Giving Back by Guiding Others

Mentorship is a powerful gift. When we share our knowledge and experience with others, whether it is in our workplaces, universities, professional organizations or communities, we give back to our profession in a profound and impactful way.

The wisdom learned from those who guide us based on their expertise is distinct from the knowledge gained from lectures, textbooks and peer-reviewed journals. Both are critical to preparing future generations of nurse leaders, clinicians and scientists for success.

In this issue, we are celebrating mentorship by highlighting some of our many faculty members and alumni who serve as guides and role models to others, and some of the outstanding nursing students they’ve inspired along the way.

Have comments, questions or suggestions? Please don’t hesitate to email me: jshaver@email.arizona.edu.

Retiring Faculty Leave Lasting Legacies

In 2015, we celebrated the retirements of two long-time faculty members at our college: Clinical Associate Professor Roxanne Moutafis (BSN ’81, MSN ’89) and Clinical Assistant Professor Judy Nolen (BSN ’92, MSN ’99).

Roxanne retired in December after 25 years of service to our college. She taught leadership/management courses in our BSN program and was a leader in curriculum development and evaluation. She facilitated the new graduate program at Banner – University Medical Center Tucson (formerly UMC) and was a mentor to many faculty.

Judy retired in May after 16 years on our faculty. She taught psychiatric/mental health nursing in our BSN program and was instrumental in facilitating clinical placements at Banner – UMC South. She was also a dedicated leader and representative for our local Sigma Theta Tau International chapter.

Thank you Roxanne and Judy for your many years of dedication to educating future generations of Wildcat Nurses! May your legacies continue to inspire others.
Marylyn McEwen (BSN ’76, MSN ’87, PhD ’03), expert border-health researcher, outstanding faculty mentor, proud Wildcat Nurse and our Gladys E. Sorensen Endowed Professor for Diabetes Research, was recently honored with the Ruth B. Freeman Award from the Public Health Nursing Section of the American Public Health Association (APHA) for her distinguished career in public health education and research.

For more than 20 years, Marylyn has promoted health in Mexican-Americans who reside in the U.S.-Mexico border region through community-based interventions and participatory research, including studies of Mexican immigrant women and their binational health practices, health-illness transitions and risk perceptions related to undocumented border crossing.

To advance her work in the border region—where type 2 diabetes exceeds the U.S. national rates for Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites—in 2011, Marylyn was awarded a $1.8 million, five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health, National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities, to study how capitalizing on familismo (the strong cultural value of family) can strengthen how Mexican-American adults manage their type 2 diabetes.

As the co-principal investigator for an Interdisciplinary Rural Health Training Grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for 12 years, Marylyn has an exceptional record of mentoring undergraduate and graduate students in nursing, medicine, social work, nutrition, pharmacy and other disciplines to provide culturally relevant interventions in the Arizona-Sonora border region.

Marylyn joined our faculty in 2003 and holds a joint appointment in the UA Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health. She teaches courses about health and health disparities along the U.S.-Mexico border and how to conduct community-based interventions to decrease health inequities among vulnerable populations.

A passionate advocate for health equity, since 2003, Marylyn has served as the president of Chapter 18 of the Arizona Nurses Association, known as Enfermera de Salud Fronteriza (Border Health Nurses). She has been an active member of APHA for 22 years, and previously served as section chair and chair of the Awards and Policy Committees. In 2006, she was honored by APHA with the Public Health Nursing Creative Achievement Award.

As a student in our BSN program, Brooke Finley (BSN ’15) knew she wanted to pursue research her first day of class in Scholarly Inquiry in Evidence-Based Practice, taught by Associate Professor Janice Crist.

“I always asked ‘What’s next?’ ‘What does this mean?’” Brooke says. “There’s always something more you can know. That first day, I felt like all my questions were answered and more.”

As an undergraduate student, Brooke participated in a number of research opportunities, including working as a data collector for Associate Professor Barbara Brewer (PhD ’02) and as a research assistant for Assistant Professors Jane Carrington (PhD ’08) and Sheila Gephart (PhD ’12).

“They were excellent mentors,” Brooke says. “I really couldn’t have asked to work with better people. They were really supportive of my learning and treated me like a colleague, not a student. I really enjoyed the level of interaction we had and that was one of the key things that made me realize I wanted to pursue research as a career.”

For her honors thesis on compassion fatigue in oncology nurses, Brooke worked with Clinical Associate Professor Kate Sheppard (PhD ’08), who took her under her wing and provided data for Brooke to analyze for her thesis project.

Brooke went on to present her honors thesis during a podium session at the Western Institute of Nursing annual research conference, attended by hundreds of leading nurse-scientists, faculty and graduate students across 13 Western states.

Brooke graduated with her BSN degree last May. Now a first-year PhD student, she is one of 23 graduate students selected to receive the University Fellows Award from the UA Graduate College, a prestigious, one-year fellowship. The focus of her dissertation is improving the efficiency of electronic health records use by nurses and other health-care professionals. Jane Carrington is her dissertation chair.

“The thing that I love about Dr. Carrington is she doesn’t feel that success is a definite property,” Brooke says. “It’s infinite and continuous and she’ll share it with everyone.”
Recent BSN Graduate Sends Clinical Instructor a Huge Thank You

Haley Finley (BSN ’15), who graduated from our college last May, recently emailed Clinical Instructor Doug Cunningham a heartfelt thank you describing how his rigorous, third-semester course, Acute & Chronic Illness Management II, set her up for success as a new RN graduate hired in a cardiothoracic intensive care unit. With Haley’s permission, her email is shared below:

Hey Doug!

I hope this email finds you well and not too deep into the chaos of third semester. I am writing to share with you what’s been going on with me since graduation as well as thank you for the preparation for critical care.

A week after graduation, I was offered a job in the cardiothoracic ICU at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center. This job offer was followed by frantic studying for the NCLEX and then countless weeks of waiting on the infamous California Board of Registered Nursing (which moves slower than traffic on the 405 freeway). I am now in week three of UCLA’s new grad RN residency... and this is where my great appreciation comes in.

I am one of 12 BSN new grads hired into the CTICU at UCLA. It has been great interacting with and getting to know the other new grads and hear about their nursing school experiences. This has revealed to me the differences between programs, and how superior Arizona’s College of Nursing truly is. In week one we had “simulations,” which half of my cohort had never done before. Some programs don’t have a pharmacology class (mind-blowing) or the students were barely exposed to critical care (if they were even exposed at all).

I am not writing to bash other programs, but thank you for the rigorous “third semester” you put us through!!! I am excelling in the hemodynamics, EKG and other various critical care competencies my unit has asked us to complete. I am aware this is due to the previous exposure from U of A’s program and your diligence in teaching essential concepts for critical care. Your 3rd semester team rocks!

If you want to share this email with your current students or other faculty teaching alongside you, please don’t hesitate. From a new grad RN who thought third semester was insane a year ago- it isn’t. It is exactly what is necessary for any new grad interested in critical care. The sepsis bundle, the A-line, the Swan, the vasoactive drips…. it’s all worth it.

Proudly wearing my University of Arizona College of Nursing Alumni badge reel in Bruin territory, Los Angeles, California. Thanks so much Doug!!!

Best wishes & Beardown,
Haley Finley

Career Tips from Our Alumna of the Year

During Homecoming, our 2015 Alumna of the Year Rebecca Kuhn (MSN ’80), executive vice president for community delivery at Banner Health, shared the below words of wisdom for how to have a long and successful career.

Principles for Living, Working and a Great Career Trajectory

- Launching
  - Expand your horizons
  - Say yes to opportunities
  - Overcome your fears

- In Flight
  - Set goals
  - Get out of your comfort zone
  - Honor commitments

- Landing
  - Be loyal to your team
  - Do your best in every role
  - Be open to new challenges

May Your Career Flight...

- Take you where you want to go
- With minimal turbulence
- And provide you with a challenging and meaningful journey

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In Their Own Words

Emily Heiland (BSN ’15)

“Through assessment, we see things others neglect to see. Through education/knowledge, we understand things others don’t have the capacity to understand. Through compassionate care, we feel things others cannot comprehend.”

-From Emily’s speech on behalf of her class at Convocation on Dec. 17.

New Name: UA Health Sciences

The Arizona Health Sciences Center has a new name: the University of Arizona Health Sciences — a move to clearly identify Arizona’s academic health center as an integral part of the University of Arizona, one of the nation’s premier research universities.

As a mentor, Professor Leslie Ritter (BSN ’74, MSN ’81, PhD ’96) is making a global impact. Through a partnership with the University of Modena-Emilia Romagna in Italy, Leslie recently hosted graduate nursing student Giulia Cervi (left) for a month in Tucson. Together, they examined research methods that will serve as the foundation for Giulia’s PhD study in transitions of care. For almost 10 years, Leslie has also mentored undergraduate students from the School of Nursing at the University of Bologna in systems of care for stroke.

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