Innovations in Teaching

Transforming Nursing Through Innovations in Teaching

Weaving Interprofessional BRAIDS

Does The Flipped Classroom Work?

Learning From Almost Real Life

Creating Simulations for PMH Nursing
From The Dean

The word “disrupt” (meaning “to cause something to be unable to continue in the normal way; to interrupt the normal progress; to throw into disorder”) does not usually carry a favorable connotation. But paired with the word “innovation”—as in the phrase “disruptive innovation”—and in the context of higher education, the connotation becomes one of challenge. Disruption in the space of education suggests better service models, redefined quality within the complexity of access to knowledge, real-world relevance, and personalized educational paths. Today’s challenges in nursing education can be viewed from a “disruptive innovation” perspective and can transform our approaches to education.

In this edition of KCON Magazine, a feature article highlights strategies for higher education reform and considers their application within nursing education. As a leader in innovation, the Kirkhof College of Nursing boasts faculty who are changing the dynamics for learning. Interprofessional collaborative practice skills are a required competency in education for the health professions. You will read how a new course was launched for nursing and health professions students through the leadership of nursing faculty. One of the hottest trends in education is the model of the “flipped classroom.” How this was implemented at KCON and our initial results are shared in this edition. And finally, the continued effective use of simulation is described, with an emphasis on how simulation can be an alternative for clinical placement shortages in specialized practice areas.

I am pleased to bring greetings to our collective community after a harsh winter. I hope learning about KCON’s energy and purposeful outcomes generates renewed excitement. We continue to strive to make a difference through our work, knowing that society counts on the relevance we bring to the educational process. I invite you as alumni, community practice partners, and friends of the college to enhance your involvement in our efforts. Please support our initiatives, encourage the advancement of nursing education, and share our story so we attract excellent students, faculty, and practice partners!

Cynthia McCurren

CYNTHIA MCCURREN, PH.D., RN, FNP
DEAN AND PROFESSOR
KIRKHOF COLLEGE OF NURSING
As a profession, nursing understands that society counts on our seeking relevance and creating nursing education programs that will meet the needs of our population. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) is the national voice for baccalaureate and graduate nursing education. The AACN is committed to establishing quality standards for nursing education, assisting schools in implementing those standards, and influencing the nursing profession to improve health care. To ensure currency and quality in nursing education, the AACN coordinates a number of activities, including annual education conferences targeted for each nursing degree program, an annual faculty development conference, and an ongoing series of free webinars. As the leading resource for leaders in nursing education, the AACN challenges educators to embrace opportunities to move from traditional educational approaches and explore innovation.
As active participants in AACN activities, KCON’s faculty fully understand the challenges in nursing education. We join countless numbers of nurse educators and administrators across the U.S. who understand that we must rethink our time-honored teaching methods to better prepare students, and thus ensure that all Americans have access to high-quality care in a redesigned health care system.

Such rethinking should be well informed and done in a broader context. Calls for higher education reform in general have become widespread. Some key messages from these efforts have significance for nursing education.

• Advances in technology allow the “unbundling” of traditional approaches to education. Historically, students seeking a degree accessed the full scale of resources (teaching, research, student life, etc.) while space-bound at one institution. Today, libraries are available on any laptop computer, communication technology allows knowledge transmission across vast distances, and virtual simulation replaces hands-on experience. Among chief academic officers, 65 percent report that online learning is a key strategy for the future of their institutions.

• Competency-based (or personalized) learning is an alternative to traditional “seat time,” fostering an educational approach that creates flexibility. Students can progress as academic content is mastered, regardless of time, place, or pace of learning. Personalized learning strategies include online and blended learning, digital enrichment, and project-based and community-based learning. This promotes enhanced student engagement because the content is relevant to each student and tailored to the individual’s unique needs. Better student outcomes can be anticipated because the pace of learning is customized. For example, Carnegie Mellon University’s Open Learning Initiative provides online learning where the instructional sequence scaffolds learning based on the individual student’s performance on embedded assessments.

• A call for “enhanced portability” promotes learning that can flow across venues. This encompasses flexibility in credit transfers, articulation agreements between institutions, and dual enrollment. While there are inherent challenges associated with financial aid and institutional awarding of degrees, the potential for efficiency and decreased duplication for specialty content areas suggests the need for critical examination.

• Individual competencies are increasingly needed for given skills or content areas. This supports the notion of “badges” or certificates that complement an existing degree, a career path, or other post-secondary education. This type of efficiency avoids the unnecessary time and expense associated with earning a degree that could be more than needed for the competency.

Fundamental to any consideration of educational reform is the question of quality. The focus must be on outcomes rather than the process of delivery. Four basic components that must be examined are: (a) the proportion of students who start a program or course and actually complete it; (b) how much students truly learn; (c) the relevance of what is taught in the context of societal or industry need; and (d) how those who complete fare in terms of employment, earning power, and ability to pay off educational debt.

As nurse educators struggle with these challenges, higher education reform strategies have great relevance in helping to address key issues such as clinical placement shortages, access for those in rural or underserved areas, the creation of seamless articulation agreements, and the recognition of individual competencies for determining progression. Further, there is a need to enhance and expand student learning. The 2010 Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching report, “Educating Nurses: A Call for Radical Transformation” (http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/publications/educating-nurses-call-radical-transformation), concluded that nursing students are undereducated for the demands of practice, especially in the context of multiple potential care settings. Attention was drawn to situation cognition and teaching for a sense of salience.

There is little evidence about what constitutes best practice in clinical education, and this demands the evaluation of outcomes. Operationalizing the competencies that must be achieved is critical, as well as identifying the potential for nontraditional educational strategies. With an ongoing faculty shortage, consideration must be given to sharing faculty who have content-specific expertise through strategies such as dual enrollment or credit transfer. And post-baccalaureate or post-graduate certificate programs can add expertise to care delivery in areas such as palliative care, information science, older adult care, and mental health integration.

At KCON, we are optimistic about the future of nursing education, and we are proud that our educational degree programs are continually enhanced by the innovations our faculty are implementing to meet all of these challenges.

Weaving Interprofessional BRAIDS

Developing a new university course is never simple. But the process is complicated when multiple schools and departments are involved in the creation of an interprofessional course in health care. It takes years. Just ask KCON associate professor Cynthia Beel-Bates, PhD, RN, FGSA, and Elaine Van Doren, PhD, RN.

IPE 407/507, “Building Relationships Across Interprofessional Domains” (BRAIDS), was offered for the first time in January 2013 after the initial idea for the course emerged in 2007. This innovative two-credit interprofessional education course is offered to students from various health professions who work together to assess and plan client care. So far, students from four of GVSU’s major health professions programs (nursing, occupational therapy, social work, and speech) and students from Ferris State University’s College of Pharmacy have taken the course.

To create the course, Beel-Bates teamed up with GVSU colleagues Joan Barst, PhD, LMSW, School of Social Work; Cynthia Grapcynski, EdD, MS, OTR/L, Occupational Therapy Department; Courtney Karasinski, PhD, MA, BS, CCC-SLP, Communication Sciences and Disorders; and Jeanne Smith, Med, a simulation center instructional designer who is now with Grand Rapids Medical Education Partners.

“This course applies the fundamental principles of interprofessional education,” explains Beel-Bates, “including collaborative, egalitarian, group-directed, experiential, reflective, and applied learning which includes the faculty, not just the students. For example, we conducted ‘teach the teacher’ programs for the faculty to enhance their facilitation skills and build stronger relationships among everyone involved.”

As expected for any change like this new course, student response has been mixed. “Some see the value of learning team skills through experiential learning and simulations,” says Beel-Bates. “Others indicated that they didn’t think it was clinical enough.

“But we are very positive about where this course is headed,” she continues. “Elaine Van Doren recently ran into a KCON graduate who had just taken the NCLEX. She felt confident that she had answered the questions about interprofessional collaboration correctly because she had taken the IPE course and knew the various scopes of practice and where overlaps occur in the major health care professions.”

“I think the most innovative aspect of this course is that it has been developed from the syllabus of record as an interprofessional course,” Beel-Bates concludes. “Teams of faculty have contributed from different professions to the development of various topics and learning units. And GVSU’s administration has been highly supportive. Being able to co-teach with faculty members in the same room at the same time allows us to model collaboration and offer our students the different perspectives inherent in our different professions.”

References

Karasinski, EdD, Courtney; Grapcynski, Cynthia; Smith, Jeanne; Van Doren, Elaine. (2013). “Building Relationships Across Interprofessional Domains.” In KCON, Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, MI.
One of the hottest trends in education is the concept of the “flipped classroom.” A comparatively simple definition can be found at TeachThought [http://www.teachthought.com/learning/the-definitio

of-the-flipped-classroom/]. “A flipped classroom is one where students are introduced to content at home, and practice working through it at school… . face-to-face interaction is mixed with independent study via technology. Students watch pre-recorded videos at home, then come to school to do the homework armed with questions and at least some background knowledge.”

According to data from “Speak Up,” a national initiative of Project Tomorrow [http://www.tomorrow.org/speakup/index.html], as of spring 2013, 60 percent of teachers using flipped classrooms believed that students were more motivated to learn, developed more creativity, and developed better problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

But this trend has only begun to emerge in higher education. Would the flipped classroom work at KCON? A GVSU team decided to study the question in 2012-2013.

Study Structure and Data Analysis: Susan Harrington, PhD, RN, was the principal investigator for the study. Other KCON team members included Cynthia Beli-Bates, PhD, RN, FGSA; Nancy Schools, PhD, RN; and Melodee Vanden Bosch, PhD, RN. They were joined by Kiki Anderson, PhD, from the GVSU Statistics Department. The project, titled “A Comparison of Two Pedagogies: Flipped Versus Traditional Classroom in Nursing Education,” was funded in part by KCON and also through a grant from GVSU’s Pew Faculty Teaching & Learning Center.

After piloting the research in Fall 2012, the team compared two educational approaches during the Winter 2013 term for the 14-week course NUR 316. Eighty-two undergraduate students were randomly assigned to one of two educational approaches: (a) to a traditional lecture-driven classroom and (b) to a flipped classroom. Qualitative and quantitative information were collected to enhance and document the experience with hard data.

The two groups had access to separate Blackboard sites. Classes were held in two separate classrooms of the same size and day of the week, and the same content was delivered. Exams and quizzes were identical, and all students submitted a written paper. The flipped classroom included videotaped lectures and assigned readings, with the majority of classroom time spent in activities such as case studies, NCLEX practice questions, simulations, and discussions. The traditional classroom included lectures, review notes, and assigned readings; most of the classroom time was spent in lecture with few activities. Both groups were assigned “just-in-time” quizzes prior to attending class. These quizzes were reviewed by the faculty to ascertain the least-understood material, which was then clarified in class.

The data analysis at the end of Winter term compared the number of correct responses, or points, between the flipped and traditional students on the knowledge and application questions in three exams. The points earned for the quizzes and written paper were also compared between the two groups.

Findings: There were no statistically significant differences in the outcome measures for the exams, quizzes, or papers between the two groups. Also, there were no statistically significant differences between the knowledge and application questions on any of the exam scores.

To further enhance the data, a student survey was conducted after the term ended. The questions addressed (a) out-of-class workload/preparation, (b) how effectively in-class time was spent, (c) whether they took notes during videos or lectures, (d) peer and faculty interactions during in-class time, (e) how well they felt they learned, (f) if they enjoyed listening to the traditional or recorded lectures, and (g) if the pre-class assignments were clear. Figure 1 shows the results.

Figure 1: Comparison of Student Responses by Teaching Method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Traditional Classroom</th>
<th>Flipped Classroom</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heavier Prep</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Class Time</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes/Video</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Interactions</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Interactions</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learned Well/Method</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recorded vs Live Lectures</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments Clear</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of students that agree / strongly agree with survey questions

Three Likert-scale questions in the survey showed a significant association:

- “I enjoyed listening to lectures during class time” (traditional) or “I enjoyed the recorded lectures” (flipped). More students (50% vs. 28%) in the traditional classroom agreed or strongly agreed.
- “I continued to learn from the interaction with my peers during the in-class time.” More students (65% vs. 53%) in the flipped classroom agreed or strongly agreed.
- “The pre-class assignments were clear and reasonable.” More students (53% vs. 43%) in the flipped classroom agreed or strongly agreed.

Finally, Figure 2 shows the primary learning preferences indicated by the students in the two groups who completed the survey.

Figure 2: Primary Learning Preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Traditional (N=39)</th>
<th>Flipped (N=40)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Participation</td>
<td>22 (56%)</td>
<td>19 (48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to Taped Lectures</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to Live Lectures in Class</td>
<td>11 (28%)</td>
<td>8 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking Notes in Either Venue</td>
<td>13 (33%)</td>
<td>10 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PowerPoints/With/Without Files</td>
<td>21 (54%)</td>
<td>17 (43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading the Textbook</td>
<td>4 (10%)</td>
<td>5 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing NCLEX Questions</td>
<td>25 (64%)</td>
<td>26 (65%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study Scenarios</td>
<td>14 (36%)</td>
<td>15 (38%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outcomes: In this study, all students learned the course content despite the new approach to learning for those in the flipped classroom and the novel teaching methods for those instructors.

Certain themes emerged from the student survey results:

- Traditional classroom students mentioned positive interactions and familiarity.
- Flipped classroom students mentioned effective classroom activities, effective recorded lectures, and autonomy.
- Suggested improvements from the traditional classroom students included more interaction and reduction in reading/preparation.
- Suggested improvements from the flipped classroom students included the need for more effective recorded lectures.

The biggest challenges students cited to learning in the traditional manner were too much material and “boaring.” The flipped classroom students cited lack of time and lack of immediate clarification.

According to Harrington, because there were no statistically significant differences in outcomes between the two groups, the team has decided to continue to use the flipped classroom. It is hoped this will promote a more learner-centered approach, increase time spent in the application of knowledge, and help students develop life-long learning techniques.

Does the Flipped Classroom Work?
Learning From Almost Real Life

How do student nurses learn their profession without hurting anyone in the process? As patient acuity and complexity increases, even new nurses must have highly developed critical thinking skills and excellent clinical judgment. Thus, today’s health care environment calls for more sophisticated educational strategies, including the use of simulation.

KCON offers the entire range of simulation possibilities — from specific task trainers, to virtual patient “visits,” to computerized manikins that breathe and blink, to experiences with standard patients. Associate professor Deborah Bambini, PhD, MSN [’95], RN, WHNP, CNE, CHSE, has taken a faculty leadership role in education simulation technologies at KCON.

“Simulation as a pedagogy incorporates all of these approaches,” Bambini says. “With advances in technology, fidelity — realism — has significantly increased during recent years, leading faculty to increase and change the way simulation is used. KCON now includes 21 clock hours of simulation in every clinical course in our traditional and second degree undergraduate programs.”

While simulation technologies like task trainers have been available for decades, learning through online virtual encounters is a newer idea. In 2017, a KCON team created virtual patients living in an online virtual neighborhood called Kaycon, which was based on four actual Grand Rapids neighborhoods. Bambini created eight pregnant patients who each experience a different complication of pregnancy that unfolds over eight separate student “encounters.” Students listen to audio clips about the patients and then are given lab results, vital signs, and assessment findings at each visit online. They have to make decisions, find neighborhood resources, and perform various activities related to that patient. They also participate in Blackboard and clinical group discussions. [See related story on page 9.]

How does using simulation for nursing education benefit students and, ultimately, their patients? “Simulation is like a bridge,” Bambini says. “It is one thing to read about something in a textbook, watch videos, even practice skills. But simulation is all about learning in the context of a patient situation and putting the psychomotor and decision-making skills you’ve learned into action.

“In the safe environment at KCON,” she continues, “students can practice clinical decision making in situations that are almost ‘real-life’ before they work with patients. They can make mistakes, knowing they won’t hurt anyone. In general, patients who are hospitalized today are much more acutely ill than in the past, and there is less room for error. Using simulation is giving our students more confidence and they are even more competent when they arrive at a clinical site.”

Creating Simulations for PMH Nursing

Psychiatric/mental health (PMH) nursing is a specialty that can be difficult to teach, and it might even be seen as incompatible with the world of simulation. But KCON associate professor Andrea Bostrom, PhD, PMHCNS-BC, has been utilizing her skills in that specialty to create simulation scenarios that work.

In 2011, Bostrom and KCON associate professors Deborah Bambini, PhD, MSN (’95), RN, WHNP, CNE, CHSE, and Elaine Van Doren, PhD, RN, were awarded a $33,000 Michigan Nursing Corps (MNC) grant for a project titled “Simulation for the Integration of Psychiatric-Mental Health.” The project was designed to develop simulation technology to facilitate student learning about current issues facing individuals who suffer from mental illness.

To accomplish this, “virtual patients” with mental illness have been developed. Scripts have been created for student, faculty, and theater volunteers. They have been videorecorded, and those tapes are being used as anchors for learning objectives and activities. In addition, tools for PMH learning outcomes, various student assessments, and detailed case scenarios have been developed. So far, eight scenarios have been completed, and four were used for the first time during Winter term in the NUR 417 course.

The work for this project was built on an existing initiative. Drs. Bambini and Van Doren, through a National League of Nursing Initiative called Health Information Technology Scholars (HITS), created a virtual neighborhood called Kaycon. [See related story on page 8. The neighborhood connects undergraduate students online to virtual patients. Those clinical cases/exemplars originally focused on obstetrics and community health nursing. The MNC grant allowed the team to create integrated case scenarios that added PMH nursing. For example, one scenario is a woman with peripartal depression.

“The simulation method of creating patient exemplars on video and adding them to an existing virtual neighborhood is an innovation,” explains Bostrom. “Students will see the interaction of PMH patients in their family and community environment. These types of experiences are very difficult to provide with the current methods of teaching PMH.

“We believe using simulation will promote efficient use of clinical faculty,” Bostrom concludes. “Also, it will help students complete their nursing education programs on time and ensure that they attain relevant competencies. Ultimately, the use of virtual patients is a cost-effective method of clinical teaching. And while virtual experiences are not a substitute for PMH clinical immersion experiences, they do not depend on the serendipitous availability of specific experiences.”
Scott Recognized as Distinguished Alumna

Linda Scott, PhD, MSN ’95, FAAN, was named a Distinguished Alumna by the GVSU Alumni Association at the December 2013 commencement ceremonies. She is currently the chief academic officer at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Nursing, where she is spearheading the strategic revision of a new nursing curriculum. She is also the chancellor’s appointed representative to the national Coalition of Urban Serving Universities.

Scott earned her undergraduate degree in nursing from MSU in 1979, her MSN from GVSU in 1995, and her PhD in nursing from the University of Michigan in 1999. In 2008, she was inducted as a fellow into the American Academy of Nursing, the nursing profession’s highest honor. This recognition was the first for a member of the nursing faculty at GVSU.

Scott began her career as a nurse clinician and has been a champion for equitable and accessible health care for diverse and vulnerable populations. She is also a nurse scientist, one of few nurses to ever conduct research on nurse fatigue and patient safety. During her tenure as a KCON professor from 1998-2012, Scott was the recipient of three major teaching awards: the Pew Excellence in Teaching Award (2000), the GVSU Outstanding Teaching Award (2003), and the Glenn A. Nemeyer Outstanding Faculty Award (2009). She was also integral to the development and implementation of several curricular initiatives and nursing programs, including KCON’s DNP degree program.

Treme Recognized at Veterans Summit

During the week of November 11, 2013, Julie Treme, BSN ’13, an Army National Guard veteran wasn’t crawling through a dark room to find and help a wounded combat soldier. Instead, she was an honoree at the 2013 Governor’s Summit on Veterans Talent, co-sponsored by the Detroit Regional Chamber and the Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency. Treme, who was selected from more than 100 nominees, was one of five recent graduates from Michigan universities to be recognized at the event.

Revised NCLEX: KCON Scores Well

Once again, KCON is doing well when it comes to NCLEX-RN exam scores. Our first-time test takers between July 1 and September 30, 2013, had an 89.2% pass rate. Approximately 78% of KCON undergraduate students who studied under the new KCON curriculum tested during this period; when only their scores were considered, the pass rate went up to 90.8%.

For comparison, the national pass rate for this period was 80.7% and for the Michigan BSN it was 83.5%. It should be noted that in April 2013, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing increased the difficulty of the NCLEX-RN exam. So the current exam results reflect not only our new curriculum, but also a more difficult test.

Have News?

Have news for the next issue of “Alumni Briefs”? Send it to the GVSU Alumni Relations Office:

E-mail: GVC话 Alumni@gmail.com
Phone: 616-331-3500 or 800.336.0554
KCON Web Site: www.gvsu.edu/kcon/
Find us on our Facebook page:
GVSU Kirkhof College of Nursing Alumni Chapter

All KCON alumni are automatically members of the KCON Alumni Association chapter. Please stay in touch and consider joining in on some of our activities. Use the form at http://www.
gvsu.edu/kcon/alumni/join/ to keep us up to date, or send us an e-mail at ookcon.

Jennifer (Pietraz) Langholz, BSN ’09, RN

Jennifer Pietraz Langholz, BSN ’09, RN

KCON

ALUMNI BRIEFS

Sara Matt, BSN (OS), is a clinical social worker, attending at Spectrum Health in Grand Rapids.

Amy Bruchting, BSN (OS), is teaching in the nursing program at Everest Institute in Grand Rapids.

Julie Baloun, MA (OS), BSN (OS), president of the GVSU Alumni Association board and director of emergency preparedness at Spectrum Health, was named by Grand Rapids Business Journal to its list of 50 Most Influential Women in West Michigan.

Jori Erdman, MSN (OS), BSN (OS), is a women’s health practitioner at Mercy Health Saint Mary’s comprehensive breast center.

Abigail Hocken, MSN (OS), Terri Ruiter, MSN (OS), Michelle Smith, MSN (OS), Amanda Vondrellberg, MSN (OS), and Erin Warciwski, MSN (OS), all passed the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) certification exam. This is a 100% pass rate for the first graduating class of KCON’s revised master’s degree program.

Trey Huxford, BSN (OS), KCON, is now head program coordinator at Spectrum Health.

Gweneth Johnson, BSN (OS), is a clinical services manager at Pewee Valley Christian Mental Health Services, is a featured alumna on GVSU Alumni Spotlight on YouTube. Also featured on the site are Frank Julian, BSN (OS), and Peggy Julian, BSN (OS).

Joshua Mooney, BSN (OS), is an intensivist/critical care nurse with the center for pulmonary and sleep medicine at MidMichigan Northern Michigan Hospital in Petoskey.

Devon Nauman, BSN (OS), has worked three years with the assisted breathing center at Metro Health and is completing a CNW/WHN master’s degree at Georgetown University.

Carol Fitzgerald Robinson, DNP (OS), is working as the community coordinator for Ahmed’s Collision Center.

Jennifer Roda, DNP (OS), NFA, CNHN, vice president of surgical services at Spectrum Health Hospitals, gave an inspirational message titled “Let Your Light Shine” at the 2013 induction ceremony for Kappa Epsilon Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International.

Rebecca Jewett Syprzewski, DNP (OS), MSN (OS), is a family nurse practitioner at Grand Valley Medical Specialists, contributed an article “What Older Adults Can Expect from Heart Care” to the September 8, 2013, edition of the Grand Rapids Press.

Mara Tonig-Tibbels, BSN (OS), is a clinical research nurse coordinator for the cardiovascular team at Spectrum Health.

Michelle Towle, MSN (OS), BSN (OS), CRNA, FAAN, has been selected as the incoming chair of the Academy of Nurse Anesthetist’s Expert Panel for Informatics & Technology. She is the chief professional practice officer for Excevic Clinical Solutions and also serves as campaign chair for the Bonnie Wexner Center for Health Care Transformation at GVSU-KCON.

Margaret Kenyon VanDewater, BSN (OS), is working in outpatient surgery at Spectrum Health/Butterworth Hospital and attending school to complete a master’s degree as a family nurse practitioner.
KCON SNA Attends NSNA Convention

Nine KCON SNA members attended the mid-year convention of the National Student Nurses Association (NSNA) in Louisville, Ky., last November. They went to sessions focused on career development, legislative involvement, communication, and websites, as well as various workshops and a nursing specialty showcase. The students had a private meeting with past ANA president Rebecca Patton, discussing her involvement with the Affordable Care Act and recent health care policy. In addition, all of the SNA attendees obtained American Red Cross Disaster Certification.

SNA Leaders at Work

Erin Craft-Otterbacher, SNA evaluations director, has been leading the effort to implement a GVSU resolution that was passed at both the state and national student nurses association conventions last year: “In Support of Implementing Holistic Health Programs for the Improvement of Student Nurses’ Healthy Lifestyles.”

Nancy Carlson, MS, RN, KCON affiliate faculty, and Nicole Telima, SNA’s image and breakthrough to nursing director, worked with Kent Intermediate School District (KISD) to create a Sim Day for KISD students. The clinical nursing simulation event, held last November, included the care of a patient with myocardial infarction. Two KISD students participated as assistants and the simulation was streamed for 20 other KISD students to view. SNA students led a post-simulation debriefing.

Students Help Build Community

At The Other Way Ministries, located in Grand Rapids’ near west side, KCON students are providing blood pressure checks and other health screenings, foot care clinics, and support for healthy walks with neighbors, many of whom have diabetes and hypertension. They also help individuals find doctors and insurance, cook breakfast and, even make house calls if needed. Oh, and they’ve painted a mural on a building near The Other Way.

“You’re helping, a little more community it built,” says Maureen Ryan, MSN, RN, CS, EdD(c), their clinical instructor. “In tending to physical needs, students help knit people together. It’s more than just the health of the individual; it’s the health of the neighborhood.”

An extended version of this story was originally published in the Grand Rapids Press on November 5, 2013.

Ohman Wins ESPO Award

Jennifer Ohman, DNP program, is a member of an NIH research grant team led by Rebecca Davis, PhD, MSN (’94). RN. Ohman has been selected for the Gerontological Society of America’s Emerging Scholar and Professional Organization (ESPO) Award. This is outstanding recognition for both Ohman and Davis. Their teamwork demonstrates how DNP- and PhD-prepared nurses can work collaboratively on producing and applying best evidence, a model for the future of the nursing profession.

Student Nurses Participate in AD Walk

The Alzheimer’s Association of Greater Michigan held a Walk to End Alzheimer’s on September 14, 2013. More than 950 walkers participated, including a number of KCON student nurses and SNA members. The walk, an annual fundraising event to earn money for the National Alzheimer’s Association, was held at Millennium Park. Participants planted a “remembrance garden” of pinwheels to honor those living with and affected by Alzheimer’s disease. Individuals and teams of walkers raised a total of $188,854 for the cause.

We thank Nicole Childs, who wrote the original story for GVSU’s “Nursing in the News.”

Laurie Garret Presents at GVSU

KCON nursing students and other Lakers had the opportunity to attend a presentation by Laurie Garret in October at GVSU’s Fall Arts Celebration 2013. Garret is an award-winning journalist who has written many articles and two best-selling books about public health. Her presentation focused on bioterrorism, in keeping with her recognized expertise in pandemics and the creation and weaponization of disease. She was an advisor to the creators of the 2011 movie “Contagion.”

“Nurses will be among the first individuals affected by bioterrorism and pandemics,” says KCON student Katie Warden, who attended the presentation. “Throughout history, nurses have been on the front lines, and we must be prepared.”

STUDENT/SNA UPDATE

KCON STUDENTS

STUDENTS

SNA 2014 OFFICERS

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• Vice President: Jenna LaPeer
• Secretary: Jamie Studvik
• Treasurer: Lauren DeYoung
• Communications Director: Andrew Dechaine
• Community Wellness Director: Andrew Dechaine
• Curriculum Director: Jaime Knopp
• Evaluation Director: Erin Craft-Otterbacher

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• Angela Garcia, Office of Student Services
• Nancy Carlson, Adjunct Faculty
Women Veterans Health Training Initiated

Yvette Petti, PhD, MSN, AHN, associate dean for graduate programs and embedded faculty member at the Battle Creek VA Medical Center, has recently implemented an initiative titled Women Veteran’s Health Screening for the Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACT). These teams consist of physicians, APRN, and PA-led teams of RNs, LPNs, and medical assistants, along with interdisciplinary teams of clinical psychologists, clinical pharmacists, information technology specialists, laboratory science specialists, and specialty nurse examiner trainers.

KCON faculty are advancing their skills through this training. On February 7, Deborah Bambini, PhD, MSN (’95), RN, WHNP, CNE, CHSE; Joy Washburn, EdD, RN, WHNP-BC; and Karyn Butler, PhD, CNM, participated in the Women’s Health Proﬁciency Skills Training for Primary Care and Women’s Wellness Providers and PACT Nurses held at the Battle Creek VA. The training was led by Dr. Petti.

Welcome New Staff!

Tamara Mohr, MSN, BSN (’00), Academic Community Liaison
Lori Turnbull, Ofﬁce Coordinator

FACErTY & STAFF AWAARDS

Cynthia Coniar, PhD, MSN (’85), CNE, was selected for the GVSU 2014 Distinguished Graduate Mentoring award. Congratulations, Cindy!

The Kappa Epsilon Chapter-at-Large of Sigma Theta Tau International gave the following 2013 faculty awards:

• Ruth Ann Brintnall, PhD, MSN (’95), RN, WHNP-BC, APRN, CHSE - Outstanding Mentor
• Joy Washburn, EdD, RN, WHNP-BC - Excellence in Education

The following faculty and staff were recently honored for their years of service in GVSU:

• Ruth Ann Brintnall, PhD, MSN (’95), RN, WHNP-BC, APRN-BC - 30 years
• Cassandra Carter, MEd, BS - 20 years
• Sharon Leder, DSN - 20 years
• Cassondra Wright, PhD, MS, CNE - 20 years
• Susan Mlynarczyk, PhD, RN, PNP - 10 years
• Wanda Mouland, BSN - 10 years

Joy Washburn, PhD, RN, WHNP-BC, was selected for the GVSU 2014 chair-elect for the Healthy Kent Breastfeeding Coalition. She will become chair in 2015.

Rebecca Davis, PhD, MSN (’94), RN, and her research team were recently interviewed on WZZM TV 13 about her NIH-funded research related to wayfinding behavior among those with dementia. Their work was also the subject of a story in the Holland Sentinel.

Ruth Ann Brintnall, PhD, MSN (’95), RNC, WHNP-BC - 20 years

Mary Jo Mielke, BSN, RN (’01), RN, contributed an article titled “How to Maintain Excellent Health While Traveling” to the February 9, 2014, edition of the Grand Rapids Press.

Suzanne Mlynarczyk, PhD, RN, PNP, was selected by the Midwest Nursing Research Society’s Pediatric Research Section for the Fall 2013 quarter’s “Meet the Member.”

Kristin Norton, MA, was selected by GVSU’s provost for the 2013-2014 University Leadership Program. She was one of only 16 employees selected from across the university.

Ann Sheehan, DNP, PNP, contributed an article titled “Access to Health Care can be a Conundrum” to the November 10, 2013, edition of the Grand Rapids Press.

Joy Washburn, EdD, RN, WHNP-BC, was invited last fall to participate in Grand Rapids Community College’s Community Planning Summit, which focused on the development of a new three-year strategic plan for GRCC.

Kathy Watt, PhD, contributed an article titled “Chronic Inflammation: Oft-a Faulty Response of Body Fighting Disease” to the December 8, 2013, edition of the Grand Rapids Press.

“...We do not reject our traditions, but we are willing to adapt to changing circumstances, when change we must. We are willing to suffer the discomfort of change in order to achieve a better future.”

BARBARA JORDAN
In 2010, it was estimated that nine percent of the adults residing in Kent County had Type II diabetes. Research has shown that diabetes and other debilitating conditions can be delayed, improved, or prevented by increasing physical activity levels. But physical activity is typically not consistently assessed during primary care of office visits, and patients may not receive complete information about the interventions they need to address their sedentary habits.

The practitioners at GVSU’s Family Health Center (FHC) struggle with the same questions faced by other primary care practitioners. Can the barriers to increased physical activity for low-income, inner-city, sedentary adults be overcome? Can effective lifestyle interventions established on evidence-based practice be widely implemented?

Tom Sanchez, MSN (’04), RN, FNP-BC, a KCON DNP candidate working at the FHC, is beginning to address this problem as part of his DNP immersion experience. "In Fall 2013, I learned about the YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids’ community outreach programs," says Sanchez. “I also learned about the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP), an effort to enroll high-risk clients in a program developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.”

According to Sanchez, the local YMCA partners with community organizations in their neighborhoods to engage clients with the DPP and other wellness activities. One of these programs includes free, professionally led, popular exercise classes scheduled in familiar neighborhood organizations.

"I participated in one of those classes," Sanchez explains, “and we offered blood pressure and other screenings during the class. We saw how much fun participants were having and how holding the class in a place like New Hope Baptist Church broke down a number of exercise barriers like cost, proximity to home, and safety."

"I also found out," he continues, “that the YMCA had only one partnership with a health care organization. The proverbial light went on, and we outlined an approach to engage more providers in referrals to YMCA community outreach programs. Being able to refer FHC clients to various free programs that are embedded in the local community and run by a reliable, well-recognized organization answers an array of primary care needs.”

Thanks to a team of collaborators, including Sarah Portenga from the YMCA, Sanchez, and other FHC staff, the FHC now has a process for referring patients to all of the YMCA programs offered in the surrounding community. Because this referral process is relatively new, results will not be known for at least a few months.

The executive director of KCON’s Bonnie Wesorick Center for Health Care Transformation, Evelyn Clingerman, PhD, RN, FNAP, uses phrases like “common mission,” “joining together,” and “nourishing relationships” when she reflects on the center’s mission. “The Wesorick Center is a unique part of KCON,” Clingerman explains. “We are a dedicated interdisciplinary setting where scholarly work is done to advance knowledge of health care delivery and transform practice at the point of care. We support students, faculty, community partners, and providers — everyone interested in collaborating, developing, and implementing sustainable projects related to health care clinical practice and delivery.”

According to Clingerman, the center’s support includes proposal and writing consultation for grants, data analyses, implementation assistance, and evidence-based science projects. Its workshops focus on patient thinking, interprofessional education and collaborative practice, health informatics, and evidence-based clinical practice.

What started out as a vision in 2009 is now a reality, the Wesorick Center has generated an impressive list of accomplishments so far, including hiring its executive director in August 2012. Some of these include:

- Completed research data collection and data entry with students for a funded study titled “Integration of Health Care Services in Grand Rapids.”
- Developed interprofessional clinical practice guidelines for use in an integrated health information technology documentation system used in 400 clinical practice settings in North America.
- Sponsored the first Wesorick Distinguished Lecturehip in November 2013. Lisa Osbourne, PhD, CRNA, CAPT, NC, USN, an expert in veteran’s health, was the guest speaker.
- Facilitated two three-hour interprofessional patient thinking workshops, with a foundational certificate for faculty in health-related disciplines.

The center has also developed a newsletter, a website [http://www.gvsu.edu/kcon/the-bonnie-wesorick-center-for-health-care-transformation-233.htm], and a Facebook page [https://www.facebook.com/wesorick].

What difference does the Wesorick Center hope to make over time? “We embrace each patient’s story as the effective health care delivery,” says Clingerman. “We want to improve outcomes; reduce costs and redundancies in delivery; develop visionary leaders; and leverage knowledge about health information technology, interprofessional education, and evidence-based and collaborative clinical practices. We believe we have found a perfect home for all of this at the Kirkhof College of Nursing.”
THE KIRKHOF COLLEGE OF NURSING CURRENTLY OFFERS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMS:

- Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)
  - Traditional Undergraduate Program
  - Second Degree Program
  - RN to BSN Program
- Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)
- Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)

“We are creating exceptional opportunities for faculty and students, engaged in dynamic teaching and learning experiences. A revised curriculum for the BSN degree program tracks is ensuring that our graduates attain the competencies they need for an evolving healthcare system. With an urgent need for evidence-based care, care coordination, and quality/process improvement in our care delivery models, our MSN program prepares our graduates with these critical skills and eligibility for the Clinical Nurse Leader certification. Since 2009, we have been averaging 35 new students per year in our Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree program, preparing them for Advanced Nursing Practice (Child/Adolescent or Adult/Older Adult) or Health Systems Leadership. All of our graduates are committed to the Future of Nursing — leading change, advancing health.”

Dr. Cynthia McCurren
Dean, Kirkhof College of Nursing