nursing are tremendous and inspiring, and I’m excited to continue her successes and guide the school into the future. In this issue, you’ll learn a little more about me, what I envision for the School of Nursing, and why this job is a dream come true.

It’s no secret that nursing at every level is a challenging profession, but it’s the nurses who respond, adapt, and emerge victorious who are advancing the profession. We honor you and your dedication.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Christine E. Kasper".

Christine E. Kasper, PhD, FAAN, FACS
Dean
University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing

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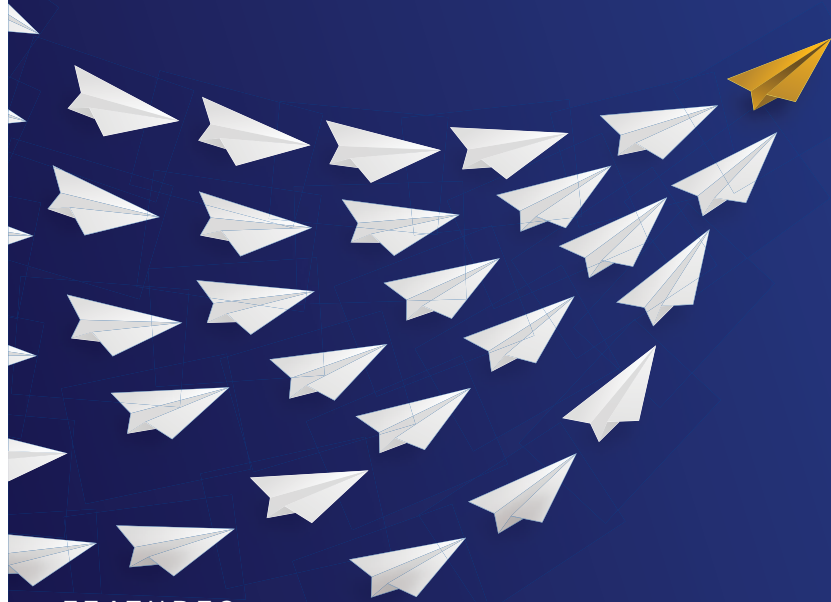
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U.S. News & World Report Rankings

U.S. News & World Report released its rankings of the top online graduate nursing programs on Jan. 24, 2023, and the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing has been ranked seventh in the country. Pitt is the only school in Pennsylvania listed in the top 10.

Pitt Nursing's Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program offers three areas of concentration: clinical nurse leader, nursing informatics, and school nursing. The clinical nurse leader area of concentration became available online in the 2009-10 school year, while the nursing informatics

area of concentration was first offered online in the 2012-13 school year. In 2022, Pitt Nursing became the 11th institution in the country to offer an MSN in school nursing.

U.S. News & World Report bases its rankings on data reported to the agency through statistical and peer assessment surveys in the following categories: engagement, faculty credentials and training, expert opinion, services and technologies, and student excellence. Pitt Nursing's online MSN program received a score of 97/100.

Alumni Recognized for Excellence in Nursing

Four University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing alumni were honored by Pittsburgh Magazine with the publication's seventh annual Excellence in Nursing Awards.

Brett Fadgen (MSN '11) received the Excellence in Nursing - Advanced Practitioner award, Jill Demirci (BSN '05, MSN '10, PhD '12) received the Excellence in Nursing - Researcher award, Carl Ross (BSN '85) received the

Excellence in Nursing - Academic award, and Camellia Herisko (MSN '94, MSN '97, DNP '12) received the Excellence in Nursing - Leadership/Executive award.

Brayden Kameg (BSN '16, DNP '19) received an honorable mention in the Academic category.

A panel of 18 respected nursing professionals reviewed 136 nominations for the eight award categories. It's the most

nominations Pittsburgh Magazine has ever received.

"We are incredibly proud of the outstanding work that our faculty and alumni do and grateful for the recognition of outstanding contributions that the Pittsburgh Magazine awards provide," said Pitt Nursing Dean Christine E. Kasper.

Pictured below, left to right: Brett Fadgen, Jill Demirci, Carl Ross, and Camellia Herisko; photo courtesy of Pittsburgh Magazine



Conley Appointed to Nursing Research and Scholarship Role

The University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing is proud to announce that Yvette Conley, PhD, FAAN, has been named associate dean for research and scholarship.



"This truly is my dream role," Conley says. "I hope to establish an enhanced infrastructure for research in the school that will assist our amazingly talented faculty and students to realize their research goals."

Conley's research in the field of molecular genetics has been recognized nationally. In 2015, she was selected for the International Society of Nurses in Genetics Founders' Award for research, one of the organization's highest forms of recognition. In 2022, she was awarded the Eastern Nursing Research Society Distinguished Contributions to Nursing Research Award, which is given every year in recognition of sustained and outstanding contributions to nursing research by a senior investigator. Most notably, in 2016, she was recognized as an honorary fellow of the American Academy of Nursing—a prestigious honor given to few non-nurses.

"I look forward to stimulating new research endeavors while supporting current research in the school, and I'm really looking forward to recruiting new research faculty to join us during this exciting time at Pitt Nursing," Conley says.

Pitt Nursing has been recognized for its research endeavors. The Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research ranked the school seventh among public universities and 12th overall after securing nearly \$5.7 million in competitive research grants received by schools of nursing from the National Institutes of Health in 2022.

Happiness and Human Flourishing Course Debuts

Grant Martsolf, University of Pittsburgh professor and UPMC Health Systems Chair in Nursing Science, teamed up with David Sanchez, associate professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, and Ryan McDermott, associate professor in the Department of English, to create the Happiness and Human Flourishing course, which debuted in spring term 2023.

The instructors—all good friends, Martsolf noted—have taught "happiness"-oriented courses within their respective academic fields, so they decided to pool resources and insights for one jointly taught course. In addition to Martsolf's Health Policy and Human Flourishing, which he started in 2020, McDermott teaches a first-year composition course based on happiness-related literature, while Sanchez leads a noncredit seminar class called Engineering Happiness.

"Those three courses, we realized that they're very similar, at least in their goal and their content," Martsolf said, "so we decided to teach this course together."

The three-credit interdisciplinary class explores the "happiness crisis" in the modern West, which is experiencing "historic levels of depression, anxiety and lack of meaning," the class description reads. The ultimate goal is to help students "reflect on their own lives and how they might construct flourishing lives in college and beyond."

Another goal of the course, Martsolf noted, is to reinvigorate the idea of "the university" as not just a professional training ground but a generator of citizenship and philosophical and moral engagement.

"I think in many ways, we've lost our calling to also do moral formation in our students—help them be good citizens when they leave here," he said. "I don't mean just ready to get a job, but how to participate in a pluralist democracy—but then also give them some sort of vision of, not just what can I do to work, but how can I live and live well."

The overall goal, Martsolf said, is not just to compare theories of "well-being vs. happiness vs. flourishing vs. life satisfaction," but also "to help students create habits that would allow them to take this knowledge and understanding and apply it to their lives. We hope that at the end of the course, students have a better understanding of how to pursue full and flourishing lives."

Excerpted from a University Times article by Shannon O. Wells

The ultimate goal is to help students "reflect on their own lives and how they might construct flourishing lives in college and beyond."



Spring Graduation

Congratulations, Spring 2023 Graduates

The University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing welcomed its newest cohort of alumni during its spring graduation ceremony at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center on April 28, 2023. These graduates join more than 13,000 other Pitt Nursing alumni who are changing the face of nursing and health care worldwide.





Intrepido Named Director of Development

The University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing has announced the appointment of Melissa “Missy” Intrepido as its new director of development, effective Jan. 30, 2023.

Intrepido comes to Pitt Nursing from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, where she worked as the director of affinity projects. Prior to this role, she was the senior director of development for Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, and assistant director of alumni advancement for the University of New England in Portland, Maine. For almost a decade, Intrepido has used a collaborative and creative approach to connect funder dollars to impact.



“I am truly excited to join the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing team,” says Intrepido. “Pitt Nursing is the best of the best and has made such an impact in the field, in the Pittsburgh region and beyond. There is a critical need for nurses right now, and the demand for funding to assist with scholarships, uniforms, research, and more is crucial. I look forward to partnering with the dedicated nursing alumni and friends to increase engagement and support of the school.”

In her free time, Intrepido enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband, Patrick, and their 5-year-old son, Luca. She volunteers with her son’s T-ball team and loves spending time in her garden.

Any inquiries about how to get involved with and support the School of Nursing can be directed to Intrepido at missy.intrepido@pitt.edu or +1-412-510-3563.

Former Polio Nurse Visits Salk Exhibit

The University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing and School of Public Health welcomed Patricia George Stepanchak (BSN '47) back to campus recently.



Stepanchak, a 98-year-old former polio nurse, cared for polio patients at the Pittsburgh Municipal Hospital (now Salk Hall) on the floor above Jonas Salk's lab while his team was working to develop the lifesaving vaccine.

She made a special stop at the School of Public Health to preview the Jonas Salk Legacy Exhibit, which celebrates his work and the countless lives saved by public health vaccine initiatives. The exhibit features some of Salk's laboratory equipment; his desk; and photographs, clippings, and documents that celebrate the safe and effective polio vaccine developed by Salk and his team of researchers. During her visit, Stepanchak recounted stories about manually operating iron

lungs when the power went out and how she met her late husband, Pitt Public Health and Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences graduate Russ Stepanchak, in the cafeteria.

She also chatted with Pitt Nursing Dean Christine E. Kasper; Alex Taylor, associate professor of history of art and architecture; and Jeanine Buchanich, associate dean for research at Pitt Public Health.

In 2010, Stepanchak documented her experiences caring for polio patients in a memoir called "The Shot Felt 'Round the World."

Materials displayed in the exhibit are part of a gift to the University from the Salk family.

Honeysett Elected VP of NSNA

Kayla Honeysett, a University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing second-year BSN student and current mental health chair of Pitt's Nursing Student Association, was elected vice president of the National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA) during the organization's 71st annual convention in Nashville, Tennessee, in April.

"There was a lot of anticipation leading up to the vote, because I had spent every spare minute over the first three days of the conference creating my campaign materials and speaking to students," says Honeysett. "When they finally announced the results of the vice president and I heard my name, I was so excited! As I walked to the front of the House of Delegates to accept my new role, I looked out at the approximately 250 nursing students from across the country and felt proud that they elected me to represent them. I am so grateful for the opportunity to represent an

organization with more than 50,000 members and to have a voice on a national level."

Honeysett says that as vice president, she will have several responsibilities, including speaking at conferences, leading the Health Policy and Advocacy Committee, and contributing to both the Finance and Breakthrough to Nursing committees. As the health policy and advocacy chair, Honeysett will review the resolutions that have passed and incorporate them into her goals for the year.

"While the committee will collectively agree on our goals for the year, I hope to be able to advocate for mental health, people with disabilities, and school and workplace safety," she says. "I want to encourage nursing students to use their voices and votes to create a better future for students, nurses, and patients."

Honeysett joined the Pitt Nursing Student Association as a first-year BSN student as a way to meet other nursing students. She says that she got more involved when she joined the mental health committee and enjoyed what the group did for mental health advocacy and promotion. It eventually led her to become mental health chair of the student-run organization.



New Online Master's in School Nursing

The University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing is offering a new specialty area for students wishing to pursue their Master of Science in Nursing.

The online school nursing program will prepare licensed registered nurses to work in the specialty practice of school nursing, which requires advanced skills to address the complex health needs of students within a school community setting. In the 1960s, 2% of children had a chronic health condition. Today, an estimated 25-32% of children have a chronic health condition, and when they reach adolescence, that number jumps to 41.8%.

"We are very excited to build upon our certificate program in school nursing to offer an MSN," says Pitt Nursing Dean Emeritus Jacqueline Dunbar-Jacob. "As 'The Future of Nursing 2020-2030: Charting a Path to Achieve Health Equity' report indicated, school nurses play a vital role in advancing health equity, and Pitt Nursing is enthusiastic about offering advanced preparation for this significant public health role."

The innovative online program is a continuation of Pitt Nursing's online 15-credit school nurse Pre-K-12 certificate. The online MSN in school nursing will offer an additional 18 credits for a total of 33. Students will have three options to complete the program:



- Full time over one year without a prior school nurse certificate (33 credits)
- Part time over one year after completion of the school nurse certificate (18 credits)
- Part time over two years without a prior school nurse certificate (33 credits)

School nurses are leaving the workforce in record numbers. In 2018, a study by the National Association of School Nurses found that almost half of all school nurses in the United States are older than 50 and close to retirement. Pitt Nursing will help to fill the need for school nurses as one of only 11 U.S. colleges and universities to offer an MSN in school

nursing. The MSN in school nursing also will provide collegiate credits and specialized education hours required for active certifications, as school nurses who practice in Pennsylvania are required to be certified. Pitt Nursing's program will allow nurses in Pennsylvania with a Level 1 Certificate (which is only good for six years) to obtain a Level 2 Certificate and keep their certification active. School nurses must have 24 credits after their initial BSN and practice for three years as a school nurse to obtain a Level 2 Certificate and keep their certification active.

For more information about this and other Pitt Nursing degree programs, visit nursing.pitt.edu/degree-programs.



Dean Emeritus Jacqueline Dunbar-Jacob was recognized by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) for her substantial impact on academic nursing and was the recipient of the Emeritus Membership Award in 2022.

Dunbar-Jacob was honored during the AACN Academic Nursing Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C. She is pictured with Cynthia McCurren, PhD, chair of the AACN board of directors, and Deborah Trautman (MSN '87), PhD, FAAN, president and chief executive officer (ex officio), AACN.

SHAPING THE FUTURE

DEAN CHRISTINE E. KASPER

Christine Kasper remembers it vividly.

“I was sitting in a very large manor house that looks like a castle overlooking the British countryside when I got the offer, and I thought, ‘Wow, this is the place to get an offer!’”

Kasper was attending the 33rd International Nursing Research Congress organized by Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing in Edinburgh, Scotland, when she found out that after a highly competitive national search, she had been offered the role of dean at the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing, replacing dean and Distinguished Service Professor of Nursing Jacqueline Dunbar-Jacob.



"I was shocked but extremely happy," she says. "When the job posting was announced, I was really excited to think, maybe, if I get lucky, this will work out, because Pitt is such an outstanding place."

Whether it was luck or sheer talent, Kasper became the sixth dean of Pitt Nursing on Jan. 1, 2023.

"I GRADUATED VERY YOUNG AND STUPID."

Kasper's journey to becoming Pitt Nursing's dean started as an undergraduate studying nursing at the University of Evansville in 1975. She went on to receive her master's degree in nursing at Rush University and then headed straight for her doctorate at the University of Michigan, where she studied nursing and exercise physiology. Her education continued with a postdoctoral fellowship at Rush in physiology and biophysics. Her area of research focuses on skeletal muscle regeneration and highly genotoxic environmental exposures of muscle.

"I graduated very young and stupid," Kasper says with a chuckle. "I was 28 years old when I got my PhD, so I've had a lot of time to kind of move around, shall we say."

Kasper then took on her first faculty appointment at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, followed by a position at the University of California, Los Angeles, and an endowed chair at the Johns Hopkins University.

"Then things got really wild and interesting, and I went to the federal government," she says. "I had not anticipated that move in my career, but it came up. I was asked to start a PhD program for federal nurses at what is known as Uniformed Services University, the military's medical academy."

As a senior nurse executive in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Nursing Services, Kasper advised the chief nursing officer on academics, research, and policy and was a professor in the Daniel K. Inouye Graduate School of Nursing at Uniformed Services University in Bethesda, Maryland.

Kasper's research was funded through multiple National Institutes of Health grants and even a grant from NASA.

"I had an experiment done on one of the NASA shuttles, so it's been kind of fun," she says. "I think there's a lot of fun in being an academic and being a scientist. You really get to explore things

"Dr. Kasper has been chosen from a pool of exceptionally qualified leaders identified through a national search. I believe Dr. Kasper is superbly qualified to lead Pitt's School of Nursing on a continued path of success, and I look forward to working with her closely."

Anantha Skekhar, Pitt senior vice chancellor for the health sciences and John and Gertrude Petersen Dean, School of Medicine

and answer questions that a lot of other people don't get the chance to do, so I've always loved it."

After being a student, an educator, and a researcher, becoming a dean felt like the right next move.

"You get to a point in your career where it's an important thing to do—become a dean," she says. "It gives you that experience to see how various big research project [R01] grants operate [and] how faculty think across the country, and you really get to see what levels of excellence are."

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

"I started at the University of New Mexico's College of Nursing in 2018," Kasper says. "What intrigued me was that it is one of the few R01 universities that is also a Minority Serving Institution—63% of our students are minorities. New Mexico is a majority-minority state. This has given me really good experience on how to build research in areas that are culturally diverse as well as faculty development and student opportunities," she says.

During Kasper's tenure as dean, enrollment at the College of Nursing increased by 35% to 1,100 students.



CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Annual Review of Nursing Research, series editor
- Biological Research for Nursing, founding editor
- American Academy of Nurses fellow, 1994
- American College of Sports Medicine fellow, 1995
- International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame, Sigma Theta Tau International, 2015
- More than 200 national and international peer-reviewed and invited publications, books, and presentations

“WHEN YOU SEE THE JOB POSTING, IT’S KIND OF LIKE MAGIC HAPPENS.”

Kasper says that when she saw that Pitt Nursing was looking for a new dean, she decided to go for it and apply.

“The University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing—and I say this genuinely—has been a top-10 school for decades,” she says. “As far back as I can recall, it’s been right up there. People have always spoken highly of it [and] highly of the deans there. They’ve made a massive impact on many things.”

Kasper went through an extensive and elaborate interview process that lasted for months and that included meetings with the dean’s search committee, composed of Pitt faculty and students, and visits to Pitt’s campus.

“It gave me confidence that this was an organization I wanted to work for mainly because they were so meticulous with the process and so careful that they made sure I met everyone,” she says. “It was fascinating. Everyone was so helpful and so gracious in sharing information and really having careful conversations that you don’t see in interviews. You could really tell that everybody in the University was truly invested in making this

happen, making it work, and setting up a future relationship. That’s really important.”

Kasper was ultimately chosen from a pool of “exceptionally qualified leaders,” according to Anantha Shekhar, Pitt’s senior vice chancellor for the health sciences, and was offered the position of dean in the summer of 2022.

“It’s such an outstanding place—outstanding faculty, amazing students, and an outstanding university. What’s not to like?!”

THE FUTURE OF PITT NURSING

Kasper, who took over as dean on Jan. 1, 2023, says that she wants to start by speaking in depth with faculty and student groups.

“It’s often not a joke when we say the first step in the nursing process is assessment,” she says. “I may have various wild ideas of my own, but coming into such a well-established, top-ranked school, I think you have to be very, very thoughtful and engage with the constituents in the University to make sure you don’t mess it up. You have to be thoughtful and look at the next level and figure out how we can move higher.”

Some areas Kasper wants to address include the future location of the School of Nursing on the Pittsburgh campus, work with development and community, increasing student enrollment without inhibiting the faculty scholarly process, and recruiting top-notch clinicians and scientists as faculty.

But one area Kasper says Pitt Nursing excels at already is mentoring undergrads to continue on to graduate school, and she wants to see that momentum continue.

“It’s going to be the schools of national importance like Pitt that really do bear some responsibility for creating that next generation of scientists and clinical scholars,” she says. “The more you can move those undergrads through, the better. I was one of those, and if it hadn’t been for my mentors [who] said, ‘Move,’ I wouldn’t have been able to get through the programs as fast and receive my PhD so young. We need more of that.”

One of Kasper’s mentors who helped her early on in her career was Ellen Rudy, dean of Pitt Nursing from 1991 to 2001.

“She was an amazing woman,” Kasper says. “She was out there on the national stage and extremely gracious in helping junior faculty. I was very lucky.”

MOVING IN

Kasper says she’s excited about the city’s food scene, sporting events, and museums and about being on campus. And after four years in New Mexico, she’s really looking forward to snow.

“I really want my snow back,” she says. “I have my L.L. Bean winter boots ready!”

What she wants Pitt Nursing students, faculty, alumni, and staff to know about her as she gets ready to take over the reigns at one of the most prestigious nursing schools in the country is that she tries to be fun.

“Deans are supposed to be serious, but I’m not,” she says with a laugh. “I keep trying, but it’s not happening!”

Aging and Gerontological Nursing Research Hub Formed



By 2060, people who are age 65 and older are expected to make up nearly a quarter of the U.S. population. Recognizing the health and societal implications of our nation’s demographic shifts, the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing is finding ways to address a wide range of challenges that will arise as the population ages.

The school is launching a new research hub that is focused on aging and gerontological nursing.

While the long-term goal of the hub is to establish Pitt Nursing as a leader in federally funded research in these areas, the short-term goal is to identify priority areas and collaborative opportunities for research on gerontology, aging, and care of older adults.

“While our nation’s demographic trends reflect significant advances in public health, disease prevention, and the treatment of major chronic disorders, advanced age remains a key factor for a number of serious health conditions,” reads the hub proposal. “Therefore, the need for a robust and rigorous evidence base to promote healthy aging and optimize the care of those with aging-related comorbidities has never been greater.”

The hub will bring together both established and emerging leaders in research at Pitt Nursing who will collaborate on issues related to aging and gerontological nursing like osteoarthritis, cardiovascular disease, Alzheimer’s disease, palliative care, health disparities, mobility, and caregiving. Led by Assistant Professor Yurun Cai, the hub’s first pilot study will examine physical activity levels and their impact on cognitive function and cognitive impairment risk.

“Dr. Cai’s study is significant because understanding the link between complexity of daily physical activity patterns and trajectories of cognitive decline has the potential to yield new insights into the underlying mechanisms connecting motor dysfunction to brain aging,” says Jennifer Lingler, professor and vice chair for research in the Department of Health and Community Systems, who will serve as hub leader. “This is exciting and could lead to novel directions for tailored interventions to prevent or delay the onset of Alzheimer’s, dementia, and related disorders.”



New Men in Nursing Club

A new club at the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing is giving male students a place to come together.

“I wanted to create a safe space for males within the School of Nursing to have a place to both network and connect with other students at different levels of their academic journeys,” says Adrian Bermudez (BSN ’19), DNP student and club cofounder. “I hope to both start the club and provide it with the necessary foundation to allow it to continue to grow for many years to come.”

Bermudez says that one of the goals of the Men in Nursing Club is to help provide mentee/mentor relationships that all members can participate in, something he said was vital during his time as a BSN student at Pitt.

“Whether it be talking about different types of nursing jobs, different types of graduate programs, [or] study strategies for specific nursing courses or talking about our interests outside the classroom, I hope everyone involved can get something out of the club,” says Bermudez. “I could not

have finished my BSN program and gained acceptance to graduate school without the guidance of upper-level students, and I hope to give back and help out those students who are younger than [I].”

One of those students is Thomas Kelly, who is helping to spearhead the club’s launch on campus. The third-year student transferred to Pitt Nursing and says that the transition was a lot easier thanks to his three clinical instructors, Regis Kearney, Conor Yates, and Bermudez.

“They all have been fantastic resources for my foray into nursing school, none more so than Adrian,” says Kelly. “I hope I can enable students to get the same help I have had because by forming this club, we can create an environment where men in Pitt Nursing, of all levels, can come together and learn from one another.”

Julius Kitutu, Pitt Nursing associate dean for student affairs and alumni relations, chief diversity officer, and associate professor, is the faculty sponsor for the new club and says that it will have a major impact on men within the School of Nursing.

“The male population in the nursing profession is very low,” says Kitutu.

“Coming together as a club will develop a safe space for information exchange on what works or does not work.”

In 2000, 9% of the student population in the undergraduate BSN program at Pitt Nursing identified as male. That number increased to 11% in 2022. When you include the graduate programs at Pitt Nursing, nearly 14% of the student population identifies as male, which is nearly 2% above the national average for the nursing profession.

Participants in the Men in Nursing Club will have a chance to have discussions aimed at developing each other’s skills, participate in activities that will help with their mental health and well-being as students, and address some of the issues in local communities. While the club leaders will be students, male faculty members will be invited to serve as mentors and offer guidance. The club also will invite guest speakers to share insights into their education and clinical specialties.

“We hope that with the creation of this club, students will plan to meet outside the club and form lasting friendships,” says Kelly.

Pitt Nursing Alumni Are Taking Charge

When you visit the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing website, one of the first phrases you see on the front page is “we shape the future.” The school “changes the face of nursing practice by preparing nurses to deliver the highest quality care—care that is guided by research, intellect, and passion.”

Pitt Nursing isn’t just preparing nurses for the bedside; they’re also preparing nurses to take on major roles within facilities around the world.

Those leaders, those Pitt Nursing alumni, are shaping the future.

“It’s hard to believe when I look back,” says Diane Hupp (DNP ’14). “I fondly remember those days of volunteering and working as a professional staff nurse. I would not have imagined that I would end up being the president of the hospital.”

Hupp’s journey to becoming a hospital president started more than three decades ago as an undergraduate student at Duquesne University. Hupp didn’t begin her college education in nursing but rather in business.

“I had a calling to be a nurse,” she remembers clearly. “During the end of my sophomore year, I decided I should be a nurse.”

But to make sure she was making the right decision, Hupp says that she needed to do some volunteer work. In 1985, she hopped on a bus from Duquesne University to UPMC Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, then located in Oakland. She volunteered in the fifth-floor preschool playroom.

“I really fell in love with working with children and families. The impact you can make is significant and rewarding,” she says.

A year later, Hupp took on her first paid role at Children’s Hospital as a childcare assistant, which today is known as a nursing student intern, and in 1987, upon graduating from Duquesne with a BSN, Hupp received her first RN position on the orthopaedic, trauma, and surgical unit at the hospital. From there, the leadership opportunities materialized.

“Many of the opportunities were interim roles to cover for a leader, which then led to another leadership

role,” she recalls. “I was the interim nurse manager for a couple years. I was asked to be the director of medical services then surgical services. I’ve had opportunities to work really all over the house.”

But Hupp says that her goal was to always be the chief nursing officer.



“I’ve loved nursing,” she explains. “I’m passionate about it. There’s nothing more impactful than the opportunities to make differences in lives through our art of caring and compassion.”

For 18 years, Hupp held the role of chief nursing officer, as well as vice president of operations for many of those years, at UPMC Children’s, calling it a privilege and an honor. The hospital is currently ranked sixth in the country by U.S. News & World Report and has maintained a top-10 ranking for years. She also has stressed the importance of education and through her leadership and helped to get nearly 90% of her nurses achieving baccalaureate degrees. UPMC Children’s currently leads the state in nurses who are baccalaureate trained.

Hupp was the catalyst for significant advancements in surgical services efficiencies and patient safety and has helped the organization to achieve magnet designation three times since 2012. She created a pediatric hospital-within-a-hospital concept in central Pennsylvania and helped to lead efforts to create a pediatric East Coast transplant network in collaboration with surgeons.

“We’ve made so many strides,” she says. “When I first became chief nurse, we had 100 nurse vacancies at Children’s. We did a lot of rebuilding, a lot of replenishing the team, a lot of recruitment and building culture.”

While Hupp was seeing success as the hospital’s chief nursing officer with a BSN and a graduate degree in nursing administration, she felt it was important to take her education a step further.

“Here I am, promoting the highest level of education to my frontline nurses as chief nursing officer,” she says. “I should really hold the highest degree with a doctorate in nursing.”

Gail Wolf, a former UPMC chief nursing officer and former Pitt Nursing faculty member, was instrumental in guiding and mentoring Hupp and encouraged her to strive for the best. Hupp enrolled in the University of Pittsburgh’s DNP executive leadership program in 2012 and immediately started working toward her degree. For the clinical and fellowship requirements for her degree, Hupp chose to step out of her comfort zone and instead went to the health plan to begin to learn about the insurance side of the business.

“I didn’t know anything about it,” she says. “I learned so much, and it helps me in my role today.”

It took Hupp two and a half years to complete her DNP while working full time. Today, she is the first woman and first nurse to serve as president of UPMC Children’s Hospital, a role to which she was promoted to in February 2022.

“What I enjoy most about being a leader isn’t just seeing results and cultivating cultures, but watching people grow,” she says. “Yes, it was great when I received this role, but it was just as wonderful to say, ‘Wow, now I can promote individuals to

“ I’ve loved nursing. I’m passionate about it. There’s nothing more impactful than the opportunities to make differences in lives through our art of caring and compassion.”

Diane Hupp (DNP ’14)

Seven Pitt Nursing Alumni Named AAN Fellows

The American Academy of Nursing (AAN) welcomed seven University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing alumni to its 2022 class of fellows.

Congratulations to Susan Bindon (BSN ’84), Deborah Dillon (MSN ’92), Richard Fidler (MSN ’94), Dawndra Jones (DNP ’14), John O’Donnell (MSN ’91), Judith Tate (MSN ’91, PhD ’10), and Renee Thompson (BSN ’01, MSN ’04, DNP ’13).

The inductees were recognized for their contributions to health and health care during the academy’s annual Health Policy Conference in October 2022.

AAN inducted 250 nurse leaders—the largest cohort since the organization was founded 50 years ago—into this year’s class.

“At a time when investments in, and policy to address, health equity, innovation, and access are paramount, the academy is thrilled to welcome these dynamic and courageous nurse leaders who will support our collective vision of healthy lives for all people,” said Kenneth R. White, AAN president.

“You may be in a good place right now in your career, but you don’t know what other opportunities you may have or the exposure within your organization it can provide you unless you pursue your DNP.”

Judith Zedreck
Gonzalez (DNP '14)



assume my former role.’ I promoted two people who were longtime and accomplished leaders and nurses here at Children’s and who were just thrilled and ecstatic about their new roles and being able to grow and professionally develop.”

BETTER-PREPARED NURSES FOR A BROADER ROLE AT THE EXECUTIVE TABLE

Pitt Nursing’s DNP program in health systems executive leadership was initially focused on nursing administration only.

“As we evaluated the program, we found there were nurse leaders looking at expanded roles outside of a silo of just nursing administration,” says program coordinator Judith Zedreck Gonzalez. “When you look at the collaborative practice and expectations of that, clearly we wanted to be able to prepare nurses to be sitting at the broader table.”

Zedreck Gonzalez says that Pitt Nursing examined where its graduates were being employed and found that many were taking leadership roles.

“We evaluated the curriculum content and went to the provost to request

a name change for the program to better reflect what we were preparing our leaders to be,” she says.

The program prepares nurses to function in executive leadership and management roles that focus on creating or redesigning systems to meet the demands of the emerging health care market. Graduates of the program lead the transformation of health care systems as chief executive officers; chief nursing officers; and executive directors of quality, clinical informatics, population health, and clinical practice in hospitals, ambulatory clinics, and nonprofit and governmental organizations.

The program is designed for students with at least two years of management experience, can be completed on a full-time or part-time basis, and is available fully online. Students also are required to complete a leadership practicum or residency with a senior-level mentor and a project focused on a system-level practice change or a rigorous investigation of a clinical

concern or issue that results in the translation of evidence into practice. The DNP project should result in a new or expanded area of expertise for the student and serve as a foundation for future scholarship and practice.

“The fact that our program is online and can be done remotely allows us to attract individuals not only across the United States but [also] internationally,” says Zedreck Gonzalez.

In fact, the program has taught students in the Philippines, Japan, Germany, Cuba, and Spain and continues to expand.

“One of our graduates, Shannon Tung [DNP ‘21], started a nurse practitioner program in the Philippines,” says Zedreck Gonzalez. “During her interview, we asked why she wanted her DNP, and she [said] she wanted to learn more about clinical leadership and the executive focus she could have. She saw a need for a family nurse practitioner program in her country. For her project, she worked with the Ministry of Health in the Philippines and implemented a nurse practitioner training program [there].”

The success of the DNP program overall is consistently recognized. U.S. News & World Report ranked Pitt Nursing’s DNP program seventh in its 2023 list of the country’s top DNP programs.

“It’s the return on investment,” says Zedreck Gonzalez. “You may be in a good place right now in your career, but you don’t know what other opportunities you may have or the



Shingler-Nace (left) participates in a parade honoring workers during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and (inset) holds a baby early in her career as a staff nurse.



exposure within your organization it can provide you unless you pursue your DNP.”

FROM BABY NURSE TO OPERATIONS LEADER

“It’s been an interesting 20 years in health care.”

Autum Shingler-Nace (DNP ’17) is vice president of operations at Jefferson Health’s Washington Township campus in New Jersey, but she never expected she’d be in a leadership position.

“I wanted to take care of patients,” she says. “When I got into nursing, I wanted to make a difference.”

Shingler-Nace received her nursing diploma from UPMC Mercy Hospital School of Nursing in 2004 and got her nursing career started at UPMC Children’s Hospital in the pediatric ICU. Her first leadership position was at Carlisle Regional Medical Center, now UPMC Carlisle, as a house supervisor, and her first formal role in nursing leadership was at UPMC Passavant as an assistant manager.

“I started to think I really could impact change in a positive way,” she says. “For me, leadership has always been about understanding the

frontline staff—understanding where we [are], understanding what’s working well and what’s not working well, understanding from a patient perspective what’s working and what’s not—and really taking all that information and developing a plan to take us a step forward and do something better.”

Shingler-Nace started pursuing her DNP in health systems executive leadership at Pitt Nursing while serving as clinical director in various units at Cooper University Health Care in New Jersey at Children’s Regional Hospital, where she was overseeing the pediatric ICU, pediatric step-down unit, and neonatal ICU.

“At that point, I had a lot of experience underneath me,” she says.

That experience, and a Pitt Nursing connection, landed Shingler-Nace an opportunity at Jefferson Health in New Jersey.

“My connection was with Helene Burns [DNP ’18], senior vice president and chief nursing officer at Jefferson [Health in] New Jersey, who was also in the DNP program at Pitt when I was,” she says. “It was interesting because here we are in

southern New Jersey, and never did I expect to have someone in my class who was literally in my backyard. We began to connect through Pitt and through projects, and I was able to be mentored by her. Eventually, I ended up becoming her second in command at Jefferson and became the assistant vice president of nursing.”

In that role, Shingler-Nace had oversight over all inpatient nursing areas and emergency departments at Jefferson’s three hospitals. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she became involved in several projects outside nursing and was tasked with developing all the hospital’s surge plans and changing models as health care was evolving.

“I began to realize that there were a lot of other things in health care outside of nursing that I was interested in, and I wanted to learn more and support the community in a different way,” she says. “I never saw myself leaving nursing-specific work.”

But as the vice president of operations at Jefferson Health’s largest hospital was about to retire, Shingler-Nace

“As a bedside nurse, you can do a lot of things. You can take care of a lot of patients and make a huge impact. But as a leader, you get to influence all the patients, the process, and the nurses and can create a different level of impact on health care and patient experience.”

Autum Shingler-Nace (DNP '17), quoting her mentor, Melanie Heuston

was encouraged to throw her name into consideration for the role and was promoted to the position in 2021. She oversees the daily operations at the campus's 279 acute care beds and has oversight of other key locations, including the Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center—Washington Township and the Vickie & Jack Farber Institute for Neuroscience.

“When I had someone reach out to me about being a leader and dipping my toes in the water, I was taken aback,” she recalls. “I was like, ‘No, I want to take care of patients!’ My mentor at the time was Melanie Heuston, [who] is now the chief nursing executive at the West Virginia University Health System. She said to me, ‘As a bedside nurse, you can do a lot of things. You can take care of a lot of patients and make a huge impact. But as a leader, you get to influence all the patients, the process, and the nurses and can create a different level of impact on health care and patient experience.’ That resonated with me.”

Shingler-Nace says that it was the mentorship she received from advisors and professors while pursuing her DNP that she values most about her time at Pitt Nursing.

“The program itself was extremely collaborative,” she says. “We had the opportunity to work with other students and professionals outside of nursing, which I think is beneficial as a leader to not just work in your own silo. The mentorship I received is something I have never received anywhere else. I keep in touch with some of my professors and advisors, and it's valuable. Having people who have your back and want you to succeed is amazing.”

Last February, Shingler-Nace was recognized as one of 2022's Women to Watch by South Jersey Biz. She credits those close, professional relationships for helping her to succeed.

“It was definitely a very humbling experience,” she says. “I'm certainly proud of my accomplishments, but I didn't do this by myself. I got here because I have people who believe in

me and mentors who told me I could do this even when I doubted myself.”

Shingler-Nace says that because she believes those relationships helped her get to where she is today, she is paying it forward and mentoring the next generation of leaders.

“It only takes one person to believe in you, and you can really take it to the next level,” she says. “I think having a great coach and good mentors is certainly important because it is a difficult world to navigate through sometimes, especially as a new leader, when you're trying to understand and prioritize different challenges that are thrown our way.”

She says it was those relationships, built not just in the field with experience but through her education at Pitt Nursing, that molded her into the successful leader she is today.

“I think my biggest impact has been teaching people how to listen, how to validate concerns, whether it be from a patient standpoint or an employee standpoint, and building trust to really impact others,” she says. “My biggest impact is allowing people to feel comfortable with me, allowing people to know that I am an approachable leader, building trust with patients and employees, and partnering and collaborating to get us to where we need to be in challenging times and others.”

Through preparation, care and compassion, Pitt Nursing alumni leaders are shaping the future.

Nursing PhD Student Is Fantasy Novelist



“I can’t say I’ve always wanted to be an author because my dream has always been to be a scientist,” Susan Grayson says. “I’ve just always loved to read, and creating my own story felt like a natural extension of that.”

The University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing PhD student, whose area of research is breast cancer

genomics and psychoneurological symptoms in individuals with metastatic breast cancer, just published her first novel, “Spears and Shadows.” Grayson started writing the book as a fourth-year BSN student at Pitt Nursing.

“The first draft of the novel took me about three months to write, but the editing process took me about a year after that,” Grayson says. “During that time, I wasn’t sure if I was going to pursue publishing or if this was going to be a project I just did for myself. The road from a fully written manuscript to a published book is definitely the part of the journey that took the longest.”

“Spears and Shadows” is a fantasy novel centered around historian Nora Zvezda as she vies for a promotion at Chicago’s Field Museum. “Nora struggled with work-life balance even before an immortal sorcerer showed up and turned her career and her love life upside down,” according to a summary of the book.

Grayson says that she’s always been an avid reader of fantasy but felt she hadn’t read the exact book with the type of characters she wanted to see. “It occurred to me one day that there was nothing stopping me from sitting down and writing it myself,” she says. “I started writing it to be the type of book I wanted to read,

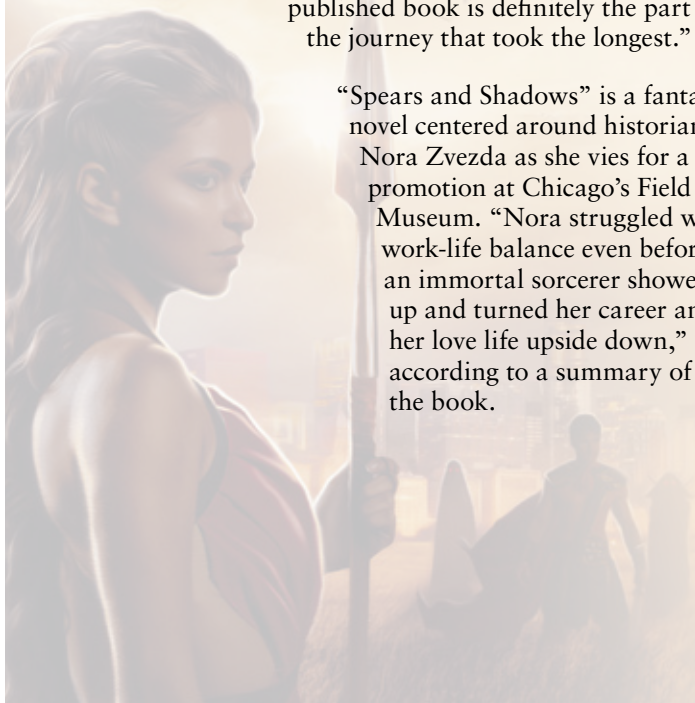
and somewhere along the way, I realized that other readers probably felt the same way. That’s when I started pursuing publishing my novel seriously.”

The novel, published by City Owl Press and released on June 16, 2022, has received reviews on both Amazon and Goodreads.

“I feel incredibly lucky to get to live a double dream of becoming a nurse-scientist and a published fantasy author,” she says.

Grayson has another book coming out—a reimagining of “Beauty and the Beast” set in a fantasy version of Victorian London. “I’ve always loved fairy tale retellings, so it was definitely something I wanted to take on next,” she says.

The sequel to “Spears and Shadows” also is written and is currently in the editing process. It’s tentatively scheduled to be released in the summer of 2023.



Pitt Nursing Moves Up in BRIMR Rankings

The University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing ranked seventh among public research universities receiving competitive federal research grants in 2022 and 12th overall, according to rankings released by the Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research (BRIMR).

Pitt Nursing secured nearly \$5.7 million from the National Institutes of Health.

“Pitt Nursing has provided faculty and students with the resources and support they need to lead innovative research for decades,” says Pitt Nursing Dean Christine E. Kasper. “Our faculty and their research are generating new knowledge that’s transforming health care. I am confident that our research funding will continue an upwards trajectory.”

The new ranking put Pitt Nursing up four spots overall from the previous year. BRIMR has published these rankings since 2006.



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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:

Theresa Steele-Austin

By Alison Cooley

Theresa Steele-Austin (BSN '85) says that the University of Pittsburgh still feels like home after all these years.

"I was raised in Norton, Ohio, and when I was visiting colleges, I was looking for a college that wasn't too far from home. When I visited campus, Pitt felt like home. It's wonderful that it still feels that way all these years later."

Steele-Austin today lives in Akron, Ohio, and often visits Pitt, where her journey in nursing began. She was fortunate in that she always knew she wanted to be a nurse. Everything she learned at the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing prepared her for the field, and her education has enabled her to work in public health, schools, home care, and long-term care. Each of those positions equipped her for her current role as a certified case manager at Contigo Health, LLC, where she manages nearly 800 patients.

Health care isn't the only thing she's passionate about, though. Steele-Austin's enthusiasm for Pitt knows no bounds. Many Akron residents can easily spot her truck on the road, fully equipped with a Pitt license plate, blue and gold decals, and Hail to Pitt floor mats. Steele-Austin and her mother, Edna Steele, also frequently take road trips together to cheer on the Pitt Panthers at football games in Pittsburgh and in other cities.

"I became a Pitt fan when my daughter attended college," Steele says. "Now the best thing about traveling is that I get to spend more time with her."

Their shared love for Pitt and Steele-Austin's zeal for the field of nursing inspired an idea. In 2014, along with Steele-Austin's husband, Troy, the mother and daughter created the Adam I. Steele Jr. Nursing Fund in memory of their late husband and father. The family wanted to create a way for his memory to live on. Education was important to him, and he sacrificed his own opportunity for an education to work on a farm in order to take care of his family.

The fund provides awards for undergraduate students in Pitt Nursing with a preference for out-of-state students who exhibit true passion for the nursing profession as evidenced by their commitment to the school and the community. The family wants the fund to support out-of-state students like Steele-Austin, who didn't receive any scholarships or loans. Her parents helped to fund her education, which is why she feels it's so important to give to Pitt.

"We want to give a helping hand to someone whose parents might not be able to help," she says.

The family is grateful to everyone who has supported the Adam I. Steele Jr. Nursing Fund, which was fully funded in just three years. The goal is to provide full tuition to an out-of-state student every year. Steele-Austin is sure of one thing: Students who earn a degree at Pitt Nursing will receive an exceptional education, and she hopes that they will consider Pitt to be their home away from home, too.

Right: Theresa Steele-Austin with her mother, Edna Steele



When I visited campus, Pitt felt like home. It's wonderful that it still feels that way all these years later.

Theresa Steele-Austin



Stay Up to Date with Professional Development

The University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing is proud to present online/enduring nursing professional development activities.

Health Care Provider Training on LGBTQIA+ Health: An Introductory Module on Best Practices

provides a brief introduction to best practices in LGBTQIA+ health and speaks to the specific needs of this population to increase knowledge, promote positive attitudes, and improve clinical preparedness among professional nurses. This is an hour-long interactive session.

Key Concepts in Health Policy

is a two-part series consisting of **Health and Society** and **American Democracy and Its Challenges**.

Well-constructed public policy is necessary to promote the health and well-being of the population; however, 21st-century America has been marked by deep divisions in terms of public policy solutions to our most intractable issues. Health policy challenges are not immune to these deep divisions, as the debate during and since the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act illustrates. Positions on key public policy issues are driven by a variety of philosophical and social ideals. Each session is an hour in length and provides valuable information for all professional nurses.

Once an activity is successfully completed, the participant receives a certificate for one contact hour. The cost is \$25 per activity.

For more information and to register, visit nursing.pitt.edu/continuing-education.



Bucher Named to State Board of Nursing

Donald Bucher (MSN '07) has been appointed to the Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing.

"The call was very unexpected," Bucher says. "I talked to my state senator in 2017, and he asked if I was interested in serving on the board. I told him I would love the opportunity but never gave it another thought."

Bucher will hold the registered nurse seat on the board. His term runs through 2028.

"I am proud of my nursing education at the University of Pittsburgh," Bucher says. "During my acute care nurse practitioner program, the professors taught us it was not only important to learn the skills and didactic information but to also to help advance the profession by volunteering and advocating."

He says that those skills will help him with his new appointment. "I feel like I bring a lot of different nursing experiences to the board. I graduated from [the] Sharon Regional [Health System] School of Nursing diploma program in 1998. I taught in an associate degree in nursing program. I completed my BSN, then MSN, as an acute care nurse practitioner. Finally, I completed my DNP in 2011. I think understanding nursing at each level helps when looking at new program development and nursing preparation."



Wiggins Receives AANA Vigness Award

Laura Wiggins (DNP '17) received the 2022 Daniel D. Vigness Federal Political Director Award from the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA). The award is given to an individual who has made "significant contributions to the advancement of the national health-care agenda of CRNAs by coordinating grassroots CRNA involvement at the state level or through special contributions to the federal political process."

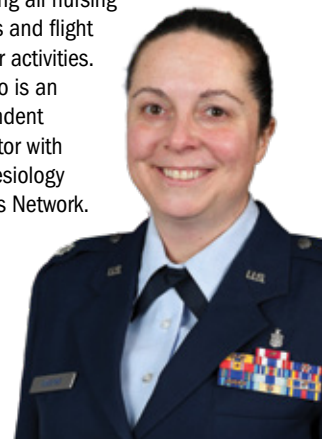
"Promoting and safeguarding the profession and helping to work toward regulations and legislation that allow CRNAs to practice at their full scope has been both an honor and a privilege," Wiggins says. "However, all my work could not be accomplished without the support of the Pennsylvania Association of Nurse Anesthetists and my employers. I thank them for providing me with the resources and time to build the relationships that have allowed me to be a successful advocate for all CRNAs."

Wiggins is a staff CRNA with UPMC in Pittsburgh, a former chief nurse for the 911 Aeromedical Staging Squadron, and a former critical care air transport team member in the U.S. Air Force Reserve who has been deployed to support several missions around the world. She also is the federal political director for the Pennsylvania Association of Nurse

Anesthetists (PANA) and serves on its board of trustees.

Wiggins has been praised for her hands-on leadership during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a member of the PANA board, Wiggins used her military skills to review mask options and determine the best fit for PANA members' safety. She helped to create a 3-D mask, and more than 1,200 were shipped across the state.

Wiggins is a clinical instructor in the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing's nurse anesthesia program. In 2019, she arranged for more than 180 CRNAs and students enrolled in nurse anesthesiology programs to lobby in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. She supervises more than 60 medical military personnel as a critical care nurse for the Air Force Reserve while managing all nursing services and flight member activities. She also is an independent contractor with Anesthesiology Services Network.



Melnyk Named to National Forum Board

Bernadette Melnyk (MSN '83) has been elected vice chair of the board of directors of the National Forum for Heart Disease & Stroke Prevention for the 2023-24 term. Melnyk, who serves as vice president for health promotion, university chief wellness officer, and dean of the College of Nursing at Ohio State University, will use her nationally renowned expertise in health and wellness, mental health, nursing, and evidence-based practice to help guide advocacy that protects cardiovascular health, reduces disparities, and achieves health equity, according to the forum.

"I am honored to serve as part of an awesome leadership team for an influential national organization that works every day to transform health and improve lives," Melnyk says. "My mom died of a stroke right in front of me when I was 15 years old, with an unfilled prescription

for blood pressure medication in her purse, so the mission and purpose of the national forum is very personal for me.

"We know from research that 80% of chronic disease—including heart disease—is totally preventable with some healthy lifestyle behavior changes," Melnyk continues. "We as a team will continue to work to empower people to take charge of their behaviors and make the changes necessary for them to prevent cardiovascular disease and conquer their adverse health conditions to live longer, better, and happier lives."

The national forum is a nonprofit voluntary health organization. Its goal is to help people reach health equity and optimize their cardiovascular health and well-being throughout the life span.

In Memoriam

1940s

Adena Johnson Davis (BSN '47)

1950s

Mary Bilcheck (BSN '54)

Patricia Colonna (BSN '54, MLitt '60)

Marcia Fix (BSN '58, MEd '61)

Phyllis Janocha (BSN '51)

Rebekah Jones (BSNEd '59)

Marion Thomas (BSN '56)

Barbara Wingerter (BSN '55)

1960s

Peggy Alderdice (BSN '67)

Helen "Jean" Cahill (BSN '62)

Leah Carlisle (MEd '66)

Pernina Fortoloczki (BSNEd '60)

Barbara Gillespie (BSN '61)

Joanne Greedan (BSN '64)

Roberta Lee (BSN '62)

Susan Mars (BSN '64)

Esther Seeley (MS '69)

Joan Smith-Walleck (BSN '68)

Louise Warrick (BSN '63)

Marian Weller (BSN '67)

1970s

Constance Blank (BSN '76)

Betty Carr (BAS '70)

Jean Cuppett (BSN '72)

Janet Deneselya (BSN '75)

Delia DiCarlo (BSN '73)

Barbara Kuchinic (BSN '79)

Janice Molinero (BSN '72)

Deborah Mooney (BSN '74)

Ellen Owens (BSN '76)

Amy Sabo (BSN '76)

1980s

Valerie Bell-Jones (BSN '86, MSN '91)

Patricia Blackburn (MSN '87)

Mary Di Franco (BSN '88)

Martha Dolinich (MEd '80)

Amy Kasiorek (BSN '87)

Phyllis Lane (BSN '86)

David Misialek (BSN '89)

1990s

Vivan Guillard Hritz (BSN '94)

Jane E. Keenan (BSN '96)

Marilyn Patterson (MSN '98)

Richard Shoop (BSN '97)

Lynn Simko (MSN '90)

Kathy Veney (BSN '91)

Notable Alumni Achievements

Camellia Herisko (MSN '97, DNP '12) moved into a new role at Western Behavioral Health and Western Psychiatric Hospital as the vice president of operations and strategy implementation.

Melanie Heuston (MSN '04, DNP '10) was named West Virginia University Health System's inaugural chief nursing executive.

Lisa Kitko (BSN '90) was named the sixth dean of the University of Rochester School of Nursing.

Kathleen Lindell (BSN '82, MSN '87, PhD '07) was named the Mary Swain Endowed Chair in Palliative Care Health at the Medical University of South Carolina.

Bernadette Melynk (MSN '83) received an honorary Doctor of Science degree from SUNY Upstate Medical University in May 2022.

Lynn F. Reinke (MSN '90) was appointed the inaugural Clare Dumke Ryberg, RN, Presidential Endowed Chair for Palliative and End of Life Care at the University of Utah College of Nursing.

Rita Trofino (BSN '76, MEd '81) was elected to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing board of directors.

Monica Tucker-Schwartz (DNP '21) has received a 2023 American Organization for Nursing Leadership Nurse Director Fellowship. She currently works at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston as a senior nurse director of procedural services.

Jing Wang (PhD '10) was elected to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation board of trustees.

Nora E. Warshawsky (BSN '82) received the 2022 Nurse Researcher Award from the American Organization for Nursing Leadership Foundation.



Camellia Herisko



Melanie Heuston



Lisa Kitko



Monica Tucker-Schwartz



Adena Johnson Davis (BSN '47) made history by becoming one of the first African American women to be admitted to the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing in 1943. She thrived at Pitt Nursing and graduated as Keeper of the Light for her class—an honor bestowed upon the student graduating with the highest GPA.

Davis had a long career at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital and was later named head nurse at the Veterans Administration Hospital.

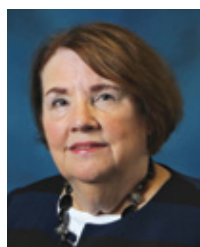
In honor of Davis' lasting legacy, the University created a scholarship that annually awards tuition, room and board to one first-year African American nursing student.



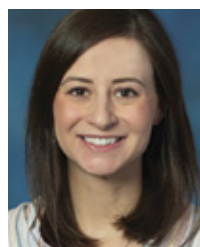
Laurel Anderson-Miner



Amy Bowser



Annette DeVitto Dabbs



Brayden Kameg



John O'Donnell



Margaret Rosenzweig

FACULTY AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

Laurel Anderson-Miner, PhD, was named the Pennsylvania Association of Nurse Anesthetists' 2022 Didactic Instructor of the Year.

John O'Donnell, DrPH, MSN, was elected vice president of the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs for 2022-23.

FACULTY GRANTS

Salah Al-Zaiti, PhD, FAHA
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
 Electrocardiographic Detection of Non-ST Elevation Myocardial Events for Accelerated Classification of Chest Pain Encounters

Catherine Bender, PhD, FAAN; **Yvette Conley**, PhD, FAAN; and **Margaret Rosenzweig**, PhD, FAAN
Magee-Womens Cancer Research Center and UPMC Hillman Cancer Center

Financial Distress, Symptoms/Side Effects and Adherence to Combination CDK4/6 Inhibitor + Endocrine Therapy in Women with Breast Cancer

Amy Bowser, PhD
University of Pittsburgh Provost's Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence
 Development of Competency-based Performance Rubrics Assessing Undergraduate Nursing Students' Clinical Judgment in High-fidelity Simulation

Yurun Cai, PhD
UPMC Competitive Medical Research Fund
 Quantifying Multiscale Dynamics of Accelerometer-derived Physical Activity in Relation to Risk of Cognitive Impairment and Dementia

Yvette Conley, PhD, FAAN
National Institute of Nursing Research
 Targeting Research and Academic Training of Nurses in Genomics

Annette DeVito Dabbs, PhD, FAAN
National Institute of Nursing Research
 Technology Research in Chronic and Critical Illness

Brayden Kameg, DNP
Health Resources and Services Administration
 Enhancing Nursing Students' Ability to Address Underserved Populations through Interprofessional Public Health Simulation

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
 Improving Identification and Care Coordination of Veterans with Mental Health Problems

Margaret Rosenzweig, PhD, FAAN
Genentech
 Exploring Allostasis, Cellular Aging, and Cancer Outcomes



The Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing inducted two University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing faculty members into its International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame in 2022. **Eileen Chasens**, PhD, FAAN, professor emeritus, and **Margaret Rosenzweig**, PhD, FAAN, Distinguished Service Professor of Nursing, were chosen for the honor based on the significant impact their research has had on the nursing profession. Rosenzweig (left) and Chasens (right) are pictured with Sigma President Kenneth Dion at Sigma's 33rd International Nursing Research Congress in Edinburgh, Scotland, in July 2022.

STUDENT AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

PhD student **Jessica Davis** received a Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing grant for her project, Neonatal Diet Type and Associations with Adverse Feeding Outcomes and Gut Microbiome Composition in Neonates with Critical Congenital Heart Defects.

Third-year midwifery student **Karen Faulk** won two awards from the American College of Nurse-Midwives Foundation, Inc.: the Edith B. Wonnell CNM Scholarship and a Thatcher Community Grant to support implementation of her DNP project.

PhD student **Lauren Taylor Narbey** was selected for fellowship in the American College of Nurse-Midwives.

Postdoctoral scholar **Mitali Ray** was awarded a National Institute of Nursing Research grant for her project, Allostatic Load and Race: Implications for Cardiovascular Health in Pregnancy and Beyond.

PhD student **Kai-Lin You** was awarded a doctoral scholarship by the Oncology Nursing Foundation.

AL-ZAITI RECEIVES FULBRIGHT AWARD

University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing Associate Professor and Vice Chair of Research **Salah Al-Zaiti** has received a prestigious Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program award from the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board for the 2023-24 academic year to conduct research abroad. Al-Zaiti will head to Jordan as part of his award.

Al-Zaiti's research interests lie at the intersection of cardiovascular disease, biomedical informatics, and machine learning. He has received nearly \$8 million in funding through the National Institute of Nursing Research and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. He currently leads two trials at UPMC that focus on developing and deploying machine learning-based clinical decision support

tools to triage patients with chest pain at the emergency department and building and deploying an intelligent alerting system to predict hemodynamic instability in step-down units in real time, including designing and testing a clinician-facing graphical user interface.

Al-Zaiti has nearly 100 scholarly publications in peer-reviewed journals and has made 50 scientific presentations. In 2020, he helped to develop the American Heart Association guidelines for preventing and mitigating the risk of exercise-related adverse cardiac events and received a patent from U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. In 2023, he received a Chancellor's Distinguished Research Award in the Junior Scholar category.

Al-Zaiti's research interests lie at the intersection of cardiovascular disease, biomedical informatics, and machine learning.



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Email Taylor Andrekanic, alumni coordinator, at tva4@pitt.edu.

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