

Pitt | nurse

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From
**Nightingale to
COVID-19**



To the world, and to our communities, nursing looks very different now compared to a year ago.

Yes, nursing is consistently rated the most trusted profession year after year. Yes, nurses know what they can accomplish each and every day and what they do for our patients. And yes, parents of nurses have spoken with admiration of their children's vocation.



“Nurses ... are now respected for our education and our skill instead of being perceived as people who just take orders from physicians and who don't have the education and autonomous skills to work collaboratively for the benefit of the patient.”

The World Health Organization designated 2020 as the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. The University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing, along with many other nursing programs across the country, had planned to celebrate and honor nurses and nursing in a large fashion. This was our year to show the world what nursing is and what nursing means in the community.

And then COVID-19 happened and plans changed. In-person gatherings were canceled, stay-at-home orders were issued, and the University—along with most other educational institutions in the United States—sent students home and started remote education. And nurses and health care providers began facing the unimaginable every day when they went to work.

But in the midst of this, the world saw the power of nurses and nursing. Nurses began to be seen more widely as the talented and knowledgeable professionals they truly are. We are respected for our education and our skill instead of being perceived as people who just take orders from physicians and who don't have the education and autonomous skills to work collaboratively for the benefit of the patient.

The world finally saw what we have known all along.

The nursing profession has changed, and the world has changed along with it. While the path and journey to becoming a respected nurse began on the battlefield, learning from a mentor, it now starts for most with earning a baccalaureate degree—and going higher and higher from there to acquire advanced education.

This issue of Pitt Nurse focuses on the academization of nursing—starting with Florence Nightingale, who established the first hospital-based nursing school (among her many other notable achievements), and moving to the expectation of nurses to achieve a BSN and then the ways in which education and goals have continued

to change over the past century. We feature nurses who are serving on the front lines and nurses who are helping to guide their health care organizations through the COVID-19 pandemic. You'll explore why acquiring an advanced nursing degree has become so essential to the provision of care in a variety of ways. You will learn about the ever-evolving role of nurse anesthesia and read about the experiences of a recent Doctor of Nursing Practice graduate now practicing in one of the United States' COVID-19 hot spots. And you'll see the important difference that graduate-prepared nurse-midwives make in the lives of women and their communities.

Please enjoy and reflect on what I hope is a bright piece of mail in your mailbox. Remember that we are nurses, and we are stronger together.

Stay safe and stay well.

Jacqueline Dunbar-Jacob, PhD, FAAN
Dean and Distinguished Service Professor of Nursing
University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing

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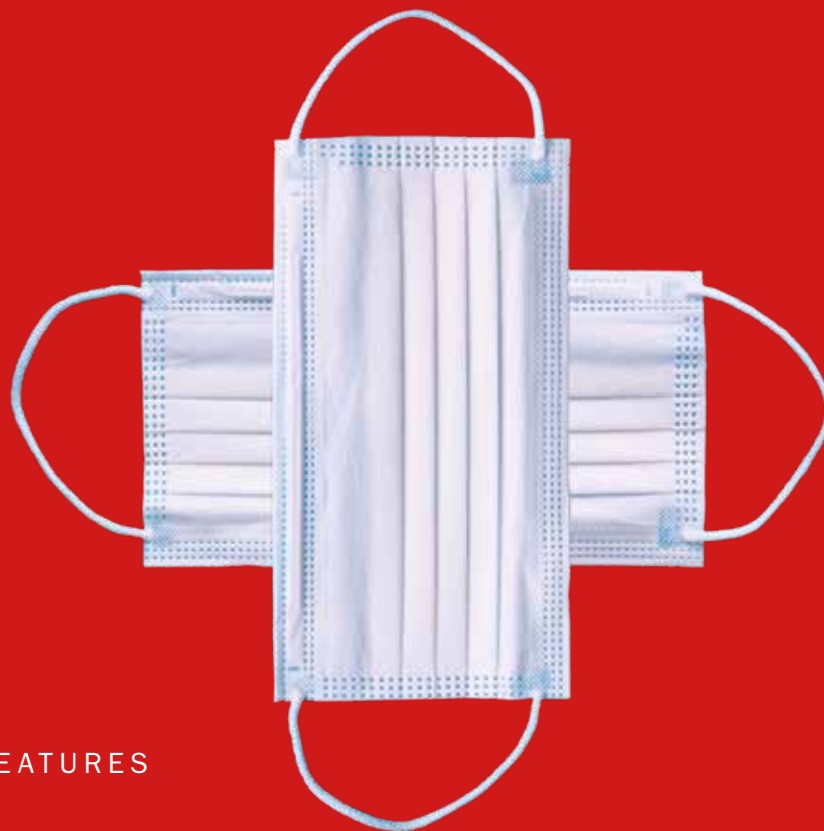
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Pitt Nursing Faculty Member to Lead National Caregiving Center

University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing faculty member Heidi Donovan, PhD, has been selected to colead the National Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Family Support. Created through a \$4.3-million grant from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research, the center will serve as a national hub for the rapid translation of evidence-based family support interventions into community practice and policy. Additionally, the center will train key professional, nonprofit, patient and family stakeholders on family support.

This new center, codirected by Donovan along with Pitt School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences' Scott Beach, PhD, and Bambang Parmanto, PhD, is a joint effort among the University's Health Policy Institute, University Center for Social and Urban Research, School of Nursing, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, School of Medicine, and Graduate School of Public Health. The goal is to leverage state-of-the-science research to improve the care, health, and quality of life of all people with disabilities and the families who support them.

This five-year grant builds on more than 30 years of multidisciplinary research in caregiving led by Richard Schulz, PhD, director of Pitt's Center for Caregiving Research, Education and Policy.

A central theme of the Center on Family Support will be a focus on disability and family support over the life cycle. The four initial research projects are as follows:

1. Implementation of a "smart rehab" program for people with cancer-related disabilities and their family caregivers co-led by Pitt Nursing faculty member and alumna Grace Campbell, PhD
2. Analysis of national data sets spanning the life course to identify at-risk family caregivers to inform intervention research and policy
3. Development of mobile health interventions for family caregivers and people with spinal cord injuries, spina bifida and cerebral palsy
4. Implementation study of the Community Aging in Place, Advancing Better Living for Elders intervention with local Area Agencies on Aging

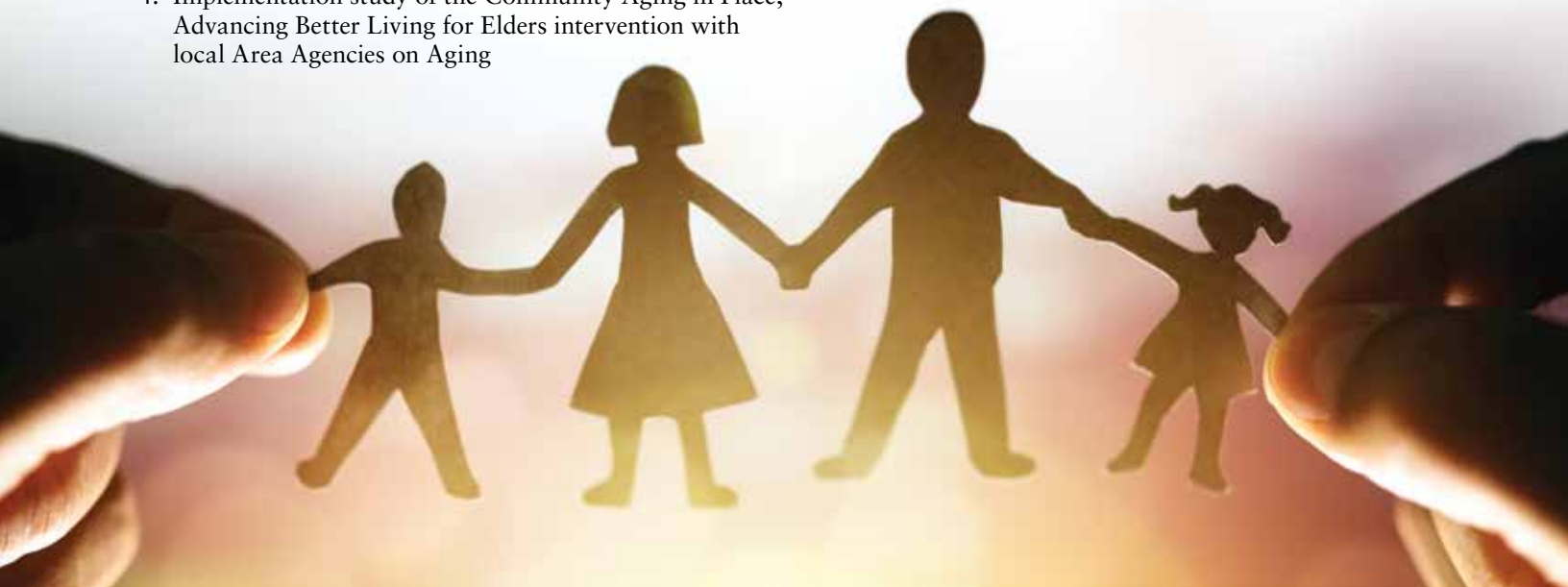
Faculty Honored with Chancellor's Awards

Salah Al-Zaiti, PhD, associate professor; Betty Braxter, PhD, associate professor and associate dean for undergraduate education; and Yvette Conley, PhD, professor and PhD program director, were among the recipients of the 2020 University of Pittsburgh Chancellor's Awards.

Al-Zaiti received a Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award for his special talent in explaining complex concepts to students. Since joining the Pitt faculty in 2013, he has served as a key member of scientific investigative teams on nine research projects contributing to the development and implementation of research protocols, processing electrocardiogram data streams, and performing longitudinal statistical data analyses. Al-Zaiti also coordinates the school's Honors Program. Al-Zaiti received the Dean's Distinguished Teaching Award last year. He is a previous recipient of the American Heart Association's Martha N. Hill Early Career Investigator Award.

Braxter received a Chancellor's Distinguished Public Service Award in part for her dedication throughout her career to the care of disadvantaged girls and young women. Under Braxter's guidance, Pitt School of Nursing students gain experience in community environments like the Allegheny County Health Department's maternal-child health program, the Pitt Community Engagement Center in Homewood, and UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital's Womancare Birth Center. She received the Dean's Distinguished Teaching Award last year.

Conley was honored with a Chancellor's Distinguished Research Award in the Senior Scholar category for the role she has played in shaping the interface between genomics and nursing. She was the first geneticist appointed in a nursing school to infuse genomics into nursing sciences. Conley is vice chair for research in the Department of Health Promotion and Development. In 2016, she was inducted as an honorary fellow of the American Academy of Nursing.



Faculty and Alumni Accomplishments Recognized

Pittsburgh Magazine honors nursing heroes each year through its Excellence in Nursing Awards program. Three members of the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing community were selected by a panel of health care professionals to receive special recognition in late 2019. Congratulations to these honorees:



Community: Catherine Grant (MSN '88), assistant professor, Department of Health Promotion and Development, Pitt Nursing, and owner, Associates in Family Health



Leadership: Dawndra Jones (DNP '14), chief nursing officer and vice president, patient care services, UPMC East and UPMC McKeesport



Research: Jennifer Lingler (MSN '98, PhD '04), professor, Department of Health and Community Systems, Pitt Nursing

Pitt Nursing alumni and faculty members also received honorable mentions in four categories:

Academic: Janette Petro (MSN '90), professor and nursing department chair, Boyce Campus, Community College of Allegheny County, and

Patricia Tuite (BSN '85, MSN '92), assistant professor, Department of Acute/Tertiary Care, Pitt Nursing

Advanced Practitioner: Brenda Cassidy (MSN '86, MSN '97, DNP '11), assistant professor, Department of Health Promotion and Development, Pitt Nursing, and nurse practitioner, UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh and East Side Pediatrics

Community: Elizabeth Konieczny (BSN '08), emergency department nurse, Allegheny General Hospital

Leadership: Anne Hast (MN '81, DNP '12), chief executive officer, Advanced Surgical Hospital

Women of Excellence

Each year, 50 African American women in Western Pennsylvania are recognized by the New Pittsburgh Courier for the significant contributions they have made to their community. Pitt Nursing associate professor Willa Doswell and alumnae Joanne Boyd (BSN '81) and Dawndra Jones (DNP '14) were among the 2019 honorees.

A faculty member and alumnae of the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing were honored this past winter as 2019 Women of Excellence by the New Pittsburgh Courier.

Pitt Nursing Faculty Stand Out at Annual Nightingale Awards

Three University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing faculty members were recognized at the 30th annual gala and celebration of the Nightingale Awards of Pennsylvania, held November 8, 2019, in Harrisburg.



Brenda Cassidy (MSN '86, MSN '97, DNP '11), assistant professor, won the Doctorate of Nursing Practice award; Jennifer Lingler (MSN '98, PhD '04), professor, won the Nursing Research award; and Patricia Tuite (BSN '85, MSN '92), assistant professor, who won the Nursing Education - Academia award.

Pitt Nursing alumnae Tamra Minnier (BSN '84, MSN '85), chief quality officer, UPMC, and Rita Trofino (BSN '76, MNEd '81), associate dean, School of Health Sciences, Saint Francis University, were award finalists.

The Nightingale Awards are a statewide program designed to recognize excellence in nursing. More than 100 nursing professionals across the state have been recognized over the past 30 years for their exemplification of compassionate care, clinical expertise, education and leadership.

In the Top 10 Again

The University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing remains among the top 10 graduate nursing programs according to U.S. News & World Report's 2021 ranking of America's Best graduate schools. Pitt Nursing is now ranked sixth among Master of Science in Nursing programs and eighth among Doctor of Nursing Practice programs.

In spring, the QS World University Rankings by Subject placed Pitt Nursing 16th in the world and ninth in the United States. These rankings represent a weighted average of indicators that include peer assessment, student selectivity and achievement, mean grade point average, acceptance rate, student-faculty ratio, faculty credentials and academic achievements, and research activity.

The school's research capacity also has been recognized, as the School of Nursing is now sixth in the nation among schools of nursing for funding from the National Institutes of Health.



THE CORNERSTONE OF THE PANDEMIC RESPONSE

No one could foresee the global pandemic that would shock the world in 2020, coincidentally the World Health Organization International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife.

But what better time to recognize the power that nurses have in their community than during a pandemic that brings things that no one could have imagined and very few could have planned for? Within a matter of weeks, the world changed—and the heroes providing patient care took center stage.

In some ways, this is a story that has repeated itself since what is seen as the beginning of modern nursing: the time of Florence Nightingale and her lamp. She cared for her patients with the best evidence that existed at the time, and she made things better for the patients in her care. As graduates hear at pinning ceremonies at nursing programs and schools of nursing around the world, Nightingale worked to advocate for her patients and to change outcomes based on real data.

This story has replayed throughout history. In 1953, when Jonas Salk and his team developed a vaccine for polio, just blocks away from where Pitt Nursing's Victoria Building is today, nurses were there to administer it. Nurses have comforted patients after the large traumatic incidents that have punctuated our country in the years since. Nurses have been on the front lines at the major events in history both domestically and abroad. Year after year, nursing has been named one of the most trusted professions.

And nurses keep working and going back to their patients each and every day.

Making things better is what nurses are doing right now—even when it means risking their health to protect their patients and their loved ones. Without hesitation, they are stepping up to make sure that patients are cared for, comforted, and treated with dignity. They are providing bedside care and leading hospital systems. They are serving on the front lines of VA hospitals that are seeing dramatic patient surges and in their community hospitals to help new mothers have a birth experience that

is as close to normal as it can be in this day and age. And some of our nurses are even traveling to COVID-19 hot spots to provide care and support.

Pitt nurses don't back down.

"Now that I've seen what this is, I understand how overwhelmed our hospitals are," says Liane Popkin (BSN '13), who traveled from her home in Denver, Colorado, to work in a Bronx, New York, emergency department. But it isn't all bad, she says. "The spirit of cooperation and helpfulness among the nursing staff is amazing. I've never seen such great teamwork in my life."

Pitt nurses are leading teams' responses to this crisis across the country. Alumni serve in leadership roles in many ways, but to many facilities have become the face of the measured, cautious response. Alumnae such as Tamra Minnier (BSN '84, MSN '85), chief quality officer at UPMC, and Helene Burns (DNP '18), senior vice president and chief nursing officer at Jefferson Health New Jersey, are helping nurses and health systems to get through this crisis. April Adley (DNP '20), vice president of nursing services, Children's Hospital and Women's Health, at Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, even took time while managing the crisis to complete and present her DNP capstone project, *Unboxing Joy: A Revolutionary Bundle to Decrease Nurse Manager Burnout*. Without skipping a beat, she presented her project and then went right back to work to manage her facility's response, using many of the tools she analyzed for her project to help her frontline nurses.

Using the tools and knowledge they developed at Pitt is what keeps some of our alumni going as they fight these frontline battles.

"When I was at Pitt, I did a clinical rotation at the VA hospital, where we had to use some of the same types of

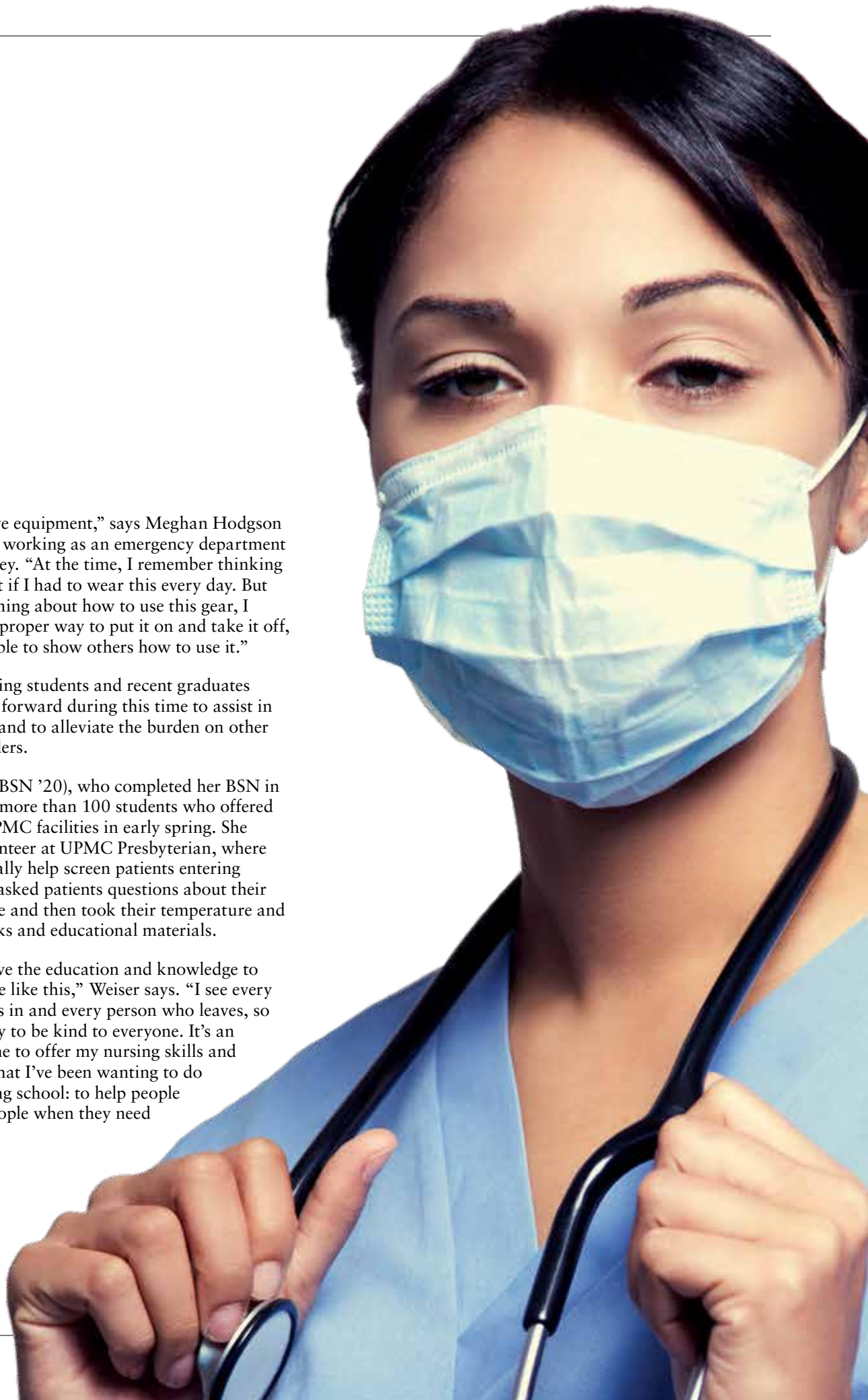
personal protective equipment,” says Meghan Hodgson (BSN '03), who is working as an emergency department nurse in New Jersey. “At the time, I remember thinking I wouldn’t make it if I had to wear this every day. But thanks to my training about how to use this gear, I already knew the proper way to put it on and take it off, and I have been able to show others how to use it.”

Current Pitt Nursing students and recent graduates also have stepped forward during this time to assist in meaningful ways and to alleviate the burden on other health care providers.

Kathleen Weiser (BSN '20), who completed her BSN in April, was one of more than 100 students who offered to volunteer at UPMC facilities in early spring. She was asked to volunteer at UPMC Presbyterian, where she would eventually help screen patients entering the building. She asked patients questions about their potential exposure and then took their temperature and offered them masks and educational materials.

“I’m grateful I have the education and knowledge to volunteer at a time like this,” Weiser says. “I see every person who comes in and every person who leaves, so it’s an opportunity to be kind to everyone. It’s an opportunity for me to offer my nursing skills and really get to do what I’ve been wanting to do throughout nursing school: to help people and to be with people when they need it most.”

And that is what nurses do.





THE EVOLUTION OF THE EDUCATED NURSE

Nursing was a lifelong calling for Florence Nightingale. Yet it wasn't until the "founder of modern nursing" was 31 years old that her father finally gave her his permission to enroll as a nursing student at a hospital.

There were no nursing degree programs in the 1800s. Study at that time was primarily an exchange of labor for learning. Nurses were educated and trained in apprenticeships and learned based on the knowledge and experiences that had been passed down from generation to generation.

Many people became nurses because, like Nightingale, it was a calling. Others came to the profession because they wanted to help others or because—particularly in wartime—there was a need that led people who might not otherwise have considered nursing to step up. Poet Walt Whitman, for example, served as a volunteer nurse for three years during the Civil War. Nurses at that time often practiced with only rudimentary knowledge and made decisions based upon what felt right.

But Nightingale knew that she and her fellow nurses could do better. Appalled at the death rates among soldiers wounded in the Crimean War, she developed new measures to improve care—and she waited to see what happened after they were implemented. Nightingale documented and presented her data, which showed that improved hygiene resulted in fewer deaths and better outcomes for soldiers.

Nightingale was a strong proponent of formalized nursing education, and in 1860, she established the Nightingale Home and Training School for Nurses at St. Thomas' Hospital in London. After a year of study, graduates received a uniform, a stipend and a placement at the hospital or at a home or institution.

Although the first formal hospital-based program started with Nightingale's school, it would be nearly 50 years before the first Bachelor of Science in Nursing program in existence would be offered at the University of Minnesota. During that half century, progress was made, additional schools were established, and formal nursing education became requisite.

Since its founding in 1939, the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing has been dedicated to driving health care forward by educating exceptional caliber nurses. Starting with the first class pinned in 1943 and a short 11 years later becoming one of the first three schools in the nation to offer a doctoral degree, Pitt Nursing has always endeavored to educate nurses to the top of their profession. Pitt Nursing has prepared nurses who would strive to deliver the best evidence-based care they could, regardless of their time and place in history. The school's inaugural dean, Ruth Perkins Kuehn became the first nursing dean in the United States to earn a doctoral degree—illustrating the need to educate to the fullest scope and level.



THE NEED FOR ACADEMICALLY PREPARED NURSES

Across the United States, Europe, Canada and Asia, peer-reviewed research has demonstrated that for every 10 additional nurses out of 100 who hold a BSN or MSN, patient mortality risk decreases. Similar decreased mortality has been seen in oncology care. The more hours that a BSN-prepared nurse spends with a patient during inpatient care, the lower the incidence of medication errors and pressure ulcers. Patients who are cared for by a baccalaureate-prepared nurse also are less likely to be readmitted to the hospital and have, on average, a shorter length of stay.

In 2000, the American Nurses Association reaffirmed its 1965 position that all nursing education should move to colleges and universities and that a BSN should be the minimum degree for entry into practice. A decade later, the National Academy of Medicine noted that the goal should be that 80 percent of nurses hold a BSN by 2020 and that more students should be prepared at the graduate level. Yet even in the year of that goal, nearly 1,200 diploma and associate degree programs are available across the United States.

ALWAYS MOVING, ALWAYS CHANGING

Nursing continues to evolve, and the progression toward nurses with a higher level of education hasn't slowed. The trend toward doctorally prepared nurses keeps increasing, with the standards for advanced practice nurses now

changing from the Master of Science in Nursing as the baseline requirement to more and more accrediting bodies requesting that the advanced

practice nurse now hold a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. In line with that, many schools of nursing have moved away from offering nurse practitioner programs only at the MSN level and now offer them instead at the DNP level. Many doctoral programs offer students a way to go directly from a BSN to a doctoral degree and then also offer options for master's degree-prepared nurses to further enhance their education and approach nursing care as a provider with the highest level of knowledge possible.


Expanding the breadth of nursing practice and education has tremendous benefits and improves outcomes for patients. The literature shows that nurses who are more highly educated provide better care—and the increased presence of advanced practice providers, in turn, results in increased access for patients in rural communities and those in groups that often are marginalized.

And that is precisely what Nightingale would have wanted to achieve within the profession: continuous work toward improving outcomes for patients and improving the quality of nurses.

Expanding the breadth of nursing practice and education has tremendous benefits and improves outcomes for patients.

FROM THE BATTLEFIELD TO COVID-19:

THE PROGRESSION OF ANESTHESIA



When Justin Bailey (BSN '14, DNP '19) graduated from the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing's Doctor of Nursing Practice program in December 2019, he was excited to support doctors and surgeons by delivering anesthesia in a fast-paced environment. The next month, he began work as a certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA) at Milwaukee's Froedtert Hospital. But when Froedtert Hospital, a 600-bed Level 1 trauma center and academic medical center affiliated with the Medical College of Wisconsin, saw its first cases of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 just a month or so later, Bailey realized that he would be working at an even faster pace—and with greater independence—than he had anticipated.

Between shifts, Bailey dropped his former Pitt Nursing instructors a note, expressing his best wishes for their health and thanking them for the varied clinical experiences he benefited from while at Pitt.

"What a time to be a newly graduated CRNA," Bailey wrote.

"As of a few days ago, my hospital had roughly 25 patients with confirmed coronavirus. ... Depending on how things progress, the system is preparing to potentially ask CRNAs to assume advanced practice provider roles in the ICUs and/or emergency department in my hospital."

Some of the procedures Bailey anticipated supporting included mechanical ventilation management, line placement, intubations, and mechanical circulatory support.

“I can’t say I am comfortable” with all of those procedures, Bailey wrote to his former teachers, “but I believe I can get myself up to speed relatively quickly. ... Pitt has definitely prepared me to confidently seek out relevant resources in order to get myself up to speed.”

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) require nurse anesthetists like Bailey to work under the supervision of physicians and surgeons. But when Bailey sent his email, Wisconsin was one of 17 states where governors had opted out of the CMS requirement, permitting CRNAs to work independently. And shortly after Bailey sent his message, CMS temporarily suspended the physician supervision requirements for CRNAs during the COVID-19 outbreak in order “to equip the American health care system with maximum flexibility to respond to the pandemic” and enabling nurse anesthetists like Bailey to work at the top of their licenses.

As urgent and unprecedented as the COVID-19 pandemic may be, the history of how anesthesia has been administered in the United States has long been intertwined with moments of upheaval.

“The crises our country has experienced have brought forth enormous changes” in anesthesia and particularly the nurse anesthesia field, says John O’Donnell (MSN ’91), DrPH, professor in and chair of the Department of Nurse Anesthesia and director of the nurse anesthesia program at Pitt Nursing.

The first demonstrated use of anesthesia was in 1846 at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. Within 20 years, it was in use on the battlefield as nurses administered anesthesia to wounded soldiers during the Civil War. In doing so, nurses became the first professional group in the United States to provide anesthesia services.



Later, the delivery of anesthesia on the battlefields of World Wars I and II led to nurse anesthesia’s becoming the first recognized clinical nursing specialty. Training in the field was managed strictly on the job, and oftentimes the surgeon chose the individuals who were administering anesthesia. That often meant medical students, who were more interested in observing surgical procedures than supporting them with anesthesia, resulting in high rates of morbidity and mortality.

After World War I, there was a recognized need for properly educating and credentialing anesthetists, and in 1931, the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) was founded. Focused on anesthesia alone, nurse anesthetists became involved in a wide range of surgical procedures and pioneered critical refinements in anesthesia techniques and equipment. World War II further accelerated the move toward specialization, with the first credentialing exam for nurse anesthetists given in 1945.

Today, nearly 54,000 CRNAs and student nurse anesthetists are AANA members, and CRNAs administer more than 49 million anesthetics each year in the United States. Across large swaths of the country, CRNAs are the primary providers of anesthesia for health care facilities in medically underserved communities.

The delivery of anesthesia on the battlefields of World Wars I and II led to nurse anesthesia’s becoming the first recognized clinical nursing specialty.



Nurse anesthetists form only part of the story of anesthesia in the United States, however. Physician anesthesiologists operate with full independence, often overseeing members of a surgery team. In 1937, the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) formed a board to certify physicians practicing in the field of anesthesiology. Today, ASA has about 53,000 members, virtually identical in size to the membership body of AANA.

Both nurse anesthetists and physician anesthesiologists are recognized as appropriate providers, and both professions are well respected in the medical community. And within the next decade or so, the distinction between the two job titles will no longer hinge

on who has earned a doctoral degree. In 2007, AANA recommended that entry to the practice of nurse anesthesia move to the doctoral level by 2025, meaning that the Doctor of Nursing Practice will soon replace the Master of Science in Nursing degree as the standard for entry into practice as a CRNA.

“Physician anesthesiologists and nurse anesthetists are jockeying for position within health care organizations,” O’Donnell says. Rather than one side “winning,” however, O’Donnell says, “what I think will happen is that as nurse anesthetists advance, they can be used more flexibly. Their levels of training and competence have gone up, and you now can deploy CRNAs to do lots of things, trusting that things will be fine.”

While that outcome may take a generation to fully materialize, O’Donnell points out that deploying CRNAs to do multiple things is exactly what is happening during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The current crisis could accelerate that process,” he says.

In this climate, alumni like Bailey are likely to find that their Pitt Nursing training has prepared them well for the flexibility and autonomy that O’Donnell foresees.

“I had several opportunities throughout school to work independently, which certainly helped me adapt,” Bailey says. “There are several clinical rotations where student registered nurse anesthetists are given more independence.” As a student progresses, they work in the presence of a CRNA but treat that colleague as a clinical resource, available to provide judgment when needed but allowing the student as much independence as possible.

Graduates of the nurse anesthesia program also benefit from the range of environments in which they gain experience while at Pitt Nursing.

“Pitt prepares graduates to work in any setting,” from large university tertiary care centers to ambulatory care centers or VA hospitals, says Laurel Anderson-Miner, assistant professor of nurse anesthesia. She points to graduates who work in centers specializing in pediatrics and in OB/GYN and women’s health, among others.

“We try to give students every possible exposure to all types of anesthesia,” O’Donnell adds.

It’s little wonder that Bailey expressed confidence as the COVID-19 crisis intensified.

“When your feet hit the ground, you learn to quickly adapt to your new environment,” he wrote. “I’m glad I’m going into this impending storm as a Pitt grad.”

When your feet hit the ground, you learn to quickly adapt to your new environment. I’m glad I’m going into this impending storm as a Pitt grad.

Justin Bailey



HOW MIDWIVES CAN SAVE MOTHERS

When the World Health Organization (WHO) named 2020 the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife, health professionals in the United States said that the focus couldn't have come at a better time. In the United States, approximately 700 maternal deaths occur each year. While maternal mortality rates have decreased globally, the numbers continue to rise in the United States, with more women dying from pregnancy-related complications here than in any other developed country. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that 60% of the maternal deaths in the United States could have been prevented.

This is where nurse-midwives step in.

WHO reported in 2019 that, globally, midwifery could avert more than 80% of all maternal deaths, stillbirths and neonatal deaths. Certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) wield expertise rooted in medical nursing skills coupled with holistic midwifery knowledge. This combination enables them to support women throughout the entire pregnancy process and, notably, into primary care. The long-term care of a midwife has led to more than 50 additional patient benefits, ranging from increased contraceptive use to tobacco cessation to decreased rates of postpartum depression.

"The core of midwifery philosophy is that pregnancy and childbearing are not medical

illnesses, but that they're healthy life events," says Nancy Niemczyk, PhD, director of the nurse-midwife program at the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing. "So when you place childbirth and midwifery in that context, it makes sense that you have to start with healthy childbearing people to have healthy pregnancies. It makes intuitive sense to our students that creating the best outcomes for newborns means starting with having healthy children who grow up into healthy adolescents and healthy adults."

The long-term patient relationships that CNMs establish are the defining components of midwifery care. Those relationships are what ensure successful, healthy births for low-risk pregnancies around the world. But midwives' responsibilities go beyond delivery. Slightly more than half of CNMs in the United States identify reproductive care as their main responsibility in full-time positions, while a third say that primary care is their focus. These providers spend the majority of their time on annual exams, nutritional counseling, parenting education, reproductive health visits, and more. The evolution of recognized medical responsibilities has made the education and certification process for nurse-midwives much more rigorous. Since 2010, CNM certification has required a minimum of a master's degree, and now an increasing number of students are pursuing doctoral degrees before certification.



I do emphasize ways of thinking and seeing, trying to be open minded, and seeing beyond the medical equipment and routines that we have. We want good, therapeutic relationships with family and women in a holistic way.

Sandra Founds

WHO reported in 2019 that, globally, midwifery could avert more than 80% of all maternal deaths, stillbirths and neonatal deaths.

Sandra Founds, PhD, associate professor at Pitt Nursing, helped to design and implement the midwifery program at the school. Keeping the core philosophy of midwifery in mind—providing care throughout the life span—Founds drew upon her work experiences at the Frontier Nursing University in Kentucky and research trips to Jamaica, Ghana and Tanzania to create the structure of the program. Working in rural areas with limited access to care imparted a powerful lesson on how providers use skills beyond medical knowledge to assess and manage the phases of childbearing. Her hope was basic yet complex: to create a program that celebrated and normalized birth, acknowledged women's unique needs and saw them as community members, and prioritized the highest quality medical skills in their midwives.

"In general, I always strive to have students think holistically," Founds says. "I do emphasize ways of thinking and seeing, trying to be open minded, and seeing beyond the medical equipment and routines that we have. We want good, therapeutic relationships with family and women in a holistic way."

Pitt's nurse-midwife program has several core elements to this holistic approach. First, students take the same core courses as nurse practitioner students to establish a strong base in primary care. Second, while many schools focus on the hospital experience, Pitt students attend births in a variety of settings, strengthening their ability to assess maternal health across different environments. This includes community experiences at locations such as the Midwife Center for Birth & Women's Health in Pittsburgh's Strip District, the largest freestanding birth center in the

country. Niemczyk notes that a particularly special component of the program is its dedicated newborn care clinical rotation.

"In Pennsylvania, we're licensed to take care of newborns for their first month of life," Niemczyk explains. "It just makes sense that you should take care of postpartum mothers and children together. It makes sense for holistic care."

Betty Braxter, PhD, Pitt Nursing's associate dean for undergraduate education, says that another important component of the program is its focus on community environments and their impact on lifestyle and health. Braxter obtained her midwifery certification at the University of Mississippi and was a staff nurse midwife at the medical center there. She saw powerful relationships between midwives and the vulnerable populations in the area, particularly low-income and Black communities. In her teaching and research, she found that integrating an awareness of a patient's living conditions and neighborhood is crucial to ensuring a healthy birth. Pitt's program includes two courses in community and global health early in the program, which Braxter says emphasize the importance of understanding environmental conditions in relation to personal health on both micro and macro levels.

"It's interesting that it's coming into vogue now, but it's been a part of care since forever. You always looked at where people lived. Do they have resources in that neighborhood? What is the median income? Now there is more and more data that can really either help support the woman to help reduce her risk or exacerbate the risk that she already has," Braxter says. "We have to think about that person, that neighborhood. [We have to ask] what the family is like, what are the stressors in the neighborhood, and what is going on beyond the issue of the pregnancy itself."

These educational developments that integrate nursing practice, midwifery knowledge, and a concern for community health are increasingly important in the United States. CDC reported that America's death rates for mothers have risen in the past 20 years, with nearly 17 women dying for every 100,000 births in 2016. Compare this figure to other nations like Sweden, where the death rate is four per 100,000 births, and

England, where the rate is seven deaths for every 100,000 births in the United States. Many complications also are due to Cesarean section births, which happen in a third of all births. In medical emergencies, C-sections can save lives, but they also involve serious risks. Maternal mortality rates are even worse for women of color: Black women have a maternal mortality rate of more than 42 deaths per 100,000 births, and American Indian and Alaska Native women experience more than 30 deaths per 100,000 births.

Studies show that having CNMs as primary care providers for low-risk pregnancies is safer and more cost effective, reducing the number of unnecessary high-risk surgeries. A recent Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation survey compared prenatal care results in maternity care homes; group care homes; and birth centers, which follow midwifery models. The results showed that patients in birth centers had lower rates of preterm birth, low birth weight, and C-sections—and that giving birth was more than \$2,000 cheaper per mother/infant pair. Additional statistics from a WHO report showed that women who received midwife-led continuity of care were seven times more likely to be attended at birth by a known midwife, 16% less likely to lose their baby, 15% less likely to have regional analgesia, 24% less likely to have preterm birth, 16% less likely to have an episiotomy, and 19% less likely to lose their baby before 24 weeks. Emotionally, CNM-supported patients said they felt like they had a better understanding of the procedure, had more decision-making power over their pain relief options, and felt more prepared for birth.

And yet CNMs attended just 9.1% of all U.S. births in 2017. In the United Kingdom, midwives attend all planned births, including at-home births and hospital-based C-sections, and are not required to obtain additional medical degrees. The discrepancy in the United States, Founds explains, is due to “a history of struggle” in which midwives have not received the same legitimacy and acceptance in the medical community as obstetricians. But CNMs are highly trained to identify normal births and know exactly when to refer patients to obstetricians for medical emergencies. If patients

We have to think about that person, that neighborhood. [We have to ask] what the family is like, what are the stressors in the neighborhood, and what is going on beyond the issue of the pregnancy itself.

Betty Braxter



were more intentionally directed to providers trained to their level of risk—i.e., low-risk pregnancies to CNMs and high-risk pregnancies to obstetricians—instead of choosing obstetrics by default, Niemczyk says that the system would be safer and more efficient.

“Obstetricians don’t have time for [building long-term relationships with each patient]. They have to pay for malpractice [insurance] and loans; they can’t sit with a family for half an hour every prenatal visit and talk about how they’re feeling,” Niemczyk says. “Midwives can afford to do that, and we love doing that. We love having relationships and teaching and counseling, so it’s really sensible to use the health care workforce to let us do the things we’re good at—counseling healthy people. Let obstetricians do what they went to school for eight years [to do], and we can work in a collegial fashion where we each acknowledge each other’s expertise.”

Low-risk pregnancies constitute approximately 85% of pregnancies in the United States, according to CDC. Founds suggests that if medical care were distributed to births more appropriately, there might be less strain on the health care network and resources. In a moment like now, in the middle of a global pandemic, Founds says that a system that redirects potential hospital patients to alternate birthing centers could help to reduce risk and save lives.

Increasing and normalizing midwifery practice is what reduces infant and maternal mortality rates, Braxter says. And when maternal health is properly addressed, she adds, the United States might improve not only mortality rates but community health overall.

“We have to improve the health of the most vulnerable,” Braxter says, referring to mothers. “Once we improve that health, then all health will be increased.”

COVID-19 Relief Opportunities

The world is facing unprecedented times. The COVID-19 crisis has impacted daily life in more ways than we can count. Although the University of Pittsburgh community is dispersed, we are poised to come together to respond to this public health crisis. Your support for any or all of the following funds would be appreciated.

VIRGINIA G. BRALEY STUDENT EMERGENCY ENDOWMENT

The Virginia G. Braley Student Emergency Endowment is a fund specific to the School of Nursing that supports students with emergent financial needs.

The fund may be used to pay for expenses such as the following:

- medical and health care expenses
- food
- unexpected transportation or travel expenses
- sudden changes in housing plans
- overdue utility bills reaching a turn-off notice
- childcare coverage and expenses
- technology repair or support

Donations made to this fund stay within the School of Nursing, and all donations directly support Pitt Nursing students.

LEAVE YOUR LEGACY AT PITT NURSING

Find resources and ways to start at plannedgiving.pitt.edu.

HEALTH SCIENCES COVID-19 RESPONSE FUND

The Health Sciences COVID-19 Response Fund supports research in the areas of vaccine development, epidemiology, treatment, prevention, education, and public health. Funds will help Pitt's dedicated researchers, educators, and public health leaders continue projects in the areas of virus tracking, the effectiveness of social distancing measures, and the longevity of the virus on surfaces and will support new projects as they arise.

COVID-19 VACCINE RESEARCH FUND

The U.S. government chose Pitt's Center for Vaccine Research as one of a handful of institutions nationwide to receive the virus for study, and our reputation as a center for excellence in health innovation stretches back decades to the pioneering work of Jonas Salk in developing the polio vaccine. Pitt already has made progress in collaboration with the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations to take a potential vaccine through Phase I clinical trials in humans. Contributions to the COVID-19 Vaccine Research Fund will support the continued development of a vaccine that could save countless lives.

To support our students and researchers through donations to these funds, visit giveto.pitt.edu.



NOTABLE ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENTS



Susan Bakewell-Sachs (BSN '79), dean of the School of Nursing and vice president for nursing affairs at Oregon Health & Science University, was elected chair of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing board of directors.

Judith LaRosa (BSN '63, MEd '64) coauthored and published the eighth edition of her book, *New Dimensions in Women's Health*.



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



In Memoriam

1940s

Lucie Young Kelly
(BSN '47, MLit '57, PhD '65)

Miriam Norment
(BSNEd '49)

Hilda Bubeck Stolp
(BSN '47, MLit '50)

1950s

Phyllis Armstrong
(BSNEd '53)

Lillian Audi Azar
(BSN '51)

Dorothy Chutko
(BSNEd '57)

Betty Fink
(BSNEd '58)

Patricia Glessner
(BSN '53)

Charlotte Spicher
(MEd '63, PhD '75)

Victoria Trumbore
(BSNEd '50)

Theresa Yochum
(BSNEd '52)

Louise Zegeer
(BSNEd '54)

1960s

Patricia Capriotti
(BSN '63)

Carolyn Hocker Cooper
(MEd '68)

Patricia Feeney
(BSN '61)

Anna Marie Huth
(MEd '66)

Judith King
(BSN '61)

Kathleen Groves Pastirik
(BSN '67)

Elizabeth Snyder Spragg
(BSN '63)

1970s

Jane Gentile
(BSN '72)

Eleanor Phipps Hogan
(BAS '70, MN '77)

Barbara Britt Luccy
(BSN '70)

Marianne Mulroy
(BSN '78)

Linda Lee Pape
(MN '72)

Rebecca Savage
(BSN '77)

Kathe Taliaferro
(MN '70)

1980s

Patrice Michalski
(MSN '89, MSN '98)

1990s

Carol Buchan
(BSN '98)

Jackie Oren
(BSN '96)

2000s

Robin Cunningham
(BSN '04)

In Memoriam: Lucie Young Kelly

Lucie Young Kelly (BSN '47, MLit '57, PhD '65), a three-time alumna of the University of Pittsburgh, passed away in November 2019.

Kelly, who earned a PhD at Pitt's School of Education in addition to her two Pitt Nursing degrees, had a long and prestigious career in nursing, education, and health care administration. Her professional career highlights included serving as vice president of nursing at UPMC McKeesport, professor and Nursing department chair at California University of Pennsylvania, professor of public health and nursing in the School of Nursing at Columbia University, and professor of public health and associate dean of academic affairs in the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia. Kelly also established an interdisciplinary nursing and public health program at Columbia.

She was the author of numerous periodical articles, editorials, book chapters, and textbooks and held editorial positions at professional journals. Among her many honors, Kelly was elected to the American Academy of Nursing and later named a Living Legend by the academy and a Legacy Laureate at Pitt. She was a past president of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing.

Recognizing the importance of supporting the next generation of nursing faculty, Kelly established the Lucie Young Kelly Faculty Leadership Award in 1997.



ALUMNI AWARDEES RECOGNIZED

Each year, the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing presents awards to alumni and honorary alumni who embody the spirit of a Pitt nurse and who have made impactful contributions to their respective fields. For 2020, the award categories were expanded to recognize distinguished alumni in practice, service, research and education; young alumni; and honorary alumni.

Distinguished Alumni Award (Education)

SANDRA S. BOWLES (BSN '61, MEd '64), EdD, Dean Emeritus, Bradford Division of Health Sciences; Assistant Dean and Director of Assessment and Special Projects, School of Pharmacy; and Professor of Nursing, University of Charleston



Sandra Bowles graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 1961 from the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing. She worked with the Visiting Nurse Association of Allegheny County before returning to Pitt to earn a master's degree. In 1963, she was inducted into the Eta Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International. Upon completing her MEd, she relocated to Charleston,

West Virginia, where, after working one term at Charleston General Hospital School of Nursing, she was instrumental in opening an associate degree program in

nursing at Morris Harvey College, now the University of Charleston. She has remained at this institution since 1964, leaving only to complete a doctorate in higher education administration at Vanderbilt University. On July 31, 2020, Bowles retired after having served Morris Harvey College/the University of Charleston for 52 years, the longest-serving faculty member at the institution.

During her tenure at the University of Charleston, she served as chair of the Department of Nursing and dean of health sciences, overseeing health science programs in respiratory therapy, radiological technology, medical technology, and sports medicine—programs that have produced more than 5,000 graduates to serve the region. She completed a term as university provost prior to retiring from health sciences and moving to the School of Pharmacy.

Bowles has been very involved in accreditation and assessment throughout the years. In 1968, she became an accreditation site visitor for the National League for Nursing (NLN), and she went on to serve it in many capacities, including as chair of the Council of Associate Degree Programs and member of the NLN board of governors from 1995 to 1997. Bowles currently serves as an elected commissioner to the NLN Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation. She has made many presentations on assessment and accreditation at regional and national meetings and coordinated three workshops on accreditation at her local campus. She served two terms on the West Virginia Board of Examiners for Registered Nurses.

In 1991, Bowles became a consultant evaluator for the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and for nearly 30 years has served that organization as a peer reviewer; as a member of the Eligibility Committee; on accreditation review panels; and, currently, as a member of the Institutional Actions Council, the group that makes accreditation decisions for colleges and universities within HLC.

Bowles has served as a consultant to many nursing and higher education programs, providing assistance with assessment and achievement of accreditation. In 2008, she earned her first certification as a certified nurse educator through NLN, a certification she still holds today. In 2005, Bowles was recognized as Professional Woman of the Year by the West Virginia Women's Commission.

Distinguished Alumni Award (Education)

JANICE A. SELEKMAN (BSN '69), DNSc, Professor, University of Delaware School of Nursing



Janice Selekmán earned her BSN in 1969 at the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing. She received her MSN from the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing as a clinical nurse specialist in nursing of children and for her entire career has focused on the needs of children and youths and those who care for them; her doctoral degree also is from Penn Nursing. She served as director of the nursing program at the University of Delaware and as a leader of the fledgling Society of Pediatric Nurses, and today she is one of the most well-known and respected names in school nursing.

With hundreds of national keynote presentations to her name, Selekmán is known for being ahead of the curve. She has led the way in introducing topics to multiple audiences of nurses, even when these topics have not yet reached nursing education or nursing publications. These have included sexuality education, HIV/AIDS, learning disabilities, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, cutting, vaping, mental health in children, transgender youths, and body piercing and tattooing—all of which are now common topics. Selekmán was among the first to clarify concerns about these topics for pediatric nurses in both publications and presentations.

She is best known as one of the most respected leaders in school nursing for taking the scope of practice within that specialty and developing the first (and, to date, only) comprehensive textbook for the National Association of School Nurses, which has served as an everyday resource for the practicing school nurse, a textbook for those studying to enter the specialty of school nursing, and the state of the science of school nursing in courts of law. This accomplishment has earned her multiple awards and honors. In addition, she has written certification review books for both pediatric and school nurses to assist them in achieving national certification.

Selekmán has been recognized for her distinguished teaching, service and scholarship by the National Association of School Nurses, the Society of Pediatric Nurses, the National Board for Certification of School Nurses, Thomas Jefferson University, and the State of Delaware. She was inducted as a fellow of the National Academy of School Nurses in 2012.

As part of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the National Association of School Nurses, Selekmán was identified as a key contributor to moving the specialty of school nursing forward. She now is working to encourage nurses in different specialties, such as pediatric nurse practitioners and pediatric surgical nurses, to communicate with each other to facilitate the transition of care from hospital and primary care practices to schools.

Distinguished Alumni Award (Practice)

TAMRA MINNIER (BSN '84, MSN '85), Chief Quality Officer, UPMC



Tamra "Tami" Minnier is the chief quality officer for UPMC, a \$20-billion integrated health care delivery and health care delivery and insurance system in Pittsburgh. Minnier oversees the Wolff Center, which drives quality and safety efforts across the UPMC enterprise. She also is the executive director of the Beckwith Institute, a \$16-million foundation supporting innovation in care delivery.

In her role as chief quality officer, Minnier coordinates the activities of 40 hospitals, more than 4,900 physicians, more than 3.7 million health plan enrollees, and various clinical sites in Italy and Ireland. She has held hospital executive and nursing leadership positions in health care and has overseen the building of several new acute care hospitals.

Minnier has a passion for clinical care improvement and achieving excellent outcomes. She earned her BSN and MSN at the University of Pittsburgh and is a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives. Minnier has studied the Toyota Production System and lean manufacturing. She is a graduate of the Advanced Training Program in Clinical and Quality Improvement at the Intermountain Healthcare Delivery Institute and has served on the faculty at the Institute for Healthcare Improvement.

Many of the care delivery programs Minnier has developed have gained national and international recognition for UPMC. She is chair of the board of the Joint Commission International and Joint Commission Resources. She also serves as a board member of the Patient Safety Movement Foundation, the United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania, and Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. Minnier is a nationally known speaker and author who has been published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, Newsweek, The Journal of Nursing Administration, Modern Healthcare, Journal of Healthcare Leadership, Reflections, and many other journals. She was listed by Becker's Hospital Review as one of the 50 Experts Leading the Field of Patient Safety 2014 and one of the 130 Women Hospital and Health System Leaders to Know 2017.

Distinguished Alumni Award (Service)

DEBRA THOMPSON (BSN '77, MSN '81, PhD '10), CEO, Debra N. Thompson, LLC



Debra Thompson is CEO of Debra N. Thompson, LLC, and holds an adjunct faculty appointment at the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing. Thompson has expertise in leadership development, patient safety, and quality improvement. She has extensive experience in using the Toyota Production System and lean manufacturing in health care to improve safety, quality, and care outcomes. She currently works with a variety of health care organizations

nationally and internationally to apply these principles. As the chief nursing officer for the Pittsburgh Regional Health Initiative, she led a project cofunded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation to prepare frontline leaders to serve as change

agents to improve safety and quality and was the Pittsburgh lead for an Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality team working to identify the challenges senior leaders faced in implementing a patient safety agenda. Thompson has held a variety of administrative roles in both academic medical centers and community hospitals. She has coauthored multiple articles on organizational transformation, work redesign, and patient safety and has presented internationally and nationally. Her work with industrial models in health care is featured in the Shingo Prize-winning book "The Pittsburgh Way to Efficient Healthcare: Improving Patient Care Using Toyota Based Methods" by Naida Grunden.

Thompson serves as a patient safety and administrative advisor to Qualaris and as a nursing practice advisor to Sensez 9. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and a member of the American Organization for Nursing Leadership and has served on its Foundation Education and Patient Safety and Quality committees. Thompson has been involved with the Center for Evidence-Based Management since its inception. She is a past president of the Eta Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing and is its current treasurer. Thompson also serves as a trustee of Excelsa Health in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.

A longtime supporter of the University of Pittsburgh and the School of Nursing, Thompson has served on multiple University and school committees. Since 2013, she has served on the Pitt Alumni Association Board of Directors, currently as a vice president. She has spoken at Pitt Nursing graduation ceremonies, alumni events and mentoring activities.

Recognizing the importance of advanced education, Thompson created the Newmeyer-Thompson Doctoral Student Award at Pitt Nursing in 2013. This fund benefits PhD students by supporting education-related expenses, including research.

Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient (Research)

J. MARGO BROOKS CARTHON (MSN '98), PhD, Associate Professor, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing



J. Margo Brooks Carthon is an associate professor at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. She received her BS from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, her MSN in adult health and psychiatric mental health nursing from the University of Pittsburgh, and her PhD from the University of Pennsylvania.

A vision of equitable health care guides Brooks Carthon's program of research, which focuses on identifying ways that nursing care delivery can be tailored to improve health outcomes for marginalized individuals. Her research has received generous support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, and Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Results of Brooks Carthon's work have been widely cited in peer-reviewed journals, including BMJ Quality & Safety and the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society.

Brooks Carthon has been the recipient of numerous research and mentoring awards. She successfully led an interdisciplinary team of clinicians, researchers, and allied health professionals in the

development of THRIVE@HOME, a set of solutions and technologies to support socially vulnerable individuals and clinicians working to achieve better health outcomes after a hospitalization. She is a senior fellow of the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics, an advisory board member of Trinity Health PACE Mercy LIFE of West Philadelphia, a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Nurse Faculty scholar, and a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing.

Outstanding Young Alumni Award:

Maya Clark-Cutaia (PhD '12), Assistant Professor, New York University Rory Meyers College of Nursing



Maya Clark-Cutaia is an assistant professor of nursing at the New York University Rory Meyers College of Nursing. She received her BSN and MSN from the University of Pennsylvania and her PhD from the University of Pittsburgh. Clark-Cutaia's predoctoral training

was initially supported by a T32 predoctoral fellowship and then by an individual National

Research Service Award F31 predoctoral fellowship for her research on dietary modification management in end-stage renal disease sufferers on hemodialysis.

After completing her PhD, she returned to the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing for a T32 postdoctoral fellowship. This fellowship culminated in Clark-Cutaia's receipt of a K23 Mentored Patient-Oriented Research Career Development Award from the National Institute of Nursing Research to develop her program of research in symptom science, with an emphasis on hemodialysis patient symptoms related to dietary sodium intake.

Clark-Cutaia's scholarship focuses on the increased morbidity and mortality risk that results from end-stage renal disease and hemodialysis renal replacement therapy. Her long-term goal is to impact end-stage renal disease sufferer quality of life by decreasing symptom burden and hospital visitation. She is building her program to determine the effects of carefully monitored levels of sodium intake as set forth by the National Kidney Foundation's Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the American Heart Association on the effects of symptoms and signs in end-stage renal disease patients undergoing hemodialysis. While these recommendations are universally accepted and prescribed to patients, little to no empirical evidence exists demonstrating the their beneficence. Clark-Cutaia's randomized controlled trial was the first of its kind, to her and her research team's knowledge, and she is actively publishing these data to better inform clinical practice and her next scientific inquiry.

Clark-Cutaia continues to practice as a nurse practitioner in the fields of urology, general surgery and otolaryngology. She served in the U.S. Air Force Reserve Command in an aeromedical evacuation squadron as a flight nurse and in an aerospace medicine squadron in a public health nurse capacity. She is president of the Xi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau and president of the Penn Nursing Alumni Board. She was recognized with the Under 40 Award by the National Black Nurses Association, Inc. Clark-Cutaia has received a one-year \$30,000 pilot award from the Center for Improving Care Delivery for the Aging to study self-assessment among patients with kidney disease who are receiving dialysis. She was selected as one of 10 Multiple Chronic Conditions

scholars, a program spearheaded by the National Institutes of Health-funded Health Care Systems Research Network and Older Americans Independence Centers' AGING Initiative.

Honorary Alumni Award:

Jonas Johnson, MD, Eugene N. Meyers, MD, Professor and Chair, Department of Otolaryngology, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine



Jonas Johnson is an expert in innovative surgical strategies for the treatment of head and neck cancer, imaging of head and neck tumors, the apoptosis of immune cells in head and neck cancer, the role of radiation in head and neck cancer, and the diagnosis and treatment of infectious and allergic disorders. He has been a close collaborator with the School of Nursing and faculty member Marci Nilsen in establishing the UPMC Head & Neck Cancer Survivorship Clinic.

A professor who has been director or codirector of more than 80 courses for students, residents, fellows, and senior physicians, Johnson has been honored many times with outstanding professor awards. He has presented more than 500 lectures and seminars in national and international venues.

Johnson received his medical degree from SUNY Upstate Medical University. He is a past president of the American Head and Neck Society and the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, where he remains on the board. He also has been a member of the board of governors of the American College of Surgeons and president of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Chapter of that group.

Honorary Alumni Award:

The Aldisert Family

There is a strong history of nursing and patient care in the Aldisert family. Caesar Aldisert graduated from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine in 1943, and Helen Aldisert earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at St. John's College.

Their daughter, Regina Aldisert, felt strongly (along with her late husband, Terry Laughlin, a former member of the University of Pittsburgh Board of Trustees) that this passion and history should be carried forward at Pitt by honoring Regina's parents. Indeed, their daughter, Rena Kate, and Laughlin's sister, Kate, are both nurse practitioners.

Helen Aldisert was a trustee of Achieva and The Arc of Greater Pittsburgh, as well as a founding board member and former president of Southwinds, which supports adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities in Allegheny County.

Regina Aldisert earned her MBA at Carnegie Mellon University, and her bachelor's degree at American University. She is the cofounder of 1000 Women for Mentoring, an initiative project of MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, which connects young people with mentors in New York City. She also serves on the board of trustees of the Brooklyn Museum.

In 2019, wanting to support students who were pursuing nursing careers, the Aldisert family established the Caesar O. Aldisert, MD, and Helen M. Aldisert, BSN, Nursing Scholarship in recognition of Regina Aldisert's parents.



Sheila Alexander



Salah Al-Zaiti



Grace Campbell



Jill Demirci



Heidi Donovan



Melissa Harlan

FACULTY GRANTS

Sheila Alexander, PhD

National Institutes of Health (NIH)/National Institute on Aging

Epigenetic Changes and Delirium after Intensive Care Unit Admission

Michael Beach, DNP

Helene Fuld Health Trust

Accelerated Second Degree Program

Grace Campbell, PhD

Aging Institute of UPMC Senior Services and the University of Pittsburgh and UPMC Hillman Cancer Center

Characterizing Age-related Variations in Persistent Neuropathy-related Balance/Gait Changes, Functional Impairments, and Social Role Disability after Chemotherapy for Gynecologic Cancer

University of Pittsburgh Innovation Institute

Here 4 You Virtual Cancer Support Coach

Jill Demirci, PhD

NIH/Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

Effect of Antenatal Milk Expression on Breastfeeding Outcomes among Overweight and Obese Women

Heidi Donovan, PhD

Clovis Oncology

Family Caregiver Resource Development

Hayley Germack, PhD

University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing Center for Research & Evaluation Pilot/Feasibility Study Program

Contributions of Neighborhood Disadvantage to Readmission Risk for Patients with Comorbid Serious Mental Illness

Melissa Harlan, DNP

Pitt Nursing Jane Eleanor Knox Educator Award

Use of Cognitive Rehearsal to Increase Self-efficacy in Nursing Students Caring for Aggressive Patients

Brayden Kameg, DNP

Foundation of the National Student Nurses' Association, Inc.

Promise of Nursing for Pennsylvania Nursing School Grant

Jacob Kariuki, PhD

SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University Program to Increase Diversity among Individuals Engaged in Health-related Research

Pilot Testing the Functionality and Usability of a Web-based Physical Activity for the Heart (PATH) Intervention

University of Pittsburgh Healthy Lifestyle Institute and University Center for International Studies Hewlett International Grant Program

Sociodemographic Predictors and Cardiovascular Correlates of Age-related Impairment on Midlife and Elderly Community-dwelling Kenyans

Young Ji Lee, PhD

NIH/National Library of Medicine

Development and Implementation of a Health e-Librarian with Personalized Recommender (HELPeR)

Jennifer Lingler, PhD

NIH/National Institute on Aging

Administrative Supplement for Recruitment Innovations to Enhance Diversity in Alzheimer's Disease Research

Nancy Niemczyk, PhD

American Association of Birth Centers

Evaluation of Consensus Guidelines for Safe Prevention of the Primary Cesarean Delivery in Birth Centers

Marci Nilsen, PhD

Pitt Nursing Center for Research & Evaluation Pilot/Feasibility Study Program

The Influence of Radiation Therapy on Cognitive Function in Head and Neck Cancer Patients

Cecelia Yates-Binder, PhD

CSL Behring

FibroKine: CXCL10 Biomimetic Peptides for Treatment of Pulmonary Fibrosis

Fei Zhang, PhD

Pitt Nursing Center for Research & Evaluation Pilot/Feasibility Study Program

Applying Real-time Analytics to High-resolution Perioperative Data among Noncardiac Thoracic Surgery Patients: Intraoperative Risk Assessment through Deep Learning Methodology

FACULTY AWARDS

Salah Al-Zaiti, PhD, was promoted to associate professor with tenure.

Laurel Anderson-Miner, PhD, was elected to a position on the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists Education Committee, which is a national oversight committee of the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists.

Marilyn Hravnak, PhD, was named a master of critical care medicine by the American College of Critical Care Medicine. Masters are selected from among the fellows in the college. Hravnak also was selected to participate in the 2020 National Institute of Nursing Research Artificial Intelligence Boot Camp.

Grant Martsolf, PhD, has been named the UPMC Health Systems Chair in Nursing Science. He also was appointed full professor.

Jonna Morris, PhD, was selected to attend the 2020 American Thoracic Society New Faculty Boot Camp. The society received more than 100 applications for only 50 spots.

Susan Wesmiller, PhD, received a 2019 International Society of Nurses in Genetics (ISONG) President's Award. This award is given to members for going over and above in their service to ISONG and to the profession. Wesmiller also was promoted to associate professor with tenure.



Brayden Kameg



Jacob Kariuki



Young Ji Lee



Grant Martsof



Marci Nilsen



Cecelia Yates-Binder

Cecelia Yates-Binder, PhD, was selected as a councilor at large for the American Society for Investigative Pathology. Her term began on July 1, 2020.

STUDENT GRANTS

Rachel Dieterich, PhD student
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses

The Relationship between Perinatal Weight Stigma and Breastfeeding Outcomes

Lisa Gawron, PhD student
Eta Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing

Promoting Health through Precision Labor Management

Lacey Heinsberg, PhD student
American Nurses Foundation/Eleanor C. Lambertson Scholar and Eastern Nursing Research Society Funds

Temporal DNA Methylation of the Iron Homeostasis Pathway and Patient Outcomes after Aneurysmal Subarachnoid Hemorrhage

Rockefeller University Heilbrunn Family Center for Nursing Research

A Longitudinal Pilot Study of PFAS Exposure and the Metabolome in Obesity in Samoan Infants

Frances Peterson-Burch, PhD student
International Society of Nurses in Genetics
miRNAs Related to Age-related Macular Degeneration, Given Nuclear Genetic Susceptibility

Monica Wagner, postdoctoral scholar
NIH/National Institute of Nursing Research
Omics of Pain in the Context of Declining Estrogen

STUDENT AWARDS

Mary Pat Lynch, a doctoral student, received a Graduate Scholarship in Cancer Nursing Practice from the American Cancer Society.

NEW FACULTY

Sarah Belcher, PhD, assistant professor, Department of Health and Community Systems

Theresa Koleck, PhD, assistant professor, Department of Health Promotion and Development

Daniel Wilkenfeld, PhD, assistant professor, Department of Acute/Tertiary Care

KEEP US POSTED

Please share information about your career achievements, advanced education, publications, presentations, honors received and appointments. We may include your news in the Alumni News + Notes section or other media. Indicate names, dates and locations. Photos are welcome! Please print clearly.

Name (include name at graduation as well as current name)

Degree(s) and Year(s) of Graduation

Home Address

Home Telephone

Email Address (please note home or work)

Professional Position

Name of Employer

Employer's Address

News

COMPLETE AND RETURN TO:

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Maddy Dix
Alumni Coordinator
240 Victoria Building
3500 Victoria Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15261
Email: madelinedix@pitt.edu

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE: ONLINE COURSES

Three new programs are now available to help you stay informed about important clinical developments.

Donning and Doffing PPE 101

Presenter: Michael Beach, DNP, FAAN, Assistant Professor

Overview: A brief introduction on how to properly put on and take off personal protective equipment (PPE)

Contact Hours: 1

Cost: \$25

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

Presenters: Betty Braxter, PhD, Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education

Brenda Cassidy, DNP, Assistant Professor

Andrea Fischl, PhD, Research Assistant Professor

Overview: A brief introduction to best practices in LGBTQIA+ health that speaks to the specific needs of this population to increase knowledge, promote positive attitudes, and improve clinical preparedness of professional nurses

Contact Hours: 1

Cost: \$25

COVID-19 from a Physiological Perspective for Nurses

Presenters: Sheila Alexander, PhD, FCCM, Associate Professor
Yvette Conley, PhD, FAAN, Professor

Monica Wagner, PhD, Postdoctoral Scholar

Overview: An overview of COVID-19 structural components, testing techniques, treatments, and available resources for professional nurses

Contact Hours: 1

Cost: \$25

For additional information and to register, visit nursing.pitt.edu/continuing-education/enduringonline-activities.

Find Yourself in High Demand When You Specialize at Pitt Nursing

Across the country, demand for adult-gerontology primary care nurse practitioners (AGPCNPs) is high. AGPCNPs deliver care to young, middle-aged and older adults in a wide variety of settings, including internal medicine, primary care, specialty practice (e.g., cardiology), and outpatient clinics. The University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing AGPCNP program is uniquely equipped to educate the next generation of AGPCNPs and is ranked fourth in the country by U.S. News & World Report.

LEARNING FROM INNOVATORS

Lorraine Novosel, PhD, coordinates the AGPCNP program at Pitt Nursing in addition to the postprofessional certificate in gerontology for nurse practitioners. An experienced educator with extensive clinical experience as an internal medicine practitioner, she has received awards for her clinical expertise, research contributions, and role as an educator. But what brings Novosel to work every day?

"I am most proud of my students and the work they do. I celebrate their accomplishments and find joy in developing the next generation of nurse practitioners, researchers and nursing educators."

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS

Pitt Nursing faculty members are actively engaged with students from admission to graduation and continue to serve as resources and mentors during the transition to professional nurse practitioner practice. Novosel personally advises each AGPCNP student throughout the program and guides students in individualized scholarly work. At Pitt, there are numerous opportunities to engage in clinical and scholarly activities and to learn from top-tier faculty and clinicians within our network of partnerships. Class sizes are kept small to optimize learning opportunities and maximize professional growth.

Students work closely with a dedicated coordinator who works with faculty to secure clinical placements throughout the program.

Pitt Nursing capitalizes on strong, established relationships with community providers to facilitate each student's learning experience and best prepare them for nurse practitioner practice upon graduating.

Learn more at nursing.pitt.edu.

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