

Fall/Winter 2012

NURSING INNOVATION AND LEADERSHIP
AT THE FRANCES PAYNE BOLTON SCHOOL OF NURSING

fore**FRONT**

Not Alone:
Mental Health
Nursing
Program
Positions
Family on
Healing's
Front Lines



FRANCES PAYNE BOLTON
SCHOOL OF NURSING

CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY

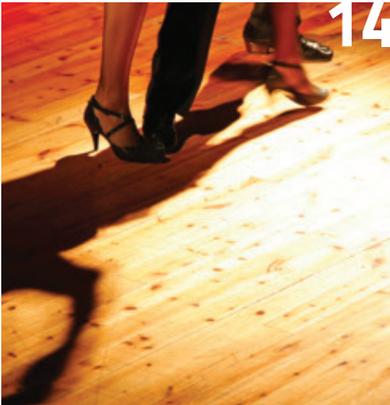
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with \$4.5 million Ebersbach Gift

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About *Forefront*

This publication is produced twice a year for the alumni and friends of the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing at Case Western Reserve University. The *Forefront* mission is to inform readers about the school's excellence in nursing science, education and practice and how it impacts daily lives.

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dean's LETTER

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Welcome to the first issue of *Forefront: Nursing Innovation and Leadership at the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing*.

As an alumna, I have always enjoyed reading *FPB Nursing* but after a year as dean, I have come to realize the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing is more than *FPB Nursing*—we are the face of health care leadership both locally and around the globe.

Everywhere I visited during the past 12 months, I met people who admire our school's continuing legacy of curricular innovation, cutting-edge science and clinical practice, and outstanding leadership. They recognize that the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing not only educates world-class health care professionals but also defines the future of the nursing profession.

The magazine's new name and format demonstrates that ideal: an ideal embraced by our namesake Frances Payne Bolton.

Almost 70 years ago, Bolton sponsored the Bolton Act of 1943. She had two forward-thinking goals: to advance the profession of nursing and to meet the growing health care needs of America's armed forces. Today the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing continues to focus on these needs.

In our cover story "Not Alone: Mental Health Nursing Program Positions Family on Healing's Front Lines," we examine a growing national health care crisis—the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder on our veterans and their families. We also examine how we are addressing this complex issue through our Family Systems Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing program.

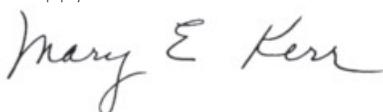
This issue also looks at another unsung hero, the late Dorothy Ebersbach (NUR '54). A Women Airforce Service Pilot (WASP), public health nurse and Congressional Gold Medal recipient, Ebersbach has given one of the largest gifts in the school's history to our first-of-its-kind advanced practice flight nursing program.

One of Dorothy's classmates and friends is also featured: Marie Grubisha Wilkie (NUR '54). Wilkie was able to not only see the world with her education, but make it a better place.

I can think of no better group of individuals to feature in this first issue. I hope you agree. Send me a note or email me at mary.kerr@case.edu and let me know. I would like to hear your thoughts about the magazine and about our school.

In the meantime, let me wish you a wonderful and healthy new year.

Happy New Year,



Mary E. Kerr, PhD, RN, FAAN (GRS '91)
Dean and the May L. Wykle Professor





QSEN COMES TO TOWN

The Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing is the new home for the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) Institute, a project that the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation initiated seven years ago at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH).

“Much of the work of the last few years has been sharing with colleagues around the nation innovative ways to deliver quality and safety education through the QSEN.org website and the National Forums,” said Associate Professor of Nursing Mary Dolansky, PhD, RN. Dolansky is the new QSEN director with the retirement of UNC-CH Professor Linda Cronenwett, PhD, RN, FAAN.

She will expand QSEN’s reach by enhancing the quality and safety resources to assist with education of nurses and other health care professionals in clinical practice. In addition, future work will include interprofessional educators as quality and safety rely on health professionals working in teams.

“Eventually,” Dolansky said, “an entire generation of health care professionals will receive this education to ensure safe and high-quality health care.”

NEW ASSOCIATE DEAN OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS NAMED

The School of Nursing has appointed Elizabeth Madigan, PhD, RN (GRS ‘96) associate dean of academic affairs. She has also been named the Independence Foundation Professor in Nursing Education.

In her new role, Madigan oversees all academic programs, the Office of Student Services, the Learning Resource Center, international programs, continuing education and faculty development. Her work impacts the daily lives of every student and all teaching faculty at the school.

“I was impressed with Liz’s boundless energy, intellect and dedication,” said nursing school Dean Mary E. Kerr, PhD, RN, (GRS ‘91). “She also brings a proven track record in leadership and team-building.”

Madigan has been on the nursing school faculty for more than 15 years since earning her PhD here. Besides her teaching and research, she leads the World Health Organization Collaborating Center for Research and Clinical Training in Home Care Nursing—one of only 38 nurse-related WHO Collaborating Centers in the world. She is also the vice president for the Midwest Nursing Research Society and a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing. “Everywhere I look, I see opportunities for us to grow and enhance the FPB legacy on the national stage,” Madigan said.



NEW MAJOR FOCUSES ON NURSE EDUCATORS

With America’s aging population and the growth in chronic diseases, the demand for skilled nurses continues to increase. Yet more than 67,000 qualified applicants are denied admission to nursing schools nationwide annually because of a shortage of nursing faculty and resources.

To help alleviate this shortage, the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing launched a new major in its Master of Science in Nursing program for students interested in becoming nurse educators. The Education with Population Focus curriculum features education courses to improve teaching skills without advanced practice clinical requirements.

“These graduates will help solve the nursing shortage in the United States by becoming faculty. But the faculty shortage is worldwide problem,” said MSN Program Director Carol Savrin, DNP. “This is also the ideal program for many of our international students, who return to their home countries to teach.”



A SECOND CAREER FOR RETIRED TRAINING “PATIENTS”

After 15 years, six training manikins used by thousands of Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing students are starting new jobs in Cleveland.

They were donated along with some older examination equipment to several health care organizations, including RN Heavenly Hands, a Cleveland nonprofit that trains low-income, unemployed residents to become entry-level, state-tested nursing assistants for jobs in nursing homes and home health care.

“All schools need patient manikins—especially the basic human manikins,” said Celeste Alfes, DNP, assistant professor of nursing and director of the school’s Learning Resource Center. “We were happy to find them places that can continue to use them.”

The newer, human-like replacements at the nursing school are more diverse and enhanced with accessories that attach to the body to customize the model, changing the patient’s gender and adding skin conditions, like ulcers from bedsores, and other medical conditions.



GARY HONORED FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Medical Mutual of Ohio Kent W. Clapp Chair and Professor Faye Gary, EdD, RN, FAAN, was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Black Nurses Association.

Besides her research with African-Americans and other vulnerable populations for more than three decades, she has served on the Advisory Council for the National Institute of Mental Health and the Advisory Council of the National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities. She has also served as a consultant to Ministries of Health over five continents.



CELEBRATING 10,000 BIRTHDAYS

To celebrate October’s National Midwifery Week, Case Western Reserve’s midwifery nursing students gave away 1,000 mini cupcakes—one for every 10 children in Ohio born into the hands of certified nurse midwives. The nurse midwifery graduate program at the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing is ranked 17th in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report’s* Graduate School rankings.

QUINN GRIFFIN NAMED NLN FELLOW

The Academy of Nursing Education’s National League for Nursing has selected Mary Quinn Griffin, PhD, RN, (NUR ’93, GRS ’01) to be a member of its sixth group of fellows.

Quinn Griffin, an associate professor at the School of Nursing, was selected for her enduring and substantial contributions to nursing education and visionary leadership in nursing education.





GENETICIST JOINS NURSING FACULTY

Geneticist Rebecca Marsick Darrah, PhD, (GRS'93, '98, '10) joined the faculty this fall as an assistant professor. Darrah is board certified by the American Board of Genetic Counseling and studies cystic fibrosis on a genetic level.

"I'm examining the relationship between variation in the endothelin receptor gene and severity of cystic fibrosis pulmonary disease," said the Cleveland native, who also has a master's degree in bioethics. "It is part of a larger effort to identify genetic modifiers of CF disease course and possible therapeutic targets."

Having a geneticist on faculty is new for the nursing school and part of a growing trend in health care. "Health care is moving toward more and more individualized care based on genetics," explained Dean Mary E. Kerr, PhD, RN. "Having a geneticist on faculty will extend the methods doctoral students and other nurse faculty can incorporate into their research studies as well as integrate genetic knowledge at all levels of nursing education."

NURSING STUDENTS COLLABORATE WITH DENTAL STUDENTS IN NEW INTERPROFESSIONAL PROJECT OFFERING "ONE-STOP" HEALTH CARE

Advanced practice nursing students will provide health screenings during oral exam visits to the university's dental clinic in a new interprofessional team approach to treating patients, starting in late January.

The Collaborative Home for Oral Health, Medical Review and Health Promotion, or CHOMP, funded with a three-year \$265,000 grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration to the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, creates a one-stop shop for patient care while bringing together the health science professions in working and learning situations.

Patients will pay for regular dental exams and testing while the grant defrays fees for health screenings for cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure, red and white blood cell counts, and, if desired, HIV, as well as immunizations. Under supervision, the future nurse practitioners may treat and prescribe medications for patients with such acute health issues as flu, strep throat and other non-chronic illnesses.

Project director and Master of Science in Nursing program director Carol L. Savrin, DNP, along with co-director and associate dean for education at the dental school Kristin Victoroff, DDS, PhD, will track how patients use the combined services and whether it is economically viable to have nurse practitioners work in the dental clinic.





NURSE SCIENTISTS FIND UNPAID FAMILY CAREGIVERS PAY A HEAVY PRICE

According to AARP, the annual cost of unpaid elder caregiving—work that falls mainly on the backs of family members—runs about \$450 billion. While some companies document the physical and emotional toll that the workplace takes on their employees, exactly how draining caregiving might be has never really been measured, until now.

“Without knowing the impact of effort, we have two vulnerable people at risk for health issues—the caregiver and the care receiver,” said Evanne Juratovac, PhD, RN, assistant professor at the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing and the study’s lead investigator.

Juratovac was part of a research group that analyzed the effort of 110 family members for the study, “Effort, Workload and Depression Symptoms in Family Caregivers of Older Adults: Conceptualizing and Testing a Work-Health Relationship.” It was published in the international journal, *Research and Theory for Nursing Practice*.

While it’s been known that caregivers can develop depression, this study found that “higher effort by the caregiver correlated with higher depressive symptoms,” Juratovac said.

But researchers were surprised to learn that a caregiver’s effort was not eased when outside professional help or other family members stepped in.

Knowing what kinds of effort are expended would help in the development of interventions to ease this workload, yet maintain quality care for the recipient, Juratovac said.

Researchers studied the physical, mental, emotional and time-related cost of home caregiving—the toll of which is usually energy overload.

LAB NOTES

The School of Nursing received the prestigious **Jonas Fellowship** from the Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence to provide leadership development support for PhD candidates.

Evelyn Duffy, DNP, participated in the Syracuse University 2012 Aging Studies Summer Institute: Public Issues in Aging.

Ronald Hickman, PhD, RN, and **Melissa Pinto, PhD, RN**, attended the NIH’s Summer Genetics Institute sponsored by the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR).

The International Network of Kangaroo Mother Care awarded **Susan Ludington, PhD, FAAN**, the first “ORATION of HONOUR” award for her contributions to Kangaroo Care.

The paper, “Longitudinal Analysis of Resourcefulness, Family Strain and Depressive Symptoms in Grandmother Caregivers,” by **Carol Musil, PhD, RN, Jaclene Zauszniewski, PhD, RN-BC, Christopher Burant, PhD, Alexandra Jeanblanc** and **Camille Warner, PhD**, was one of eight papers selected from a field of 770 abstracts as a “Presentation of Distinction” at the 2012 Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science.

Assistant Professor **Jacquelyn Slomka, PhD, RN**, has been awarded a \$1.7 million grant from the NIH and NINR to support her study titled “Randomized Trial of an HIV Navigation Program for Early Palliative Care.”

Research Associate **Ann S. Williams, PhD, RN**, has been elected as a Board Member for the American Association of Diabetes Educators.

Kate Hanna Harvey Professor in Community Health Nursing and PhD Program Director **Jaclene A. Zauszniewski, PhD, RN-BC, FAAN**, has been selected as an editorial board member for the *Journal of Nursing Measurement*.



Ebersbach Gives \$4.5 million for School's Flight Nursing Program

GIFT AMONG THE SCHOOL'S LARGEST

Less than a year after Dorothy Ebersbach (NUR '54) made a \$2 million gift to flight nursing, trustees from her estate made a surprise announcement of an additional \$2.5 million gift during the dedication of the Dorothy Ebersbach Academic Center for Flight Nursing on Aug. 8.

More than 120 classmates, friends, faculty and flight nursing students gathered during the school's annual Flight Camp on Case Western Reserve's Squire Valleevue Farm to honor Ebersbach, who passed last December. A Women Airforce Service Pilot (WASP) in World War II, a public health nurse and loyal FPB alumna, Ebersbach saw the program as a way to merge her three passions: flying, nursing and service.

"It is humbling to see that this brave and pioneering woman believed so passionately in the mission of flight nursing," said Mary Kerr, PhD, RN, (GRS '91), dean of the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing. "Our charge now is to lift our own education and research to meet the great aspirations she had for us."

By providing scholarships for undergraduates and fellowships for graduate students, the Dorothy Ebersbach Academic Center for Flight Nursing will be able to expand the number of advanced practice nurses who receive this intensive, innovative training. Her gift also helps ensure the long-term sustainability of the initiative and allows additional resources to be concentrated on research and overall program enhancement.

"Flight nursing is more than getting the patient to the hospital in the shortest amount of time," said Christopher Manacci (NUR '03), founder and director of the center. "It's about bringing ER or ICU care to the field."

One of the first institutions in the United States to use Case Western Reserve's nurse practitioner model to transport critically ill patients is Cleveland Clinic, which now flies the Ebersbach Academic Center's logo on its helicopters.

During the event, Robert Wyllie, MD, chief medical operations officer at Cleveland Clinic, noted that since its inception, the Cleveland Clinic transport program has transferred nearly 20,000 individuals from over 21

countries in almost every state in the United States. Most members of Cleveland Clinic's critical care transport team are FPB flight nursing graduates.

Besides the additional \$2.5 million to support for the flight nursing program, the trustees from Ebersbach's estate also presented the school with her WASP memorabilia, including her uniform and Congressional Gold Medal.

Gayla Russell, Ebersbach's longtime friend and co-trustee of her estate with Foster Aldridge, described Ebersbach's reaction to receiving the Congressional Gold Medal in 2010 along with her fellow WASPs. "She told me that what people do not understand was that the honor was being chosen to serve—and it was her duty to serve." +



Top left: (L to R) Former nursing school dean May L. Wykle, Ebersbach estate co-trustee Gayla Russell, Dean Mary Kerr, Case Western Reserve President Barbara Snyder, and Ebersbach Academic Center Director Chris Manacci at the center's dedication. Top Right: Dorothy Ebersbach's uniform and Congressional Gold Medal. Left: Flight nursing jacket.



DOROTHY EBERSBACH (NUR '54) AVIATOR. NURSE. PIONEER.

1914–2011

Dorothy "Dottie" Ebersbach was born in Pomeroy, Ohio, in 1914. Her passion for adventure, learning and service was evident early in life.

She earned her private pilot's license in 1939, three years after she graduated *summa cum laude* from Ohio University. To celebrate, her father—who had moved the family to Florida—gave her a Piper Cruiser: a three-seat, single-engine plane for her to ferry supplies statewide for his road construction business.

When the United States entered World War II, Ebersbach was one of only 1,800 women selected from a pool of 25,000 applicants to the Women Airforce Service Pilots or WASP. She tested repaired airplanes and towed practice targets for male gunners.

At the time, WASP members were considered civilians rather than military personnel. They were not granted veteran status until 1977. In 2010, Ebersbach and her peers were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for their distinguished service to their country in its time of need.

Following the war, Ebersbach continued to serve others. She graduated from the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing in 1954 and joined the Hillsborough County Health Department in Tampa, Fla. She worked in public health until her retirement in 1975.

For a video on Dorothy Ebersbach's life, visit nursing.case.edu/ebersbach.

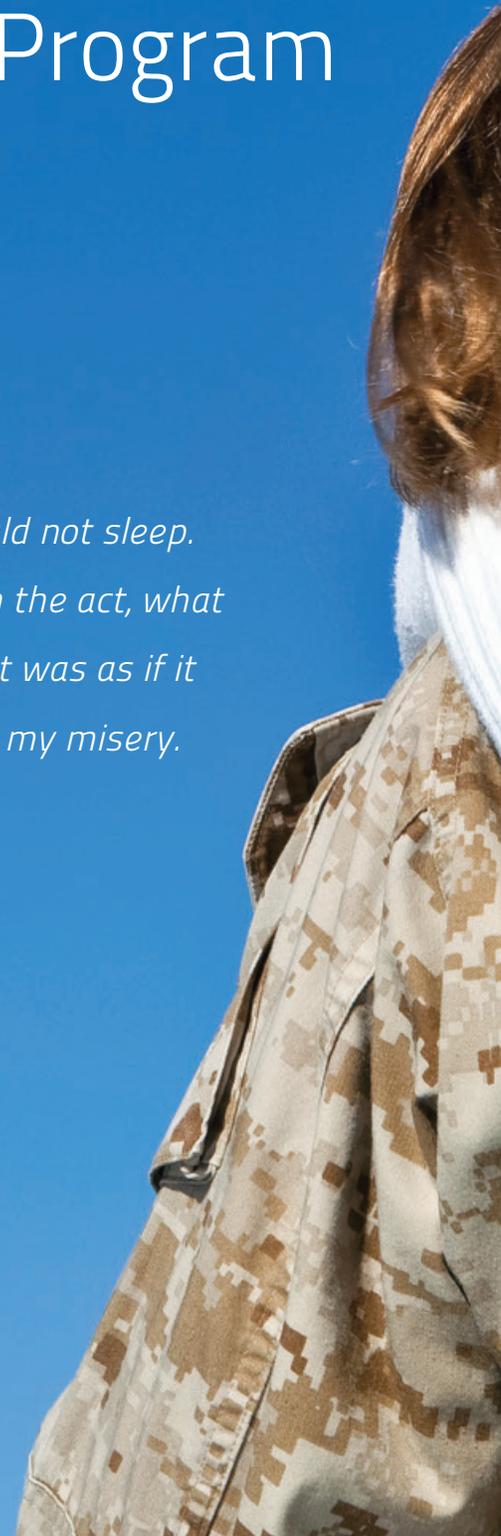
NOT ALONE:

Mental Health Nursing Program Positions Family on Healing's Front Lines

BY TAMAR NORDENBERG

I started having worsening anxiety and panic attacks. I could not sleep. I began to idealize suicide, thinking of how I would perform the act, what I would use, how I could protect my family from knowing. It was as if it began to make sense to me. I was miserable; it would end my misery.

These words chronicling the mental anguish from post-traumatic stress disorder might have been penned by a soldier haunted by the horrors of wartime combat. But the passage from Andrea Carlile's *The War That Came Home* actually describes her own debilitating mental agony as she watched PTSD transform her husband and the father of her two young daughters—who had earned a reputation as a hero during his Army service in Iraq—into a “man and a monster, a split personality that was trapped in his own world of pain and suffering.”







Formidable mental health challenges, including post-traumatic stress disorder and depression, are common among military service members and veterans. And military service has powerful primary and ripple effects on loved ones who share the stressful experiences of separation and re-adjustment.

In recognition of the psychological burdens faced by military personnel and their families—and by others grappling with mental burdens associated with a wide range of influences such as the economy, violence and mental disorders—the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing recently launched its Family

Systems in Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing program toward helping people rebuild their splintered lives. The specialization within the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program brings family, community and cultural factors to bear in the healing process.

“Nothing really prepares you totally for what these service men and women can encounter,” says Jane Suresky, DNP, (NUR ‘88, ‘95), a School of Nursing assistant professor and director of the Family Systems program. “It’s very important that we, as nurses, be prepared to help them and their families before their service, while they are away and after they return.”

HELP NEEDED ON THE HOME FRONT

Like many military families, author Andrea Carlile and her husband, Wes, had no way to anticipate the mental turmoil in store when Wes returned from Iraq, having buried 15 of his friends killed when their Chinook helicopter was fired on by insurgents. “In our lives, the war had not stopped, continuing to rage on in a different venue,” Andrea wrote. “We were at war on the home front, and I was now the enemy under attack.”

One of every six troops returning from Afghanistan and Iraq—all told, more than 300,000 of them—have suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury, according to government estimates. Even those coming home with no serious physical injuries can be dealing with mental health issues such as PTSD, anxiety, depression or substance abuse—dubbed the “invisible wounds of war.”

“It’s amazing, the lasting and devastating mental health effects of service,” says Family Systems program instructor Theresa Backman, DNP, RN, (NUR ‘12), a military reservist for 23 years who worked for several years as a Veterans Affairs (VA) nurse. “So many veterans, even from the eras of Vietnam and Korea, are walking around with PTSD, depression or substance abuse that’s not being addressed.”

Loved ones, meanwhile, can suffer mental consequences of their own. For instance, a spouse can find it difficult to take on the role of both

mother and father. And re-integration into past roles can be difficult, as well. For their part, children can feel afraid and abandoned when a military parent is torn away for a time. “These military families are vulnerable families,” sums up Suresky. “If their needs are not addressed, mental health problems tend to progress to a more severe state.”

As a hospital nurse near a Georgia military base, Patricia Dille, BSN, RN, saw young wives through panic attacks and severe asthma attacks while their husbands were deployed, and saw babies delivered during their fathers’ service away from home. She herself parented four young children while their father, Steve, served in the Navy. Seeing him off for submarine duty with little notice or for long periods was difficult, says Dille, who later faced the grief of Steve’s death in a car crash after he had retired from 22 years of military service.

“The sense of community among military families can help you get through the hard times, day by day,” says the military wife who has maintained her ties as she moved around the country, most recently settling in New Hampshire. “I still feel an emotional connection and devotion to the military.”

Seeking professional advancement after her husband’s death, one-time school nurse Dille registered for the FPB Family Systems MSN program, which resonated for the value it placed on the role of family

“If their needs are not addressed, mental health problems tend to progress to a more severe state.”

and community networks. “If I could design a program that fit with my interests and experience, it would be the Case Western Reserve program,” says the first-semester student.

“LIKE SPOKES IN A WHEEL”

The Family Systems program is considered a “blended role” major, enabling graduates to serve as psychiatric nurse practitioners or

NURSES FIND FELLOWSHIP STUDYING WITH PSYCHIATRISTS

In health circles, it’s preached often but practiced much less frequently, says Maureen Sweeney, MSN. Collaborations among health professionals can improve patient outcomes. Sweeney, a School of Nursing BSN alumna who recently earned her MSN with the Family Systems specialization, is one of the first nurses to participate in a CWRU School of Medicine Public and Community Psychiatry Fellowship; once a physician-only educational opportunity, these days the fellowship joins nurses and psychiatrists in health care delivery and academic study toward improving care.

The program develops the clinical, management and administrative skills needed for leadership in public health settings—by Sweeney’s description, to foster “our managerial hats in addition to our practitioner hats.” Including advance practice nurses in the fellowship advances this goal, says program director Patrick Runnels, MD, PhD, assistant professor at the School of Medicine and a psychiatrist at University Hospitals Case Medical Center, by “allowing participants to interact as colleagues and develop a greater respect for each other’s professions.”

Adds Runnels, whose program graduated its first nurse participant in 2012, “We can get lost in what makes a doctor different from an advanced practice nurse, when it’s much more useful to respect the different paths to the same type of work, and enhance our capabilities to work together to boost the quality of public mental health care.”

clinical nurse specialists across a broad spectrum of practice settings, such as community mental health clinics, hospital systems, private physician offices, prison systems, military bases and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals and other treatment facilities.

The program, whose inaugural class started in September 2009, prioritizes the consideration of a person's circumstances not in isolation, but within their family unit of interconnected and interdependent people. "The whole program looks at the interactions among members of the family unit," Dille describes. "One member may be having problems functioning, but like spokes in a wheel, invariably there's interplay of the parts of that unit."

The curriculum prepares graduates to help people within diverse family structures—military families, and also kinship structures such as single-parent families, blended families, families of choice, migrant and immigrant families, foster families and caregivers. Family is defined by the decision to live together in such kinship relationships, not by biological or legally recognized connections alone. FPB is a "frontrunner" of a trend to focus on the family unit, says Family Systems program graduate Maureen Sweeney, MSN, (NUR'10, '12), a newlywed with an 8-year-old son. She points out that even in national certification, the traditional concentration on either adult

psychiatric nursing or child psychiatric nursing is being phased out.

The Family Systems curriculum includes 45-48 credit hours of coursework—typically completed within four semesters—and 720 clinical hours. "Our program strongly emphasizes psychotherapy, in individual, family and group settings," says Suresky, "as reflected in our 720 clinical hours compared to the typical program's 500."

Suresky, who teaches four courses within the program during this academic year, attends class alone—physically speaking. Except for an occasional one-day session they attend in person, students catch class online, mostly in real-time, from around the country—Dille from her New Hampshire home, for example, and others this semester from New York State and Columbus and Dayton in Ohio. Previous years included learners from Washington State,

Michigan, Texas and the U.S.

Virgin Island of St. Thomas. "The virtual classroom makes all the

difference, providing a broader opportunity

for a diverse group to attend," Suresky says. Suresky

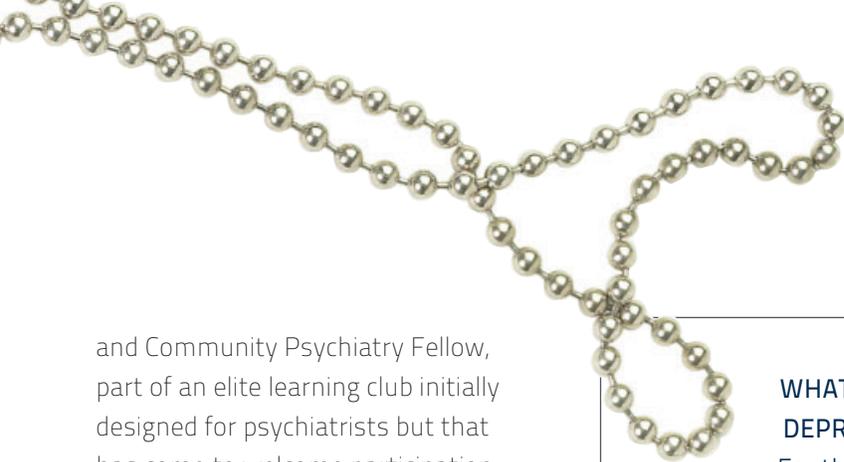
had a concern about a virtual classroom replacing the real thing:

a void in the camaraderie among students. "I think it's important in psychiatric nursing education that students engage with each other.

And they've proven my fear wrong, keeping in touch with each other and supporting each other every step of the way."

Another standout program feature, beyond the distance learning opportunity, according to the program's director, is the major opens doors to learning from a wide range of experts—from within the nursing school and from partner institutions such as University Hospitals Case Medical Center. Sweeney is a Public





and Community Psychiatry Fellow, part of an elite learning club initially designed for psychiatrists but that has come to welcome participation by FPB advance practice nurses. (See “Nurses Find Fellowship Studying With Psychiatrists.” on Pg. 11.)

MOVING FORWARD

The first class graduated with the Family Systems concentration in January 2011, and despite doubling capacity to 14 students in 2012, Suresky says the supply of these specialized nurses cannot keep up with the demand. “I get calls all the time for our graduates. The need overwhelms what we can accommodate.”

For Wes in *The War That Came Home*, it was his pastor, co-workers and the VA that helped him triumph over PTSD and save his family bonds. Having surmounted their dire mental health hurdles, Andrea Carlile assures, “PTSD does not have to destroy the veteran and his or her family. There is help available.”

For some, says nursing instructor Backman, getting help means “really learning to live again in spite of the pain. You’re forever changed, but how do you move forward despite having seen what you’ve seen and having done what you’ve done?” By the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing’s family systems principles, one key lies in understanding that elements of your environment contributed to your strife, and you can’t be expected to heal in isolation, either. +

WHAT NURSING SCHOOL STUDIES SAY ABOUT DEPRESSION, STIGMA

For those in the military, depression can prove to be a treacherous impediment to a fulfilling life. At the extreme, depression and related feelings of hopelessness can lead to thoughts of taking one’s own life. Pentagon statistics reveal a surge in suicides over recent years; calamitously, 154 service members took their own lives in the first 155 days of 2012, outpacing even the number of U.S. troops killed in action in Afghanistan.

Now, a survey developed by the FPB School of Nursing’s Jaclene Zauszniewski, PhD, RN-BC, (NUR’ 89, GRS’92) could help clinicians head off a patient’s depression at the pass. Zauszniewski’s Depression Cognition Scale (DCS) asks people to rank eight feelings, such as helplessness, hopelessness and emptiness. In research reported in the *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, Zauszniewski, with Marquette University College of Nursing researcher Abir K. Bekhet, PhD, RN, (GRS ’07), found that the DCS could identify the point at which negative thinking patterns act as telltale precursors to serious depression. “Clinicians need guidelines and measures to know when negative thinking has reached a tipping point and has begun to spiral into clinical depression,” says Zauszniewski, the nursing school’s Kate Hanna Harvey Professor in Community Health Nursing and nursing PhD program director.

For service members struggling with depression, or another mental health hurdle, the “man-up” culture may stop them from seeking care from a nurse, psychiatrist or other health professional. In what may be a step toward encouraging people with mental illness to seek assistance, FPB KL2 post-doctoral scholar Melissa Pinto, PhD, RN, and her colleagues looked at the “Revised Attribution Questionnaire” for measuring stigma in a different population—adolescents—and found it to be a reliable and valid measure of stigma in this group. The research suggests the tool measures the effectiveness of interventions aimed at reducing mental illness-associated stigma among adolescents. Such research is important in helping people recover from mental illness, Pinto says: “Creating a social culture where people feel comfortable getting treatment and talking about the illness with others who can support them is a vital initial step that can help people get better.”



Quick Stepping With Mary Kerr:

The Dean Reflects
on Her First Year
and Plans for the Future

BY LAURA PUTRE
WITH HELEN JONES-TOMS



When Mary Kerr, PhD, RN, (GRS '91), dean of the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, makes an entrance, often it is to give a speech, show around an important visitor or check out how a research project is going. But occasionally, on the weekends, the room she enters is filled with music and twinkly lights.

Ballroom dancing with her husband of 37 years, Jack, is one of Kerr's favorite ways to relax. But even in her leisure time, Kerr does not do anything halfway. She competes in national dance competitions afterhours.

"If you take classes and you do not compete, you do not work as hard," says Kerr. "It is similar to going to school and auditing a class instead of taking a test. If you take the test, you study harder."

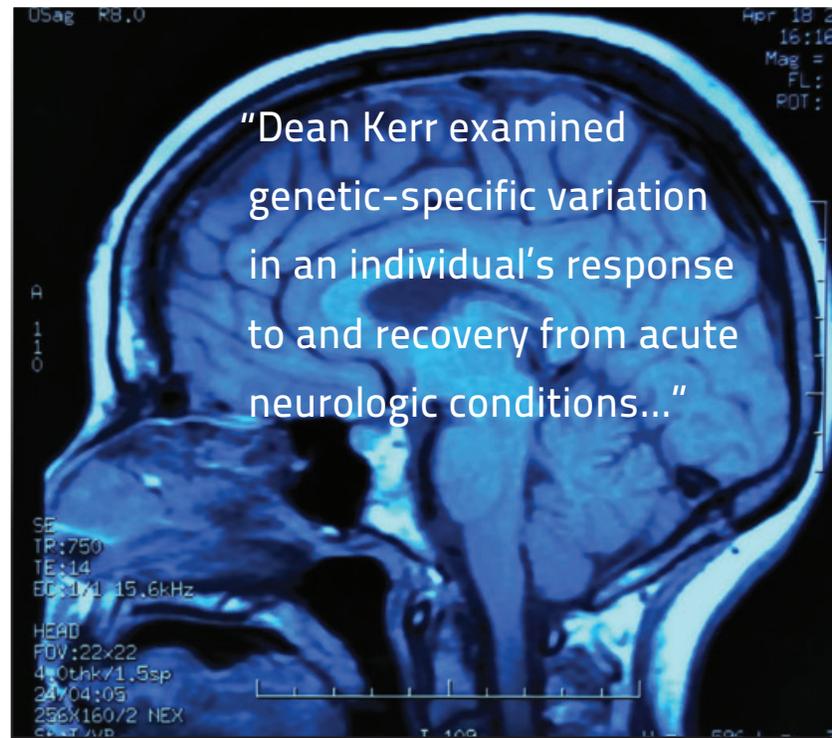
A PASSION FOR RESEARCH

Kerr is not shy about studying harder. A lover of research since she "did a little project on microbes transmitted across gloves" as a BSN student, she wrote a letter to the legendary first editor of *Nursing Research*, Florence Downs, looking for advice on a career as a nurse scientist. "Florence sent me a personal letter that I still treasure. It said 'Get a PhD.' I just thought the idea was insurmountable."

But 15 years and many late nights after that correspondence, Kerr earned her hood from the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing and the respect of her fellow nurse scientists. She authored or co-authored more than 100 scholarly publications and abstracts, including her research on preventing cerebral ischemia and maximizing cerebral perfusion in the critically ill patient with a neurologic condition.

She examined genetic-specific variation in an individual's response to and recovery from acute neurologic conditions such as traumatic brain injury or a ruptured cerebral aneurysm. She remains particularly interested in identifying early biomarkers or parameters that help nurses identify individuals at risk for acute and chronic disease, including cerebral ischemia.

Her ability to instill her passion for research in others helped her to rise quickly through the faculty ranks at the University of Pittsburgh serving as the director of its Center for Nursing Research and later as UPMC Health System Chair in Nursing Science. Her research also earned her a secondary appointment as a full professor in Pitt's Department of Neurosurgery, one of the first nurses to receive this distinction at the school of medicine at Pittsburgh.



In 2005, she was tapped to be deputy director for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) under Director Patricia A. Grady. In that role, Kerr advocated for increased interdisciplinary research in health care nationwide. After more than six years at the NIH helping plan, direct and manage the NINR programs and resources, Kerr needed a new challenge: dean of nursing at a major research university, and her alma mater turned out to be the perfect fit.

Kerr liked the nursing school's energy. She also liked that it was one of eight strong schools in the university that encouraged interdisciplinary collaboration, rather than being integrated within a health sciences division.

Lively questions from the faculty also impressed her. "They wanted to know how I saw education, clinical practice and research being merged," she recalls. "They also asked me how I felt about community involvement for students. I could tell that they had a broader view of what happened in a school besides what goes on in the classrooms."



FUTURE-FOCUSED

In her first year as dean, Kerr sought new ways to collaborate with other schools at Case Western Reserve. Dental and advanced practice nurse practitioner students are now working on delivering clinical care together. And nursing and engineering faculty are collaborating on a 'smart' wheelchair that interacts with the patient's environment, doing things like signaling doors to open and adjusting itself if there is too much pressure on one part of the patient's anatomy.

She has also added a geneticist, Rebecca Darrah, PhD, to the faculty and sent two up-and-coming faculty, Ronald Hickman, PhD, RN, (CAS'00, NUR'02, GRS'08) and Melissa Pinto, PhD, RN, to the highly competitive NINR Summer Genetics Institute.

Kerr has also made it a priority to pair research projects with clinical programs where the school shines, like gerontology, palliative and end-of-life care, and the flight nursing program. The Doctor of Nursing Practice program, the first of its kind in the nation, continues to grow, despite heightened competition.

"Nearly 20 years ago, we were the first to offer a clinical doctorate, now known as the DNP. We are now one of 185 programs nationwide," Kerr notes. "There are still plenty of opportunities for us to expand our program with its unique distance-friendly cohort system, especially since the Institute of Medicine has recommended that the number

"Kerr has also made it a priority to pair research projects with clinical programs where the school shines, like the flight nurse program."

of doctorates in nursing double by 2020. Our graduates are among the top nursing leaders nationwide."

Her first love remains research and she hopes to graduate more scientists by strengthening the PhD program. But she has not forgotten how the very concept of pursuing a PhD made her feel and how important Downs's encouragement was. With that in mind, she created the PhD Legacy Fellows program.

The program, named to honor this year's 40th anniversary of university's nursing PhD program, provides full-tuition scholarships, education stipends and research assistantships for the nation's top recent BSN graduates who are interested in pursuing a doctorate.

Those potential students receive a personal letter from the dean encouraging them to apply. "The response to the letters has been tremendous," Kerr says. "Students have called to thank us for acknowledging their potential, and we saw a huge surge in interest in our PhD program." The first inaugural fellows began this fall, and the dean hopes to find ongoing support for these future nurse scientists.

In addition, to honor all of the students as well as the faculty, the dean would also like to modernize the nursing school building so it is as sharp as the people in it. "We need more glass, more light and flexible working space to reflect the school's energy and creativity," she says.

With all her new responsibilities, Kerr has not had as much time to renew her energy with her favorite hobby: dance. This year, she missed a big ballroom competition because of a scheduling conflict. But the consummate researcher is quick to note her consolation prize: *New England Journal of Medicine* reports that ballroom dancing is the No. 1 activity to promote both cognitive and physical health.

Another win for hard work. +

TEA TIMELESS

During commencement weekend, new graduates and their families gathered on the veranda at Franchester Place, the former home of Frances Payne Bolton, for an afternoon tea similar to the ones hosted by Bolton herself. The event was sponsored by the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing Alumni Association.



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1940s

Rebecca Plotkin Eden (NUR '49) celebrated her 90th birthday by throwing out the first pitch at the July 3, 2012, Cleveland Indians game in front of thousands of fans. A retired first lieutenant in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps, she represented veterans as part of the Indians' Fourth of July celebration.

1960s

Susan Palumbo Kelley (NUR '62) of Olmsted Falls, Ohio, was recently named one of the Beautiful Minds of 2011 by life'sDHA™ and the National Center for Creative Aging (NCCA). The health education campaign *Beautiful Minds: Finding Your Lifelong Potential* is devoted to raising awareness of "actions people can take to maintain one of the most vital parts of the body—the brain." Kelley volunteers for numerous causes, including Meals on Wheels, Habitat for Humanity and her church.

Evelyn McCoy Keim (NUR '67)

was featured in *The Florida Times-Union* as a mentor to 9-year-old Rayshawn Price. The retired Keim met Rayshawn as a volunteer in the Positive Adult Leadership program, at Altama Elementary School in Brunswick, Ga.



1970s

Susan Hoefflinger Taft (NUR '74, GRS '88) was honored by Kent State University with the Distinguished Teaching Award, the university's highest faculty honor. She has taught at Kent for more than two decades and is director of the MSN-MBA/MPA dual degree program in the College of Nursing and the MSN and health care management program.

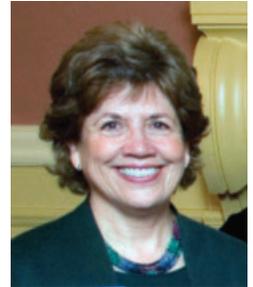
Susan Prion (NUR '79), associate professor in the School of Nursing and Health Professions at the University of San Francisco, was selected as a Fulbright Fellow/Core Scholar in Ha Noi, Vietnam during the 2012-13 academic year as a continuation of her work with the Vietnam Nurse Project. She is based at the Vietnamese Academy of Traditional Medicine to provide instruction to nursing students and offer faculty development workshops on topics such as assessment and evaluation of student performance in the classroom and clinical settings, teaching techniques for both environments, and developing more effective clinical and skills laboratory experiences. Prion will also assist the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Training, and the Ha Noi Public Health Department to revise and extend the Vietnamese national nursing curriculum.

1980s

Robert H. Welton (NUR '81) was named director of nursing in the Clinical Practice and Professional Development section of Maryland General Hospital in Baltimore.

Sheila A. Niles (NUR '88)

received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Cleveland State University. She



now serves as a health care consultant and educator with the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging and Ohio Department of Aging on a five-county Healthy You: Take Charge of Your Health Program. She is the former director of mental health and elder services at the Visiting Nurse Association of Ohio and also the director/principal investigator for the award-winning Healthy Town and Ready Seniors programs.

1990s

Laura M. Wagner (NUR '97) was named an assistant professor at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) School of Nursing. She is a geriatric nurse practitioner and is recognized as a national and international expert in the area of improving patient safety and nursing care in nursing home settings. Wagner resides in San Francisco with her husband, Patrick McDonald, an astrophysicist at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory in Berkeley, and their daughter, Anya.



Carmen Kosicek (NUR '98) published *Nurses, Jobs and Money—A Guide on Advancing Your Nursing Career and Salary*.

Her extensive career in both the health care and business worlds has provided her with keen knowledge and experience in the arenas of nuclear medicine, labor and delivery, OB nurse management, advanced practice nurse midwifery, maximum security prison nursing, hospice nursing, and community health nursing.

2000s



Eric J. Williams (NUR '07) was elected first vice president of the National Black Nurses Association, Inc. from 2012 until

2014. In this role, Williams will focus on membership and retention and improved visibility of the National Black Nurses Association. Williams is a professor of nursing in the Health Sciences Department at Santa Monica College in Santa Monica, Calif.

Carol Porter (NUR '09) was appointed as the first endowed Edgar M. Cullman Sr. Chair of the Department of Nursing at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York. It is the first endowed chair in the institution's 160-year history. Porter is the chief nursing officer and senior vice president for nursing at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York.



CLEVELAND CLINIC HONORS FPB ALUMNI

Mary Ann Dominick (NUR '08), Iyaad M. Hasan (CAS '95, NUR '00), Ann N. Hyland (NUR '74) and Christine F. Nelson (NUR '90) were recognized by Cleveland Clinic's Stanley Shalom Zielony Institute for Nursing Excellence as part of National Nurses Week 2012. Hyland, who works at the Beachwood Ambulatory Surgery Center, received the 2012 Professional Practice Model Award. Hasan, Nelson and Dominick were awarded with the 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award. Hasan and Nelson work at Cleveland Clinic's main campus in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and the Taussig Cancer Institute, respectively. Dominick is member of the team at the SeniorCare Assessment Center at Lakewood Hospital.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Florence Cellar Conference on Aging

Gray Matters: Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Healthy Aging
Friday, April 12, 2013
fpb.case.edu/cellarconference

Homecoming Weekend

A Celebration of Alumni - Families - Students
Sept. 26 -29, 2013
case.edu/alumni/weekend/

CORRECTION: In the Spring 2012 issue of *FPB Nursing*, Carol Roe (NUR'79) should have been noted as the organizer of the visit by Kathleen Sebelius, U.S. Secretary of Health & Human Services. Roe's home was also the site for the visit.

events & CELEBRATIONS



During the spring Career Connections, (1) FPB Alumni Association Board Past-President Heather Schober (NUR'96) shares her nursing experiences. (2) Students discover various career options from Career Connections panelists (3) (l to r) Debbie Freund (NUR'79), Pamela Hetride (NUR'03) and Cheryl Patterson (NUR'83, NUR'98). (4) During the spring Alumni Welcome Tea for new graduates, Dean Mary Kerr (center) chats with (l to r) FPB Alumni Association Board member Debbie Rorick (NUR'80, NUR'89) and Alumni Association Board President-Elect Audrey J. Smith (NUR '60, NUR'72). (5) Franchester Place, site of the Commencement Weekend Welcome Tea and home to Frances Payne Bolton.

inMEMORIAM

Elizabeth Garland Lueke (NUR '31), age 102, died Jan. 17, 2012. According to Susan G. Komen for the Cure, she was the oldest survivor in California of breast cancer. Her secret to a long life was "ice cream and lots of it!"

Katharine S. Gettman (NUR '34), age 100, died Aug. 24, 2012. She immigrated to Ohio from Austria with her family in 1919. She worked for the Cleveland Visiting Nurse Association, serving some of the area's neediest neighborhoods during the depths of the Depression. In 1957 she founded the recovery room at Pardee Memorial Hospital. She was also a founding member of Hospice of Henderson County, now Four Seasons Hospice, where she volunteered as a nurse for many years. She was inducted into the "Second Wind Hall of Fame" and received the Governor's Award for Volunteer Services in recognition of her life of helping others, especially in her contributions to the hospice movement.

Anna Hanscom Barnes (NUR '35) passed away May 24, 2012.



Dorothy Holsapple Chapman (NUR '39) died Jan. 23, 2012. Born in Dayton, Ohio, she enlisted in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps as an instructor of cadet nurses. She was a volunteer for the American Red Cross for 34 years and remained active in the community and church.

Elva Jane Waters (SAS '39, NUR '40), age 97, died Aug. 9, 2012. Her entire career was devoted to public health with the health department and Visiting Nurses Association. Joining the U.S. Public Health Service in July 1945, she helped the displaced persons in Germany who were released from concentration camps.

Martha Brereton Loss (NUR '43), of Arlington Heights, Ill., age 93, died March 1, 2012. She entered the U.S. Army as a nurse, where she served until the end of World War II.

Elizabeth St. Clair Russell (NUR '45) passed away Jan. 19, 2012 in Davis, Calif.



Helen Hannah Marx (NUR '46), of Rockleigh, N.J., age 91, died Jan. 4, 2012. Born in Shrewsbury, N.J., she received her

undergraduate degree at Wilson College and then went to then-Western Reserve University to earn a graduate degree in nursing. She was the head nurse at Parkway Hospital for many years in Forest Hills, N.Y. During retirement she was a dedicated docent at the Bronx Zoo.

Mary Lou Belcher Baker (NUR'47), of Alliance, Ohio, age 85, died May 4, 2012. She was a member of the U.S. Public Health Cadet Nursing Corps. She received the Chamber of Commerce Woman of the Year award in 1975. She was also active in social clubs and community organizations, volunteering at her community blood bank, preschool clinics, High School Now

Committee, Port Isabel Elementary School in Texas, and more. She also hosted numerous Rotary exchange students from all over the world.



Lois Marie Buckett (NUR '47), age 87, died April 18, 2012. Employed at Ashtabula General Hospital for many years, she was known as a dedicated and empathetic nurse.

Doris Rak Voelkel (NUR '47), of Willoughby, Ohio, age 86, passed away Aug. 19, 2012. She was a registered nurse at Golden Living Nursing Home, formerly Western Reserve Nursing Home.

Muriel H. McClure (NUR '48) died April 27, 2012 in Sedona, Ariz.



Marjorie F. Roose (NUR'48), of Silverton, Idaho, age 89, died March 12, 2012. She served as a registered nurse

and director of nursing for many years. Later she was a nursing care reviewer for the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare in Coeur d'Alene until her retirement in 1985.

Wanita Bernecker Rosner (NUR '48), of Worthington, Ohio, age 91, died June 27, 2012. A Navy nurse during World War II, she later traveled extensively overseas as a school nurse in other countries including Bangladesh and Zambia.

Arletta Marie McIsaac (NUR '49), of Sun City, Ariz., age 85, died July 11, 2012. In 1949 she joined the U.S. Public Health Service and later practiced as a private duty nurse.

Ruby Berndt Selzer (NUR '49), of Anaheim, Calif., age 85, passed away April 13, 2012. She was a nurse in the Student Health Center at Chapman College in Orange, Calif., and later an administrative assistant for Cox Hobbies, the company she owned with her husband, Bill Selzer. An extraordinary baker of cookies and pies, she was fondly known to her grandchildren as "Cookie Grandma."

M. Laurine Gullette (NUR '51) died April 6, 2012, in Columbus, Ohio.

Miriam Stauffer Powell (NUR '56), age 80, died Sept. 9, 2012 in Burnsville, Minn.



Ellen Johnson Melsness (NUR '57) died April 19, 2012. For more than 23 years she was the public health nurse for the

Ute Mountain Tribe in Towaoc, Colo. Home visits and new babies were her favorite parts of the job. In 2004, at age 74, she climbed Handies Peak, elevation of 14,048 feet.

Wavalee May Jacobs (NUR '58) died June 12, 2012. She taught nursing at the Toledo Hospital before serving as a nurse for Perrysburg Schools until her retirement in 1992. A member of the Ohio Nurses Association, she enjoyed cake decorating, calligraphy, knitting, crocheting, biking the beach at Hilton Head, and spending time with family and friends.

Sallie Dollman Hastings (NUR '59), of Conroe, Texas, age 77, passed away June 24, 2012. She worked at New York's Laurel Wood Hospital as a substance abuse nurse. She was also active in her church and many service organizations.

Patricia Hulit Reid (NUR '60), of Granville, Ohio, age 74, died in September 2012. A nursing instructor at Central Ohio Technical College in Newark, Ohio, she enjoyed exploring family history through genealogical research.

Patricia Friss Newnham (NUR '62), age 74, died June 20, 2012 in State College, Pa. A co-founder of the local chapter of the American Diabetes Association and a longtime Red Cross volunteer, she was also known for hosting Thanksgiving dinner for 30 international students and educating newly diagnosed diabetics. She received the Benjamin Rush Award in 1989 from the Centre County Medical Society for her years of outstanding work in community health.

Eleanor Hall Wilson (NUR '62), age 78, died Feb. 1, 2012. After working in nursing for many years, she achieved her dream of running her own herb nursery, Hall Wilson Gardens. Her vast knowledge of herbs and the quality of her plants were renowned.

Margaret Jane Connelly (NUR '63) passed away Aug. 20, 2012 in Glendale, Ariz., and was a direct descendent of the settlers of the Western Reserve territories that spanned Ohio and Pennsylvania. She taught nursing at St. Elizabeth Hospital School of

Nursing in Youngstown, Ohio, and was an assistant professor of health education at Youngstown State University until 1980.

Dorothy Crahan (NUR '67), age 91, died Sept. 10, 2011.

Patricia Barrett Noderer (NUR '79) died Oct. 29, 2011. She was a registered nurse and a pediatric nurse practitioner at University Hospitals in Cleveland. There she managed the Pediatric Family Clinic and was honored for nurturing more than 1,000 medical students through their first clinical experience.

Caroline Habdas Buszta (NUR '88), age 73, died in May 2012. A member of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, Alpha Mu Chapter of Case Western Reserve, she obtained her PhD in adult health education in 1996. She worked at Cleveland Clinic from 1971 to 1987, where she managed and coordinated care for patients with chronic renal failure and organ transplant. She also authored and co-authored more than 140 research studies and publications. In 1988 she joined the Veterans Administration Medical Center to head the Nursing Education and Nursing Home Care Unit and oversaw the clinical practice for more than 200 geriatric patients. In 1990, she started her own business tutoring nursing students to pass the Licensure Exam (NCLEX), helping thousands to become nurses. She also loved going on cruises and spending time with her grandchildren, Aaron and Rachel Buszta.

Paul A. Holt (NUR '02, '06), of Parma, Ohio, age 51, died on May 1, 2011.

Jennifer Schmidt (NUR '06) passed away March 15, 2012 in Elk Grove, Calif.



Gary Michael Juricka (NUR '08), of Mentor, Ohio, age 27, died Aug. 24, 2012, in Sandusky, Ohio. After graduating with his BSN, he continued his education

at the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing as a MSN student in the Cleveland Clinic Nurse Anesthetist program and was expected to graduate in November 2012.

This memorial section lists deceased alumni and friends of the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing for whom death notices were received between March 1 and Sept. 30, 2012.

TELL US ABOUT IT.

Have you recently married, changed careers, received an award, had a baby or have other news to share? Tell us your story at nursing.case.edu/classnotes or send notes to fpbmarketing@case.edu or to Forefront, Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, Case Western Reserve University, 10900 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44106-4904.

FRIENDS AND FACULTY



Rosemarie Mihelich Hogan Alumna, Assistant Dean Emerita and Professor

Rosemarie Mihelich Hogan (NUR '61, '71) died Sept. 4, 2012, shortly before her 85th birthday. She served as assistant dean of academic programs under Dean Joyce Fitzpatrick at the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing. She was an active member of the Ohio Nurse Association and American Nurse Association, a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing, and an officer of Sigma Theta Tau International's Honor Society of Nursing. After her retirement, she volunteered for 10 years at the David Simpson Hospice House of the Western Reserve. A tireless advocate for the nursing profession, she loved the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing and dedicated her life to the school's mission.



Wilma J. Phipps Educator, Mentor, Friend

Wilma J. Phipps, age 87, passed away June 23, 2012, at her home in Cleveland. As professor emerita of medical surgical nursing at the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, she was mentor to countless students and faculty and helped boost the role of nurses in health care. She came to Case Western Reserve in 1970 as professor and chairperson of the Department of Medical-Surgical Nursing at FPB and director of Medical-Surgical Nursing at University Hospitals. In this dual role for 20 years, she taught student nurses and supervised them as they implemented lessons into practice at University Hospitals.

A prolific public speaker within the nursing community, she authored numerous publications, including *Mosby's Medical Surgical Nursing: Concepts and Clinical Practice* (now in its eighth edition), where she was one of the original editors. Passionate about social justice, Phipps was a member of the Medical Committee on Human Rights during the 1960s. Memorial gifts may be made to the Wilma J. Phipps Endowment Fund to benefit student scholarships at the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, Case Western Reserve University, 10900 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44106-4904.

From Paris, Afghanistan and Zimbabwe with Love

BY JASON BARONE (GRS'08)



AN INTERNATIONAL CAREER INSPIRES ALUMNA MARIE GRUBISHA WILKIE TO SUPPORT NURSING WORLDWIDE

War and espionage may sound more like the setting of a summer blockbuster, but both were the real-life backdrop for Marie Grubisha Wilkie's (NUR '54) nursing career in international health.

Her adventures began innocently enough in 1958, when Wilkie joined two Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing classmates for a summer in Europe. Her vacation led to a yearlong nursing position at the American Hospital in Paris, assignments in Switzerland and Belgium, and with the World Health Organization in Asia and Africa.

Wilkie was also sent to Afghanistan, where she helped establish one of the country's first nursing programs for girls. In the field, she encountered—and fought against—a number of detrimental, but traditional health care practices. For instance, she learned that a traditional form of swaddling that used a binding cord caused pneumonia, which contributed to the country's 75-percent newborn mortality rate.

"When one infant died in a rural clinic's waiting room, an Afghani doctor became so angry that he broke the cord and told the other mothers to throw theirs away if they wanted their babies to live," she says. "Within minutes, the clinic was surrounded by about 15 armed tribesmen demanding to kill him for his interference. We helped him escape through a back door," Wilkie recalls.

While in Afghanistan, Wilkie also met her future husband William, a Scotsman who was a British intelligence agent.

"Although we could never admit it at the time, he was actually an agent for London's MI6—a real-life James Bond!" she says.

The couple settled in Rhodesia—now the Republic of Zimbabwe—for 11 years amid an ongoing brutal guerilla war. Despite this tense backdrop, she witnessed women beginning to question centuries of restrictive traditions, such as paying witch doctors for expensive amulets that supposedly protected their infants by warding off evil spirits.

She remembers a woman who stood up at her clinic and asked other mothers how much they had paid to protect their babies. "She said 'If we all agree not to buy these amulets we can't afford, our babies would all be equal, so we shouldn't need them.' And that one woman changed that practice in just a matter of minutes."

The couple fled Rhodesia's turmoil for the United States in 1980. Settled in Pittsburgh, Wilkie, now a widow, remains an active force for nursing education, having trained more than 250 operating room nurses in liaison with a local community college.

She also continues her involvement in world health issues by providing both moral and financial support to many of the nursing school's international students. Through her annual fund gifts and an annuity trust, she helps students who set up or improve nursing programs in their home countries. Her gifts have enabled nursing education to continue and flourish on a global scale.

"I've seen the tremendous difference that health education can make around the world," she says. "An FPB education raises the status of women and improves world health conditions, and I'm proud to contribute to that legacy."

And, judging by Wilkie's career, an FPB education can put a little adventure in your life, too. +



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