Celebrating 50 Years!
Reflecting on Our Past, Looking Toward Our Future
In the Beginning: The Class of '74
And Then Came the MSN Program
In this KCON Magazine, we mark GVSU’s 50th anniversary and showcase some of KCON’s historical highlights. To guide us, I asked Linda Bond, one of our longest-serving faculty members and the alumni association’s faculty liaison, to reflect on her deep historical knowledge of our college. Enjoy the journey!

GVSU nursing, like our parent university, has a rich history. From the early beginnings, when the fledgling program was housed as a unit in the School of Health Sciences, KCON has grown and developed under the visionary leadership of our program heads and deans. And always, central to our success and the success of more than 3,500 alumni has been a very talented, hardworking faculty.

Having started my career as a nursing educator at an older, more established institution, it has been refreshing and professionally challenging to be in the company of leaders who honor history but aren’t encumbered by it. GVSU’s emphasis on teaching has created a culture that welcomes, expects and promotes change, particularly if it is beneficial to students. This philosophy has made it relatively easy to make program changes in response to the changing roles of nurses and the needs of our region.

For example, when I arrived at Grand Valley in 1986, the baccalaureate program was well established and the master’s program was in full swing. It was a time of nursing shortages and KCON responded by doubling the number of BSN students, admitting two cohorts each year. A couple of decades later, again in response to nursing shortages, the number of students was increased by adding yet a third cohort of students and teaching nursing classes year around. Along the way, KCON was an early leader in distance education, online teaching and other technologies to promote continued education for adult learners.

To create KCON’s pioneer class of 1974, Grand Valley called for students with exceptional potential. That tradition continues today as our alumni are making significant contributions in health care, both locally and around the world. We are proud of our still-young history, but even more proud of all of you who are out there every day making a difference!
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Cover Photo: 1976 School of Nursing Faculty and Staff

Back Row, Left to Right

Middle Row, Left to Right
Kathy Brehm, Linda Roberds, Joan Shedd, Jan Kniskern, Phyllis Gendler.

Front Row, Left to Right
Crystal Stewart, Colleen Martin, Claire Pinnsonault, Ruth Ann Stone.
In 1982, Grand Valley State University Kirkhof School of Nursing was named in honor of Russe1 Kirkhof, seen here seated.
Reflecting on Our Past, Looking Toward Our Future

For the past year, GVSU has been celebrating its 50th anniversary. Since its first class of 12 pioneering students began in 1973, KCON has played a critical role in GVSU’s development — helping it to become the high-quality, nationally recognized regional university it is today.

KCON Magazine recently talked with GVSU’s president, Dr. Thomas Haas, and KCON’s dean, Dr. Cynthia McCurren, about KCON’s place in Grand Valley’s history and their vision of KCON’s future.
Talking About: KCON’s Place in GVSU History

President Haas: In the 50 years since our charter was granted, the university has grown not only in numbers but in relevance to this region. Back in 1960, William Seidman and others looked to create, with a public/private partnership, a public university that would serve this region with talent development and economic development.

Part of their thinking was to continually nurture the relationship we have with the West Michigan region, and then beyond. Our results are impressive. From the first 226 students enrolled in 1963, we’ve grown to a university of almost 25,000, with students coming from almost every Michigan county and many other states and nations. The university has matured and changed over the years. And although we remain very young in many respects, when we look at the successes of Grand Valley, it has been because we’ve always maintained our relevance to the region while contributing to the nation and the world.

When I think specifically about the investments Grand Valley has made in nursing and the health professions, I think Kirkhof College of Nursing has led the way. GVSU’s early leaders looked beyond what was fundamentally a regional commuter campus. Years ago they stepped out, surveyed what the region needed, and saw that a nursing core was necessary for our health care system here in West Michigan. And nursing, given the strong emphasis we had in the sciences, made sense in relation to Grand Valley’s mission. Building on that early success, then we were able to look at other types of health professions that would serve the region’s needs.

I appreciate the vision Grand Valley’s former presidents had. I could see immediately when I arrived here how important nursing was to GVSU. Nursing has led the way, and the results have been remarkable. People often ask me what some of our strengths are. I point to nursing as one of our core strengths, with outcomes that we can be very, very proud of.

Dean McCurren: Having only been here since 2007, I didn’t participate in most of GVSU’s and KCON’s history. But when I was here for interviews, I immediately felt like the college of nursing has always been thoughtful and strategic about how it grew. KCON started with undergraduate programs. They got their feet wet and made sure they were doing that really well before they expanded to graduate programs. You could see the careful planning.

Also, they weren’t mired down in a local mentality. Grand Valley’s leaders were very aware of where the nursing profession needed to go and were guided by a national focus. They were visionary, and it was clear they had been that way since the founding of the nursing program.

At the same time, I could see that GVSU and the college have always been responsive to the needs of the community. For example, not long before I came they’d been faced with the need to expand enrollment in response to the current nursing shortage. Rather than doing this in isolation, they worked in cooperation with members of the regional Alliance for Health. Grand Valley still manages a clinical placement consortium, where area nursing education providers work together to share responsibility and access to the region’s clinical resources.

1971
- Grand Valley received approvals to establish baccalaureate nursing program in the School of Health Sciences, located in Lake Michigan Hall

1973
- Vera Brand named first director of nursing education
- Donna Larson, Colleen Martin & Suzanne Perkins hired as first faculty members
- 12 students enrolled in first nursing class

1974
- First class graduated with BS degree and a major in nursing
- Colleen Martin named second director of nursing education

1975
- Nursing program became separate school within the College of Arts & Sciences, and degree changed to BSN
- Colleen Martin named director of School of Nursing

1978
- School of Nursing received initial accreditation from the National League of Nursing

1979
- Colleen Curtin named interim director while Colleen Martin returned to school

1980
Talking About: The Wow! Factor

Dean McCurren: When I was first approached about the dean’s position, I hadn’t even heard of Grand Valley. My real “Wow” moment came when I came for the onsite interview. The entire two-day interview was handled very professionally. I was very impressed with the search committee, which included students. They asked great questions, were very articulate, and knew what they were looking for in a leader.

Of course, the Cook-DeVos building is very impressive to see. But I understood it meant that the university was committed to ensuring a quality education — visible evidence that GVSU cares about what it does and is willing to commit the resources to do it in a first-class way. It also showed me that KCON is a highly respected college in the university.

When I met with individual faculty and heard some of their stories, aspirations and innovations, I felt like there was a lot of potential. I was looking to be with a group of people who wanted to move to the next level, and I heard the faculty say that many times, “We’ve done many good things, and we’re poised to do even more. We’re ready to go to the next level.” That told me they were innovative and looking to the future. This was exactly what I wanted in my own professional growth.

President Haas: What really caught my attention were the efforts the faculty put forward to implement the Doctor of Nursing Practice program. I knew, given past experiences, that if we could create the leadership needed for the classroom and the clinical practice, we could be a leader in this whole area of nursing.

When I communicated with the provost and KCON’s dean, they were happy that I embraced the DNP as one of my initial activities in supporting faculty and curricular development. During my first year, I continued to be very vocal about it, telling people, “This is a great opportunity the faculty have brought to the university; let’s support it.” Then, when it finally happened and they started doing the marketing, I couldn’t have been any happier.

1982
- School of Nursing named in honor of Russel Kirkhof (KSON)

1983
- Master’s program established with funding from Grand Rapids Community Foundation
- First courses in master’s degree program offered; 10 students enrolled
- Mary Horan recruited to be graduate program director

1985
- KSON Honor Society formed

1987
- KSON became autonomous school, with Mary Horan named first dean

1988
- Chartering ceremony held for Kappa Epsilon Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International

1989
- KSON began admitting two baccalaureate nursing classes per year
- Grand Valley granted university status
- New nursing lab opened in Lake Michigan Hall

1990
- KSON began distance education classes for RN/BSN students via satellite in WGVU studios at Eberhard Center
Talking About:
A GVSU Without KCON

**President Haas:** What would Grand Valley be like without KCON? Well, I asked some of our board members recently, “If you think of Grand Valley, what comes to mind? What is top of mind, first and foremost?” Two out of eight said, “Nursing.”

Think of what’s relevant today, especially for this region. If we didn’t have a college of nursing, I don’t think the stature or the reputation of Grand Valley as a neighbor and source of talent would be as good as it is. KCON is a key part of Grand Valley’s role in talent development and economic development. If we develop the talent and the professions, economic development will proceed. KCON and GVSU are integral to West Michigan in that regard.

We know with nursing there will be continued growth — in both nursing education and nursing itself — in the jobs of the future. Think about this region without KCON at Grand Valley? I don’t think that hole could be filled by others.

Talking About:
Visions for the Future

**Dean McCurren:** I would like to see KCON be a visionary leader in the work needed to implement the recommendations for the future of nursing described in the October 2010 consensus report from the Institute of Medicine (IOM), “The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health.” Each recommendation has a blueprint for action itemizing specific activities that need to occur. I see us as a leader in ensuring the ability to implement and meet many of those recommendations.

I also think we’ll be a leader in figuring out how health care needs to be delivered in the future and contributing to health care reform. The development of the Bonnie Wesorick Center for Health Care Transformation is a testament to that belief. We’re very intentional about the degree programs we’re offering. We believe they are a well-defended strategy for nurses to acquire the skills and knowledge to be change agents. To help with reform, nurses need to be well educated, articulate and know how to contribute to the discussions that will lead to the reform that is needed.

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**1994**
- Women’s Health Nurse Practitioner Program developed

**1995**
- KSON moved to Henry Hall

**1996**
- KSON established nurse screening clinic at Herkimer Apartment site in Grand Rapids’ Heartside neighborhood

**1997**
- Lorraine Rodrigues-Fisher named KSON’s second dean
- KSON began development of global nursing focus and nursing student exchange program

**1999**
- KSON celebrated 25th anniversary
- GVSU, U of M, MSU and Wayne State awarded $4 million grant to establish collaborative Academic Nurse-Managed Primary Care Center, and GVSU Family Health Center established

**2000**
- Postlicensure programs moved to DeVos Center, with nursing taught on both campuses
- Phyllis Gendler named interim dean and in 2001 named KSON’s third dean
President Haas: As we know, there will be increasing specialization in medical schools. With that in mind, we’re going to have to look at the integration of professional work that’s associated with health care services. We certainly have to look at costs. But I think what we’re going to see is “team health.” The changing dynamic in the next 10 years will be to more of an interprofessional team approach to health care that will reduce costs. We’ll see physicians become more specialized while nurses, physician assistants and allied health professionals take the lead to create a new approach to primary care.

Nursing, as a profession, is going to provide some of the leadership for this form of patient care, and DNP-trained nurses are going to be critical to its success. There is no doubt in my mind that the nursing profession will become even more important in the next 10 years — an integral part of team health. To meet this need, Grand Valley is going to look at leading in accreditation and leading in education for clinical practice.

A role and responsibility we have in all of our disciplines is to attract the best and the brightest students. I see the GVSU nursing faculty and KCON alumni who are in the field doing just that. We need to inspire both young and old. We want to attract the traditional student, but we also need to look at the evolving market. For example, look at veterans — those corpsmen and other medically related personnel who are coming out of the military services. We also need to work more closely with community colleges.

How can we inspire others to look at this world of service and work that is embodied by nursing? The future of Kirkhof College of Nursing will be driven by our answers to this question.
In the Beginning:
The Class of ’74

Nursing education in West Michigan was dominated by hospital-based diploma programs for much of the mid-20th century, which was typical of most nursing education across the United States. Grand Rapids had three programs — one each at Blodgett, Butterworth and Saint Mary’s hospitals. At the same time, there was growing concern about the health care needs of the region and the nation. Would enough adequately trained nursing staff be available?

Findings in a 1963 report from the Surgeon General’s Consultant Group on Nursing suggested that the baccalaureate degree was the best preparation for nursing. In response, the 1965 American Nurses Association (ANA) House of Delegates adopted a recommendation that the ANA continue to work toward baccalaureate education as the educational foundation for professional nursing practice.

This ultimately led Grand Valley and its community supporters to explore the possibility of developing a nursing program. Visionary leaders such as Arend (Don) Lubbers, then president of the university, embraced the challenge and persisted until approval was granted in 1971 by the State of Michigan Department of Education for the formation of a baccalaureate nursing program. Approval of the initial curriculum and plan for implementation by the State of Michigan Board of Nursing came in September 1972.

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FIRST NURSING PATCH USED IN THE 1970s.
FACULTY MEMBER AND LATER DEAN, PHYLLIS GENDLER WATCHES A STUDENT USE A SYRINGE.
Originally housed in the School of Health Sciences (SHS), nursing first appeared as an academic program in the 1972-73 Grand Valley State College catalog. The catalog description indicated that students must be “academically superior” to consider the program. Students were to be trained to function not only in hospitals and other acute care settings, but also more independently as family nurse practitioners.

The first class of junior students was admitted into the nursing major in Fall 1972. The academically superior student body included an even dozen: five men and seven women. History notes that this class graduated in 1974, and the graduates were employed at hospitals in Grand Rapids and throughout Michigan.

KCON Magazine was able to locate several graduates from the class of 1974. We wanted to hear their stories. What happened in their careers? How well prepared had they been? These pioneers all indicated they appreciated the emphasis on science in their education and felt that knowledge was crucial for their nursing coursework and, later, graduate education. They also agreed that they learned how to be assertive and not accept the status quo!

Vera Brand, founding director of the program, instilled in them the belief that they were clinicians, not traditional nurse providers. And while the program accepted transfer students, one returningRN found it difficult to have to repeat much of her education to earn the BSN. Grand Valley, like many academic programs of that time, was willing to help RNs get a BSN — provided they were willing to complete the one curriculum plan available.

The life journeys for the class of ’74 have taken many of them far from Grand Rapids. At least two members devoted much of their career to military nursing. One reported that his most rewarding job was as Commander of the Joint Anesthesia Element, Balad AFB, Iraq, where care is provided to American military and civilians, including children.

A graduate who remained in West Michigan cited her career in community health, particularly being in an administrative role during a time of great transition. We discovered that several graduates have served as nurse educators at some point during their professional journey, passing on the challenge to question the status quo as care providers.

As members of the class of ’74 approach retirement, many continue to practice their profession either full time or part time. One mental health specialist does contract work for the Department of Defense as a military and family life consultant. Another has found her calling in part-time work as a direct care provider for hospice.

Nursing is constantly changing, providing challenging and fulfilling opportunities. Members of the class of ’74 acknowledged the many changes that have occurred over the years, including higher patient acuity and an expanded knowledge base. Educational opportunities now abound for nurses who want to continue their education for advanced practice roles. One person noted how good it is to see nurse practitioners in the OR in roles that had previously been strictly for physician assistants. Complexity in health care has led to many subspecialties in the last 40 years. Concern continues over the “fractures” in nursing education, and debate continues over the educational preparation needed for entry into practice. And yet these veteran nurses, and many others, remember that their practice is all about their patients.

The class of ’74 continues to bring honor to Grand Valley, Kirkhof College of Nursing and our profession. Vera Brand put an emphasis on how the “new nurse” would have many roles, and members of the first class have done just that. The vision of GVSU’s early leaders has played out with the founding class and the more than 3,500 graduates who have followed them out into the profession. It is our privilege to recognize all of our “academically superior” graduates.
The 1980s were a time of recession for Michigan, with funding cuts that affected all of the state’s colleges and universities. In spite of this environment, it was a time of significant change and growth for KCON’s nursing program.

Emily Droste Bielak became the first doctoral-prepared member of the growing nursing faculty in 1980. This proved to be a turning point, allowing the vision of a graduate program in nursing to be implemented. Bielak took the lead in writing a grant to support its development. Unfortunately, the poor economic climate made it impossible to secure the necessary matching funds. Despite this setback, the desire on campus for the program didn’t subside.

In addition to GVSU’s own internal support for a graduate nursing program, there was support in the community, especially from the Grand Rapids district of the Michigan Nurses Association (MNA). Four nurses from the MNA lobbied on behalf of the program, first to President Arend Lubbers and Provost Glenn Niemeyer, and later to representatives of the Grand Rapids Community Foundation. The dream persisted. Finally in 1983, with a grant from the Grand Rapids Community Foundation, the master’s program became a reality.

The MSN program originally focused on preparing nurses for leadership positions in educational and health care organizations. The clinical emphasis was on acute care for adults and children. Mary Horan was recruited to be the first graduate program director. Horan, along with the 10 students enrolled in the part-time program, became the pioneers in graduate nursing education in West Michigan.

Since the 1980s, KCON’s graduate programs have continued to respond to the changing needs of health care in the region, the state and the country. The most recent addition to graduate nursing at Grand Valley was the DNP program, which was established in 2009. At the same time, the master’s program was revised to focus on the advanced generalist role of clinical nurse leader.

Many of that first class of KCON MSN graduates have gone on to advance their careers with more education. Some are clinical providers, serving as nurse practitioners. One has become a nurse researcher. Several have gone on to serve in administrative roles within complex organizations.

And what was the value of their KCON education? One alumna summed it up. “I felt very well prepared for my career in nursing — not so much with answers, but with having learned how to think and process information.”
KCON PAST FACULTY MEMBER AND LEADER IN THE AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION, PATRICIA UNDERWOOD, MET PRESIDENT CLINTON. UNDERWOOD LATER SERVED AS ANA’S VICE PRESIDENT.
KCON SHINES IN NCLEX-RN

KCON’s graduates are shining stars, and we have the data to prove it! The NCLEX-RN exam pass rate for October 1 through December 31, 2010, was 95.45% for KCON graduates. This is significantly higher than the national rate of 81.74%, the Michigan RN program rate of 85.53% and the Michigan BSN program rate of 87.72%. Congratulations!

FROM THE ALUMNI BOARD

In our nursing education we learned that we need to be full members of the profession. What is your contribution? What is your career, and how are you connected to nursing? What are you doing to move forward, grow, generate opportunities, challenge yourself? We want to hear and celebrate you!

We challenge you to actively participate in our alumni chapter and share in our collective growth as professionals. We’re planning a kick-off alumni open house in the fall with CE credits provided. Join us to celebrate, learn and grow. And yes, it’s another of our free events for our alumni.

Ready to reconnect with your graduating class? We’re on Facebook at “Alumni of the Kirkhof College of Nursing GVSU”

Mary Barr, BSN ('97), MSN ('02), a nurse practitioner at Spectrum Health’s Sleep Disorder Center, was featured in the March 13, 2011, edition of the Grand Rapids Press in an article about technology interfering with a good night’s sleep.

Julie Bulson, BSN ('99), MPA ('07), system director for emergency planning and response for all Spectrum Health hospitals across West Michigan, was honored by the Michigan Emergency Management Association. She was given the Mitigation of the Year Award for 2010, which recognizes a professional for any “project that includes education, hazard & risk reduction through mitigation.”

Shannon Darket, BSN ('09), works in a cardiac IMC at the University of Maryland Medical Center. She is currently heading an EBP research project on pet therapy programs for inpatient settings.

Natasha DeHaan, MSN ('09), family nurse practitioner, has been hired by the Spectrum Health Medical Group.

Barbara Gielincki, MSN ('00), FNP, and Hayley Baker, MSN ('10), FNP, are employed at Mercy Family Care in Prudenville, Mich.

Carol Glover, BSN ('05), RN, wrote and was featured in the story, “Medical Emergency at 30,000 Feet” in the September 2010 issue of the journal, Nursing2011 (Vol. 40, Issue 9, pgs 42-45).

Lynette Johnson, BSN ('94), MSA, RNC, received the 2010 Research Abstract Award from the National Association of Neonatal Nurses (NANN) for her paper, “Regionalization of a Safe Sleep Program.” She is the neonatal outreach coordinator at Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital.

Martha Katt, BSN ('84), is serving as president of the Butterworth School of Nursing Alumni Association.

Wendy Looman, BSN ('95), PhD, RN, PNP, associate professor at the University of Minnesota, is conducting research and clinical practice as a core faculty member of the Center for Children with Special Health Care Needs.

Julie Ondersma, MSN ('08), is employed full time as a nurse practitioner by Emergency Care Specialists, PC.

Lindsey Ray, BSN ('04), MSN ('09), FNP, has been hired by Lakeshore Health Partners-Family Medicine at the Holland Hospital medical center in Zeeland Township.

Michelle Troseth, BSN ('83), MSN ('97), has been appointed as a faculty associate in the Department of Organizational Systems & Adult Health at the University of Maryland School of Nursing.

Have news for the next issue of “Alumni Briefs”? Send it to the GVSU Alumni Relations Office: E-mail: www.gvsu.edu/alumni Phone: 616-331-3590 or 800-558-0541

All KCON alumni are automatically members of the KCON Alumni Chapter. Please stay in touch and consider joining in on some of our activities.
STUDENT/SNA UPDATE

KCON's Student Athletes Excel

Nursing students have to juggle many commitments just to successfully complete their studies. But along the way, some seem to relish taking on an extra challenge. KCON has six students who not only participate, but excel, in GVSU athletics in addition to their other commitments. A special round of applause to these athletes who go the extra mile:

- **Katie Alfredson**, Cross country
- **Jaleen Dingledine**, Soccer
- **Megan Maceratini**, Cross country & track (3-time All American)
- **Kristen Myers**, Track
- **Sara Parks**, Cross country & track
- **Molly Streeter**, Soccer

SNA Volunteers with Habitat for Humanity

The GVSU SNA had 15 students volunteer with the Habitat for Humanity organization on February 24. Those who volunteered spent the day installing windows, preparing siding, setting up rails, and learning how to operate the tools and machinery never seen in the hospital. The accomplishments were significant given a blustery cold day. The achievement in making a small difference in the overall completion of the house was greatly inspiring. The house, located at 827 Fremont, NW, GR, 49504, is set for completion in the spring.


KCON Graduate Students Present

KCON graduate students gave presentations at the November 2010 Graduate Student Presentation Day:

- **Amy Bertotti**, Poster presentation, “Decreasing Vascular Complications in Post Percutaneous Coronary Intervention: A Nursing Protocol for the Removal of Femoral Sheaths” (Dr. L. Scott, advisor)
- **Cassidy Boeskool**, Podium presentation, “Establishing Test-Retest Reliability of the Revised Osteoporosis Knowledge Test” (Dr. C. Covik, advisor)

SNA Leads the Way at State Conference

GSU SNA turned out in full force in February for the Michigan Nursing Student Association (MNSA) 60th Annual Convention. Forty-seven students attended — the largest single delegation in the state — helped by the fact that it was held locally at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel.

Three KCON SNA members were elected to one-year terms on the MNSA state board at the convention:

- **Katie Childs**, 1st vice president
- **Jennifer Senita**, 2nd vice president
- **Brooke Telep**, membership director

In addition, the GSU SNA chapter was presented with three awards:

- **Chapter Achievement Award**. Given to the chapter with the highest overall achievements as a pre-professional nursing organization. GSU SNA also won this award in 2009.

- **Community Health Award**. Given in recognition of exceptional community service. GSU SNA members completed more than 1,400 hours of community service in the Fall 2010 semester alone.

- **FUNdraising Award**. Given to the chapter with the most creative, fun ways to earn money for the chapter and the community.

And finally, SNA vice president Jenna Mitchell won the Future Florence Award and a $500 scholarship for demonstrating her love for the nursing profession.

Congratulations to everyone!

Congratulations to the following scholarship recipients at KCON

Butterworth Nursing Alumni Scholarship
Becca Sample

Janice Flentje Memorial Nursing Scholarship
Lisa Walker

Gail & Scott Haebich Scholarship
Rachel Kloosterman

Lynn Kraemer Memorial Scholarship
Ashley Boyer
Sarah Loveland
Kaylee Yonker

The Non-Traditional Nursing (Judith Pratt) Scholarship
Beth Hoffman
Sarah Metiva

Esther R. Padnos Nursing Scholarship
Laura DuCheny
Jeffrey Gietzen
Robert Sarniak

Drs. Esther & Enrico Sobong Scholarship
Feven Measho
Nadine Mushimbe

Esther Rehm Stotz Nursing Scholarship
Samantha Gainer
Annalyn Hawkes
Amber Hop
Caroline Rhoda
Constance Welsch
Taylor Westers

Volkhardt Family Nursing Scholarship
Rhiannon Bandstra
Ellen Bruno

Florence Cowan Ward Scholarship for Nursing
Aimee Bottini
Katelyn Grashorn
Betty Grove
Stephanie Hendrick
Mindy Niedzwiecki
Rhonda Patrick
Kaitlynn Regala-Miller
Denise Stepanovich
Katherine Warner

Samuel L. Westerman Foundation Scholarship for Nursing
Jaleen Dingledine
Karen Krummel
Tracey Lewis
Alisha Wallace

Emily Schipper. Podium presentation. “Virtual Patient Modules: Is This an Effective Teaching Strategy?” (Dr. D. Bambini, advisor)

Rachel Van Den Brink. Podium presentation. “Body & Soul Blue Project Manager” (Dr. L. Scott & M. VanderWerf, advisors)

David VanderArk. Podium presentation. “Psychiatric Nursing as a Model for Teaching Patient-Centered Care: Using Peplau’s and Orlando’s Theories as a Basis for Curriculum and Course Design” (Dr. A. Bostrom, advisor)

Sara Workman. Podium presentation. “The Lived Experience of Grand Valley State University Baccalaureate Nursing Program Graduates Who Failed the NCLEX-RN: Literature Review and Handling of Qualitative Data” (Dr. L. Grinstead & Dr. N. Schoofs, advisors)

At the 35th Annual Research Conference for the Midwest Nursing Research Society (MNRS), held in March, two KCON students made presentations. Joshua Martin, MSN (‘10), presented his evidence-based protocol titled, “Effective Management of Acute Hypothermia for the Wilderness Medical Provider: An Evidence-Based Protocol for Effective Field Rewarming.” Dr. Andrea Bostrom was his protocol supervisor. Tate Gregaitis, MSN (‘11), presented results from his research practicum with Dr. Rebecca Davis titled, “Life Space Mobility and Cognition in Community Dwelling Older Adults.”

And finally, two KCON students gave poster presentations in March at Graduate Showcase 2011: Education for the Future, hosted by the Office of Graduate Studies and the Center for Scholarly and Creative Excellence. Pam Bryant, MSN (‘11), presented “The Effect of Structured Group Reminiscence Photo Therapy on Depression Symptoms in Rural Elderly Long Term Care Residents: A Pilot Study.” Carol Robinson, DNP candidate, presented “End of Life Simulation of Therapeutic Communication and Care Using Standard Patients and SimMan®.”
FACULTY/STAFF UPDATE

Martin Invited to White House Conference

Jean Martin, PhD, RN, CPNP, current president of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP), was invited by First Lady Michelle Obama’s office to a White House meeting focused on enhancing the well-being and psychological health of military families.

The one-day conference, held on March 29, included 25 representatives from national primary care and mental health associations. Martin was one of two participants representing nursing in the room.

Although Mrs. Obama was not in attendance, Martin said the meeting was productive. “It was really about looking at the best practices and resources available for families and military personnel,” she said.

West Michigan troops are not supported by a large military base, which can create difficulties in trying to find mental health and primary care resources. “We’re in a unique situation, and this meeting helped us to better understand the military culture, what the service members and their families are going through, and what kind of help they may need,” Martin noted.

Buck Receives A/P Award

Linda Buck, MSN (‘10), one of KCON’s academic advisors, recently received the 2011 GVSU Administrative/Professional Achievement Award. The award recognized the exemplary services she provides to GVSU students, faculty and staff, as well as her consistent commitment to excellence.

Linda joined KCON Student Services in March 2007. She works with the direct admit undergraduate nursing students and is involved with freshman and transfer student orientation. She also works in the recruitment of graduate students and serves as an advisor to the MSN students.

Staff Participating in Harvard Program

KCON faculty member Cynthia Beel-Bates, PhD, RN, FGSA, and Jeanne Smith, MA, simulation instructional designer from the GVSU Simulation Center, recently had a joint proposal accepted and are representing GVSU at the Harvard Macy Institute’s Program for Educators in the Health Professions. Their project is titled “Leadership Development as Healthcare Professions Educators: Creation of a Faculty Development Program Integrating Educational Technology.”

The goal of this in-residence program at Harvard is to enhance the professional development of physicians, basic scientists and other health care professionals as educators. It combines five major themes: learning and teaching, curriculum, evaluation, leadership and information technology. The program provides a select group of 60 health care professionals with the knowledge base and skills to enhance their expertise in both conducting an educational project of their own design and taking a leadership role in the interprofessional educational activities at their home institutions.

Portions of this story were originally posted on “GVNow” on April 25, 2011.
Davis Receives Teaching Excellence Award

Rebecca L. Davis, PhD, RN, received the Grand Valley State University Pew Teaching Excellence Award at the annual Faculty Awards Convocation, held on February 3, 2011. Pew Teaching Excellence Awards were established to recognize outstanding teachers from around the university each year.

Davis joined KCON in August 2001. Her focus is on appropriate care for older adults. Among other significant accomplishments, she was a key player on the team that created a curricular innovation — the Longitudinal Elder Initiative (LEI) — in which nursing students implement care plans and interact intensively with older adults during a series of home visits. The LEI won an award from the Hartford Foundation, and it remains an integral part of KCON’s curriculum.

Davis recently said, “I believe that learning occurs best when there is a true interaction with the material to be learned. This means that I try to have students be as involved as possible with the content by completing case studies, working in groups, and doing projects that make them use the material in new ways. Learning is discovery.”

In the award nomination, a colleague stated, “It is hard to imagine another … who is more dedicated, and has contributed more to teaching excellence.” A recent graduate noted, “She illustrated key points by relaying real-life experiences and situations … her warmth, caring, knowledge, and accomplishments provide a high standard of excellence to which I aspire.”

Staff Profile: Coreen Pelton

Coreen Pelton, our academic department coordinator for undergraduate nursing programs, joined the KCON family in July 2008. In that busy role, she faces the daily challenge of keeping the faculty and students from the undergraduate program “in line.”

Coreen started at Grand Valley in 1998, and since then she has made her mark as a leader within KCON and the university. For example, she was a member of the Clerical, Office and Technical (COT) Association leadership team when they worked through a historic agreement to join with the rest of the university’s employees in a wage freeze.

Her zest for living a healthy life extends into fitness and, despite the lack of a facility in the Cook-DeVos building, she has mapped out routes for walking inside — all 1.5 miles of the hallways. So almost every day you can find Coreen briskly walking the halls on her lunch hour. She has initiated a “Biggest Loser” event and facilitated workout sessions. In addition to her work, she uses her many talents to bring some fun, relaxation and food to the KCON faculty and staff, which we all appreciate!
Jean Barry, PhD, RN, has joined a clinical practice model (CPM) shared leadership group that is reviewing theories to identify those that are the foundation for various aspects of the CPM model. She is serving as a subject matter expert and a member. She also is serving as a research/academic consultant for the Stroke Improvement Team at Value Health Partners, which is led by Dr. Mary Kay Van Driel, MSN (’02).

Jean Barry, PhD, RN, was appointed to the 2011 American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) Institute of Medicine (IOM) Future of Nursing Task Force. The task force is charged with the development of recommendations for potential AONE actions in response to the IOM’s 2010 recommendations for the nursing profession.

Andrea Bostrom, PhD, PMHCNS-BC, was appointed to the Adult Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) Work Group under the Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement (PCPI), convened by the American Medical Association (AMA).

Linda Buck, MSN, RN, and Wanda Moerland, BSN, RN, academic advisors, represented KCON at a medical science and health services career exploration event sponsored by the Grand Rapids Public Museum and Kent Intermediate School District’s Career Focused Education Program.

Erin Busscher, BA, MEd, academic advisor, gave a presentation with her colleagues last fall at the Michigan College Personnel Association (MCPC) conference. The presentation was titled “Utilizing all of our Human Capital: The Critical Role of Support Staff in Student Development.”

Linda Grinstead, PhD, RN, CPN, CNE, contributed an article to the December 26, 2010, edition of the Grand Rapids Press’ Advice for Life section: “Winter is RSV Season for Children.”

Grace Hoyer, MSN, APRN, BC, EdDc, adjunct faculty, successfully passed her Qualifying Exams in her progress toward completing her doctoral work at Eastern Michigan University.

Susan Jarchow, MSN, PhDc, affiliate faculty, doctoral student at University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, successfully completed both the written and oral components of her Doctoral Preliminary Comprehensive Exams.

Cynthia Beel-Bates, PhD, RN, FGSA, was the 2010 recipient of the Kappa Epsilon Chapter-at-Large, Sigma Theta Tau International, Excellence in Nursing Education Award.

Jan Coye, PhD, RN, received the 2011 Nursing Achievement Award from the West Michigan Nursing Advisory Council. Coye was recognized for her tireless efforts on behalf of WMNAC and the overall profession of nursing.

The GVSU Family Health Center was recognized by the National Nursing Centers Consortium in San Antonio, Texas, at its 2011 national meeting for 10 years of continuous service to the community.

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

- Emily Droste-Bielok, PhD, RN - 30 years
- Cynthia Kruizenga - 20 years
- Mary Jo Miedema, BSN, RN - 20 years
- Maureen Ryan, MSN, RN, CS, EdDc - 20 years
- Marilyn Vander Werf, MSN, RN - 10 years

Larry Boekeloo, MPA, has been named practice manager for the GVSU Family Health Center.

Leslie Cammenga, BSN, RN, has joined the care team at the GVSU Family Health Center.

Victoria Hecksel-Lantz, MSN, RN, has joined KCON as project coordinator for the Nursing Workforce Diversity grant.

Claudia Leiras-Laubach, MS, PhD, assistant professor, has resigned.

Monica Lyons, MSN, NP, has resigned from the GVSU Family Health Center.
Comments Welcome for DNP Program Accreditation

KCON is pleased to announce the upcoming accreditation review of its Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree program. In keeping with our beliefs about quality nursing education, our DNP program will undergo rigorous evaluation by the Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), the same organization that granted national certification for our baccalaureate and master’s degree programs through 2017.

The accreditation site visit will occur October 12-14, 2011. Students and alumni will have an opportunity to meet with site evaluators at a reception on October 13, 2011.

In addition, all parties associated with KCON are encouraged to provide written input regarding KCON and its DNP program to the accreditation team. Written and signed comments will be accepted until September 12, 2011. Comments should be sent to:

Ms. Cristina Walcott, CCNE Administrative Assistant
Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education
One Dupont Circle, NW
Suite S30
Washington, D.C. 20036-1120

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- Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)

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Dean, Kirkhof College of Nursing
Dr. Cynthia McCurren

Web Site: www.gvsu.edu/kcon Phone: 616-331-3558 Fax: 616-331-2510 E-mail: Use “Contact Us” page on KCON’s Web site
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