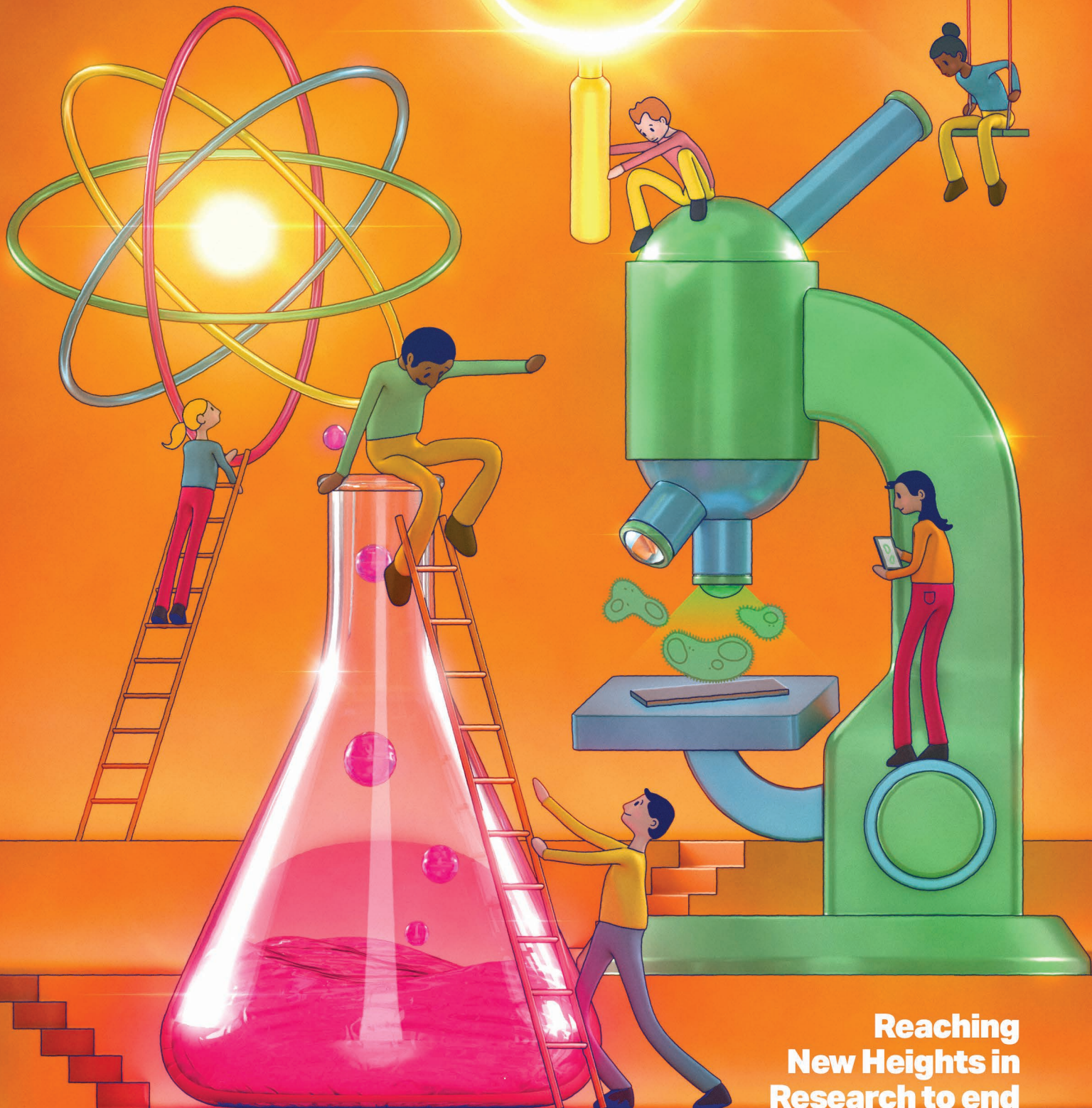


heartbeats

FALL 2023

University of Miami School of Nursing and
and Health Studies



**Reaching
New Heights in
Research to end
Health Disparities**

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FALL 2023

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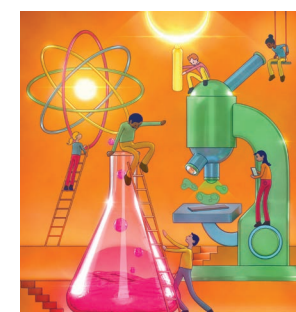
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75, You Were Amazing!

*Thank you to all who have taken
this journey with us,*

*Our legacy is a promising one
in the hands of the next generation
of our graduates.*

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

School of Nursing and Health Studies

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Novel
Optimistic
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A TRANSFORMATIVE YEAR FOR RESEARCH

Welcome to the new issue of *Heartbeat* magazine. When we first branded 2023 our “75th Year of Excellence” at SONHS, I could not have imagined just how fitting a word excellence would be. The level of excellence SONHS achieved in 2023—from nationally lauded academic programs and international simulation endorsement to world-class leaders in health disparities research—will lead us into a bold new era.

As spotlighted in this issue, research played a starring role. Since joining SONHS as Dean and Professor in August 2017, I have made research a top priority. Research holds immense promise for every conceivable aspect of health and well-being, informing evidence-based practice, optimizing patient outcomes, and innovating novel, optimistic, world-changing solutions.

Elevating our School’s already-robust research portfolio to new heights required significant investments in infrastructure, faculty, personnel, facilities, and mentorship. These and other efforts have resulted in a steady rise in research support from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), a key benchmark I selected to measure progress. In the wake of sudden, unprecedented challenges imposed by COVID-19 in 2020, our research teams not only persisted, they instantly began asking more creative questions, finding new ways to solve problems, and engaging more deeply in the communities they sought to serve.

In the 2022 fiscal year, the NIH granted SONHS an all-time high of \$3.396 million for principally led research, putting us in the nation’s top 25 for NIH research funding to nursing schools. Now, preliminary data for 2023, shows that SONHS faculty and students have once again shattered all expectations, receiving a total of \$6.226 million in NIH grant support. According to NIH RePORTER data as of the end of October, SONHS ranks #16 in the *nation* for NIH funding to nursing schools.



Robert Klemm

While numbers and rankings are impressive measures of excellence, they don’t tell the whole story. Our faculty and students are also contributing their expertise to a multitude of innovative interdisciplinary research efforts across UM and around the globe, and leading research and scholarly work funded by foundations and other non-NIH entities. Shepherding these endeavors is an exceptional nurse leader and scientist, Dr. Hudson Santos, who transitioned into his role as SONHS Vice Dean for Research Affairs in June 2023. In this issue of *Heartbeat*, you’ll read about the many new studies Dr. Santos and the faculty and students of SONHS are embarking on with energy and compassion, targeting pressing health disparities and timely concerns that range from climate change to the maternal health crisis.

I recently announced my intention to step down as Dean in May 2024, and to retire following a yearlong sabbatical. Dr. Guillermo “Willy” Prado—a beloved SONHS faculty member as well as UM’s interim executive vice president for academic affairs and provost—has already convened a search committee to

identify my successor. He is hopeful the search will be completed by spring in order to promote a smooth transition of leadership.

While my decision is of course bittersweet, it is an exercise in the self-care I have advocated consistently for all members of the health profession, and especially nurses. As I prepare to devote more time to family, world travel, and research, I am comforted knowing I’ll leave SONHS in an exceptionally strong position and capable hands. As you’ll see in this magazine, our School is on an incredible trajectory toward becoming a preeminent national leader in a way very few schools of nursing or health studies are able to achieve. We’re ready to move forward yet again. Lighting our way into a very bright future is excellence in evidence-based education, along with the kind of high-caliber research you’ll read about in the pages that follow.

Cindy L. Munro
Ph.D., R.N., A.N.P.-B.C., F.A.A.N., F.A.A.N.P., F.A.A.A.S.
Dean and Professor

Dean's Fall Lecture Series

An impressive lineup of speakers honored the School's 75th anniversary in 2023.

In anticipation of Hurricane Season, **Marilia van Keeken**, Ed.S., M.S., deputy director for Miami-Dade County Healthcare Preparedness Coalition, kicked off the Dean's Fall Lecture Series. In her September address, "Healthcare Coalitions: Healthcare Preparedness through Partnerships," she touched on her role overseeing the coalition's Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response Hospital Preparedness program grant, which has awarded millions of dollars to Miami-Dade hospital, health care, and community partners to strengthen the region's emergency and disaster readiness.



RN, FAAN, in November to discuss a topic near to her heart, "The Unlimited Leadership Potential of Military Service." In fact, after 35 distinguished years of service, Dr. Wilmoth retired from the U.S. Army at the rank of Major General. Her "firsts" included first female commanding general of a medical brigade and first woman and nurse to serve as Deputy Surgeon General for the Army Reserve. In the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, she helped modify deployment policies concerning pre-existing psychiatric conditions and psychotropic medicine usage. During her tenure, she heavily contributed to policies allowing transgendered individuals to openly serve in the Armed Forces as well as policies allowing women to serve in all occupational specialties in the Army. Through extensive research, she addresses the well-being of reserve-connected military children, psychiatric evaluation from the theatre of war, and deployment-related health policy. Currently, as the AAN/ANA/ANF Distinguished Nurse Scholar in Residence at the National Academy of Medicine, Dr. Wilmoth has an important voice in health policy at federal and international levels.



In October, **Ernest Grant**, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, was invited by Dean Cindy Munro to share his extensive insights about "Nurses as Change Agents." Dr. Grant is Interim Vice Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at the Duke University School of Nursing. Prior to that role, he was the first man and third African-American person to lead the 127-year-old American Nurses Association. His leadership of the nation's largest nurses organization, which represents 4 million registered nurses, began January 2019. He would soon become a sought-after spokesperson worldwide, soundly addressing growing concerns facing his profession and country throughout the pandemic. Dr. Grant's identity as a change agent in nursing emerged decades earlier. After 9/11 he contributed his burn-care and fire-safety expertise. His contributions at Ground Zero were recognized by then-President George W. Bush.

In advance of Veteran's Day, the SONHS community welcomed **Margaret C. "Peggy" Wilmoth**, Ph.D., M.S.S.,

A very special guest speaker invited to address graduates during the SONHS Fall Awards Ceremony in December. That guest was none other than the esteemed president of the American Academy of Nursing, **Kenneth R. White**, Ph.D., AGACNP, ACHPN, FACHE, FAAN. Dr. White is also Dean of the School of Nursing, among other roles, at Boston's MGH Institute of Health Professions.

Baby Steps Named Edge Runner

Innovative model of care receives American Academy of Nursing recognition

A telehealth initiative co-created by Assistant Professor Yui Matsuda, PhD, PHNA-BC, MPH, is one of four innovative care models the American Academy of Nursing (Academy) selected for its prestigious Edge Runners Awards this year to promote nurses' ingenuity and collaboration and promote health equity. "Edge Runners are evidence-based, nurse-designed models that demonstrate significant clinical, financial, community, and policy outcomes with proven sustainability and replicability," states the Academy.

Dr. Matsuda co-developed "*Baby Steps: Nurse-led Telehealth for Transition of Care*" with Danielle Altares Sarik, PhD, APRN, CPNP-PC, a pediatric nurse practitioner and research nurse scientist at Miami's Nicklaus Children's Hospital (Nicklaus). "In addition to the intrinsic reward we already get from serving these babies and families," says Dr. Matsuda, "it is wonderful to have recognition from the Academy that our work is making a difference."

Baby Steps was born out of Matsuda's personal postpartum experience of having a newborn in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). "The anxiety and stress I felt as I went home with my son was very difficult," admitted Matsuda, now the mother of a healthy 5-year-old.

With their dream team of NICU nurses and IT specialists from Nicklaus and grad students from SONHS, Drs. Matsuda and Altares Sarik developed a language-concordant, culturally appropriate nurse-led telehealth model to ensure that families leaving the NICU—regardless of insurance or socioeconomic status—could receive a comprehensive routine of infant care



throughout the challenging hospital-to-home transition.

"Having the support of a NICU nurse after discharge is very important for families," said Matsuda. "This is something I would have loved to have had when I gave birth to my son."

The support of their respective institutions plus a three-year grant from the Florida Blue Foundation enabled the Baby Steps team to launch its evidence-based intervention. As timing would have it, this unfolded during COVID-19, so telehealth was a logical, desperately needed component. A UM Citizens Board award also supported a simulated version of the Baby Steps model that provided SONHS nursing students invaluable telehealth experience.

So far, Baby Steps has made great strides. As of early 2023, it had served over 600 families, 93 percent of whom expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the program and 62 percent of whom accessed care through public health insurance. The initiative decreased 30-day readmissions by

57 percent, saving \$225,000. Another \$21,349 in travel cost savings for families is estimated. Savings owing to the program have opened the way for Baby Steps to be integrated into the organization's operational budget.

"We are proud of the interventions developed by our faculty, and the tremendous impact they have in improving the lives of our community," said Dr. Hudson Santos, Vice Dean for Research Affairs at SONHS. Dr. Matsuda follows in the steps of SONHS Dean Cindy L. Munro, a 2016 Edge Runner for her work in reducing infections in the ICU.

"Each of these models demonstrate how nurses serve as innovative change agents who are addressing a specific health care challenge," says Academy President Kenneth White, PhD, AGACNP, ACHPN, FACHE, FAAN.

Dr. Matsuda was among the program leads honored at the Academy's 2023 Health Policy Conference in Washington, D.C., this past October.

Hispanic Health Focus



During National Hispanic Heritage Month, September 15 to October 15, SONHS faculty members Giovanna Cecilia De Oliveira and Cynthia Lebron were among the health experts welcomed by national media to discuss health problems disproportionately affecting Hispanic and Latino communities.

Dr. Lebron was interviewed by journalist Maria Elena Salinas for two Good Morning America segments on the subject—one focusing on heart disease, the other on diabetes.

“We know and the evidence shows that physician-patient concordance is going to result in better health outcomes,” explained Dr. Lebron, assistant professor. “We’re not going to be able to give the best care to our patients if we don’t understand them. It’s not just language. It’s cultural.”



Personal health is not always top of mind, she added. “When I’m talking to Latinos, they’re talking to me about immigration status, housing, employment,” she said. “There are so many things that diabetes is tenth on their list.”

In addition to diabetes and heart disease, Hispanics experience worse health outcomes for diseases like cancer, HIV, hypertension, and kidney disease, and are more likely to develop ADHD, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and major depressive disorder.

Dr. De Oliveira, associate professor of clinical, was interviewed for the American Nurses Association’s “Healthy Nurse, Healthy Nation” blog. In the article, “5 Ways Health Professionals Can Help Address Health Disparities In Hispanic Patients,” she touched on potential barriers to quality health care, such as income, where one lives, education level, English-language proficiency, and cultural challenges.

“Hispanics tend to minimize or avoid disclosing physical and mental illness

symptoms,” she said. “So nurses should be proactive when encountering Hispanics with social disparities. Look for signs of depression. Utilize family members or an interpreter to stress why preventive action is important.”

She encouraged fellow nurses and other health providers to acknowledge cultural diversity and learn about the Hispanic culture.

“We don’t like to express how we feel or think to others, especially to someone who does not share our culture. And that impedes the mental health care Hispanics receive,” said Dr. De Oliveira. “Taking small steps to understand and address the needs of Hispanic patients can help diminish the disparities they experience.”

The SONHS chapter of the Multicultural Nursing Student Association also tackled the important topic of disparities, hosting a September 28 panel discussion and dialogue in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month titled “Embracing Culture to Elevate Nursing Care.”

Disparities by the Numbers



Hispanics or Latinos represent **9%** of all RNs and **7%** of all physicians and surgeons in the U.S.



In the U.S., **36%** of Hispanics versus **52%** of non-Hispanic whites receive mental health services.



Pew Research: **44%** of Hispanic Americans believe their health disparities stem from communication problems caused by language or cultural differences.



About **18%** of Hispanics versus about **5%** of non-Hispanic whites are without health insurance.

S.H.A.R.E.® Gains Key Endorsement

When the 2023 International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning (INACSL) Conference took place in Rhode Island, Dr. Ruth Everett-Thomas, Associate Dean for Simulation Programs, was there to accept the Healthcare Simulation Standards Endorsement on behalf of the Simulation Hospital Advancing Research and Education (S.H.A.R.E.®).

The endorsement is based on a set of stringent standards INACSL set forth in 2020 for all health care simulation educators to strive toward in the areas of professional development, prebriefing and debriefing, simulation design, facilitation, operations, objectives and outcomes, professional integrity, simulation-enhanced interprofessional education, and evaluation of learning and performance.

S.H.A.R.E.® is among just 20 organizations to receive INACSL’s first-ever set of endorsements, awarded for the three-year period from 2023 to 2026. Founded in 2002 with the intention of expanding the scope of networking for nursing institutions teaching with simulation, INACSL remains at the forefront of innovation for positive changes in simulation, application of simulation practices, and health care education and patient safety.

“Our mission at S.H.A.R.E.® is to continue improving simulation education and to provide our students with an innovative, thorough, thoughtful education,” says Dr. Everett-Thomas, who is also an Associate Professor of Clinical at the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS). “We are grateful to INACSL for its guidance and work in furthering this mission. This endorsement is proof of our commitment.”

The endorsement came as S.H.A.R.E.® prepared to celebrate its sixth



anniversary. S.H.A.R.E.® opened its doors on September 28, 2017, replicating a cutting-edge, fully functioning hospital, and was accredited by the Society for Simulation in Healthcare in 2020.

Inside the 41,000-square-foot facility, as well as virtually, faculty and staff educate SONHS nursing students as well as a



range of other learners from the local and international health care community. This year the S.H.A.R.E.® team piloted CPR courses for SONHS employees and held its first “Day in the Life of a Nursing Student” event for middle and high schoolers to learn about basic nursing skills in a hands-on environment.

Annually, the S.H.A.R.E.® team hosts activities promoting Patient Safety Awareness Week and Healthcare Simulation Week (HCSW). For HCSW 2023, the team set up virtual reality

headsets programmed with a pregnancy health care scenario giving first-time users a chance to use the technology to practice taking vitals, listening for the fetal heartbeat, administering meds, and more.

“I am constantly reading, studying, and preparing myself to give the best possible education to our students, which is my primary motivation,” says long-time nurse simulation educator Amauri Quintana, M.S.N. ’15, D.N.P. ’20. “Witnessing their growth as they learn inspires me.”

At the heart of S.H.A.R.E.® is the drive to improve quality of life and patient safety. Large-scale simulations have helped test preparedness for hurricanes, active shooter situations, disease outbreaks, and other public health emergencies. This extensive capacity has been a catalyst for exciting research projects connecting faculty and students with other units at UM as well as local, national, and global institutions. These studies have led to practice improvement innovations in several areas, including anesthesia education, operating room safety, human trafficking awareness, and even climate change. “The faculty and staff here know our work is never done,” says Dr. Everett-Thomas.

Ending Violence against Women and Children

Dr. Metheny is contributing to important work taking place in South Africa

Assistant Professor Nicholas Metheny, whose research addressing intimate partner violence spans as far as South Africa, celebrated International Nurses' Day in Cape Town. He was there in May to work on a nationwide, collaborative effort with the Ministry of Health and others to address high rates of sexual offenses.

While there, he led three webinars at the Groote Schur Hospital, where the University of Cape Town Division of Nursing and Midwifery is located, on the role of nursing in ending violence against women and children—one on global nursing research, one specifically for South Africa, and one on how to weave this content into nursing curricula.

"I also worked with Drs. Beatriz Valdes and Deborah Salani from SONHS to deliver a training on human trafficking called 'Human Trafficking in South Africa: Training on Recognition and Clinical Assessment' for nearly 30 physicians, nurses, and other health professionals in Cape Town," he says.

Dr. Metheny has been working with the South African Nursing Council, UCT, and Ministry of Health to advocate for a larger role for specialist forensic nurses. The aim is to address some



of the world's highest rates of sexual offenses taking place in South Africa. Experiences that include but are not limited to rape; sexual assault, coercion, and grooming; child pornography; and forced prostitution.

"Despite high-level, nationwide commitment to ending the epidemic of sexual violence in South Africa and improving access to healing and justice via the National Strategic Plan on Gender-based Violence and Femicide, many survivors lack access to competent and timely post-offences care," says Dr. Metheny. "This care, which includes legally admissible evidence collection, trauma-informed service provision, referral to follow-up care, and legal testimony, falls under the purview of Forensic Nursing in many countries. However, Forensic Nursing is underdeveloped in South Africa, with most sexual offenses care falling on overburdened clinical forensic pathologists and nurses with limited, informal training."

To date, there are no South African Nursing Council (SANC)-accredited forensic nursing curricula to train nurses in this specialized skills set and no specialist nurse postings for forensic

nurses. The goal of this multinational, multidisciplinary team, led by the University of Cape Town Division of Nursing and Midwifery, is to bring provincial and national stakeholders together to co-create solutions for improving the training of Registered Nurses to provide trauma-informed, post-sexual offences care in hospitals, clinics, and Thutuzela Care Centres.

"Together, we aim to pair empirical evidence with advocacy for policy change to encourage a larger role for forensic nurses in the South African medical system—one that is evidence-based, regulated, trauma-informed, and sustainable," says Dr. Metheny.

Listening sessions were conducted in May 2023 with clinical pathologists, researchers, nurses, Ministry of Health officials, and academics to conduct an analysis of previous efforts to implement forensic nursing trainings and formal programs throughout the country. Dr. Metheny is also involved in an intervention development grant aimed at developing and testing as proof-of-concept the Western Cape's first province-wide forensic nursing training program.

Dr. Metheny followed up his time in South Africa with a stateside research experience at the University of California San Francisco, where he was among five early-stage researchers from around the U.S. invited to UCSF's LGBTQ+ Health Visiting Scholars program. The summer intensive, led by clinical psychologist Annesa Flentje, an associate professor in Community Health Systems the UCSF's nursing school, was held from June 20 to July 28.



Groote Schur Hospital, Cape Town

Beta Tau Wins Volunteer Award



From left, Dr. Reeves, Dean Munro, Dr. Snowden, Branches CEO Brent McLaughlin, and Dr. Salani

Community members gathered at the 7th Annual Back to School Bash hosted by Branches, a community nonprofit agency, to pack 450 backpacks full of school supplies. help schoolchildren in need get their year off to a great start.

The event, aimed at helping schoolchildren in need get their year off to a great start, took place at the University of Miami's Newman Alumni Center on August 9. The event also gave the Branches a chance to recognize the impactful support of many devoted volunteers, staff members, and community partners.

The School of Nursing and Health Studies was both a proud sponsor of the festivities and an award recipient. Attendees from SONHS included Dean Cindy Munro, as

well as faculty members Kenya Snowden, Deborah Salani, and Régine P. Reeves, representing the School's Beta Tau Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing.

Beta Tau has long supported Branches, promoting its Back-to-School supply



Dr. Snowden and her mother

and Thanksgiving food drives at the U, among other initiatives. Branches named Beta Tau its 2023 volunteer award winner in recognition of its service and collaboration.

Dr. Snowden, president of Beta Tau, accepted the 2023 Herbert C. Parlato Volunteer Award from Brent McLaughlin, the long-time president and CEO of Branches.

"It was a great event, and we are so proud of Dr. Snowden," said Dr. Reeves, who serves as secretary of Beta Tau.

Established in 1973, Branches develops and implements programs that address both the root causes of poverty and the immediate, critical needs created by poverty, empowering its clients to pursue life-changing opportunities.

Mobilizing for Community Health

Early in 2023, Dr. Kenya Snowden, director of the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Program at SONHS, answered a call for help from Erin Kobetz, Ph.D., M.P.H., University of Miami Health System Vice Provost for Research + Scholarship, Associate Director for Population Sciences and Cancer Disparity, and Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center John K. and Judy H. Schulte Senior Endowed Chair in Cancer Research.

Dr. Kobetz was seeking nursing assistance for Sylvester's Game Changer community vehicles, mobile clinics charged with bringing free cancer screenings and health information to underserved communities in South Florida. Specifically, says Dr. Snowden, there was a need for providers to conduct Pap smear screenings, a medical test used for early detection of cervical cancer.

"Since March, I have been conducting a mobile clinic along with FNP students in some of the most high-risk, marginalized, and impoverished communities from Broward County to Key West," reports Dr. Snowden. "The clinic is free to everyone, so patients who are undocumented, immigrants, homeless, and/or have no identification can receive care and follow-up as needed through this initiative."

Game Changer vehicles visit community centers, homeless shelters, and many places in between. In addition to Pap smear tests, prostate-specific antigen (PSA) labs, self-swab Human papillomavirus screenings, and other resources are made available.

"I am actively developing additional collaborations to expand this amazing initiative in order to reach as many people as possible while providing the students with invaluable clinical experience," says Dr. Snowden. "Engaging in this way helps them



understand first-hand the importance of advocacy, caring for the underserved, and reducing health inequities."

For her public health nursing course, Yui Matsuda, associate professor of clinical at SONHS, recently collaborated on a vaccination initiative with personnel from the University's Linda Ray Intervention Center and the Miller School of Medicine's Pediatric Mobile Clinic. She says it was the first time all three entities worked together. In addition to helping with inoculations, Dr. Matsuda's undergraduate nursing students provided educational outreach about healthy nutrition to the patients of the mobile clinic and their caregivers.

The SONHS chapter of the National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA) has taken health promotion to the streets of its community as well.



Chapter members participated in a number of 5K walkathon events around South Florida this year to raise awareness and funds to fight cancer, including the St. Jude walk to end childhood cancer. In addition, NSNA members held a "Pink Bake Sale" at UM to raise money for the National Breast Cancer Foundation. During Recovery Month in September, they welcomed Brian Sims, a certified recovery peer specialist (CRPS-V), to present on the opioid epidemic and instruct on how to recognize an overdose and administer the lifesaving opioid antagonist naloxone. "These students are amazing," raves chapter advisor Regine Placide Reaves, assistant professor of clinical, who accompanied the chapter's president, Hailey Laurenson, and other executive board members to NSNA's annual convention in Nashville earlier this year.

Florida's Nursing Ed Forecast



Dean Munro and FCN Board Chair Louisana Louis

Rayna Letourneau, Ph.D., RN, executive director of the Florida Center for Nursing (FCN), visited the School in October to facilitate "The State of Nursing Education in Florida and Proposed Solutions Think Tank." During the three-hour workshop, she highlighted FCN's statewide education survey findings, including NCLEX results, from the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years. SONHS continues to rate well above state and national averages for NCLEX first-time pass rates and other key metrics used to determine nursing program health, such as enrollment and retention. The FCN

event was designed to give attendees an opportunity to share feedback on nursing education and workforce strategic planning issues affecting the state. Participating nurses were eligible for two continuing education credits. This was FCN's third nursing education think tank of 2023 (the other two took place in Tallahassee and Orlando). Headquartered at the University of South Florida, FCN collects and evaluates program-specific data for Florida's hundreds of approved nursing education programs and facilitates development of a strategic statewide plan for the nursing workforce.

Alumna Elected FNA President

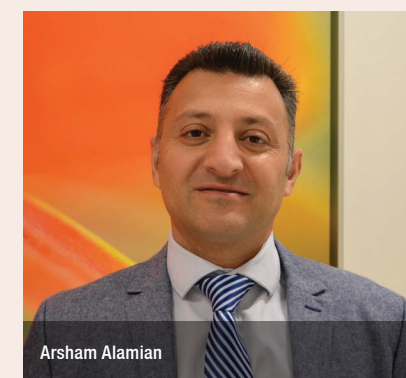


Marie O. Etienne

In October the Florida Nurses Association announced SONHS alumna **Marie O. Etienne**, D.N.P. '10, APRN, FNP, PNP, GNP, PLNC, as its newly elected president. "A seasoned nursing professional with a distinguished career, Dr. Etienne brings a wealth of experience and a passion for advancing nursing practice, education, and policy," FNA stated. She is a professor at Miami Dade College Medical Campus Benjamin León School of Nursing, co-leader of the Florida Action Coalition Diversity Council, Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer for the

Florida Department of Health, past president of the Haitian American Nurses Association of Florida (HANA), and past chair of the Haitian American Professionals Coalition. Her many awards include the National Black Nurses Association Trailblazer Award, International Red Cross Florence Nightingale Medal, HANA Wall of Fame inductee, and Nurse.Com Nursing Excellence Regional Award. According to HANA, Dr. Etienne is the first Haitian American FNA president.

Public Health Accredited through 2030



Arsham Alamian

In September, the Board of Councilors for the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), an independent agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, announced its accreditation of the Bachelor of Science in Public Health program at SONHS through December 31, 2030. First accredited by CEPH in 2018 for the five-year maximum period awarded on initial reviews, the program is now accredited

for the maximum seven-year term. "CEPH accreditation speaks to the quality of the program, the quality of education students receive," says Dr. Arsham Alamian, SONHS Associate Dean for Health Studies, who led the reaccreditation effort. The B.S.P.H. program offered at SONHS remains Florida's only standalone baccalaureate public health program accredited by CEPH.

75 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Celebrating SONHS at 75

An amazing year of festivities kicked off during National Nurses Month.



Photography by: Mitchell Zachs

In 2023, SONHS turned 75. Dedicating the Spring 2023 issue of *Heartbeat* magazine to commemorating this milestone occasion, Dean Cindy Munro wrote, “We are proud of our School’s origins, committed to elevating its current success, and wholly invested in ensuring its thriving future,” she

said.” Dean Cindy Munro kicked off the 75th anniversary celebrations for the School in May, during National Nurses Month. She brought students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community partners together in the lobby of the M. Christine Schwartz Center for Nursing and Health Studies for an afternoon of food, fun, and nostalgia.

In addition, a 150-page memory book was published in honor of the School’s incredible evolution, from humble beginnings in 1948 through its many phases of growth and development, to its current world-class status. Here are some of the special moments captured during this momentous year in SONHS history.



Alumni Weekend and Homecoming 2023

The School of Nursing and Health Studies hosted a fantastic Alumni Weekend and Homecoming (AWH) gathering. Themed “Celebrating 75 Years of Excellence,” the events included a Friday afternoon gathering in the School’s open-air courtyard full of food, music, and fun for students, faculty, staff, and alumni of all ages. The event gave the extended SONHS family an opportunity to revel in this historic milestone.

2023 SONHS Alumna of Distinction

Shakira Henderson, Ph.D. '15, D.N.P., M.P.H., E.M.B.A., B.S. '03, RNC-NIC, IBCLC

By Joy Elizabeth Cadman
Photography by: Mitchell Zachs

It is said nurses should have a seat at the table. Shakira Henderson has three—not that she has much time to sit. As Assistant Vice Chancellor for Clinical Research at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Vice President for Research at UNC Health, and Clinical Research Integration Officer for UNC School of Medicine, Dr. Henderson is harnessing her unique oversight to integrate clinical management and implement a system-wide strategy for translational, basic, and clinical research.

She recently returned to SONHS, where she earned her Ph.D. in 2015, to accept the 2023 Alumna of Distinction Award during Alumni Weekend and Homecoming festivities.

Dr. Henderson has long been recognized as an esteemed nurse leader by her peers, receiving accolades for her vision, competence, and contributions. In 2020 she was recognized with the DAISY Foundation's Nurse Leader Award for her work with nonprofit North Carolina hospital system Vidant Health (now ECU), where she was director of nursing research and senior systems administrator, establishing the Center for Research and Grants to support research and innovation.

In the DAISY Award spotlight, colleagues praised Dr. Henderson's ability to offer solutions to complex problems, as well as "her solid ethical principles" and "unflappability in the middle of often difficult situations."

"Dr. Henderson generously shares herself to develop others," offered one colleague. "Her energy is unmatched, her optimism contagious, and her contributions to local, state, national, and international nursing activities are to be admired."



Originally from the Caribbean island of Dominica, Dr. Henderson earned her B.S. in biology and chemistry from UM with honors. Later obtaining her nursing degree, she worked as a clinical staff nurse and neonatal intensive care nurse specialist for Baptist Health South Florida. That experience ignited Dr. Henderson's passion for maternal and newborn health. In 2012, she was accepted into the prestigious Sigma Theta Tau Maternal-Child Health Nurse Leadership Academy to develop a training course that would help nurses guide mothers through the breastfeeding process.

She soon received the 2013 Path Award for Advocacy from FIU for inspiring young professionals, who described her as "an exceptional leader" who "encourages you to do things you would never think possible." Dr. Henderson is "a shooting star in my life who propels me to be who I never thought I would be," said one mentee.

A recent graduate of Brown University's Executive MBA in Social Impact

program, Dr. Henderson has also served on numerous professional boards. She is a past chair of the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners, and in January 2023 began her term as president of the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN). In addition, she is a reviewer for the *Journal of Public Health Nursing and American Journal of Infection Control*, among other scientific publications.

For her exemplary nurse leadership, commitment to advocating for equal access to care and the health and well-being of mothers and their families, and dedication to mentoring, Dr. Henderson is this year's Alumna of Distinction. "Reducing health disparities creates better health for women and newborns," she has said, "but it requires deliberate and consistent collaboration from our health care providers, health care systems, states, communities, and our women and their families."



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A Bold Era in Research

SONHS powers up a potent research core to end health disparities and improve health for all.

By Dr. Hudson Santos and Robin Shear

The School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) has always championed research as the beating heart of education and the beacon of knowledge. Over the past two decades, this passion for research has only intensified, paralleling the School's physical and academic expansions.

That fervor has culminated in a vibrant research ecosystem at SONHS. Since arriving in 2017 as Dean and Professor, Cindy L. Munro has made clear her vision for promoting novel, optimistic, world-changing research and propelling SONHS into the top ranks of NIH-funded nursing schools.



As SONHS celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2023, a wave of innovative research undertakings did just that, boosting the School to unprecedented prominence. “The School is poised to become a national leader in a way very few schools of nursing or health studies are able to achieve,” says Dean Munro, a member of the National Advisory Council for Nursing Research whose own research centers on improving outcomes for critically ill adults.

Pioneering health disparities scientist Dr. Guillermo “Willy” Prado, Interim Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost at UM, agrees. He says Dean Munro’s strong support of the School’s focus on social determinants of health has contributed to its surge in scientific prowess. As co-developer of the venerable Familias Unidas behavioral health intervention for Hispanic youth, he chose to relocate his prevention science team from UM’s Miller School of Medicine to SONHS in 2019. “The School is nationally recognized as a leader in health disparities research,” he says. “Dean Munro has recruited really stellar faculty members who have truly elevated the research portfolio of the School.”

Today, under the stalwart leadership of Dr. Hudson Santos, Vice Dean for Research Affairs since June 2023, SONHS is on the cusp of breakthroughs poised to redefine patient care, eradicate health disparities, and rejuvenate the health care landscape. On the following pages, you will learn about stellar SONHS-led research teams embarking on multidisciplinary studies to address our nation’s most pressing concerns.

The prominent research momentum SONHS is building reflects the unyielding dedication of its faculty, staff, and students, as well as their countless study participants, community collaborators, and clinical partners, near and far, all of whom invest time, trust, and faith in the rigorous research process. It’s a journey where instant solutions are rare, but the promise of groundbreaking change is palpable. “The purpose of research is never to prove your ideas are ‘right,’” says Dean Munro. “Instead, research should help us to understand the world better.”

SONHS Research Ecosystem

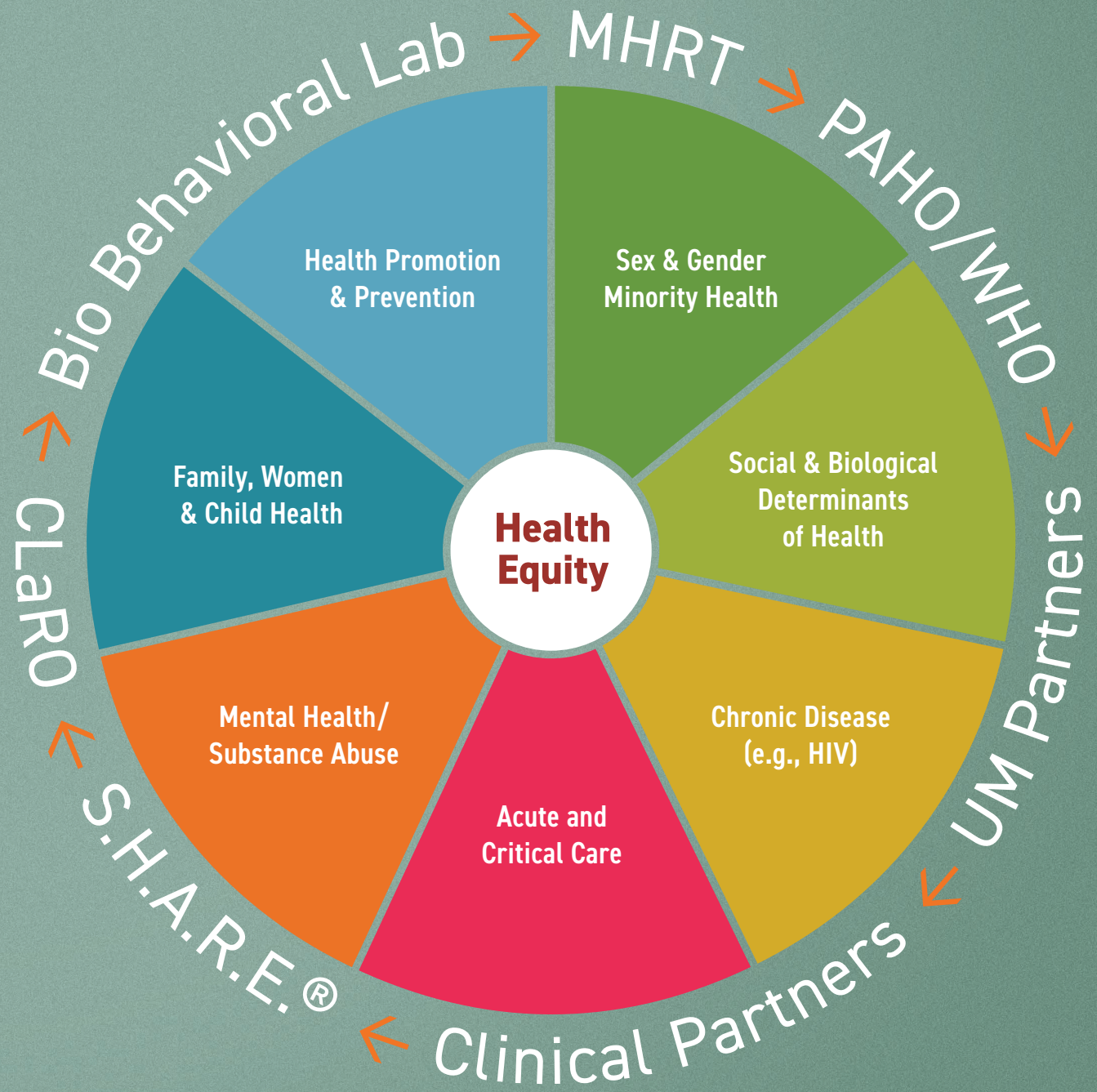
Health equity is at the core of the robust research ecosystem at SONHS. This infographic illustrates how all the parts of this complex ecosystem come together to advance mission-driven research aimed at ending health disparities and promoting health equity.

The knowledge base surrounding this core at SONHS is built on a strong foundation of resources, from the School’s state-of-the-art facilities, such as the Simulation Hospital Advancing Research and Education (S.H.A.R.E.®) and the Jorie Healthcare Partners Biobehavioral Research Laboratory, to its prestigious collaborative centers, like the NIH-supported Center for Latino Health Research Opportunities (CLaRO) and the PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centre for Nursing Human Resources Development and Patient Safety. Many interdisciplinary networks support these and other initiatives, among them the University of Miami and its affiliated health

systems, the University’s Center for HIV and Research in Mental Health (CHARM), the Miami Center for AIDS Research (CFAR), and hundreds of local, national, and global clinical partners. In addition, NIH mentorship mechanisms like the Minority Health and Health Disparities Training (MHRT) Program are available.

As illustrated, this interconnected framework creates a powerful wheelhouse of inquiry and innovation in seven critical areas of expertise: health promotion and prevention, sex and gender minority health, social and biological determinants of health, chronic disease, acute and critical care, mental health/substance abuse, and family, women and child health. SONHS faculty researchers and their teams create synergy through these intersecting, overlapping areas of expertise to address a range of health disparities among many at-risk and under-studied populations.

Studies in progress range from the emerging science of cannabis and psychedelics to HIV prevention among vulnerable and high-risk populations like Hispanic and African-American sexual minorities, to early childhood obesity prevention, to evidence-based mental health programs for sexual minority and Latinx youth. There are also studies at SONHS focused on ICU and cancer survivorship, asthma caregiver education, human trafficking awareness, health care simulation education, ultrasound-guided anesthesia procedures, and more.



Several NIH grants and awards led by SONHS faculty confirmed in the summer and fall of 2023 will account for significant NIH research funding to the School in the coming months and years. In addition, as this publication goes to press, SONHS awaits news about funding for many more research submissions addressing health disparities.

Miami-ECHO Makes History

By far the biggest of these NIH grants is the multimillion-dollar grant Dr. Santos has received to lead development of the first and only Miami-ECHO cohort. Dr. Santos began his nearly 20-year career as a nurse scientist in Brazil, studying nursing and health care provision in psychiatric hospitals and halfway houses. Over the past decade in the U.S., he has become a leader in studying maternal and child health disparities, with increasing interest and expertise in epigenetics and neurodevelopment.

When Dr. Santos came to SONHS in 2022 as a professor and the Dolores J. Chambreau Endowed Chair in Nursing, he was serving as principal investigator (PI) on three National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) grants in process: Placental Origins of Positive Child Health Outcomes, Healthy Mothers-Healthy Children: An Intervention with Hispanic Mothers and their Young Children, and Genetic and Epigenetic Effects on Childhood Cognitive Trajectories.

In June 2023, Dean Munro named him Vice Dean for Research Affairs. A watershed moment soon followed. In September 2023, the **NIH Office of the Director** awarded the School a seven-year, \$23,582,769 grant with Dr. Santos as PI of the study **“Miami-ECHO: A Diverse Cohort of Mothers, Children, and Fathers in Miami-Dade County.”**

The NIH’s Environmental influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) Program seeks to understand the impacts of early environmental factors on child health and development. As such, it requires a diverse cohort of children and parents nationwide representing the vast array of U.S. populations, particularly those racial and ethnic minority populations often subject to socioeconomic adversity stressors.



Miami-ECHO will join other cohorts across the nation to create a historic cohort of over 50,000 children and their parents. The first phase (UG3) of the seven-year grant, awarded \$6,683,383, runs September 2023 to May 2025. Another \$16,890,609 is expected to support the study’s final second phase (UH3) into 2030. Professor Michael Paidas, M.D., chair of the Miller School of Medicine’s Department of Obstetrics and Reproductive Sciences, is multiple-PI.

Drs. Santos and Paidas and their multidisciplinary team—including co-investigators JoNell E. Potter, Ph.D., APRN, FAAN, Karen Young, M.D., Ruby Natale, Ph.D., Psy.D., and Lunthita Duthely, Ed.D., from the Miller School—plan to enroll 1,250 pregnant women and their conceiving partners from Miami-Dade, and monitor the resulting children from birth to age 7 in order to better understand how environmental stressors, influenced by social and economic inequities, affect



children’s neurodevelopment and positive health outcomes.

“Dr. Santos’ role as lead Principal Investigator in a study of this magnitude and importance emphasizes the central contribution of nursing expertise in shaping and conducting groundbreaking research,” says Dean Munro. “The involvement of other nursing professionals, including SONHS Alumna of Distinction JoNell Potter, further underscores the critical role of nursing in this initiative.”

Also respected for his leadership nationally and internationally, Dr. Santos is currently president of the International Society of Nurses in Genetics and is the National Advisory Council Chair-Elect for the American Academy of Nursing’s Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science (CANS). See page 31.

Familias con Orgullo
Promoting Health and Reducing Risk among Hispanic Sexual Minority Youth and their Families

PI Guillermo “Willy” Prado, Ph.D., Professor
Agency/Award: NIH National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) R01MD017588

Hispanic youth who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender—also known as sexual minorities—are at much higher risk for depression, suicidal thoughts, and drug and alcohol abuse than their straight Hispanic peers. **Familias con Orgullo**, or Families with Pride, is a 12-week, family-based intervention aimed at counteracting the harmful implications of “coming out” on Hispanic sexual minority youth (HSMY). This grant follows a pilot study of 30 local families, funded by University units, including Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center. “We tried to understand why these kids were using substances and getting depressed, and a lot of it came down to the stigma they still experienced. We also saw that drug use and depression

were higher among teens who reported that their disclosure process was not a positive one,” explains Dr. Prado. Now, by enrolling 306 Hispanic families from across South Florida with teens who recently divulged their sexual orientation to one of their primary caregivers, the researchers will examine how sexual orientation, acculturation, time in U.S., and language impact drug use and depressive symptoms among HSMY. The study has the potential to transform the type of prevention programs disseminated to communities to improve the health of HSMY. “We want to be able to prevent and reduce drug use, as well as to reduce rates of depression and improve family dynamics to help youth and parents navigate this coming out process,” says Prado.



“These parents are at different stages of acceptance, so a key goal is to increase that level of acceptance.” For details, contact famconorgullo@miami.edu.

Cannabis Use and Proximal Immune Dysregulation (CUPID)

PI Renessa Williams, Ph.D., RN, Assistant Professor
Agency / Award: NIH NIMHD K23MD018337

Known as a Mentored Patient-Oriented Research Career Development Award, this grant will facilitate Dr. Williams’ study of the connection between cannabis use and biomarkers of inflammation in Black sexual minority men (SMM) with HIV. The profound HIV-related health inequities Black SMM experience compared to non-Hispanic white men may be linked to inflammation caused by chronic exposure to sexual minority stressors, such as sexual identity concealment, victimization, and community homophobia. It is crucial to understand how cannabis, along with other factors, affect inflammation to mitigate HIV-related inequities in clinical research. An interdisciplinary Mentorship



Team from four esteemed universities will guide Dr. Williams in training and research. “Because cannabis research is still in its primacy, CUPID will provide crucial evidence on its

interaction with the immune system in Black gay, bisexual, and other sexual minority men, a population largely underrepresented in HIV research. As a Black nurse scientist, I have witnessed—professionally and personally—how knowledge gaps can be mitigated by greater representation of scientists in research to address health inequities that affect minoritized communities.” Dr. Williams’ grant sponsor is Dr. Santos. Her mentors are Denise Vidot, Ph.D. (SONHS), Adam Carrico, Ph.D. (Florida International University), and Dustin Duncan, Sc.D (Columbia University). Collaborators include Daniel Feaster, Ph.D. (Miller School of Medicine), and John Schneider, M.D., M.P.H. (University of Chicago).

Leveraging a Community-Driven Approach to Address the Impact of Social Determinants of Health on Structural Inequities Among Miami-Dade County’s Intergenerational LGBTQ+ Community

Site PI Karina Gattamorta, Ph.D., Ed.S., Research Associate Professor; Grant PI Andrea Iglesias, Psy.D., UHP executive director and CEO.
Agency / Award: NIH Common Fund 10T20D035935-01



The dearth of local data about the LGBTQIA+ community creates barriers in designing and implementing appropriate health equity interventions. This award, an anticipated \$6 million for Urban Health Partnerships, Inc. (UHP), includes multiple research partners

under the Community Partnerships to Advance Science for Society (ComPASS) program. This project is dedicated to understanding and addressing factors affecting the health of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and more or other identities (LGBTQ+) in Miami-Dade County, including access to culturally appropriate health care and inclusive social services and programs. “What makes this project unique is that we’ll work closely with our intergenerational LGBTQ+ community to co-design and implement place-based structural interventions that meet their needs,” says Dr. Gattamorta. “We’ll develop indispensable knowledge that can inform research, policies, programming and funding priorities, and lead to positive health outcomes for our LGBTQ+ community across the

lifespan.” During the planning phase, the UHP and SONHS teams will collaborate with members of the LGBTQ+ sexual and gender minority community and a local Health Equity Research Assembly to develop specific interventions for implementation. Dr. Gattamorta will build a sustainable shared data system—including a data dashboard—looking at demographics specific to Miami-Dade’s LGBTQ+ population and indicators across multiple domains to assess the project’s long-term impact. “Dr. Gattamorta brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise in working with the LGBTQ+ community, and her statistical analysis background will guide project data collection and dissemination,” says Janiece Davis, M.P.H., a UHP program manager and project director on this award.



Enhancing HIV Prevention and Treatment Referral and Engagement among Latino MSM A Pilot Hybrid Effectiveness-Implementation Trial of the JUNTOS Referral Network

PI: Audrey Harkness, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Agency/Award: NIH National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) R34MH134670-01

Miami-Dade County is a domestic epicenter of the U.S. HIV epidemic, and Latino men who have sex with men (LMSM) experience over half of the local incidence of HIV. Effective, culturally grounded implementation strategies are needed to scale up and disseminate evidence-based biomedical prevention and treatment interventions such as pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis and rapid antiretroviral treatment. At the urging of community partner Care Resource, Dr. Harkness, a clinical psychologist, worked with the REACH Equity Team she leads at UM to develop JUNTOS (Joining Under-

connected Networks to Optimize Salud) Referral Network as an implementation strategy for reducing new HIV infections. JUNTOS (Spanish for “together”), they hypothesized, would improve the ability of HIV test counselors to refer and guide LMSM to HIV prevention, treatment, and ancillary services, and would increase LMSM’s demand for these services. Creation of JUNTOS Referral Network, a collaboration with Care Resource and the Florida Department of Health, was funded by the Center for HIV and Research in Mental Health (CHARM). Leveraging the federally funded Ending the HIV Epidemic

supplement, Dr. Harkness is using this new R34 planning grant to evaluate implementation and effectiveness outcomes of the yet-to-be tested JUNTOS implementation strategy. “It’s really exciting to see an idea that has come from the community be realized by the community,” says Dr. Harkness. “The fact that this originated with community stakeholders rather than in an academic setting makes the program’s potential sustained impact so much greater.” Findings are expected to lead to a full-force hybrid effectiveness-implementation trial. For details, email reach@miami.edu.

The Intersectionality Theory for Hispanic Sexual Minority Youth

Team: PI Alyssa Lozano, Ph.D., Research Assistant Professor
Agency / Award: NIH NIMHD R01MD017588

At age 12, Luciene Espinosa told her mother she thought she was a lesbian. Opening her soul to her conservative, Cuban mom took courage, but Espinosa felt compelled to share her feelings with the person who always had been her best friend. After that conversation, the dynamic shifted. “Throughout my upbringing, I was the golden child of the family,” Espinosa says. “But when I came out, I was the black sheep.” The next year, Espinosa’s mental health worsened. She even tried to take her own life. Then Espinosa participated in Familias con Orgullo, an intervention for Hispanic sexual minority youth (HSMY) piloted a few years ago by Dr. Willy Prado and then-Ph.D. student Lozano. Seeing other parents in the program accepting



their sexual minority children helped shift her mother’s opinion, recalls Espinosa. “It saved our relationship in the best way possible. Once I was accepted by the person I loved the most again, it completely calmed me down. It got quiet in my head. I give thanks every day that this program existed and that somehow I found it because otherwise I feel like my life would have taken a very different turn.” Seeing how the Familias con Orgullo pilot changed the lives of young participants like Espinosa inspired Dr.

Lozano, now a SONHS faculty member, to continue the work she started with Dr. Prado. Thanks to this, her first NIH Diversity Supplement grant as PI, she will have the chance to examine how sexual orientation, acculturation, time in the U.S., and language impact drug use and depressive symptoms among HSMY. “I was able to learn so much about the challenges these youth face and how resilient they are,” she says. “I want to continue to focus on this population because these kids were so open and candid about what they went through—no literature review could give that level of detail. And it’s really important to be doing this work right now.” Dr. Lozano’s sponsor is Dr. Prado; her mentor is Dr. Harkness.



PI Denise C. Vidot, Ph.D., Associate Professor, received three pilot awards in August and September to support

innovative investigations emerging from her groundbreaking Cannabis and Psychedelics Global Research Laboratory. “Heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Vidot and her outstanding team,”

says Dr. Santos. “Pilot awards are a fantastic mechanism to generate data that leads to external funding opportunities.”

- **Psychedelic + Cannabis Patient-Cancer Provider Communication during Cancer Care Delivery** received the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center (SCCC) Survivorship Pilot Award.
- **Cannabis Use during Active Cancer Treatment: Physical and Psychosocial Risks and Benefits** by

Urine-Quantified Cannabinoid Levels received the SCCC Outreach and Engagement Pilot Award.

- **Cannabinoid Urine Metabolites and Cardiovascular Risk among Racially/Ethnic Diverse HIV Patients with and without Postacute Sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 Infection** was funded by Miami Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) at the Miller School of Medicine

Adaption, Feasibility and Acceptability of the SEPA Intervention A Novel Approach for Helping South Florida’s Transgender Women Address Mental Health, Violence and Sexual Health Risks

Co-PIs: Joseph P. De Santis, Ph.D., APRN, ACRN, FAAN, Associate Professor, and Rosina Cianelli, Ph.D., M.P.H., RN, IBCLC, FAAN, Professor
Agency / Award: Our Fund Foundation LGBTQ Health & Wellness Fund Pilot

Transgender women (TGW) experience disparities in mental health, sexually transmitted infections like HIV, and violence—disparities that disproportionately impact overall health. Drs. De Santis and Cianelli will conduct a 1-year adaptation, feasibility, and acceptability study of the intervention SEPA (Salud/Health, Educación/Education, Prevención/Prevention, Auto-cuidado/Self-care) to address these



risks and promote health among TGW in South Florida. SEPA is a 3-session

culturally and empirically validated behavioral prevention intervention for Hispanic women that the project leads have already been funded to adapt for rural Hispanic women and Black women. The SEPA-TGW adaptation will be informed by input from 10 TGW and 5 health care workers/providers and assessed for feasibility and acceptability as a health promotion strategy with an additional 20 TGW.

Priming the Research Pipeline

If research is the beating heart of education at SONHS, doctoral students are its lifeblood. Following are 2023 highlights of a bright future for the next generation of health disparities research at SONHS.

The prestigious Ruth L. Kirschstein Predoctoral Individual National Research Service Awards (F31) from the NIH's National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) went to two Ph.D. in nursing science candidates—**Jiye Lee**, M.S.N., CPNP-AC, and **Alexa Parra**, B.S.N. '16, B.S.P.H. '16, RN.



Parra's study, "The Effects of Intersecting Identity and Social Determinants of Health on Afro-Latina Maternal Morbidity and Infant Birth Outcomes in Florida," is co-sponsored by Dr. Cynthia Lebron (SONHS), with mentors Drs. JoNell Potter and Yue Pan (UM Miller School of Medicine).

Lee's study, "Effects of Neighborhood Environment on Child Behavioral Health," employs NIH Environmental Influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) data, with mentorship from Dr. Yui Matsuda (SONHS), Dr. Pan and Dr. Scott Brown (Miller School), Dr. Daniel Messenger (University of Colorado), and Dr. Mike O'Shea (University of North Carolina). Dr. Hudson Santos,



Vice Dean for Research Affairs, is sponsoring both students.

Ph.D. candidate **Dalton Scott**, M.P.H., B.S.N., RN, presented on research he conducted in Colombia during the NIH Minority Health and Health Disparities Research Training (MHRT) Program (see Scott's Student Profile on page 36).

Dr. Johis Ortega, Vice Dean for Academic Affairs at SONHS, was invited to speak about MHRT and "Training the Next Generation of Global Health Disparities Scientists" at the Sigma Theta Tau International (Sigma) Nursing Research Congress, held this summer in the United Arab Emirates.

Ph.D. candidate **Jazmin D. Ramirez**, B.S.N., RN, got the chance to present her abstract "Association between Heat



Exposure, Placental Function, and Birth Outcomes: A Scoping Review" at another notable event, the Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science (CANS) 2023 Advanced Methods Conference, where faculty member Dr. Denise Vidot was invited to discuss multidisciplinary, biosocial methods for developing health disparities research and targeted interventions. Dr. Hudson Santos was Councilor of Programming for the September conference and is now the CANS National Advisory Council Chair-Elect (see page 31).

For the second year in a row, Ph.D. candidate **Khulud Almutairi**, FNP, MSN, was invited to present at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual meeting and Expo. Her first poster for 2023 focused on "Assessing Arabs' Knowledge of Medicinal Cannabis: A Pilot Content Analysis Study," an effort to evaluate the understanding and awareness of Arabs regarding medicinal cannabis content. Her second poster at APHA was titled "Investigating the Relationship Between Religiosity and Advising on Prophetic Medicine among Muslim Healthcare Providers." Prophetic medicine, she explains, is a form of complementary alternative medicine that holds significance within Muslim communities.

Four Student Registered Nurse Anesthetists in the D.N.P. program at SONHS presented at UM's 2023 Climate

and Health Symposium. **Charles Thuo** and **Gabrielle Hooper** won the 2nd place poster award for "Evaluating the Environmental Impact of Anesthesia, and **Alia Lescaille** and **Paul-Raymond Gonzales** conducted a workshop on "Transformative Clinical Practices and Healthcare Delivery to Address Health Impacts of Climate Change."

In addition, three promising Ph.D. in nursing science candidates successfully defended their dissertations in the summer and fall. First, **Roberto Roman Laporte**, M.S.N. '14, Ph.D. '23, D.N.P., RN, CMSRN, EBP-C, presented on a study topic that, as Dr. Laporte notes, "couldn't have come at a more significant time": "LGBT+ Inclusive Healthcare: A Qualitative Descriptive Study of LGBT+ People in South Florida."



Laporte, a Sigma Theta Tau member, also was invited to join the Edward Alexander Bouchet Graduate Honor Society, named for the first African American doctoral recipient in the U.S., in recognition of his outstanding scholarly achievement. "Pursuing my Ph.D. at [SONHS] provided me with so many opportunities to collaborate with passionate researchers," he says, from an award-winning neonatal telehealth innovation to a study of the impact of virtual choral singing on cancer survivors during COVID-19.

María José Baeza Robba, Ph.D. '23, successfully defended her dissertation, "Rethinking Intimate Partner Violence Among Hispanic Women: Self-Silencing, Help-Seeking, and Achieving Well-Being."



Kathryn Gerber, Ph.D. '23, who is in the midst of a three-year study of moderate traumatic brain injury (TBI) outcomes, successfully defended her dissertation, "Neuroinflammatory biomarkers, symptoms, and functional outcomes in individuals who have sustained traumatic brain injury 3-12 months post-injury," in September. Gerber expressed gratitude for the many opportunities she's had at SONHS and to all of her professors for being so supportive.

SONHS Ph.D. student **Tericka Smith Cesar** was on the interdisciplinary first-place winning team for the first-ever Global Health Case Competition held at the U and is poised to compete at the next level.



Meanwhile, recent SONHS grad **Cristobal Padilla Fortunatti**, Ph.D. '21, an assistant professor of nursing

at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, received the Chilean Ministry of Science, Technology, Knowledge and Innovation's prestigious "Fondecyt de Iniciacion" grant on his first submission of a three-year explanatory study titled "Incidence and Factors Associated with the Development of Post Intensive Care Syndrome among Family Members of Intensive Care Unit Survivors."

As a Ph.D. student, Dr. Padilla Fortunatti was named a Sigma Rising Star of Research. With this grant, he is certainly living up to that title. "I am thrilled by Dr. Padilla Fortunatti's success in receiving this highly significant early-career award from the Chilean Ministry of Science," says Dr. Victoria Behar-Zusman, director of the SONHS Ph.D. in nursing science program. "It is very satisfying to see our program's impact in nurturing the next generation of nurse scientists reach beyond the U.S.," she says, noting that his study is a continuation of his dissertation research.

In order to ensure that the SONHS Ph.D. program remains on the cutting-edge, Dr. Behar-Zusman has been working with her colleagues, including Dr. Santos, to update the curriculum. "We want to ensure that this already-impactful program remains an academic leader," she says, "with students, faculty, and alumni continuing to advance new frontiers in a fast-changing field for years to come."

Evidence-Based Epiphany

An NIH internship transformed this undergrad's outlook

Before this summer, junior nursing student Ophelia Hyde “wasn’t that into research,” she admits. “My idea was that it was behind the scenes in a lab, behind a computer. I diminished the impact it has. But research is not like that at all.”

What changed her mind was the chance for a hands-on research experience at the National Institutes of Health. Hyde, a University of Miami Foote Fellow, Hammond Scholar, and secretary of the School’s chapter of the Multicultural Nursing Student Association, was accepted into the very selective NIH Clinical Center Summer Internship Program in the nursing concentration.

“I was able to work in a functioning hospital with inpatient and outpatient units. The only difference is that all of the patients there are on protocols for research purposes,” she says. “I didn’t expect that. I thought I was going to be in the labs.”

Celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2023, the NIH Clinical Center is the nation’s largest hospital solely dedicated to clinical research. Since it opened, more than 500,000 patients have participated in clinical trials there.

Hyde spent eight weeks shadowing nurse researchers in the hospital, which is located on the NIH campus in Bethesda, Maryland, just 15 minutes from where she grew up. Her mentor there was service nurse educator Rosa Rousseau, D.N.P., M.S.N. Ed., CHSE.

Hyde’s experience culminated in the NIH Summer Poster Day, where she and fellow interns presented their work and heard lectures from NIH investigators. For her final project, Hyde, who is pursuing minors in public health and psychology, elected to study the psychological impact of autoimmune encephalitis, an inflammatory condition of the brain she knew little about before her internship.



Ophelia, right, and Dr. Rousseau

The condition, she learned, was identified as recently as the 2000s and seems to be more common among young people. It also disproportionately affects Black individuals and women. Moreover, because its symptoms can mimic those associated with schizophrenia, it is often misdiagnosed and treated as a psychiatric condition, Hyde explains. The poster she presented included input from NIH nurses working on the protocol and the physician in charge of it.

So far researchers have not linked the condition, which can have a sudden onset, to any genetic disorders and do not yet understand why it disproportionately affects certain populations, Hyde says. However, knowing that patients she encountered with severe symptoms will likely make a full recovery has inspired Hyde. “This is exactly why I went into the nursing field,” she says. “I want to address disparities like this. The treatment protocol was ongoing while I was at NIH, so I was able to see patients with autoimmune encephalitis receiving the treatment we had learned about.”

Witnessing the impact of her NIH mentors’ work first-hand convinced Hyde, who plans to specialize in women’s health or pediatrics after she graduates, of the transformative power of ethical, effective health research and its importance to her own future as a practitioner.

“I was able to meet patients with autoimmune encephalitis and talk to their parents,” she says. “I didn’t realize how important and crucial the work they’re doing at NIH is to everything that you do as a nurse, as a doctor. It completely impacts the way that you provide care for your patients. I feel like that was very essential for me to understand.”

While not every SONHS student can claim the NIH as their first research experience, all undergrads gain hands-on experience in health-related research at SONHS, through coursework, as well as internal and external opportunities like the one Hyde completed.

“Getting our students into research early in their education at SONHS broadens their comprehension of health in the modern world, opens more opportunities to them from the start, and expands their ability to think critically about the ways science can improve health care for all,” says Dr. Hudson Santos, Vice Dean for Research Affairs at SONHS.

Ophelia Hyde agrees. She feels empowered by her undergraduate research experience. Even though it’s been months since she met the young patients and their grateful parents at the NIH Clinical Center over the summer, she still thinks of them often and remains focused on raising awareness about this devastating but very treatable condition. “I knew nothing about clinical research nursing when I got into the internship,” she says. “This opportunity really sparked a passion I have for research that I didn’t think existed, and now I want to do more research. I want to keep this going.”

For more information about undergraduate research opportunities, contact the Offices of Student Services and Hemispheric and Global Initiatives at SONHS and the Office of Undergraduate Research and Community Outreach at UM.



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“I end health disparities by...minimizing the effects of social adversity on maternal and child health, and promoting positive child development.”

– **Hudson Santos, PhD, RN, FABMR, FAAN**
Professor, Dolores J. Chambreau Endowed Chair
Vice Dean for Research Affairs
hsantos@miami.edu



“I end health disparities by... working with communities to promote, support and empower people living with HIV.”

– **Renessa Williams, PhD, RN**
Assistant Professor
rsw95@miami.edu



“I end health disparities by... working with marginalized communities to prevent partner violence.”

– **Nicholas Metheny, PhD, MPH, RN**
Assistant Professor
nick.metheny@miami.edu



“I end health disparities by... supporting healthy moms and babies.”

– **Cynthia Lebron, PhD, MPH**
Assistant Professor
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To learn more about the PhD program, contact the SONHS research faculty in your area of interest; call (305) 284-4325 or visit www.phd.sonhs.miami.edu.

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Honors & Awards



Juan M. González, D.N.P., APRN, AGACNP-BC, ENP-C, FNP-BC, CEN, FAANP, associate professor of clinical and AGACNP program director, received the 2023 National Association of Hispanic Nurses Miami Clinical Nurse Leader Award for exceptional leadership and outstanding contributions as a nurse clinician shaping the role and advancing

nursing practice, particularly within the Hispanic community. He was also included in the Emergency Nurses Association's "Top 20 Under 40 ED Nurses" and presented a clinical update on pharmacological agents used to manage obstructive airway diseases at the 2023 AANP Fall Conference.



Greta Mitzova-Vladinov, D.N.P., CRNA, CHSE, APRN, FAANA, associate professor of clinical and Nurse Anesthesia program director, was inducted as a Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA). She also coauthored the "Simulation in Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs Report" as a member of the AANA Simulation

Subcommittee, and was an invited speaker of the Florida Clinicians for Climate Action.



Johis Ortega, Ph.D., APRN, ACNP-BC, ENP-BC, FNP-BC, FAAN, FAANP, associate dean for hemispheric and global initiatives and professor of clinical, was named Vice Dean for Academic Affairs at SONHS June 1. He received the National Association of Hispanic Nurses Miami Chapter Community Champion Award for outstanding contributions toward

improving the health of South Florida's Hispanic community.



LaToya Lewis, Ed.D., M.S.N., RN, associate professor of clinical, was named co-chair of the Miami chapter of the Black Nurses Association, Inc.'s All of Us initiative, a collaborative campaign with the National Black Nurses Association and the National Institutes of Health.



Patricia Larrieu Jimenez, D.N.P., APRN, FNP-BC, CHSE, FAANP, associate professor of clinical, was inducted as a Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) for her long-term contributions to advancing and elevating the nurse practitioner profession in the U.S. and Latin America. Her expertise and proficiency in caring for patients on dialysis

and leadership on grants such as the Hemodialysis Access Surveillance Evaluation Study have resulted in clinical practice changes and quality improvements. She has innovated curricula for the use of ultrasound and simulation and educated some 1,200 practicing NPs.



Giovanna Cecilia De Oliveira, Ph.D., ANP-C, PMHNP-BC, associate professor of clinical, and her mentee co-wrote the chapter "Walking Side By Side: The Mentor's Role in Guiding the Mentee's Scholarship and Academic Career," for the book *Mentoring in Nursing through Narrative Stories Across the World* (Springer, 2023). Dr. De Oliveira presented a poster

on psychiatric nursing simulation modalities at the American Psychiatric Nurses Association 2023 Conference.



Carmen Presti, D.N.P., APRN, ACNP-BC, associate professor of clinical, serves as secretary of the National Association of Hispanic Nurses Miami. She received the chapter's prestigious 2023 President's Award for individuals who consistently help the chapter achieve its goals and exemplify unwavering commitment to its mission.



Cynthia Lebron, Ph.D., M.P.H., assistant professor, participated in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' inaugural HHS Hispanic Health Summit ("Avanzando Nuestro Salud") as president of the American Public Health Association's Latino Caucus for Public Health.

Hudson Santos Elected to National and International Leadership Positions



Distinguished maternal and child health expert and School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) professor Hudson Santos, PhD, RN, FABMR, FAAN, has been elected to two prestigious leadership positions.

Santos recently began his term as President of the International Society of Nurses in Genetics (ISONG), where he'll lead an inclusive

international professional group serving the nursing profession and the public.

"As President of ISONG, I have the honor of guiding the organization's next phase," said Santos, who is the Dolores J. Chambreau Endowed Chair in Nursing and Vice Dean for Research Affairs at the SONHS. "I'll be leading an outstanding group of nurses in genetics who are engaged in groundbreaking genomic nursing and healthcare globally."

With an international membership of more than 350 nurse leaders and innovators in genetics and genomics, ISONG is building a vibrant global community that fosters professional development, networking, collaboration, education and leadership. ISONG promotes the integration of genetics and genomics across nursing education, research and care at all levels of professional practice.

Santos was a member-at-large on ISONG's Board of Directors for two years; he then served as president-elect before taking the reins of the organization as president.

The internationally renowned nurse researcher has also assumed the role of Chair Elect of the Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science (CANS) National Advisory Council.

"It's a great privilege to serve as Chair-Elect of the CANS National Advisory Council," said Santos, who is also interim Associate Dean for the University of Miami's Graduate School. "In this role, I'll support the development, conduct and utilization of nursing science at the national level."

An open membership entity of the American Academy of Nursing, the CANS National Advisory Council aims to be the collective, national voice for nursing science, to share and disseminate research findings, and to facilitate life-long learning and career development opportunities for nurse scientists.

Santos previously served as the CANS Councilor of Programming, and as Chair of the organization's 2022 State of the Science Congress on Nursing Research and 2023 Advanced Methods Conference.

"With his election to these prominent leadership positions, Santos exemplifies the world-class caliber of our faculty at the SONHS," said Dean Munro. "They continue to earn the respect of their peers in the profession every day."

New Faculty



Alyssa Lozano, Ph.D., joined SONHS in August 2023 as a research assistant professor. She holds a B.A. in public policy from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She earned her Master of Science and Ph.D. degrees in prevention science and community health from UM's Miller School of Medicine. Her dissertation was "Conceptualizing Sexual Orientation and Family Functioning for Latina/o/x Adolescents." She works in the area of promotion of behavioral health and family functioning among various groups of Hispanic youth, including sexual and gender minorities. Her research interests include a focus on qualitative research to inform intervention development. Specifically, she is interested in developing family-based preventive interventions that address family functioning and reduce and prevent inequities in substance use and mental health outcomes among Hispanic youth (see page 25).

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Turning Curiosity into Community

By Joy Elizabeth Cadman

SONHS Assistant Professor **Audrey Harkness**, Ph.D., is making impressive strides toward her goal of addressing HIV rates among sexual minority men through community partnerships and implementation science models. For instance, she was among the HIV and global health implementation scholars from around the world selected as a 2021-2023 HIV, Infectious Disease, and Global Health Implementation Research Institute Fellow, a prestigious training, mentorship, and networking program.

She coauthored a transdiagnostic guide published by Oxford University Press in 2022 that builds on her work evaluating the effectiveness of LGBTQ-affirmative cognitive-behavioral therapy. “It provides communities tools to access this evidence-based treatment outside of the context of research,” she explains.

Most recently, in alignment with the federal Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) initiative, Dr. Harkness has been awarded an R34 grant from the National Institute of Mental Health of the NIH to pilot test an implementation strategy addressing health disparities among Latino men who have sex with men (MSM). The study responds to community-identified needs emerging from Dr. Harkness’s work with local organizations and community members, including a formal Community Advisory Board (CAB).

“Programs like this can have a sustained impact in the community,” she says. “Working with our CAB and community partners, I try to slow down and make sure what we’re doing is aligned—to ask, what is actually needed? And how can my skills support that?”

Dr. Harkness’ identity as a researcher embedded in clinical, health care, and community contexts makes the interdisciplinary environment of SONHS, which she joined in 2022, a great fit. “I feel very at home. It’s really exciting,



the number of different things faculty are working on here—much of which synergizes with my own work,” she says. “That’s important for somebody interested in implementation science, because we’re taking what we’re learning works and studying how best to implement that in real-world practice.”

Dr. Harkness says she’s always been led by her curiosity. She followed her master’s and doctoral degrees in psychology at UC Santa Barbara with postdoctoral training at the University of Miami. Here, under the mentorship of Steven Safren, Ph.D., director of the Center for HIV and Research in Mental Health (CHARM), she collaborated on an NIH-funded study of populations affected by HIV. During this time, she was awarded two pilot study grants from the Center for Latino Health Research Opportunities (CLaRO) and Miami Center for AIDS Research (CFAR), establishing her own program of research.

“I was trying to understand the barriers to getting PrEP [pre-exposure prophylaxis], mental health and

substance use treatments to Latino MSM because that’s what I was seeing clinically—and it’s hard to bridge this gap,” she says. These pilot studies enabled Dr. Harkness to successfully apply for multiple EHE grants through the NIH. Those studies built her implementation science expertise and laid the foundation for the R34 award she received this summer.

Dr. Harkness describes her time at the U and at SONHS as prolific and career-defining. In addition to Dr. Safren, she is grateful for SONHS faculty mentors such as Drs. Guillermo “Willy” Prado, Victoria Behar-Zusman, and Hudson Santos—and the peer support of her CLaRO pilot cohort. In turn, she’s eager to mentor students and staff through the REACH (Research Engagement and Community Health) interdisciplinary team she directs. “There have been so many opportunities,” she says. “I’ve developed community relationships. I have a lot of collaborators, and I really value that, whether they’re in the community or academic space. This is a group effort.”

Message from the President



We had an amazing 75th Anniversary Celebration for the School during Alumni Weekend and Homecoming. It was wonderful to reconnect with visiting School of Nursing and Health Studies 'Canes from near and far. Steeped in tremendous educational and life experiences, our SONHS alumni are the greatest. The Alumna of Distinction event honoring Dr. Shakira Henderson was a perfect example of just how great our graduates are. Dr. Henderson was incredibly inspiring, and we welcome her back to the Sunshine State with open arms as she embarks on her exciting new chapter in nurse leadership. Like UM's nursing programs, our School's alumni organization dates back over seven decades and is critical to helping us maintain and grow the rich, lifelong bonds and friendships we forged as students that continue to support us throughout our professional and personal lives.

Renee Longini, B.S.N. '09, D.N.P. '16
SONHS, Alumni Association President

1980s and 1990s

Lucienne “Lucy” Debe Reese, B.S.N. '85, showed her SONHS support during Alumni Weekend and Homecoming 2023 by attending the School's 75th anniversary events on Friday and Saturday.

Charles “Charlie” Buscemi, B.S.N. '95, M.S.N. '01, Ph.D. '05, FIU clinical professor, was selected as a Fellow of the Wound, Ostomy, and Continence Nurses Society (WOCN®) as part of the inaugural class and was an invited speaker at the national American Association of Nurse Practitioners 2023 conference.

Grace Grau, B.S.N. '96, board certified acute care nurse practitioner, was inducted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing in 2023. After over a decade as an educator at University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Nursing, where she earned her D.N.P., she started a new position there as adjunct assistant professor with the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Grau is a founding president of the National Association of Hispanic Nurses, Alabama chapter and NAHN board member at the national level. She received NAHN's 2023 President's Award and was featured in the 2023 book *Latinas in Nursing: Stories of determination, inspiration, and trust*.

Jorge Valdes, B.S.N. '96, D.N.P. '12, a certified registered nurse anesthetist and Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology, has been chair of FIU's Department of Nurse Anesthesiology since June 2022 and in May 2023 was named Acting Dean of FIU's Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

2000s and 2010s

Myriam Pierre Oluyinka, B.S.N. '05, holds a master's in public health and is in the Class of 2024 Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner D.N.P. Program at Seattle University, where she serves as a D.N.P. Diversity Ambassador. “I knew that by becoming a nurse I could create

an opportunity to be an advocate for those belonging to diverse or disadvantaged communities,” she says.

Emily Stauffer Rocha, B.S.N. '08, M.S.N. '13, recently started a new position as director of clinical innovation at Texas Health and Human Services, where she was previously a senior nurse policy advisor. She also chairs the American Nurses Association's Individual Member Division.

Aubrey Florom Smith, B.S.N. '09, Ph.D. '13, presented her historical research poster “Launching a Diverse and Inclusive Space Nursing Workforce” at the American Academy of Nursing Health Policy Conference in 2023.

Norma Solis, B.S.N. '09, M.S.N. '12, D.N.P. '21, director of advance practice in the Division of Gastroenterology/Hepatology at the University of Miami, presented on pregnancy in inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) at SEBRADII 2023, a Brazilian conference for IBD specialists.

Marie O. Etienne, D.N.P. '11, a nursing professor at Miami Dade College, was inducted in September 2023 as president of the Florida Nurses Association.

Donna Bean, B.S.N. '15, started a new position as RN Care Coordinator, Global Patient Services at Cleveland Clinic's main campus in Cleveland, Ohio.

Brittney Price, D.N.P. '16, of San Francisco, and **Julius Johnson, D.N.P. '16**, of New York, took part in the SONHS 75th anniversary barbecue gathering during Alumni Weekend and Homecoming 2023.

Carlos A. Larrauri, M.S.N. '17, was an invited speaker at the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (FNIH) 2023 Awards Ceremony at the JFK Center for Performing Arts. He is a patient ambassador and co-chair of the Accelerating Medicines Partnership® in Schizophrenia Steering Committee for FNIH.

Belén Hervera, B.S.P.H. '19, earned her M.P.H. from the University of Miami and has started a new position at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center as a research support for population sciences project manager.

2020s

Kemika Lundy, B.S.N. '20, started a new position as a surgical intensive care nurse at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta.

Elaina Jackson, B.S.N. '21, took part in a mission to Ghana, Africa, where she helped a team of health professionals educate middle and high school boys and girls about safe sex, condoms, and their anatomy. In addition, the team supplied over 1,000 teens with feminine hygiene products and condoms.

Kathryn Gerber, Ph.D. '23, successfully defended her dissertation, “Neuroinflammatory biomarkers, symptoms, and functional outcomes in individuals who have sustained traumatic brain injury 3-12 months post-injury” in September 2023.

Robert Roman Laporte, Ph.D. '23, successfully defended his dissertation “LGBT+ Inclusive Healthcare: A Qualitative Descriptive Study of LGBT+ People in South Florida.” He writes, “The take-home message from participants in my study: pronouns matter, asking about SOGI (sexual orientation/gender identity) matters, representations and symbols of inclusion matter (to name a few)! Healthcare should be a safe place for all. Each client has their story to tell. Listen.”

María José Baeza Robba, Ph.D. '23, successfully defended her dissertation, “Rethinking Intimate Partner Violence Among Hispanic Women: Self-Silencing, Help-Seeking and Achieving Well-Being.”

To get involved in building our alumni legacy and to share what you have been up to since graduation, email nursing_alumni@miami.edu.

Meet Nursepreneur Daniel Campos

By Yolanda Mancilla

As a young nursing student in Cuba, **Daniel L. Campos, M.S.N. '13, D.N.P., A.P.R.N.**, never dreamed he'd be the first nurse to appear on the cover of *People en Español*. That distinction is only one of his many accolades as a much-sought-after “beauty expert” who brings his unique brand of “nursepreneurship” to a highly-successful aesthetic dermatology practice.

Today, Dr. Campos is the beauty expert for *People en Español* magazine, Univision's *Despierta América*, and *Hola TV*. His podcast, *El Doctor de las Estrellas*, features celebrities sharing their self-care practices. He also publishes *Buen Vivir*, a monthly digital magazine with over 90,000 subscribers across Latin America and Spain. Campos explains that he uses his visibility to educate the Spanish-speaking community about everything from high-tech clinical procedures to home-based care accessible to all.

At Ageless Forever Institute, the Coral Gables clinic he founded in 2016, Campos offers a broad array of non-invasive aesthetic and antiaging procedures. He says he developed two lines of medical-grade skin care products and trademarked several nonsurgical procedures. He also authored two antiaging advice books focused on healthy self-care. The first, published in 2019 by Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial, is *Joven para siempre: Descubre la llave del antienvejecimiento* (Forever Young: Discover the Key to Anti-Aging).

His new book, *Naturalmente bella: Remedios secretos de la abuela* (Naturally Beautiful: Grandma's Secret Remedies; HarperCollins Español, 2023), is an homage to the wisdom of Latina grandmothers, their natural beauty secrets and remedies. “I collected beauty treatments from every Latin American country to show how our grandmothers took care of their skin and hair,” he says. “I looked at the science behind their effectiveness and justified why they work.”



Campos acquired indispensable knowledge and skills as a graduate of the adult gerontology nurse practitioner program at SONHS. “Everything I'm using in my practice today I learned in my master's program,” he says. “My classes were tough, but I was part of a student community and took advantage of a great program. That's why I'm the professional I am today.”

After earning a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree, he negotiated a business partnership with his mentor, plastic surgeon John J. Martin Jr., M.D. “As nurse practitioners we have negotiating tools,” says Campos. “We have the degree, experience, passion. So why work for someone, instead of working with someone?”

Now, he is eager to use his hard-earned knowledge to help nurses launch their own health-related businesses. “There are many components to being a successful businessperson. Learn by reading, by applying what you see others do,” he says. “Be methodical, thorough, realistic. [Develop] a relationship with a bank or

business partner. Be a professional and an entrepreneur—believe in what you offer, in your skills, in your ability to make a business work, and you'll be successful.”

Campos sees near-limitless opportunities for nurses to dedicate their careers to innovation and entrepreneurship.

“Look for opportunities. Nurses are great at inventing. We can do so many things in a hospital with just tape and scissors! We come up with ideas, we find solutions. I turned a passion into a multimillion-dollar business. If you love something, educate yourself, apply yourself, be resilient. Find that passion, find your niche, go for it, and you'll have the best career anybody could have.”

While nursing programs have made great strides preparing nurse educators, researchers, and leaders, Dr. Campos believes their next challenge is to prepare nurse entrepreneurs. “Every nursing curriculum should give nurses the tools to be entrepreneurs,” he says. “A business class would be phenomenal, and I volunteer to teach it!”

Driven to Improve Migrant Health

By Robin Shear

By middle school, Dalton Scott envisioned a future of helping people through health care. Two observations he made while job-shadowing several medical professionals as a teen in his East Texas hometown solidified his decision to choose nursing. “Nurses connect with their patients on a deeper level than any other medical professional,” he says, “and there are enormous opportunities for growth.”

A decade later, Scott is forging an ambitious path as a nurse scientist devoted to reducing health disparities. Already equipped with nursing and Master of Public Health degrees from the University of Alabama in Birmingham (UAB), he is well on his way to earning a Ph.D. from the School of Nursing and Health Studies.

Several formative experiences led to this moment. Growing up in the state with the second highest number of immigrants in the U.S. influenced Scott’s empathy for and understanding of conditions that immigrants face and their resulting health concerns. In college, he volunteered with the Alabama Interfaith Refugee Partnership on initiatives aimed at improving access to health care, language, housing, and transportation resources for asylum-seekers living in the state. To further expand his horizons, he studied abroad in Salamanca, Spain, and conducted outreach in Quito, Ecuador.

After graduating with high distinguished honors at the start of the pandemic in 2020, Scott worked as an RN at UAB Hospital in a designated COVID-19 intensive care unit. There he witnessed first-hand how health disparities and inequities are exacerbated in times of crisis.

At SONHS, Scott, a Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society member,



has been recognized with the Graduate School’s most prestigious award, the Dean’s Fellowship. He also was accepted into the National Institutes of Health’s Minority Health and Health Disparities Research Training (MHRT) Program administered by SONHS.

Through MHRT, Scott was able to spend two months conducting research with SONHS’ global partners



at Nuevos Rumbos Corporation in Bogotá, Colombia, a country he’d never visited. “I saw MHRT as an incredible opportunity to conduct research internationally in areas I’m interested in—migrant health and health disparities,” he says. “Over the course of the summer, in collaboration with a renowned group of researchers, I helped on a study exploring the mental health and migration experiences of

Venezuelan parent-adolescent dyads, a topic I’m especially passionate about. I also helped on another study exploring the intangible costs associated with substance use and its impact on family life.”

Scott presented his substance use study findings during the 2023 MHRT Research Day at SONHS and is preparing a manuscript on those findings. “The experience solidified my desire to pursue my research interests,” he says. Those interests include studying violence among LGBTQ+ migrant populations and their health outcomes, with the ultimate goal of crafting culturally tailored, evidence-based health interventions that will meet the health needs of these and other underserved immigrant populations.

This Fall, Scott helped Ph.D. classmate Judy Greengold realize her vision of launching the School’s first-ever Doctoral Nursing Student Organization and now serves with her as its inaugural co-chair. He also received “encouraging news” about his F31 grant submission to the NIH. The award would support his research on drivers of depressive symptoms in Hispanic sexual minority youth. “My mentorship team—Drs. Willy Prado, Nicholas Metheny, Daniel Feaster, and Audrey Harkness—and I are eagerly awaiting final word in February 2024,” he says.

His mentors have “made all the difference in the world,” says Scott. “I am working in Dr. Metheny’s and Dr. Prado’s labs, and I couldn’t ask for better mentors as a Ph.D. student. I am confident that after my time at SONHS, I will be a strong applicant for a postdoc fellowship and eventually a faculty position at a research-intensive university.”





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