Community Engagement

Community Engagement: Doing While Learning

KCON Launches Polarity Thinking Institute

Research Results: Studying Local Health Care Services Integration

FHC Receives National Quality Certification
From The Dean

In 1995, Ernest Boyer, former president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, stated, “I have this growing conviction that what is needed for higher education is not just more programs, but a larger purpose, a larger sense of mission. What is needed is a special climate in which the academic and civic cultures communicate more continuously and more creatively with each other, which will enrich the quality of life for all.”

During the last 20 years, universities have strengthened their missions in teaching, research, and service through active, collaborative partnerships with their neighborhoods and communities. Faculty across disciplines are addressing complex community challenges by creating dynamic teaching that fosters interdisciplinary perspectives, celebrates diversity, and promotes new ways to integrate the application of knowledge. Students are realizing that their engagement has consequences for their learning and makes a difference in communities.

In this edition of KCON Magazine, we share how we are living Boyer’s vision. You will learn about GVSU’s and KCON’s commitment to community engagement. Our stories take you into the lives of those living in Grand Rapids, including the Heartside neighborhood, the southwest and southeast areas, and Grandville. They reveal our developing interdisciplinary partnerships and demonstrate innovative applications of knowledge and experience. Our students are truly learning from engagement, and that being a nurse is more than tasks.

In 1916, in his book “Democracy and Education: Introduction to the Philosophy of Education,” John Dewey advised that successful educational methods “give the pupils something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking ... learning naturally results.” Wisdom from 100 years ago is truly guiding 21st century learning!

Spring is a time of renewed excitement. I am excited to bring greetings to our collective community and to share the work and aspirations of KCON. We invite our alumni, community and practice partners, and friends of the college of nursing to stay involved and informed about our college. Please support our initiatives, encourage the advancement of nursing education, and share our story so we continue to attract excellent students, faculty, and practice partners in our quest to truly make a difference through engaged learning.
2 Community Engagement: Doing While Learning
Cynthia McCurren

4 Caring for Feet

4 Carrying Babies in Slings

5 Compiling Community Resources

5 Helping Beyond Meals

6 Treating Hepatitis C In West Michigan

7 KCON Partners to Create New Certificate Program

8 Alumni Update

9 KCON Establishes Alumni Endowed Scholarship

10 Student/SNA Update

12 Faculty/Staff Update

14 KCON Launches Polarity Thinking Institute

15 Research Results: Studying Local Health Care Services Integration

16 FHC Receives National Quality Certification
The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching promotes community engagement as a critical component in higher education, noting that successful partnerships create significant impact in both higher education institutions and their communities. Twenty-first century academic life cannot be pursued in seclusion, but rather it “must champion reason and imagination in engagement with the wider society and its concerns” (Association of Commonwealth Universities, 2001).

Community engagement has been defined by the New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE) as “collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.” Expanded further, the purpose of community engagement “is the partnership of university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative works; enhance curriculum, teaching, and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good” (NERCHE, 2015).

Community Engagement at GVSU

GVSU has made a significant commitment to community engagement. The Office for Community Engagement was launched in 2012 under the leadership of assistant dean Ruth Stegeman (http://www.gvsu.edu/community/). An advisory board of internal and external stakeholders has helped to create the strategic vision for this endeavor and fostered partnerships through which direction, alignment, and commitment have emerged.

The Office for Community Engagement has become the center of GVSU’s interdisciplinary network. Individuals representing multiple areas of expertise have come together, exploring how we can work cooperatively for the benefit of our communities. The essence of liberal education is actualized for students through these efforts as multiple ways of knowing are brought together to react to and solve real-world problems. The community becomes the classroom and through our partnerships GVSU’s mission — “to prepare students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies” — becomes reality.

Community Engagement at KCON

KCON is a leader in the university’s community engagement efforts, driven by a core belief in the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. Education and practice must collaborate. In responding to calls to action from the Institute of Medicine, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and multiple professional health care organizations, we must redesign efficient and equitable care delivery models that will produce safe, high-quality, patient-centered outcomes in a multitude of settings as we address both physical illness and the social determinants of health.

KCON’s position of negotiation with potential partners is predicated on a defined model. A partnership is intended to facilitate the implementation of an educational experience for nursing students across degree levels; the purpose is to provide health services and health promotion to individuals, families, and communities to broaden health care delivery capacity. The inclusion of interdisciplinary practice partners and students is promoted.
Our practice-education model is grounded in service-learning theory, in which there is mutual benefit to all parties involved. Service-learning employs a structured learning experience where students engage in service in response to identified concerns and learn about the context in which service is provided. Service-learning:

• Strives to achieve a balance between service and learning objectives. Partners negotiate outcomes to ensure needs and expectations are met on both sides.
• Includes the integral involvement of community partners. It involves a principle-centered partnership between a community and the professional school.
• Emphasizes reciprocal learning. Traditional definitions of “faculty,” “teacher,” and “learner” are intentionally blurred; all involved learn from each other.
• Emphasizes reflective practice. Reflection facilitates the connection between practice and theory and fosters critical thinking.

The practice partner and community benefit from this model through the following expected outcomes:

• Collaboration between faculty and providers or community leaders leads to shared redesign of the learning experience for students, one that is informed by the reality of the practice or community site.
• Patients, clients, or participants at a site benefit from an increased capacity for coordination and access to resources.
• Access to expertise contributes to strategic planning and goal setting, maximizing service potential; it also can enhance research and outcomes assessment to produce return-on-investment results.
• Interdisciplinary, team-based care is promoted.

Example: Seeds of Promise

Seeds of Promise (SoP) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving the southeast neighborhood of Grand Rapids [http://www.seedsofpromise.net/#about-us/c1kg2]. KCON’s commitment to this entity is one excellent example of our community engagement partnerships. SoP empowers urban residents to define and direct their own strategies to create a self-sustaining, self-transformed neighborhood.

For years, helping those living in poverty has been driven by a “top-down” strategy, resulting in generations of individuals being dependent on resources given to them instead of learning to solve their own problems to become self-sustaining. Those committed to the SoP initiative have chosen to stop this cycle of dependency. SoP currently works with more than 60 endorsing partners who assist in supporting its mission and vision for the neighborhood.

SoP utilizes a “deep listening” approach as a way to not only hear, but understand, what the residents see as the neighborhood’s pressing needs. Using this deep listening technique, eight impact teams have been developed that focus on all aspects of creating a self-sustaining neighborhood: (1) host neighbor community governance, (2) job creation, (3) education, (4) safe ministerial, (5) safe community, (6) housing, (7) health and nutrition, and (8) entrepreneur. The impact teams are made up of SoP staff, endorsing partners, and community host neighbors. The host neighbors are members of the community who are learning to be leaders; they attend meetings and trainings that are preparing them to lead the community to self-sustaining status.

Working with our practice partner, Mercy Health Saint Mary’s (MHSM), KCON has made substantial contributions to the health and nutrition impact team [http://www.seedsofpromise.net/#health-and-wellness/cycq]. (See the Fall ’14 edition of KCON Magazine, page 19). Deep listening activities have led to a collaboration that is being implemented at the Browning-Claytor Health Center, an MHSM primary care center located in the neighborhood.

MHSM is part of Trinity Health, a large Catholic health system which upholds a healing ministry that is committed to serving others and transforming care delivery. Its Community Benefit Ministry has supported the KCON/MHSM collaboration, establishing a nurse-led team (DNP-level nurse practitioner, clinical nurse leader, and community health worker) within the neighborhood health center. Our team coordinates care for complex patients and families and delivers health promotion activities via school- and church-based venues. Launched in January 2015, nursing students across degree levels are sharing in the care delivery. GVSU also has students from the College of Education and School of Social Work contributing to SoP, which will allow further interdisciplinary collaboration as the model expands.

Community engagement is the future of higher education. Our society as a whole desperately needs public institutions to teach the relevance of our disciplines, model interdisciplinary learning and problem solving, and promote meaningful learning opportunities for students and faculty that actually lead to transformative outcomes. KCON is proud to be a leader in this important work.

References


Caring for Feet

While foot care may seem basic to some, for those who live much of their life outside, it’s a necessity. Many neighbors in southwest Grand Rapids experience tremendous challenges, particularly when it comes to cold weather, transportation, and taking care of themselves.

Second-semester KCON nursing students are providing foot care at The Other Way Ministries to clients in the SWAN (SouthWest Area Neighborhood) area several times a semester. These students are the face of health care for many individuals. In turn, students learn about the realities facing clients who have limited access to health care.

According to Susan Harrington, PhD, RN, assistant professor, a local podiatrist, Joshua Decker, DPM, volunteers his time to teach students the basics related to foot care. He also encourages them to shadow his work at The Other Way Ministries. “This work has made quite an impression on the students,” says Harrington. “As nurses we say we serve, but this is an added dimension. Our students come to understand how much we take for granted after spending time with these neighbors in the community. We work in one big room and the conversations we get into can be very rich.

“One gentleman we worked with was a GVSU student with ALS who passed away in spring 2014,” she continues. “Two of our nursing students spent almost two hours on his feet one day. No one had paid attention to his feet in quite some time. He was delighted, and the students were overwhelmed by what their care meant to him.”

By the way, foot care isn’t the only thing KCON students provide to the neighborhood residents who stop by. They also serve coffee and fruit, check blood pressures and blood sugars, and provide evidence-based resources.

Carrying Babies in Slings

Some mothers in Grand Rapids have been benefiting from a KCON study abroad trip to Africa in March 2014.

A group of senior nursing students from KCON’s three BSN programs spent two weeks in Ghana as part of a community health rotation. While there, they learned about Ghana’s health system, worked at a maternal-infant clinic, visited traditional midwives, went to villages and homes with local community health workers, did health assessments, and taught school children about staying healthy.

During the Fall 2014 semester, when this same group partnered with The Other Way Ministries in Grand Rapids, they offered the idea of an alternative, affordable option for holding and traveling with infants: a fabric sling.

Senior nursing student Kate Bleeker, traditional program, says, “We wanted to plan a health intervention related to something we had learned in Ghana. As we were brainstorming, we thought of how the mothers in Ghana carried their babies on their backs and how convenient that would be.”

Strollers and many cloth baby carriers can be extremely expensive in the U.S. However, the Ghana-style carrier is simply two or three yards of cloth wrapped around the baby and the parent.

“In Africa everybody uses the cloth carriers,” explains senior nursing student Briana Hutchinson, traditional program. “They are affordable and they make the mom and baby closer. The mom always knows where her child is, can do other things with her hands, and can better anticipate her child’s needs. Plus, there are health benefits to using a cloth carrier.

“I think it’s really neat how we were able to go on a study abroad trip and tie in what we learned with our own community,” Hutchinson concludes. “A big part of public health nursing is understanding different cultures and trying new things.”

A longer version of this story was originally published on 11/5/14 at www.lanthom.com
Compiling Community Resources

For their capstone community health clinical experience project in Fall 2014, eight students in NUR 467 assessed and compiled local resources and then created a resource board for Grand Rapids’ Heartside neighborhood.

Located at the Mel Trotter’s Day Center, the board indicates where Heartside residents can go for a shower, meals, counseling, and other services. The students presented their board on December 4, 2014, to the staff members of Mel Trotter Ministries and other Heartside neighborhood ministries.

Nancy Schoofs, PhD, RN, associate professor, says, “In addition to the board itself, the students put together a binder that includes all of the interviews and assessments they did to determine priority health care problems in the community, the resources they found, and their PowerPoint presentation content. The Mel Trotter staff liked the resource board so much that they immediately ordered another one from the printing company.

“The students were thrilled that their project was so well received,” Schoofs concludes. “They felt very satisfied that they had created something so useful for the community.”

Helping Beyond Meals

Students in NUR 317 in KCON’s traditional program are working with Senior Meals on Wheels in Grandville to provide food and emotional support to the elderly. Although Senior Meals specializes in nutritional services for the elderly, KCON’s students are doing much more than delivering food. They are monitoring and assessing the condition of Senior Meals’ clients, using their nursing skills to help these individuals remain healthy and independent in their homes.

Joanne Finozzi, DNP (‘14), MSN, RN, adjunct faculty, notes that this work is part of the students’ required community health rotation. Mallory Buth, development administrator for Senior Meals on Wheels, says that the nursing students gain hands-on experience in the community as they provide dozens of client assessments each year. “Our partnership with KCON also could create opportunities for future research regarding senior hunger,” she adds.

Ellen Roderick, traditional program student, says she gained a lot of nursing experience while working with the Senior Meals on Wheels program. “I learned to look at a patient from many different angles. We weren’t just taking vitals or giving medications. We were looking at someone’s living conditions, income, the amount of medications they had, their family support, and so on. It was really surprising the lack of resources that some of these adults had.”

One time Roderick worked with a woman whose electricity was about to be shut off. She reported it to Senior Meals on Wheels immediately, but she says it was eye opening to think about the problems this could have caused.

“This experience helped me understand what a nurse does and how many things I can do,” Roderick notes. “Anything I can do to make someone’s life a little better in that stressful moment is all I want to do.”

A version of this story was originally published on 2/5/15 at www.lanthorn.com.
Treating Hepatitis C in West Michigan

Elaine Leigh, DNP (‘12), MSN (‘02), RN, FNP-BC, has turned her KCON DNP degree work on hepatitis C treatment [http://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/FA246874-064B-85AE-E59A5F8FC51C956E/kcon_mag_11_fall_2012_with_tags_reduced.pdf] into a community-focused nursing career. She manages a dedicated hepatitis C treatment clinic at Mercy Health in Muskegon. Since autumn 2011, the clinic has received more than 500 referrals from the West Michigan counties of Oceana, Mason, Newaygo, and Ottawa.

“Hepatitis C care has historically been limited in many communities,” Leigh explains. “Treatment has been limited to gastroenterology or infectious disease practices, where they manage many other illnesses. Our clinic solely focuses on the education, treatment, and follow-up of individuals with hepatitis C.

“There have been wonderful advances in hepatitis C treatment,” she continues. “Success rates have been raised from 30% in 2010 to now over 90%. Therapy is of shorter duration, reduced from 24-48 weeks to 8-24 weeks. And the new treatment medications are much better tolerated; they’re designed to offer a regimen specific to each client depending on their hepatitis C genotype, level of liver fibrosis, and treatment experience.”

As part of her work, Leigh has provided many hours of education to local primary care providers; professional groups; health department and case management nurses; community mental health psychiatrists, nurses, and social workers; and pharmaceutical companies. Her goal is to increase access to care for patients with hepatitis C via other health professionals.

“Many of Muskegon’s primary care practitioners are thrilled to have a dedicated hepatitis C clinic,” Leigh notes, “because they can screen their patients appropriately and know their patients will receive great care with us. We want to replicate this. So we’re in the early stages of working with Mercy Health Saint Mary’s in Grand Rapids, hoping they will institute our model of care and increase access to treatment there.”

Are You a Boomer? Screen for Hep C

If you’re a boomer, you should be screened for the hepatitis C virus. Last year, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force issued new guidelines for all adults born between 1945 and 1965 — basically the baby boom generation — recommending a one-time screening. According to the task force, people in this age group account for three-quarters of all hepatitis C cases in the U.S. A leading cause of liver disease, hepatitis C is considered a silent killer because it progresses without any indications of illness. Unlike other types of hepatitis, there is no vaccine for hepatitis C.
KCON Partners to Create New Certificate Program

KCON has partnered with two other GVSU departments — social work and public administration — to develop and offer a post-baccalaureate, 12-credit, immersion certificate program in the evolving health specialty of palliative and hospice care. Community leaders in palliative and hospice care who have offered to assist with course delivery and/or marketing are also participating.

“This certificate will fill an important void in the preparation of health care professionals by providing foundational learning related to the central tenets of palliative and hospice care,” says Ruth Ann Brintnall, PhD, MSN ’85, AOCN, CHPN, APRN-BC, associate professor. “Trends in research support the cost-effectiveness of this type of care, and the availability of quality care in West Michigan is becoming increasingly important to the area’s residents.

“A growing numbers of elderly Americans,” she continues, “will challenge our health system resources as they age, live longer and better, and succumb to illness amid a myriad of high-tech medical choices. Many who survive in the face of chronic disease will require sophisticated symptom management and/or the sensitive conversations of palliative and hospice care to help determine and implement their personal goals of care.”

The target audience for the new certificate program will be those in the health professions and other disciplines who serve chronically ill populations and/or individuals requiring supportive end-of-life care across settings. In particular, nurses and nurse practitioners; social workers; physical, occupational, and recreational therapists; clergy; speech pathologists; physicians’ assistants; and health care administrators will be approached. Other professionals who serve elders, those with chronic illnesses, or those who suffer from a significant symptom burden are also likely to be interested.

“We expect those who enroll in the certificate program will serve as change agents within their respective institutions,” notes Brintnall. “We will encourage those who complete the certificate to share their learning and materials to improve the palliative and/or hospice care in their setting. Because the field is relatively new, creating a cadre of dedicated community leaders who recognize the benefits of palliative and hospice care and are willing to mentor others will be important to improving care in the community.”

According to Brintnall, the course will be available as soon as the certificate has been fully evaluated and vetted by the normal curricular process at GVSU.
**ALUMNI UPDATE**

**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Dear KCON Alumni,

This year has been one of incredible growth for our chapter. We’re excited to report that we’ve accomplished our goals and established new ones as well. We’ve secured three incredible KCON alumni for the open vice presidents’ positions: Amy Majeski, VP of membership; Jennifer Ohman, VP of events; and Jennifer Pietraz Langholz, VP of fundraising.

We’re moving forward in securing a legacy within KCON and the GVSU Alumni Association. We hosted our second annual CEU offerings at local hospitals and had more than 110 attendees at two presentations — one related to pain at the end of life and the other on diversity and the LGBTQIA population. We’ve also begun work on an endowed scholarship to be given to a senior KCON nursing student each year. (See page 9 for details.)

We’ve connected with many of GVSU’s efforts in giving back to our community as well. For example, each year we’re involved with Community Outreach Week, Relay for Life, and the River Bank Run. And we engage in other networking and fellowship opportunities throughout the year.

We’d love to have you get involved and join us. We’ll match the time you have available with one of the many opportunities our group provides. KCON alumni are special, and you have so much to offer others. Come connect. You’ll find you receive more than you give!

On behalf of our chapter,

Tracy Hosford, BSN (’02), RN, PCCN

Find us on Facebook at “GVSU Kirkhof College of Nursing Alumni Chapter”

---

Julie Bulson, MPA (’07), BSN (’99), RN, was named one of the 50 Most Influential Women in West Michigan in 2014 by the Grand Rapids Business Journal. She is director of emergency preparedness at Spectrum Health.

Erin Craft-Otterbacher, BSN (’14), received the 2014 Kappa Epsilon Chapter at large award for Excellence in Student Performance. She also organized and moderated an LGBTQ discussion panel in November 2014.

Christine Langlois, MBA (’90), BSN (’83), is working as a hospital liaison at Porter Hills Retirement Communities and Services.

Candie Ritsma, BSN (’03), was featured in an article in the September 21, 2014, edition of the Grand Rapids Press as a 20-year survivor of non-Hodgkin lymphoma. She is currently attending Wayne State University to become a nurse practitioner.

Debbie Robles, BSN (’14), was featured in an article in the September 21, 2014, edition of the Grand Rapids Press. The article described her journey as a teacher who later chose a nursing career. Her education was supported by a Hospice of Michigan scholarship.

Jennifer Smith, BSN (’14), is working at Mel Trotter Ministries in Grand Rapids.

Nancy Steele, PhD, MSN (’94), is an associate professor at the University of North Florida, working on evidence-based practice programs, issues in women’s health, and course development.

Michelle Troseth, MSN (’97), BSN (’83), DPNAP, FAAN, received the 2014 Nursing Informatics Leadership Award from the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS). This award is presented to an individual who has demonstrated significant leadership in the area of nursing informatics within the Society and the industry. Troseth is the chief professional practice officer at Elsevier Clinical Solutions.

Cindy Yeck-Emmer, BSN (’01), is working at Spectrum Health Hospice in Grand Rapids, primarily helping nurses solve unusual or intractable problems.

Jessica Lerch Zoeller, MS, BSN (’09), CRNA, graduated with the Agnes Hagan award for outstanding academic excellence from the University of Michigan-Flint master’s degree program in anesthesia. She is working with Anesthesia Practice Consultants in Grand Rapids.

Jennifer Zoeteman, DNP (’14), MSN (’02), BSN, and her son, Matt Zoeteman, BSN (’14), both received nursing degrees at GVSU’s December 6, 2014, commencement ceremony. They started classes together at KCON in 2010. Jennifer is an affiliate professor of nursing at KCON.
KCON Establishes Alumni Endowed Scholarship

The Kirkhof College of Nursing recently established the KCON Alumni Endowed Scholarship. This new scholarship will be used to provide more KCON students with financial support as they pursue their educational goals in nursing at the college. As its name indicates, this particular endowed scholarship is gathering funding from KCON alumni from all class years.

Endowed scholarships, like the new KCON Alumni Endowed Scholarship, are awarded from a designated fund in which the principal always remains intact. Scholarships are given from part of the income earned by the endowed fund. Another portion of the income is reinvested to generate additional income and serve as a hedge against dilution of the fund.

“In this way, when people collectively come together and give gifts of any amount to support an endowed scholarship, assets can quickly accumulate and generate permanent support to meet students’ financial needs,” explains Andrew Bixel, University Development.

According to Cynthia McCurren, PhD, RN, FNAP, KCON’s dean, last year the college received 300 student scholarship applications for financial assistance. However, only 51 students received a scholarship. “We are asking our alumni to help us increase that number,” McCurren explains. “We would like to assist every student with financial need.

Although several scholarships exist to help nursing students, the financial needs of many students still go unmet.

“We hope to raise $30,000 for the KCON Alumni Endowed Scholarship by December 31, 2015,” McCurren continues. “If we meet our goal, the first scholarship will be awarded in Fall 2016.”

Julie Bulson, MPA (’07), BSN (’99), RN, recently made one of the first gifts to the new scholarship fund. “I am passionate about Grand Valley and passionate about nursing,” she says. “What a great combination! Through my work with Grand Valley, I recognized that nursing had to have a scholarship for students in need of financial support to complete their nursing education. Because we need new nurses who are passionate about nursing, we have to be passionate about supporting them in their education. I believe it is time to give back to Grand Valley through this newly established KCON Alumni Endowed Scholarship.”

This is an opportunity to “pay it forward” as you remember the value you received from your KCON educational experience. If you wish to make a gift, please visit https://www.gvsu.edu/giving/kconalum. Or contact Andrew Bixel in the University Development Office at 616-331-5619 to discuss pledge payments and other giving options.
STUDENT/SNA UPDATE

KCON SNA Attends 64th MNSA Convention

A large delegation of 19 KCON SNA members descended on Lansing in February for the 64th annual Michigan Nursing Students Association convention, and it was a big year for KCON. The SNA received the Chapter of the Year Scholarship — a $300 scholarship presented to an SNA chapter to honor its work as a preprofessional organization.

Kendall Murphy, traditional program student, presented a resolution for the local chapter that was passed. It was titled “Advocating for Programs Transitioning Student Nurses Towards the Competent Registered Nurse Role.”

Three KCON students were elected to the MNSA board of directors:
- Lizzette Chavez, second degree program student - Image & Breakthrough to Nursing Director
- Rachel Krueger, traditional program student - Newsletter Editor
- Brianna Wilson, traditional program student - President

A major conference highlight was when KCON’s dean, Cynthia McCurren, PhD, RN, FNAP, made a presentation to the students and faculty. Her topic was “Transforming Health Care: Being Intentional About Your Nursing Education.” Also Barbara Hooper, DNP ('12), MSN ('92), RN, NE-BC, presented a career planning workshop to the students.

KCON Student Dives In

Taylor Wiercinski, traditional program student, was a gymnast as a child, had successful surgery for a congenital heart defect at age 11, and then her mother signed her up for diving.

Wiercinski now owns six GVSU records and three pool records. Specializing in 1-meter and 3-meter dives, she was named GLIAC Swimming & Diving Women’s Athlete of the Week in January. She also qualified for the NCAA Division II Championships held in March, where she came in third place in the 3-meter and fourth in the 1-meter.

“I like the 3-meter by far,” Wiercinski says. “I like the feeling of being able to do more flips and having more time in the air before hitting the water.”

RN to BSN Students Partner With New Agency

TANDEM365 (http://tandem365.com/) opened its doors in Grand Rapids in March 2014, and four RN to BSN program students jumped in immediately to contribute to its mission. TANDEM365 keeps the elderly and chronically ill in their homes and out of emergency departments by providing wrap-around care.

The RN to BSN students had three consecutive semesters of clinical experience at the site, beginning in May 2014, allowing them to progress from caring for an individual in the community to seeing the challenges faced by elder populations as a whole. The partnership with TANDEM365 has been a “win-win” for KCON’s students and the agency. For example, students have had the opportunity to help develop and evaluate the agency’s policies.

One recent KCON graduate mentioned that her TANDEM365 experiences have helped her better prepare her acute care patients for discharge. “This opened my eyes to the struggles patients face and the resources that are available outside once they are home,” she says, “and this has improved my patient care practices.”

KCON 2015 Student Officers

Graduate Student Organization
- President: Allison Reynolds
- Vice President: Jennifer Campbell
- Secretary: Rachel Cardosa
- Financial Officer: Nicolle Zeller
- Community Liaison: Amanda Taylor
- Faculty Advisor: Dr. Geraldine (Geri) Terry

Student Nurses’ Association
- President: Regina Kirwin
- Vice President: Sarah Thornton
- Secretary & Treasurer: Taylor Hansen
- Communications Director: Jessica Payne
- Community Wellness Director: Ashley Town
- Curriculum Director: Nicholas Van Oosten
- Image and Breakthrough to Nursing Director: Kelsey Hautau
- Membership Director: Ellen Roderick
- Faculty Advisor: Nancy Carlson
- Staff Advisor: Angela Caruso, Office of Student Services

The original version of this story was published on 1/29/15 on mlive.com.
The following KCON students received Graduate Dean’s Citation Awards during the Graduate Student Celebration held on December 5, 2014:

**Academic Excellence in the Major**
Diane K. Ullery, MSN Program
Marie Vanderkooi, MSN (’91), DNP Program

**Excellence in Service to the Community or Profession**
Erin F. Micale (’12), MSN Program
Sylvia J. Simons, MSN (’91), DNP Program

**Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation**
Marie Vanderkooi, MSN (’91), DNP Program

**Outstanding Master’s Final Project**
Julie L. Polanic, MSN Program

**STUDENT BRIEFS**

Brandon Fitzgerald, traditional program student, was featured in the Student Spotlight column in the Fall 2014 issue of OMAnews, published by GVSU’s Office of Multicultural Affairs.

Brenda Hess, MSN, BSN, DNP program student, has been awarded the Marian McCall Educational Scholarship from the AORN (Association of periOperative Registered Nurses) Foundation. She is an affiliate faculty member as well as a DNP student.

Joshua Loomis, traditional program student, was featured as one of four students in a full-page advertisement highlighting GVSU’s health programs in the February 16 edition of MiBiz, a major regional business publication.

Three students recently had articles published in the Health section of the Grand Rapids Press:
- Monica Lyons, MSN, FNP, RN, DNP program student. “Auricular Acupuncture may Decrease Depressive Symptoms for Patients” – August 10, 2014
- Brandon Thomas, communications major and student worker at the Family Health Center. “Offering a Unique, Quality Health Care Experience” – October 12, 2014

The SNA’s Breakthrough to Nursing committee held a simulation event with Kent Intermediate School District students on November 17, 2014. The event was covered by WOODTV 8.
Welcome, New Faculty

Amy Manderscheid
DNP, RN, CMSRN, Assistant Professor

BSN, ’03, Grand Valley State University
MSN, ’08, Grand Valley State University
DNP, ’11, Rush University

Dissertation: “Design and implementation of professional development strategies in support of a succession planning imperative”

Experience: Has held staff and leadership positions in the Spectrum Health system since 2003. Served as a staff nurse preceptor, chair of the Share Leadership Council, Magnet champion, ethics steward, and clinical supervisor responsible for more than 30 FTEs. Also served as adjunct clinical faculty for KCON and as clinical preceptor for GVSU, Calvin, and GRCC nursing programs.

Harrington Receives Teaching Excellence Award

Susan Harrington, PhD, RN, received the 2015 Grand Valley State University Pew Teaching Excellence Award at the annual Faculty Awards Convocation, held on February 5. This annual award recognizes distinguished teachers from around the university.

Harrington, assistant professor of nursing, began her tenure track position at KCON in January 2012. In her award nomination document, assistant professor Melodee Vanden Bosch, PhD, MSN (’03), BSN (’79), RN, noted Harrington’s research on the flipped classroom, her expertise in community health, her use of simulation for transition care, and her utilization of numerous approaches to teaching.

“Dr. Harrington is passionate about quality nursing education,” says Vanden Bosch, “She is a collaborative partner in teaching and has worked tirelessly to find appropriate and stimulating learning experiences for students in classes, clinical rotations, and simulations. She is highly deserving of this award.”
Deborah Bambini, PhD, MSN ('95), RN, WHNP, CNE, CHSE, was a speaker at GVSU's 20th Anniversary Fall Conference on Teaching and Learning in August 2014. She also was the keynote speaker on March 22, 2015, at the Upsilon Epsilon chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International induction ceremony.

Jean Barry, PhD, RN, NEABC, has been appointed to the Advisory Curriculum Review ad hoc committee for the American Nurses Association Leadership Institute.

Karen Burritt, PhD, RN, FNP-BC, is serving as KCON’s Interim Associate Dean for Graduate Programs.

Angela Caruso, MEd, BS, has been selected to be a member of the 2015 Partnership Delegation to University of Cape Coast in Ghana.

Evelyn Clingerman, PhD, RN, CNE, was elected as Co-Chair of the Nursing Academy in the National Academies of Practice.

Kim Fenbert, DNP, CPNP, has been selected as the 2015 recipient of the Outstanding Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Educator Award by the Association of Faculties of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (AFPNP). She received the award in March at the 36th annual conference and exhibition of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (NAPNAP).

Grace Hoyer, EdD, MSN ('01), RN, is co-chairing the newly established GVSU Sexual Health Committee.

Jamie Lamers (Hendricks), FNP-BC, was featured in the December 14, 2014, Grand Rapids Press Health section. An article from the GVSU Family Health Center was published, titled “Eating Disorders and the Holidays.”

Mary Jo Miedema, BSN (’01), RN, CCM, recently passed the Case Management certification exam.

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

- Deborah Bambini, PhD, MSN ('95), RN, WHNP, CNE, CHSE - 20 years
- Cynthia Beel-Bates, PhD, RN, FGSA - 10 years
- Andrea Bostrom, PhD, WHNP-BC - 25 years
- Kristin Cooper, MSN ('02), BSN ('94), RN - 10 years
- Daniel Wezeman, AAS - 10 years

Welcome
Jamie Lamers (Hendricks), FNP-BC, Family Health Center
Sandra Dellmann, MD, visiting professor
Donna DeMann, FNP-BC, WHNP-BC, Family Health Center
Robert Johnson, MD, MEd, visiting professor
Mary Ziemkowski, MEd, BSN (’13), RN, affiliate faculty

Farewell & Thank You
Elaine Leigh, DNP (’12), MSN (’02), RN, FNP-BC, has resigned from her affiliate faculty position
Ann Sheehan, DNP, RN, CPNP, has left her position as assistant dean for practice
Wanda Maerland, BSN (’95), RN, Office of Student Services, has retired
KCON Launches Polarity Thinking Institute

By Bonnie Wesorick, MSN, RN, DPNAP, FAAN

Have you ever wondered why some of the same problems keep surfacing even though we work hard to solve them? Are you and your colleagues tired of yet another initiative, program, or project that worked for awhile but was not sustainable over time?

Why does this happen? Health care attracts some of the most intelligent, committed people in the world and yet we’re unable to successfully manage or fix serious issues such as patient and staff safety and satisfaction, quality and cost-effective care, recurring adverse events, fragmentation, and duplication. Is there a missing piece of logic that would explain this reality?

I discovered that there was. My search for this missing logic led me to Barry Johnson, the founder of Polarity Management™. His model is called Polarity Thinking, a new way of thinking that helps one understand the difference between problems to solve and polarities that need to be leveraged or managed. In health care we are masters of problem solving, but many of the serious issues we need to address are actually polarities that need to be managed. Polarity Thinking explains why the same problems keep surfacing and how to break the cycle.

Polarity (i.e., paradox or dilemma) is not a new word, but Polarity Thinking is a new way of thinking in health care. When its principles are applied to health care realities, the outcomes are not only positive but sustainable.

As I have studied Polarity Thinking and introduced it to thousands of colleagues, I have watched them get excited, heard the “aha’s,” and observed the outcomes. They want to know more and are eager to learn how to integrate it with their daily responsibilities and bring it to others.

This is why we have developed the Interprofessional Institute for Polarity Thinking in Healthcare within KCON’s Wesorick Center. It is the first and only one in the U.S. We began the journey in July 2014 when we offered a three-day workshop in connection with community partners such as Mercy Health and Priority Health. Responses from the workshop were positive, and the interprofessional participants from four different universities and diverse clinical settings were interested in more opportunities to advance their knowledge.

The journey has begun. When our strong problem-solving skills are supplemented with Polarity Thinking, we can save time, money, and resources and bring hope and directions for sustainable health care transformation.

Polarities are interdependent pairs of values or alternative points of view that appear different, unrelated, or even competitive, but need each other over time to reach outcomes neither can reach alone. Polarities are unavoidable and are present in every individual, team, organization, and nation. Polarity Thinking is about “both-and,” inviting us to move away from “you’re wrong and I’m right” to “we’re both right” and supplementing our traditional problemsolving [either-or] thinking and acting.
Research Results: Studying Local Health Care Services Integration

A qualitative research study titled “Integration of Community Health Care Services in Grand Rapids, Michigan” was described in the Fall ‘14 edition of KCON Magazine (http://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/FA246874-064B-B5AE-E59A5F8FC51C956E/kcon-mag-15_fal_l_14.pdf). At that time the study data were still being analyzed by KCON’s Bonnie Wesorick Center for Health Care Transformation. This article presents one part of the study’s findings.

This study was designed to better understand how adult health care services are currently integrated across the continuum of care in Grand Rapids, and to identify what leaders in local health care agencies and organizations would like to see in the years ahead.

Participants, Interviews, and Data

Twelve female and eight male leaders of health care systems participated in the study. Their ages ranged from 29-64 (M = 43). All participants had completed at least an undergraduate degree. A third (n = 7) were in nursing, but participants also held degrees in hospital or public administration, physical therapy, business, and social work.

The interviews for this study were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide. They were recorded, transcribed, and then analyzed using Weber’s method of data content analysis.

An inductive analysis of 1,000+ pages detailed how the participants described integrated health care in Grand Rapids. Three primary categories included: (1) conceptualizing integrated health care, (2) creating a culture of person-centered care, and (3) creating partnering relationships. Each of these primary data categories contained several subcategories. This summary focuses on outcomes related to partnerships (category 3).

Partnering Relationships

The subcategories in this primary data category included (a) properties, (b) development process, (c) types and patterns of partnering, (d) barriers, and (e) facilitators. An important aspect of this category was the way participants described the essential properties of partnerships within the context of integrated health care.

The leaders explained that meaningful partnerships require active engagement; partners need to stand together to face and negotiate difficult, challenging issues. They also explained that true partnerships involve respect, shared visions and missions, accountability, and trust. In fact, trust and a shared vision were the terms most frequently mentioned. One leader captured the way that accountability and trust were related: “It is about doing what we say we will do and following through so others know we do our best work. Our partners recognize . . . that there is no hidden agenda, no bias, and they can depend on us.”

Another participant described the need for a common mission and focus by pointing out, “We start with what we have in common and . . . focus on the people we commonly serve . . . admitting that we live in this community, we care for this community, and our patients are our neighbors, friends, and colleagues. So we are all coming together to do what is right for our community.” Several leaders noted that working together without an underlying relationship no longer works when trying to create the best health care for the community.

Although the study participants mentioned specific organizational partnerships as a key to integrated health care, they also indicated that all partnering relationships have similar properties. For example, a few of the leaders explained that all partnerships have “bumps in the road” and that “sometimes things don’t go like we expect.” When there are unanticipated outcomes that are not acceptable, true partners suspend judgment and communicate thoughtfully and directly, using the opportunity to broaden their knowledge and address the situation.

Conclusion

There is much more to share from this study, and information about the entire study will be available from KCON’s Wesorick Center. Ultimately, thanks to the cooperation and openness of 20 local health care leaders, we have significant qualitative data to help us better understand integrated health care within our community.
FHC Receives National Quality Certification

In March, the leadership and staff of the GVSU Family Health Center (FHC) learned that they had been awarded Nurse-Managed Health Center Quality Certification from the National Nursing Centers Consortium (NNCC) for two full years. 

“I am incredibly proud of this team for their commitment to quality health care and their contributions to the education of nurses and a host of other interdisciplinary students,” says Cynthia McCurren, PhD, RN, FNAP, dean of KCON. “I extend my most sincere appreciation for the dedication of the FHC team.”

The Nurse-Managed Health Center Quality Certification program was developed to recognize nurse-managed health clinics that meet the quality standards established by the Quality Task Force, which includes the NNCC, the Institute for Nursing Centers, and the Nursing Centers Research Network. Nurse-managed health centers that apply for and are awarded certification have demonstrated their commitment to measuring and improving their quality of care and service. Participating in this certification process helps centers self-identify their strengths and areas for improvement, and provides them with the opportunity to receive feedback from national-level external quality review professionals. The GVSU FHC submitted its self-study for quality review in December 2014.

Dean McCurren explains further. “Due to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, improving the quality and efficiency of medical care services in the U.S. has become a major priority for reform. Specifically, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is tying payment to quality standards and offering new incentives for providers who deliver high-quality, coordinated care.

“So nurse-managed health centers need to demonstrate that they provide superior care,” she continues. “This certification program provides nurse-managed centers with an advantage in securing new business in the country’s current competitive health care marketplace. It also can strengthen the community’s confidence in the quality of care, treatment, and services provided. And finally, quality certification like this may help nurse-managed sites like the FHC when they seek insurance contracts and negotiate reimbursement rates.

“For these reasons and many more, this certification is a significant step in the life of GVSU’s Family Health Center. All of us at KCON offer our congratulations on this major achievement!”

Michigan’s Lt. Governor Visits KCON

Michigan Lt. Gov. Brian Calley, (MBA ’00), told an audience of KCON students and faculty members that his family health care experiences have affected his public policy work. Calley visited KCON on December 5, 2014, at the invitation of graduate nursing student Cindy Pettit, a friend of his.

Calley helped push for autism insurance reform in Michigan, which became law in 2012. His daughter was diagnosed with the disorder at age 4. Calley said his public policy work in Lansing now mostly involves working to improve the health care delivery and insurance system and not “lock out” people diagnosed with brain disorders.

A longer version of this story was originally posted by University Communications on GVSU’s website.
Kirkhof College of Nursing
Positions Available

Seeking faculty eager to promote distinction in teaching, research, service, and practice.

**Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship:** Administrates the college’s research office and associated resources; develops and maintains the infrastructure needed to promote and fulfill the college’s scholarship mission; mentors and supports faculty in the development of research/scholarly programs; promotes internal and external interdisciplinary research initiatives; and oversees graduate assistants’ integration into the college’s scholarly and teaching missions. Earned PhD in nursing or related discipline, and master’s degree in nursing required. Eligibility for RN licensure in Michigan required. Ability to meet criteria for professor or associate professor appointment. Record of funded research and scholarly activity, experience in the development, implementation, and evaluation of research programs. Record of professional, community, and university service. Previous academic administrative experience desirable.

**Tenure Track Faculty:** Seeking faculty members, with preference given to applicants with expertise in pediatrics, psych/mental health, community health, or nursing administration, and applicants with certification as an Adult/Gero NP, Adult NP, PMH NP, or PNP. These positions include teaching, scholarship, and service, with opportunities for professional practice as desired. Earned doctorate (in nursing preferred, PhD or DNP) and earned master’s degree in nursing required. Ability to meet criteria for professor, associate professor, or assistant professor appointment. Evidence of area of expertise and a program of scholarship. Minimum of one year teaching experience at undergraduate and/or graduate levels.

---

**KCON Centers of Distinction**

The Aging Population: Best Practices
Human Response in Health and Illness
Reforming Health Care Delivery and Education
Vulnerable Populations: Best Practices

---

For more information, please contact the dean, Dr. Cynthia McCurren, **(616) 331-5726**.
Apply online at [www.gvsujobs.org](http://www.gvsujobs.org) for assistance call Human Resources at 616-331-2215. Review will begin immediately and continue until the positions are filled. For more information about Grand Valley, see our website at [www.gvsu.edu](http://www.gvsu.edu). TDD Callers: Call Michigan Relay Center at **1-800-649-3777**.
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 health care 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 McCuren
Dean, Kirkhof College of Nursing