

# heartbeat

Fall 2015

University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies



## GLOBAL REACH





UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
**SIMULATION HOSPITAL**  
 AT THE SCHOOL OF NURSING & HEALTH STUDIES

*Join us as we build our future.*



WHEN IT COMES TO HEALTH CARE EDUCATION, SIMULATION SAVES LIVES



OPERATING ROOM



MEDICAL SURGICAL ROOM



INTENSIVE CARE UNIT



SKILLS LAB

For further information on ways to help us reach our goal, please contact:  
 Karissa L. Grasty, Assistant Dean, Advancement  
 (305) 284-1563 • kgrasty@miami.edu

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS

Marina Alvarez, Rosa M. Lamazares-Romero, Yolanda Mancilla, Maria Padron, and Ginny Pickles

UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Vice President for Communications  
**Jacqueline R. Menendez, A.B. '83**

Assistant Vice President for Communications and Marketing  
**Todd Ellenberg**

Editorial Director  
**Meredith Camel, M.F.A. '12**

Design Director  
**Scott Fricker**

Art Director  
**Lisa Kuehnle**

Production Manager  
**Angie Villanueva, A.B. '12**

Cover Illustration  
**Lisa Kuehnle**

*Heartbeat* is published twice a year by the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) and the University of Miami Office of Communications and Marketing. *Heartbeat* is distributed to alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the SONHS. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. Postmaster and others, please send change of address notification to *Heartbeat*, School of Nursing and Health Studies, P.O. Box 248153, Coral Gables, Florida, 33124; telephone 305-284-3666. Contributions of articles and artwork are welcome, but *Heartbeat* accepts no responsibility for unsolicited items.

The comments and opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the University of Miami or the staff of *Heartbeat*. Copyright © 2015, University of Miami. An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS 15-013

fall 2015

contents

features

- 12 **Disparities Research Goes Global**  
 Minority undergraduates spend a summer gaining experience and inspiration toward becoming scientists.
- 18 **Campus Crusaders**  
 Improving the lives of college students, particularly those at the University of Miami, is a priority for many SONHS faculty and students.
- 22 **Opening Doors to LGBT Health**  
 SONHS researchers are furthering the school's mission to improve the health of all people—no matter what they look like or whom they love.

departments

- 2 **Leadership**
- 3 **Dean's Message**
- 4 **Vital Signs**  
 New UM President Julio Frenk • Student services gets a new assistant dean • Twist on interprofessional safety course • Understanding Overtown • STTI Beta Tau chapter grows • Spotlight on superb preceptor • New post-master's in mental health nursing • SONHS named HSHPS member • Delivering care in the D.R.
- 11 **Student Profile**  
 Sarah Downs
- 28 **Faculty Updates**  
 Welcoming new faculty and honoring leaders
- 30 **Honor Roll**
- 33 **Faculty Profile**  
 Martin Zdanowicz
- 34 **Class Notes**  
 Good news from SONHS graduates
- 36 **Alumni Profile**  
 Sarah Herise Kittles, B.S.N. '13



12



18



22

## UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI School of Nursing and Health Studies

### ADMINISTRATION

**Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano, Dr.P.H.**  
*Dean and Professor*

**Doris Noel Ugarriza, Ph.D.**  
*Vice Dean and Professor*

**Victoria Behar Mitrani, Ph.D.**  
*Associate Dean for Research and the Ph.D Program, and Professor*

**Martin M. Zdanowicz, Ph.D.**  
*Associate Dean for Health Studies and Professor of Clinical*

**Mary Hooshmand, Ph.D.**  
*Associate Dean, D.N.P. Programs and Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Johis Ortega, Ph.D.**  
*Associate Dean for Master's Programs and Global Initiatives, and Associate Professor of Clinical*

**Mary Mckay, D.N.P.**  
*Associate Dean for Nursing Undergraduate Programs and Associate Professor of Clinical*

**Sean Kilpatrick, M.S.Ed.**  
*Assistant Dean of Student Services*

**Marina Alvarez, B.S.**  
*Executive Director, Operations and Research*

**Zuny Fernandez, B.S.**  
*Director, Budget*

**Marta M. Medina, M.S.Ed.**  
*Associate Director, Graduate Admissions*

### ADVANCEMENT

**Karissa L. Grasty**  
*Assistant Dean, Advancement*

### 2014-2015 VISITING COMMITTEE

\*Jayne Sylvester Malfitano, *Co-Chair*

M. Christine Schwartz, *Co-Chair*

Lisette Exposito, B.S.N.

Pamela J. Garrison, R.N.

\*Thelma Anderson Gibson, B.S.N.

Jacqueline Gonzalez, D.N.P.

Kim Greene, L.C.S.W.

Joanne Martin, M.B.A.

Arthur R. Miller, M.B.A.

Deborah S. Mulvihill, M.S.N.

Maria Lamas Shojace, M.B.A.

Joan K. Stout, R.N.

Deborah Tedder, M.S.N.

David Zambrana, D.N.P.

\*Denotes Trustee

### FACULTY

**Laura D. Albuja, D.N.P.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Patricia Amado, Ph.D.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Debbie Anglade, Ph.D.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Rossana Bizzio, M.S.**  
*Lecturer and Program Director, Nurse Anesthesia*

**Patricia Larriue Briones, D.N.P.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Rosina Cianelli, Ph.D.**  
*Associate Professor*

**Nichole Crenshaw, D.N.P.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical and Director, Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Program*

**Joseph De Santis, Ph.D.**  
*Associate Professor*

**Diego Deleon, M.D.**  
*Senior Lecturer*

**Karina Gattamorta, Ph.D.**  
*Research Assistant Professor*

**Juan Gonzalez, D.N.P.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Rosa M. Gonzalez-Guarda, Ph.D.**  
*Associate Professor*

**Shayne Hauglum, Ph.D.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Melinda Jenkins, Ph.D.**  
*Associate Professor of Clinical*

**Laly Joseph, D.V.M., D.N.P.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Alexis M. Koskan, Ph.D.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Kristin N. Levoy, M.S.N.**  
*Lecturer*

**LaToya J. Lewis-Pierre, Ed.D.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Linda Mays, D.N.P.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Yui Matsuda, Ph.D.**  
*Assistant Professor*

**Brian McCabe, Ph.D.**  
*Research Assistant Professor*

**Greta Mitzova-Vladinov, D.N.P.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical and Interim Associate Director, Nurse Anesthesia Program*

**Anne E. Norris, Ph.D.**  
*Professor*

**Brenda Owusu, D.N.P.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Linda M. Parker, D.Sc.**  
*Research Assistant Professor*

**Andrew Porter, Ph.D.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Carmen Rosa Presti, D.N.P.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Deborah J. Riquelme, Ph.D.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Anthony (Tony) James Roberson, Ph.D.**  
*Associate Professor of Clinical*

**Deborah Saber, Ph.D.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Deborah Salani, D.N.P.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Jill Sanko, Ph.D.**  
*Assistant Professor*

**Kenya Snowden, D.N.P.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Natalia Villegas Rodriguez, Ph.D.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Goldie Wasman, M.S.N.**  
*Lecturer*

**Carole Wilkinson, D.N.P.**  
*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

**Jessica R. Williams, Ph.D.**  
*Assistant Professor*

### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the School of Nursing and Health Studies is to educate students and support faculty committed to excellence in nursing and health science. Through research, education, and practice, the school will create and disseminate health knowledge and prepare culturally competent leaders to provide safe service to our community, the nation, and the world.

## Breaking New Ground at the U and Beyond

### Welcome to the fall 2015 issue

of *Heartbeat*. As this issue goes to press, I am thrilled to announce the long-awaited groundbreaking on November 12 of the School of Nursing and Health Studies' new state-of-the-art Simulation Hospital.

I am hoping to see all of our SONHS family at the ceremony, including our alumni. Whether you have been with us since the beginning of our rich 67-year history, or you are a recent graduate preparing to lead the

This edition of *Heartbeat* shines the spotlight on faculty and students who are demonstrating leadership in research and service to our communities, from the UM campus to the global arena. Our cover story reports on health disparities research initiatives that enabled minority undergraduates from our programs and other South Florida



In this issue we also profile our new UM president, Dr. Julio Frenk. Given our school's unwavering commitment to national and interna-

tional health care education, practice, and science, we are especially proud and excited to welcome a transformative global health leader of President Frenk's caliber to the helm of the U.

The news, feature stories, and profiles shared in this issue are really just some highlights of all the successful work being done at all levels by our dedicated teachers and researchers, students and alumni, preceptors and community partners—whether on the UM campus, in the local community, or on the national and global stage. I hope you enjoy the issue!

**Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano**  
Dr.P.H., R.N., F.A.A.N.  
Dean and Professor

“Our budding scientists are part of the generation that will address, and ultimately eliminate, health inequities in the 21st century.”

health professions through the 21st century, please join us in celebrating this momentous achievement. I look forward to standing with all of you as we witness the birth of this revolutionary facility for health care education. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the generous donors who have made it possible for us to reach today's milestone, and I remind all readers that we have not yet attained our fundraising goal. Please continue to participate in the Simulation Hospital campaign!

institutions to spend last summer working with some of the world's brightest minds in health care research. Our budding scientists are part of the generation that will address, and ultimately eliminate, health inequities in the 21st century.

Turn the pages to meet some of our faculty members and students who are developing our understanding of health disparities among LGBTQ communities, and others who are helping to “build a better U” by leading campus-wide initiatives to address sexual violence, racial discrimination, and students' unhealthy behaviors.

## New President Charts a Course to the U's Next Century

The UM School of Nursing and Health Studies has long been a hub for research and service throughout the Americas and beyond, particularly in the areas of improving patient safety and reducing health disparities. During his first few weeks in office, UM President Julio Frenk announced his plans to build on this expertise—as well as on the strengths of the Miller School of Medicine and UHealth-University of Miami Health System—to establish the University as an academic health model throughout the hemisphere and world.

“This is the most intense period of change in the U.S. health system since Medicare and Medicaid were approved 50 years ago,” he said during a September 10 Town Hall Meeting at the BankUnited Center. “The big paradigm shift is that we’re moving from a system that rewards volume to one that rewards value. I am working very, very closely with the leadership of the health-related schools and UHealth to make sure we take advantage of this historic opportunity to lead the way in this period of amazing transformation.”

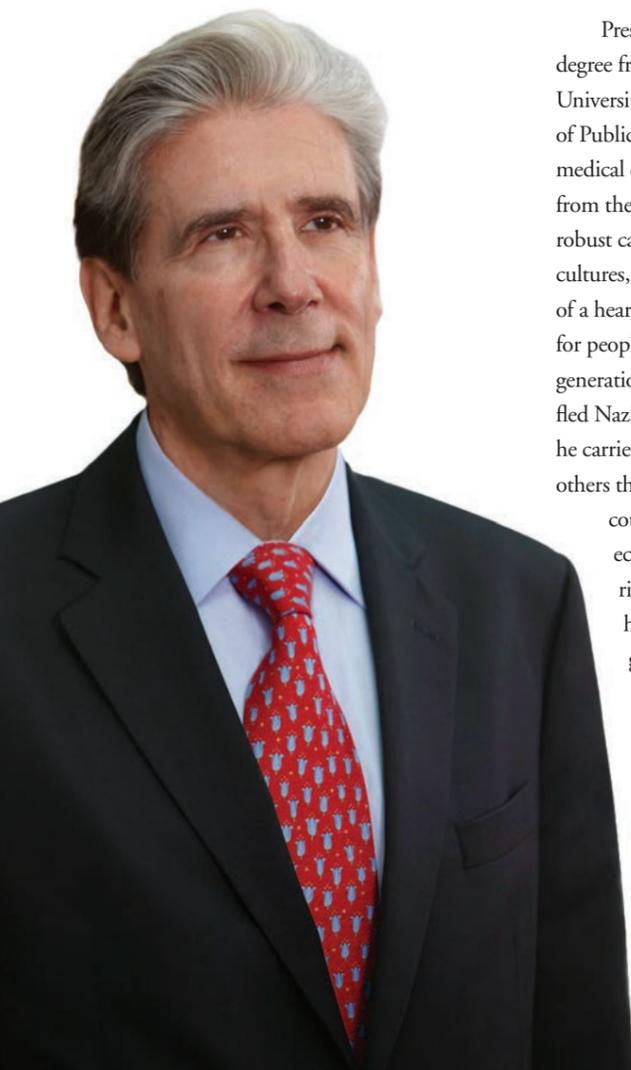
Prior to becoming the University of Miami’s sixth president, Frenk served as dean of Harvard’s T.H. Chan School of Public Health since 2009 and minister of health in Mexico from 2000 to 2006. He was the founding director-general of the National Institute of Public Health in Mexico and is responsible for introducing a program of comprehensive universal health insurance in Mexico that brought coverage to more than 50 million previously uninsured people.

President Frenk has high expectations for the University’s journey to its centennial over the next decade. He unveiled his “Roadmap to our New Century” at the Town Hall Meeting, where he also answered questions from audience members and Twitter submissions. The roadmap includes four major aspirations: pursuing excellence in all domains; being relevant to the world’s most pressing problems; serving as a model for values such as diversity and tolerance; and becoming what he calls “a force of integration across our hemisphere,” which means taking advantage of UM’s location in the gateway to the Americas—and as a “connector to the larger world.”

In positioning UM as “the hemispheric university,” President Frenk has the support of his wife, Felicia Knaul, an international health economist and expert on Latin American health systems and social sectors who leads UM’s Miami Institute for the Americas in the College of Arts and Sciences and holds a joint faculty appointment in the Department of Public Health Sciences at the Miller School. By designating his first 100 days in office as a “listening exercise,” the president welcomes input from students, faculty, and staff, which they can share online at [miami.edu/listen](http://miami.edu/listen).

President Frenk, who holds a medical degree from the National Autonomous University of Mexico, as well as a Master of Public Health and a joint doctorate in medical care organization and in sociology from the University of Michigan, built a robust career by intersecting countries and cultures, programs and policies—all part of a heartfelt mission to make a difference for people around the world. A fourth-generation physician whose grandparents fled Nazi Germany and settled in Mexico, he carries a deep benevolence toward others that stems from his gratitude to a country that “was much poorer in economic resources but much richer in tolerance for diversity,” he says. “Sometimes it’s the generosity of strangers that actually gives you the chance to live. Appreciating that the contingency of my own life is owed so much to so many people I will never meet is something that keeps me connected to every human being.”

“Appreciating that the contingency of my own life is owed so much to so many people I will never meet is something that keeps me connected to every human being.”



## New Assistant Dean Is at Home at the U

Sean Kilpatrick, A.B. '06, M.S.Ed. '09, has been a well-known fixture on campus for more than a decade. After earning his undergraduate degree in psychology and criminology, the Naples, Florida native became an academic advisor in the Undergraduate Academic Services for Psychology (UASP) office while pursuing his graduate degree. He then served as director of UASP, overseeing academic affairs for 1,000 psychology and neuroscience majors in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Now Kilpatrick is assistant dean for student and postgraduate support services at the School of Nursing and Health Studies. He was drawn to the school because “it’s at the forefront of innovation on the UM campus, from the plans for the new Simulation Hospital to the development and expansion of new and existing degree programs.” His vast, holistic view of the UM student experience and extensive institutional knowledge make him a perfect fit for the post.

And when Kilpatrick finishes the workday, his campus immersion continues at home. He lives in Hecht Residential College with his wife, Susan Leary, whom he met freshman year and who serves as associate faculty master.

“My wife is a lecturer in the English Composition program and also did her undergraduate and graduate work at UM, so we are both 100 percent true ‘Canes,” says Kilpatrick, who helps Leary implement activities to bridge academic and social life in the dorm.

Together with Ellie, their 10-year-old Soft-coated Wheaten Terrier, they are a UM family, and their door is always open.

“We learn about the students’ needs and concerns, and host dinners as well as other activities in our apartment,” says Kilpatrick. “Last year we had approximately 150 events. I’m very proud that I went to school here, live here, and have an opportunity to work and grow as a professional here. UM is my home.”

Kilpatrick’s expertise in higher education administration and enrollment management guides his approach to helping UM nursing and health studies students become leaders in health care. He aims to create an office of support services that will guide students on a successful trajectory through academic programs—from recruitment to retention to graduation and beyond. Whether helping students overcome obstacles, clarify their career goals, or see themselves as future leaders, researchers, and teachers, Kilpatrick’s goal is “to be recognized as the best student services office on campus.”



## Root Cause Analysis Added to Interprofessional Patient Safety Course

The SONHS and Miller School of Medicine joined forces again to offer the third annual Interprofessional Education Summer Patient Safety Course. The innovative program combines technology, simulation,

and the arts to deliver a transformative learning experience. Working in teams, nursing and medical students hone their interprofessional communication, diagnostic, and intervention skills through diverse activities that culminate in a “Simulation Olympics” competition. The students divide their time between the SONHS, the Gordon Center for Research in Medical Education, and the UM/Jackson Memorial Hospital Center for Patient Safety.

New this year was a team exercise in which students performed a root cause analysis of a patient safety violation scenario. As part of this risk-management tool, students created videos of themselves role-playing members of interprofessional health care teams, reconstructing events leading to the violation and brainstorming strategies to prevent adverse incidents.

“We’re excited to continue collaborating with our University and community partners to educate a new generation of health care professionals,” says Mary McKay, B.S.N. '88, D.N.P. '10, associate dean for nursing undergraduate programs, who coordinated the course for the SONHS. “They will be well prepared to work in interprofessional teams to provide safe services to our communities.”



## Understanding Overtown

A group of Accelerated B.S.N. students stands in the shade of Overtown's renowned Lyric Theater, fortified against the Miami sun with bottles of ice-cold water. Before long, Timothy Barber, executive director of the Black Archives History and Research Foundation of South Florida, leads them on a two-hour walking tour into the heart and soul of the community.

At the Lyric, one of the oldest historically black theaters in the United States, the students hear about legendary artists who once performed there, such as Ethel Waters and Aretha Franklin, and discover that Overtown was once an economic and arts hub. But the very real hurdles today's residents face appear when Barber leads the students down a main commercial street, with boarded-up storefronts, run-down apartment buildings, and neglected parks.

"We saw many homeless people with their carts full of belongings," says tour participant Nikkita Saunders, B.S.N. '15.

The students observe the lack of places to buy affordable, healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables and the implications for obesity, diabetes mellitus, and other health conditions. Instead of a major supermarket, there's a convenience store selling snack foods and places to buy BBQ wings and ice cream.

"Not having access to healthy food options will affect the health of the community as a whole," notes Kristin Applegate, B.S.N. '15. "And limited public transportation means they can't get to the big supermarkets."

The students also see signs of hope—a park offering sports and play spaces, a church undergoing renovation, and revitalization efforts led by the Black Archives.

By the tour's end, they've started to understand Overtown's needs as well as its potential. The Overtown tours are the brainchild of Jessica Williams, SONHS assistant professor who teaches Population-Focused Nursing.

"Students in the course have to conduct a community assessment to help them design and carry out a health fair for the residents, but previous students told us it was difficult to gain an understanding of Overtown's needs," says Williams, who approached Barber to customize a tour with a focus on public health. "The tours have been so successful that we're envisioning similar tours in other neighborhoods where our students are doing clinical placements, such as West Coconut Grove, Wynwood, and North Miami. The tours can be a model for other courses, so that in the future all clinical placements might begin with an immersion in the history and culture of the community our students will be serving."

The students on this Overtown tour gained valuable insight that reflected their concern as well as their optimism.

"We learned about the past," Saunders says, "but the most rewarding part of the tour was to know that Overtown has a future."



Miami's historic Overtown region was once an economic and arts hub.

An organized tour through Overtown helps nursing students better serve the community's needs.



## Beta Tau Branches Out

It was a packed house at the May 2015 induction ceremony for the newest members of the University of Miami's Beta Tau chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI), the invitation-only nursing honor society, active in more than 200 countries. Criteria for membership include excellence in scholarship at the student or faculty level, or exceptional achievements as professional nurse leaders.

"I'm a proud 'Cane, so being inducted into the UM chapter is a real honor," says Frederic Bernerd B.S.N. '13, who was inducted in 2013 and will represent Beta Tau at the STTI's 2015 convention in Las Vegas. "It's an acknowledgement of my dedication to nursing."

As president from 2013 to 2015 of Beta Tau, the only STTI chapter in South Florida, SONHS Associate Professor Rosina Cianelli grew the chapter from 100 to 500 dues-paying members and expanded membership to include other institutions throughout South Florida. She also reactivated Beta Tau's Ph.D. Dissertation Research Award and D.N.P. Capstone Award, which provide students with funding for scientific and practice initiatives.

Beta Tau's current president, Assistant Professor Mary Hooshmand, Ph.D. '10, aims to continue increasing membership, along with putting the chapter's Distinguished Lecture Series online so it's more accessible and expanding the reach of the Scholarly Activities Committee to connect

Beta Tau to the school's existing research studies. Student members are helping to drive growth.

"They're making sure the chapter is using today's technology to facilitate communication among members through social media," says Hooshmand. "Thanks to our student members' efforts, we now have an active presence on Facebook and LinkedIn, and they constantly post on our Twitter feed."

Beta Tau also has a service component, which has grown under the leadership of Kenya Snowden, M.S.N. '00, D.N.P. '12, and Deborah Salani, B.S.N. '86, M.S.N. '89, D.N.P. '13, who serve as community service chair and co-chair, respectively. Back-to-school supply drives, Christmas toy campaigns, and Thanksgiving meal deliveries all benefit local families.

It's a commitment to the service component of our profession," says Snowden. "Our 'Hearts for Haiti' Valentine's project raised money to buy glucometers, blood pressure cuffs, and other supplies for the school's Haiti missions. We also collected clothing and personal care items such as toothbrushes, soap, and sunscreen for local homeless shelters."

Beta Tau, which celebrated its 40th anniversary last year, is primed for exciting new endeavors that build on its legacy of research, education, and service. For faculty members and alumni, says Cianelli, "it's a way of paying it forward to the next generation of nurses. If we don't do it, who will?"

## New Minor in Health Communication

The School of Nursing and Health Studies and the School of Communication are jointly offering a Minor in Health Communication, open to students throughout the University. Health communication involves creating and disseminating health promotional information to improve the public's health literacy and personal health choices.

"Health communication links public health and communication studies, journalism, advertising, and public relations," explains Martin Zdanowicz, SONHS associate dean for health studies and professor of clinical. "The health communication students of today will be the researchers, scholars, practitioners, communications managers, and health and science journalists of tomorrow."

The 15-credit minor consists of core classes, as well as six communication studies credits and three public health credits students can choose from a list of course options. For information, contact the SONHS Office of Student Services at 305-284-4325.



## Preceptor Prepares ACNP Students to Be Decision-Makers

Every day at Ft. Lauderdale's Holy Cross Hospital, acute care M.S.N. students from the School of Nursing and Health Studies perform lifesaving procedures on critically ill patients under the preceptorship of Edward Coopersmith, M.D., co-director of the hospital's intensivist program. Working closely with their mentor as they hone their skills, the students look for signs that patients are in trouble, such as pulmonary edema, pulmonary embolism, low platelets, and septic shock.

Coopersmith, a pulmonologist and internal medicine physician, is on a mission to turn the students into active health care decision-makers. He encourages them to be "obsessed" with the details of each patient in order to become highly skilled diagnosticians.

"They're transitioning from being critical care nurses who take orders to ones who give orders," Coopersmith says. "They're learning to make informed choices, like whether to put a patient on a respirator, and they're practicing critical skills, learning how to intubate, how to place an arterial line. I tell them one day they will be the educators."

Under mentorship, students work as part of interdisciplinary teams in 12-hour shifts that mirror the work they'll do as future ARNPs. Their days begin with morning rounds, as Coopersmith

leads the team of nurse practitioners, physicians, case manager, clinical nurse specialist, and respiratory therapist through the three ICUs.

"Interprofessional communication is essential in critical care," says Coopersmith. "We work as a team. We see the patients together and decide what to do."

Two recent graduates of the Acute Care Nurse Practitioner program, Ashley Berg, M.S.N. '15, and Kysha Cerisier, M.S.N. '15, describe their clinical practice experience with Coopersmith in glowing terms. "He inspires trust in his patients, and challenges us as students to back up our decisions with evidence," says Cerisier. Berg adds, "He has fostered my confidence and abilities as a critical care provider."

Coopersmith, who attended the University of Miami before moving to Spain for medical school, says he takes the time from his busy schedule to mentor SONHS students because "the

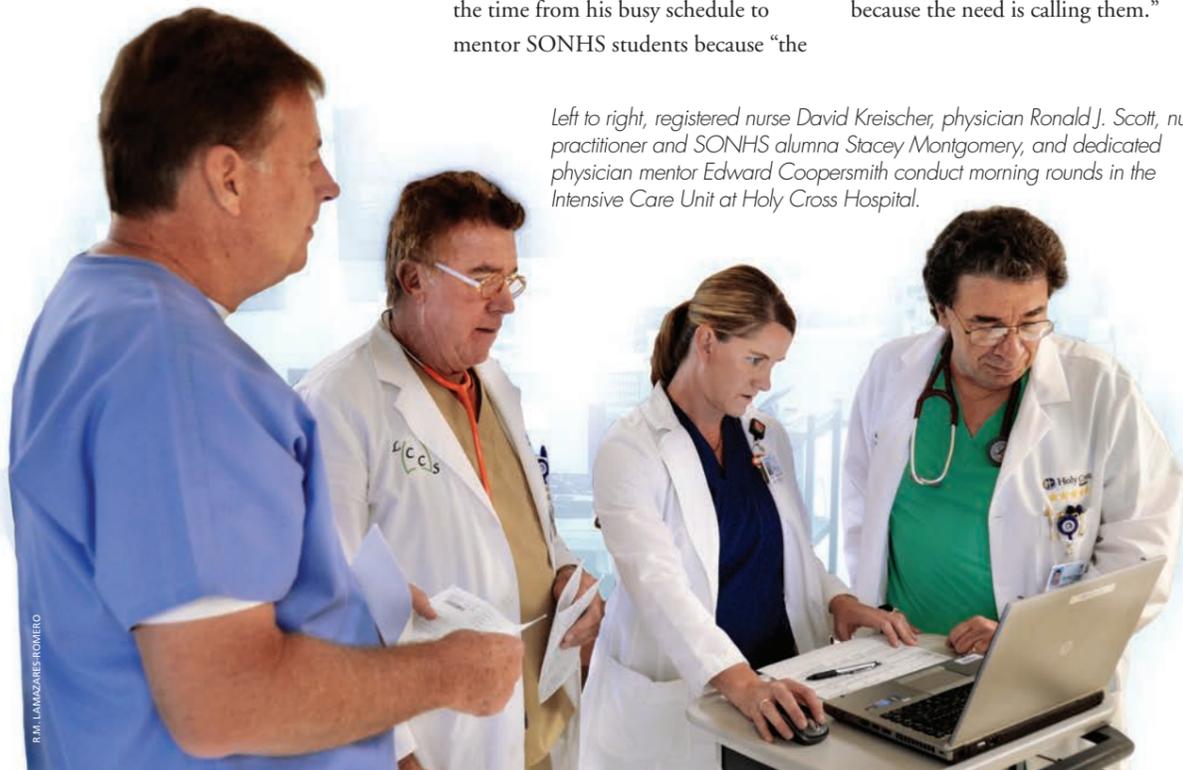
acute care nurse practitioner will be on the front lines of the new health care environment. Critical care is a challenging, exciting science. There's a celebration of life every time we're successful."

"Given the dynamics of today's critical care environment and increased complexity of patients, the ability to give our acute care students a clinical practice experience learning directly from a professional as dedicated and accomplished as Dr. Coopersmith is invaluable," says Johis Ortega, B.S.N. '02, M.S.N. '06, Ph.D. '11, associate dean for master's programs and global initiatives.

Coopersmith recently hired two SONHS graduates who completed their clinical placements under his preceptorship, Jaycee Brown, M.S.N. '14, and Stacey Montgomery, M.S.N. '14, because they met his stringent criteria for joining his team.

"I look for intelligence and personality because it's a tough job," he says. "They have to become diagnosticians, handle life-or-death emergencies, make immediate decisions, and deal with the families. They go into nursing because the need is calling them."

Left to right, registered nurse David Kreisler, physician Ronald J. Scott, nurse practitioner and SONHS alumna Stacey Montgomery, and dedicated physician mentor Edward Coopersmith conduct morning rounds in the Intensive Care Unit at Holy Cross Hospital.



## New Pipeline for Advanced Practice Mental Health Nursing

One in four American adults experiences some form of mental illness each year. That's a lot of people—about 61 million, in fact—needing care and treatment. The School of Nursing and Health Studies recently introduced a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Post-Master's Certificate Program, a vital pipeline for advanced practice nurses to pursue this in-demand specialization.



"Students who enter the program are already master's level family or adult nurse practitioners and are seeing patients who present with complex health and mental health issues," says Tony Roberson, program director and associate professor. "We prepare the advanced practice nurse to treat these patients in their practice."

As the only post-master's certificate program of its kind in South Florida, the three-semester, full-time program has a distance-learning component that's ideal for nursing professionals with work and

family obligations.

"This program is a hybrid that allows students to complete most of their didactic work online," explains Vice Dean and Professor Doris Ugarriza, M.S.N. '82, "but it also offers many opportunities for them to interact with faculty, preceptors, and each other, both in person and online."

Students take three didactic and two clinical courses comprising more than 500 hours of clinical content. They also complete 500 preceptorship hours, where they gain competencies in medication intervention and individual, group, and family therapy. They meet weekly online and visit campus twice per semester to take exams and participate in one-day seminars. As early as the first week of their clinical placements, students begin working with inpatient and outpatient populations across the lifespan in hospitals, community mental health centers, and other settings.

"You have to hit the ground running," says program participant Grace-Anne Stimpson, B.S.N. '12, who is learning to intervene quickly in emergency situations in the UM/Jackson Crisis Unit, where she works with Baker Act patients who need immediate psychiatric assessment. "By the second week, I was interviewing patients under the supervision of my preceptor. She helps to guide my thinking."

Upon completion of the program, some students will work in specialized mental health or other community settings. Others will return to private practice, now equipped to provide a full range of primary mental health care services to their patients.

## SONHS Named Hispanic-Serving Health Professions School

For its commitment to academic excellence and equitable well-being for diverse populations, including the Hispanic community, the School of Nursing and Health Studies became only the second school of nursing named a member of the Hispanic-Serving Health Professions Schools (HSHPS). HSHPS members must be accredited schools or colleges of nursing, public health, pharmacy, medicine or dentistry, and must have demonstrated commitment to increasing the Hispanic health workforce to serve and promote the health of Hispanics.

Through its HSHPS membership, the school now has access to professional development workshops, student mentorship programs for Hispanic health research, the Hispanic Health Services Research Scholar Award, graduate fellowship training programs targeting Hispanics, and other opportunities offered in collaboration with HSHPS national partners.

"I am extremely proud that our program has been recognized as a member of the HSHPS," says Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano. "Our student population is the most diverse in school history, so this is a timely achievement that reflects our commitment to enhancing excellence and diversity in our program."



## B.S.N. and Master's Students Provide Health Care in the Dominican Republic

### School of Nursing and Health

**Studies** FNP student Tiffany Chiu is observing a medical student as he surveys the hand-rigged electrical connections that draw municipal electricity from house to house along a street in Santiago, Dominican Republic (D.R.), making sure the wires leading into and throughout the patient's home are sound. Chiu then helps inspect the yard for the standing water that can attract dengue-carrying mosquitoes. These are just two of the health and safety items they assess in the small house their patient shares with eight family members.

It's an eye-opening experience for Chiu, who is learning about the role of health care professionals in the nation. "It's a major contrast between our two countries' approaches to patient care," says Chiu. "In the U.S., we always see our patients in the hospital setting, and we don't know how their home environment might be affecting their health. It really helped to see the whole picture."

A group of the school's master's and bachelor's-level students traveled to the D.R. in June to provide health care services in hospitals, clinics, and communities. Graduate students accompanied medical residents and doctors on patient rounds, rotated through internal medicine, pediatrics, and emergency consults, and conducted home visits.

"It's a completely different experience in the emergency department, with no triage, electronic patient records, or wristbands to identify patients," notes Chiu. "We had to work with what we had, and that was a lesson in humility. It made me appreciate things I take for granted, like gloves and soap, which are precious commodities in a limited-resource hospital."

The trip was also the first time SONHS graduate and undergraduate students worked as a team in an international setting. B.S.N. students conducted initial screenings and presented the information to advanced students, who then diagnosed and treated the patients. Such teamwork reflects real-world health care settings in the U.S.

"One of the most valuable gifts we can give our students is access to a global health care experience," says Associate Dean for Master's Programs and Global Initiatives Johis Ortega, B.S.N. '02, M.S.N. '06, Ph.D. '11, who accompanied the students as a faculty supervisor, along with Assistant Professor Juan Gonzalez.

"Our students observe that the role of nurses in the D.R. is less developed than in the U.S., and they learn to appreciate the leadership role nurses are playing in transforming our nation's health care landscape," Gonzalez says. "At the same time, when they are seen performing independently during these trips, they help to model a new role for nurses and stimulate the growth of the nursing profession in Latin America."



## Discovering Nursing through Public Health

**Like many 17-year-olds**, Sarah Downs, B.S.P.H. '15, graduated from high school with a variety of interests, as yet uncertain where her career focus should be. Her mother, a nurse practitioner, instilled in her an interest in medicine, while her father fostered a love of music. She chose to explore these diverse interests at the University of Miami, which has world-class music, nursing, and medical schools. "I felt it was good exposure for me," she says.

By the end of her sophomore year, Downs decided to keep music as a hobby—she is a soprano who loves to sing opera—and pursue a degree in public health.

"Public health was a new major at the University—and when I looked at the coursework involved, I liked it," she says. "I feel it's more a social application of health care that combines research with an understanding of the psychology of the population with an overall goal to help society. For example, there's a course in epidemiology, but there's also a course that looks at how the environment affects the population."

As it turns out, a number of nursing courses are included in the public health curriculum, and by the time Downs finished her requirements for a bachelor's degree in public health, her career path became clear. She was destined to follow in her mother's footsteps and become a nurse.

Upon completing her B.S.P.H. degree, Downs immediately applied for and was accepted into the one-year Accelerated B.S.N. program at the SONHS.

"I had a very good experience as an undergraduate at the University of Miami, and I'm happy to continue my education here," she says.

Downs believes public health and nursing are complementary fields of study. "My B.S.P.H. curriculum taught me about populations and how to improve health via targeted interventions, while my nursing classes thus far are focusing on the individual and allowing me to provide hands-on care to patients," she says. "While there is an obvious connection between the two—both are grounded on improving health—understanding the individual is key to helping the many and vice versa."

She considers her public health education to be a strong foundation for her nursing career, particularly in developing her communication with patients. "I also feel that with my B.S.P.H., I learned valuable health-oriented teaching skills," she says, "which is an integral facet of nursing as well, where we not only treat patients but also help them learn how to better themselves."

What does the future hold? The 21-year-old Connecticut native says she may pursue a master's degree and is considering a career as a nurse anesthetist, but for now, she will concentrate on completing her B.S.N.

"I like to take things a step at a time and focus on the now," she says.



# Disparities Research Goes Global

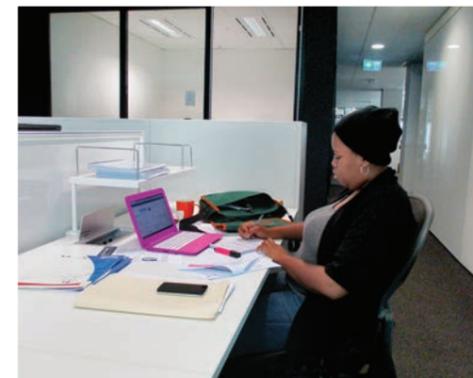
By Maria Padron

Ten undergraduates spent a transformational summer in a program that steers minority students to scientific careers.

**On a balmy June afternoon**, as her friends and classmates back in Miami were working summer jobs or basking in the Florida sun, Alexa Parra found herself on a street corner in Santiago, Chile, interviewing a commercial sex worker. Seven thousand miles across the ocean, fellow UM student Mikayla Farr had just spent a grueling day documenting all identifiable health assets on the sprawling campus of Universidad de Alicante, in Spain. Meanwhile, it was the middle of the night a hemisphere away in Melbourne, Australia, but Ariel Smith was not asleep. After participating in a Web conference with Australian aborigines the previous afternoon, the UM senior lay awake, pondering the unjust living conditions and health disparities she learned are affecting Australia's indigenous populations.

These three student researchers are among ten School of Nursing and Health Studies undergraduates who participated in the 2015 Global Health Disparities Research Experience, an opportunity meant to steer minority undergraduates toward health disparities research careers. The experience is part of the school's commitment to a national mandate to diversify the scientific workforce—a crucial step toward achieving health equity in the 21st century.

Evidence shows that when studying a population's health care needs, it's helpful for those running the study to be of the same ethnicity and race as the research participants. Scientists who come from backgrounds different than the groups they study often encounter cultural and language barriers, as well as bias and trust issues, that can hinder research projects. Projections indicate that by 2043, the majority of the U.S. populace will consist of people of color, and yet the demographics of the health care scientist population do not mirror this reality.



## Disparities 'Down Under'

"Simply put, U.S. colleges and universities have traditionally not done a good job of providing undergraduate black, Hispanic, and other minority students with experiences that expose them to careers in research," explains Assistant Professor Rosa Gonzalez-Guarda, Ph.D. '08, principal investigator of the National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIH/NIMHD) training grant\* that funded the project. "So in partnership with the NIH/NIMHD and our global partner universities in Australia, Chile, the Dominican Republic, and Spain, we designed this summer experience to address that gap."

Participants in the Global Health Disparities Research Experience were required to be upcoming juniors or seniors in any SONHS undergraduate degree program and from a group that's underrepresented among health sciences researchers. As part of the selection process, they submitted essays and participated in oral interviews. The initial phase consisted of a three-week "research institute" that prepared them culturally and academically to spend eight weeks at a foreign research site. When the students returned from abroad, they spent an additional week debriefing from their experiences and participating in career-building activities. Students who completed the experience received three academic credits.

*Heartbeat* interviews with returning students revealed that spending the summer dispersed across four countries and three continents strengthened the students' research skills and deepened their understanding of what it means to pursue a career as a health scientist.

Ariel Smith, Crystal Jackson, and Imari Daniels spent eight weeks under the mentorship of senior faculty scientists at Australian Catholic University (ACU). Jackson and Smith, both on track to receive their Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees in spring 2016, were partnered with scientists Simon Stewart and David Thompson on a study aimed at improving health care access and equity to reduce cardiovascular risk among Australian aborigines. Smith was assigned to recruit study participants at Western Hospital in Melbourne.

"I had to interview potential subjects to make sure they met study criteria," she explains. "I really learned how the process of recruitment works in a major research study."

Not so interesting was the tedious process of inputting study data.

"Basically we had 900 aboriginal patients' home addresses, as well as the names of the hospitals where they were assigned to receive treatment," Smith continues. "We had to create maps and plot out the distance from their homes to the hospitals and their general practitioner's offices, to see if distance from providers is a factor that is limiting their access to health care. This was grueling work so we got to see the unexciting side of a researcher's life."

Jackson agrees that working with the data sets was painfully meticulous, but seeing the finished product, with its implications for identifying access to care issues, was rewarding.

"As a black American girl traveling to a foreign country on the other side of the world, I did not know what to expect," says Jackson. "Then I met my foreign mentor, Professor Stewart, who is an inspiration to me as a nursing student because he has

contributed so much to the science of health disparities. I almost fainted when this world-renowned scientist told me he will make me lead author on a paper and will help me get it published in the reputable *European Journal of Cardiology*."

Daniels, a public health major, assisted her ACU mentor, Sandra Jones, on a study exploring connections between alcohol consumption, domestic violence, and socioeconomic status in Australia.

"I grew up in an African-American single-parent household," says Daniels, sharing how her own experiences led to an interest in public health. "My mother suffered from a stroke at the age of 30. Then, in my first year of college, I lost my godfather and pastor to a stroke. Factors like low medication adherence, gender roles due to cultural norms, and stress contributed to his early death at the age of 50. Understanding why health disparities happen does not necessarily require quantitative data as evidence in my case because disparities are part of my lived reality. By participating in the Global Health Disparities Research Experience, I gained insight on how to prevent differences in the burden of disease based on social injustices."

Daniels, Jackson, and Smith all draw parallels between their observations of health inequities in the Australian aborigine populations they studied and the struggles of African-Americans in the United States.

"I had no idea there was anywhere a group so similar to my own in history of racism and discrimination," Jackson says. "It's kind of impactful to see how the struggles of minorities are universal."

## Assets and Inequities in Spain

Similar to Daniels, Mikayla Farr is a public health major who also has witnessed health disparities firsthand.

"I worked at an Italian restaurant while still applying to colleges," Farr recounts. "One of my co-workers and I became close. He was one of the sweetest persons I'd ever known, but he was also a walking poster for what's wrong with the existing health care system in terms of disparities. Like me, he was African-American, and he died of AIDS at the age of 25. That didn't have to happen."

Farr initially came to UM as a broadcast journalism major. Then, while doing research for an Afro studies class, she accessed data on the bleak picture of health for African-American women in the U.S.

"The statistics regarding health risks for women just like me, from obesity and other conditions that disproportionately affect black Americans, were truly alarming," she says. "I distinctly remember sitting in my dorm room and bursting into tears."

Inspired by her new awareness, Farr switched her major to public health. She calls the Global Health Disparities Research Experience "the perfect marriage of furthering my knowledge of public health science and the Spanish language with my desire to study abroad."

At Universidad de Alicante in Spain, Farr worked with internationally recognized health care researcher Jose Ramon Martinez-Riera on a campus-wide health promotion campaign called Universidad Saludable (Healthy University). Her role was to document all of the campus's physical health assets. To complete this task, Farr used her mentor's golf cart to visit each *facultad*, or school, noting which buildings had air-conditioning, water fountains, security cameras, outdoor sprinklers and botanical gardens, information points (to promote connectedness), a lake running

route, exercise zones with equipment, and even trash and recycling cans (since environmental health is also important). Less obvious health resources such as museums—for cultural stimulation—also were documented on the map she helped create with her mentor.

"Compared to this approach, I realized that in the U.S. we are very reactive rather than proactive when it comes to health," Farr says. "It would be great to reach a point in my career where I can implement what I learned in Spain to help transform the concept of health promotion here in the U.S. at a population level."

Erika Redding, a double public health and international studies major who also was assigned to Universidad de Alicante, helped her designated foreign mentor, Maria Teresa Ruiz Cantero, conduct research on gender inequality and intimate partner violence incidence in Spain.

"I had to collect data about the homicide rate in Spain," she says, "and then I worked with a senior epidemiologist who reviewed the information with me and showed me different relationships between the data I had collected. That was the first time I got to see the process of data analysis in action at a research study-level."



\*Funding for this program was made possible by NIH/NIMHD Grant No. T37MD008647. The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services or the U.S. Government.

## Needs Assessment in Chile

Alexa Parra didn't have to travel away from home to grasp the severity of the problem of health disparities. "Growing up in Hialeah, Florida, in a predominantly Hispanic, low-income neighborhood, I saw for myself the health-detrimental consequences of absence of health education and lack of health care accessibility," she says.

Motivated to pursue a career that would give her a platform to challenge health inequalities, Parra is today a double nursing and public health major. In her application interview for the Global Health Disparities Research Experience, she described her participation in a Center for AIDS Research-funded internship, working with HIV-positive patients in the summer of 2014 and how this experience engendered a special interest in HIV-afflicted groups.

"I interacted with patients who were the products of poor public health education," she explains. "I was impressed by their resiliency in managing both a severe disease and the prejudices placed on them socially and economically."

In what she describes as a "a perfect fit" for her interests, Parra was assigned to Pontificia Universidad Catolica in Chile, under the mentorship of one of the country's leading scientists in HIV research, Lilian Ferrer. Parra worked on a study that examined the experiences of sex workers on the streets of Chile.

"I got to interview potential research subjects," Parra says. "It was extremely interesting. I learned things about commercial sex workers' lifestyles that I never would have guessed from just reading about the topic."

At neighboring Universidad Andres

Bello (UAB) School of Nursing, also in Santiago, Parra's fellow nursing students Weslin Roldan and Alex Perez conducted their research with another vulnerable population: Chile's economically disadvantaged elderly. Roldan and Perez, who are part of two groups underrepresented in nursing—males and Hispanics, worked closely with faculty scientists to analyze relationships between social capital, well-being, happiness, and health care of older adults. They interviewed low-socioeconomic-status elderly subjects in the picturesque Chilean seaport town of Valparaiso.

"One interesting finding was that these at-risk elderly are not attending the social assistance groups and not accessing the health care resources that the government has set up for them in the city because they prefer to stay within their own rural

community," Roldan says. "In other words, the policymakers created the system before conducting a needs assessment to find out what the population really needed. This is a great lesson that is applicable to my future in health care, and I will not forget it."

In what seems to be a common sentiment among all students who participated in this experience, Perez adds, "In the beginning, I was intimidated to be interacting with world-famous researchers, and did not say much. Our mentors, though, really involved us as part of their scientific teams. They even encouraged us to formulate our own free-standing research questions with the collected data sets. By the end of the eight weeks, I wasn't afraid to ask questions. I think giving us that ease in thinking of ourselves as health care professionals and scientists is one goal of this program—and it was accomplished!"

Medrano and Zahira Quinones on the connection between cardiometabolic factors and "frailty syndrome" in the elderly, as well as the epidemiology of diabetes mellitus in the D.R.

"The focus of my summer research experience was especially appealing considering my personal history as a Latina female," Ramirez explains. "Both sets of my grandparents, and my father, have battled heart disease. I am aware of the relationships between ethnic background, health, and cultural acceptance of seeking care. I wanted to learn more about the correlations between ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, and health and disease."

## Continuing the Path

The Global Health Disparities Research Experience did not end once students returned from their foreign research sites. During the weeklong dissemination phase, students discussed their preliminary findings and conducted a poster presentation attended by faculty, staff, and students at the school. Beyond the opportunity to present and publish their scientific results, participating students gained another reward—clarity about career and advanced education options.

"We hypothesized that the global summer research program would increase the participating students' interest in pursuing scientific careers in health care, as well as their chances of getting into graduate schools," says Gonzalez-Guarda. "Early indications are very promising in terms of both of these aims. Students will be followed for a five-year period to evaluate their professional trajectories, especially as they relate to the pursuit of advanced degrees and health disparities research."

## Cultural Competence in the D.R.

Dominique Hardy and Jazmin Ramirez completed their Global Health Disparities Research Experience at Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra in the Dominican Republic (PUCMM). Hardy, a microbiology major with a minor in public health, sought the D.R. placement for the same reason she came to school at UM.

"I wanted to delve into the Latino culture, practice my Spanish, and become culturally competent," Hardy says. "As an African-American woman living in the U.S., it was interesting for me to participate in studies of hypertension and other health conditions with disparity populations in the Dominican Republic. I see now that health disparities are not only a problem in the U.S. but around the world."

Hardy and Ramirez worked with PUCMM faculty scientists Martin

## FLORIDA BLUE SUPPORTS SUMMER SCIENCE AT THE U

This summer, while ten UM nursing and public health students were overseas for the Global Health Disparities Research Experience, another six students from groups underrepresented in nursing science were mentored by some of the brightest research minds at the School of Nursing and Health Studies.

Funded by a three-year grant from the Florida Blue Foundation, undergraduate nursing students from the South Florida community worked with SONHS senior faculty scientists on topics such as a home health nurse-led intervention with substance-abusing mothers, HIV testing in victims of domestic violence, and a trial of a promising video-game-based program to reduce teen Latina sexual behavior

and pregnancy. At the conclusion of the program, each student designed and presented a scientific poster displaying results of the experience, just as real-world scientists do at professional conferences worldwide.

"Among the obstacles that minority nursing students face in pursuing their doctoral education are limited access to suitable mentors, economic barriers, and lack of exposure to undergraduate research experiences," says Assistant Professor Rosa Gonzalez-Guarda, Ph.D. '08, principal investigator of the project, who mentored one of the summer scholars on her human trafficking study. "This program addresses all three of those barriers."

Monika Cintulova, a student at Miami Dade College

Benjamin León School of Nursing, spent her summer helping SONHS Associate Professor Joseph De Santis transcribe and organize data collected during his study of the health care needs of transgender women in South Florida. She says the experience exceeded her expectations, and she has since decided to pursue a nursing research career.

"Before I came to UM for this summer research experience, I was considering applying to a master's program after I complete my Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. I didn't know that such a thing existed. Nursing research is the combination of service to humanity and science that I have been seeking, and I am excited about applying to the

School of Nursing and Health Studies' Ph.D. program."

"The support from the Florida Blue Foundation helps us to reach out to a greater number of future nurse scientists at the undergraduate level," says project co-investigator Mary Hooshmand, Ph.D. '10, assistant professor of clinical.

The funded project helps address the Institute of Medicine 2010 *Future of Nursing* report mandate for doubling the number of doctorate-prepared nurses by 2020. The project is among the efforts of South Florida's Education Act Team of the Florida Action Coalition—the driving force for implementing the IOM report's recommendations and transforming health care through nursing in the state.





# Campus Crusaders

By Yolanda Mancilla

**Students and faculty** at the School of Nursing and Health Studies are working every day to address social issues that affect the well-being of various populations, including college students.

**Improving the lives of college students, particularly those at the University of Miami, is a priority for many SONHS faculty and students.**

- *Heartbeat* spoke to three faculty members and a doctoral candidate who are having an immediate, tangible impact on the lives of University of Miami students.
- Their leadership in several campus-based initiatives is helping to prevent sexual assault, improve racial harmony, and curb unhealthy behaviors such as poor eating habits, smoking, and excessive alcohol use.

*Pictured at the top of opposite page from left to right, SONHS faculty members Drs. Jessica Williams, Andrew Porter, and Brian McCabe and Ph.D. candidate Valerie Halstead are extending the service-based nature of the health care professions across campus.*



## CONFRONTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

A nationwide poll reveals that one in five women is sexually assaulted in college and, though less frequently, college-age men are also the victims of sex crimes. In April of 2014 the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault released its report, *Not Alone*, which brought attention to the growing problem of sexual violence on college campuses nationwide. Due in part to the report's call to action, the University of Miami established the President's Coalition on Sexual Violence Prevention and Education. Composed of faculty, administrators, and students, the coalition answered the charge to raise awareness and address concerns about campus sexual assault.

Valerie Halstead, B.S.N. '12, a School of Nursing and Health Studies Ph.D. student, and her advisor, Assistant Professor Jessica Williams, both serve on the coalition. As part of her dissertation, Halstead is reviewing sexual assault screening practices at student health centers in Florida colleges and universities. To deepen her understanding of the subject, she volunteered at the UM Counseling Center, where she helped to revamp the Sexual Assault Response Team (S.A.R.T.) manual. A student in crisis who calls the 24-hour S.A.R.T. hotline reaches a trained advocate who walks her or him through the process of reporting the assault and getting needed health care and counseling. Williams, a violence prevention researcher, leads the coalition's Campus Resource Identification and Program Assessment subcommittee.

"We wanted to know what we're doing well and what areas need improvement," says Williams, "so we created a survey to identify on- and off-campus resources that provide sexual violence prevention, education, and treatment, and compiled a directory that will soon be available on the UM website."

The subcommittee also conducted focus groups to help understand students' views on the issue, use of resources, and perceived needs. Some findings were

encouraging. Students demonstrated ample knowledge about where to seek help in case of an assault. They knew they could call Student Health Services or UM Police, and most were aware of the S.A.R.T. hotline.

However, the focus groups also revealed a disconnect between existing resources and perceptions of what is needed. For example, some students wanted to take self-defense classes but didn't know that UM Police offers this training on a regular basis. The subcommittee realized the need for more awareness of what is available. This understanding served as the impetus for a new website ([miami.edu/ItsOnUs](http://miami.edu/ItsOnUs)) and forthcoming pages on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram—all efforts to get the information about programs and services out to students through social media.

Halstead served on the coalition's Campus Climate subcommittee, which piloted a survey of students' knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes about sexual violence. The University now administers the Campus Climate Survey on a yearly basis to keep up to date on changing perceptions.

"All schools and colleges are being encouraged to promote the survey to their students," Halstead says. "This represents an important University-wide impact that ultimately will help transform how we address sexual violence on campus."

"We're making a concerted effort to examine our policies and procedures," adds Williams, "to ensure we're doing everything possible to address the issue and to meet student needs."

Halstead expects to complete her doctoral degree in 2016 and hopes to continue her work on campus sexual violence through a career in teaching and research at a nursing school. In the meantime, she plans to remain active on the coalition and in other campus-wide activities.

"It's important to provide service to the campus community and not to stay isolated within the school," Halstead says. "Nursing students have their own unique set of skills and knowledge that they can contribute."

## IMPROVING RACE RELATIONS

Assistant Professor of Clinical Andrew Porter also believes that future health care leaders should not remain isolated inside their academic programs. So during the fall semester of 2014, he gave students in his public health class a singular assignment: Observe the #BlackLivesMatter demonstration taking place on the UM campus and record their perceptions of the event.

"I talk about privilege, race, gender, health disparities, and the social determinants underlying poor health in all my public health classes," says Porter. "It's a constant thread. And across all my courses, I think it's important for students to be involved in the community."

Following the December 2014 protest, the students wrote two-page reflections on their experiences. "Some students wrote about why it was important to protest. For others, it was an eye-opening experience just to observe," says Porter.

In February 2015, then-UM President Donna Shalala convened the Presidential Task Force for Addressing Black Students' Concerns. The 28-member task force is "charged with evaluating and assessing programs, resources, and the climate for black students, faculty, and staff on campus." Porter was invited to serve on the initiative after some of his students attended campus town hall meetings and reported that they had a professor who was dedicated to exploring these issues in his classes.

"I was thrilled to receive the nomination because I have a long history of activism around at-risk populations, which is reflected in my research, service, and teaching activities," says Porter. "My service on the task force is a natural extension of these contributions."

Porter served on the subcommittee that created and analyzed a survey of the UM student body to assess the climate



for black students on campus. The group developed actionable items based on its findings, many of which the University will begin implementing next semester. One item of special interest to Porter is the proposal that all faculty, students, and staff engage in cultural humility and diversity training.

"Cultural humility is based on introspection and self-examination," Porter says. "It's an ongoing, lifelong journey of gaining knowledge, creating mutually beneficial relationships, and building understanding."

## FOCUSING ON STUDENT HEALTH

The Rock, located in the heart of the UM Coral Gables campus and home of the iconic "U" statue, is a popular student hangout and picture-taking location. But on April 1, 2015, students visiting The Rock also discovered an opportunity to have their blood pressure and heart rates checked by future nurses enrolled in the SONHS. Meanwhile, UM Student Health Center staff dispensed body fat analyses, nutritional education, and free healthy food, all part of National Nutrition Week. Research Assistant Professor of Nursing Brian McCabe helped to organize the activities, giving action to his belief that nursing and health studies students must engage in the well-being of the entire University community.

McCabe is collaborating with a SONHS student organization, the American Assembly for Men in Nursing, to integrate similar health screenings into numerous Healthy 'Cane Network events across campus. He works closely with the Healthy 'Cane Network to improve student health, especially with respect to substance abuse and mental health issues. He also works with nursing students to evaluate development of the Sleepy 'Canes program, which helps students develop healthier sleep habits.

A researcher at heart, McCabe believes in the power of bringing science to bear on health-promoting interventions. At the Student Health Center, he worked with nurse practitioner graduate Gisel Stark, B.S.N. '03, M.S.N. '06, D.N.P. '13, and health educator Adam Troy to implement a project in which health care providers offered alcohol education to undergraduates based on the results of a brief electronic screening. The pilot study highlighted the need for increased alcohol education.

"Across the country, college students drink more than young people who aren't in college. They often see getting drunk as a rite of passage, and about half of them binge drink," says McCabe. "But less than a third of students with alcohol use disorders get treatment, so early identification of potential problems is essential."

McCabe is developing an even more structured and extensive program of services for the fall 2015 semester. "Offering general health screenings on campus may be an effective way to reach out to many students who wouldn't otherwise seek physical or mental health care," he says. "If the screenings work well, we'll be able to maximize opportunities to help a greater number of UM students by training nursing students to add alcohol and mental health screening to their current activities."

Whether as educators, scientists, or health care professionals, SONHS faculty and students are helping to make a difference in the lives of students across the University.

"We have a strong culture of service here that extends beyond our programs," Porter says. "And one way to fulfill this mission of service is to reach out beyond the walls of the school to provide help, to teach, and to conduct research that benefits the entire campus."

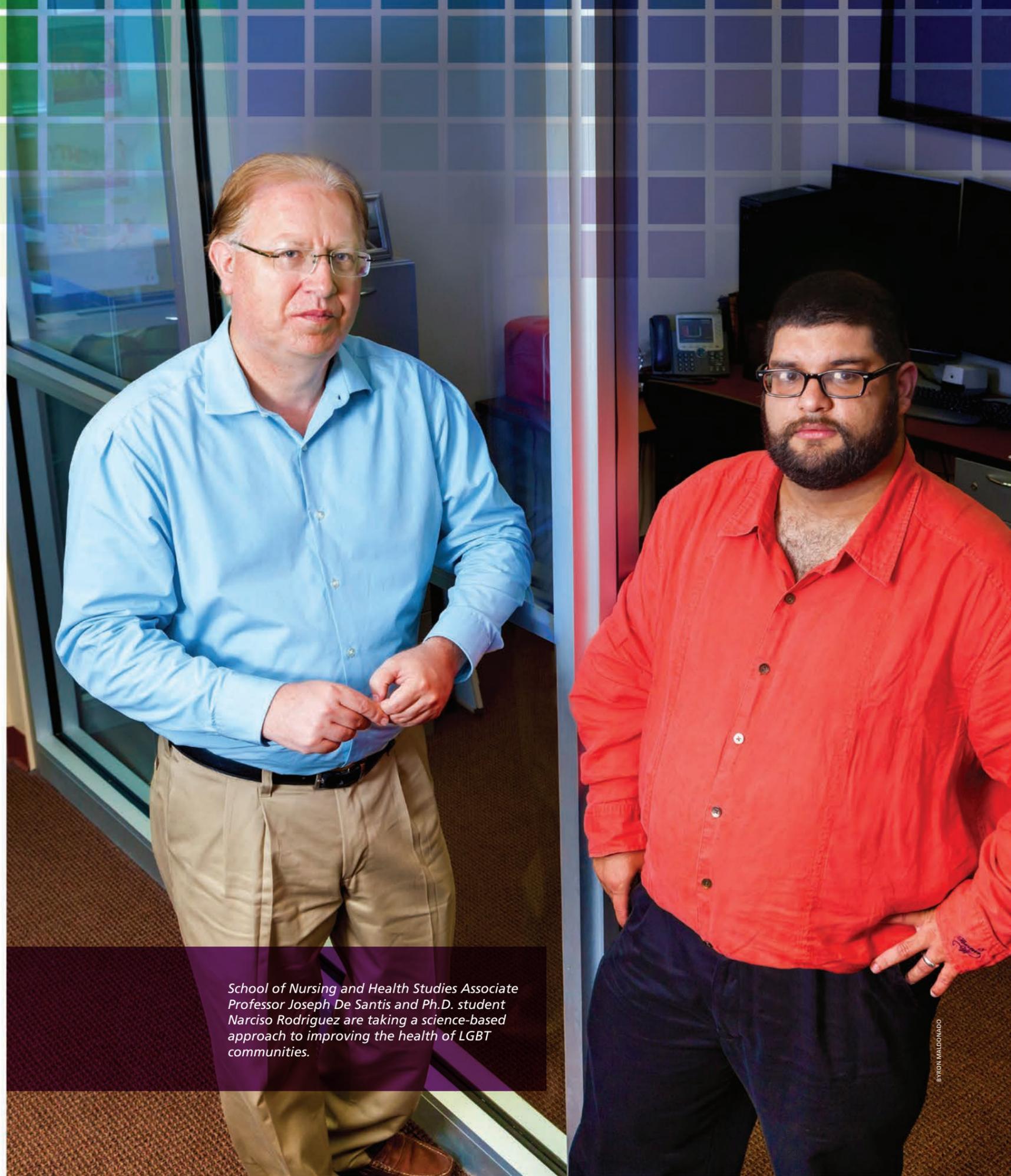
# Opening Doors to **LGBT** Health

By Meredith Camel, M.F.A. '12

SONHS researchers are coming out with much-needed data on problems that plague the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community—an important part of the school's mission to improve the health of all people, no matter what they look like or whom they love.

**“What do I have to look like to flip a damn burger!”**

The exasperated statement is from a transgender woman who endured relentless harassment from coworkers at her fast-food job. She is among 50 transgender women in South Florida that Joseph De Santis, associate professor in the School of Nursing and Health Studies, recruited for a study on health risks that disproportionately affect this population. Funded by the Aqua Foundation for Women, the study assessed everything from depression to drug use, unemployment, sexually transmitted infections, and exposure to violence.



*School of Nursing and Health Studies Associate Professor Joseph De Santis and Ph.D. student Narciso Rodríguez are taking a science-based approach to improving the health of LGBT communities.*

BYRON MALDONADO

“For many of these women, [this study] was the first time they were able to tell their story,” says De Santis, who first witnessed the struggles of the transgender community ten years ago while working at a Miami hospital where transgender patients reported being placed on display and disrespected. De Santis and colleagues addressed the problem by developing a staff sensitivity training program.

percent were fired, not hired, or denied a promotion as a result of being transgender. Long-term unemployment leads many trans women to become commercial sex workers to survive. This increases their risk for sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. With unemployment comes a lack of access to health care and a greater likelihood of sharing needles for hormone injections, which further elevates their risk for HIV

Beyond suicide statistics, awareness of all the disparities LGBT people face remains limited. According to a 2011 report from the Institute of Medicine, “Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals have unique health experiences and needs, but as a nation, we do not know exactly what these experiences and needs are.” The report calls for increased participation of sexual and gender minorities in research. Several School of Nursing and Health Studies faculty, students, and alumni are working with the school’s Center of Excellence for Health Disparities Research: El Centro to fill the knowledge gap and thus improve the health of LGBT people.

## LGB people are more than twice as likely to attempt suicide, and transgender people are more than nine times as likely.

Transgender people, those who identify with a gender that is different from their biological sex, often take steps to align their physical characteristics with how they feel inside. These steps can include changing the way they dress, hormone therapy, and surgery. Testosterone is a powerful hormone; it stimulates facial hair and a deeper voice in females transitioning to males. Estrogen, a female hormone, often cannot completely erase all male attributes, making trans women more vulnerable to discrimination than trans men.

“If one can ‘pass’ as a female, she probably has a better chance of getting employment,” says De Santis, who discovered widespread unemployment among the trans women he interviewed. The findings are consistent with the 2012 National Transgender Discrimination Survey, which reported that 90 percent of 6,450 respondents experienced on-the-job harassment or discrimination, and 47

infection and other diseases. In 2010 De Santis published an article in the *Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care* about a one-day HIV education program he designed for trans women in South Beach.

In-depth interviews with celebrities and advocates like Chaz Bono, Caitlyn Jenner, and Laverne Cox have given the public a better idea of what it means to be transgender, but this visibility has not decreased the vulnerability trans people face as a highly marginalized population. And while lesbian, bisexual, and gay (LGB) people enjoy more civil rights in the United States than ever before, including national legalization of same-sex marriage, negative attitudes toward them persist—contributing to violence, depression, drug and alcohol use, and other health risks. National research shows that LGB people are more than twice as likely to attempt suicide, and transgender people are more than nine times as likely.

## Minorities within a Minority

When it comes to health disparities research in the LGBT community, one size does not fit all. Whether it’s Hispanic gay men or Asian lesbians or black transgender women, there are several subgroups of the LGBT population—each with its own distinct struggles and vulnerabilities.

De Santis’s work with transgender women follows his extensive research on health risks, particularly HIV infection, among Hispanic gay men. Before earning his Ph.D., he was a nurse practitioner caring for children and adolescents with HIV. In his early days as a researcher, he endeavored to study a population that nobody else in nursing had studied. Most of the literature on HIV infection among gay men

addressed white men only, so De Santis wondered if the same risk factors were at play in Hispanic populations.

His curiosity is particularly relevant in Miami-Dade County, which has one of the highest rates of HIV/AIDS in the country, with Hispanic gay men representing the majority of those infected. He discovered that stressors such as ethnic discrimination, cultural assimilation, immigration problems, machismo, peer pressures, economic instability, and a lack of psychosocial support contribute to risky sexual behaviors, substance abuse, and violence among the Hispanic gay men he surveyed. His research is being replicated in El Paso, Texas, which also has a large population of Hispanic gay men.

“People are aware of the risks, but I don’t think they pay too much attention to their mental health,” De Santis says. “I’d like to explore ways to promote awareness of how your mental health affects your sexual risk.”

School of Nursing and Health Studies second-year Ph.D. student Narciso Rodriguez, B.S.N. ’14, is interested in the health nuances of the “bear” population, a category of gay males who are generally large framed and hirsute.

“It’s an interesting dynamic,” explains Rodriguez, who is a member of the bear community. “There are bears who are obese, and that’s considered attractive and celebrated, but we know obesity leads to health issues. I want to find that balance of how they can maintain their identity but also have a healthier life.”

Rodriguez is also curious about mental health issues, access to care, and



Pictured above: LGBTQ members of the Class of 2015 proudly display the rainbow graduation cords they received at the University of Miami's first annual Lavender Celebration.

## EQUALITY IN ACTION

The growing contingent of School of Nursing and Health Studies researchers who address health disparities among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people is one facet of a broad effort at the University of Miami to improve LGBT equality and inclusion. The University created a task force in 2013 to identify and address needs. Several campus resources have been introduced, including a mentorship program that pairs LGBTQ (Q stands for queer or questioning) students with a faculty or staff mentor who is “out” at work; a Lavender Celebration, which celebrates the accomplishments of LGBTQ graduates; and the IBIS (I Believe in Solidarity) Ally Network, a three-hour training session that enlightens faculty, staff, and student participants about the issues LGBTQ students face and how to be a source of trust, encouragement, and guidance. Those who complete the IBIS Ally Network training receive a sticker to display, demonstrating their membership in the network. The UM Alumni Association recently formed an official affinity group for LGBTQ alumni and allies. For more information on these and other LGBTQ initiatives on campus, visit [miami.edu/LGBTQ](http://miami.edu/LGBTQ) or send an email to [LGBTQ@miami.edu](mailto:LGBTQ@miami.edu).



Since its creation in 1978 in San Francisco, the rainbow flag has become a worldwide symbol of pride, hope, and diversity among the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning community.

risky sexual behaviors among bears. Whether it's at Bear Pride in Chicago, Bear Week in Provincetown, Massachusetts, or similar events taking place nationwide, being part of a community (with its own bear flag, no less) brings great comfort to those who don't identify with the stereotypical image of gay men as thin, clean-shaven, and somewhat effeminate.

"I remember knowing as a child that I was gay but not seeing any gay people I could relate to," Rodriguez says. "I knew that was supposed to be me, but it wasn't how I felt, how I acted, or what I looked like. When I first learned the word *bear*, I said, 'Ah, that's what I am!' Research shows that self-esteem increases when an individual finds the bear community, but it's still not as high as in the overall gay community, possibly due to discrimination and stigma related to weight."

him to the University of Miami, where he quickly learned there's more to nursing than clinical care. He enrolled in the Ph.D. program to pursue a career as a nurse researcher so he could help the LGBT community in far-reaching ways.

In addition to developing his bear-related dissertation topic, Rodriguez has been doing clinical work with local organizations that serve LGBT people. This summer he was an HIV tester and counselor at the Pride Center in Wilton Manors, Florida. Last summer he worked at Survivor's Pathway, a Miami nonprofit advocacy organization that serves LGBT people, primarily Hispanic trans women. Through these experiences he realized a universal truth: "Humans in general have a desire to be accepted for who they are, without judgment."

Rodriguez is also helping SONHS Research Assistant Professor Karina

little research on these health disparities among sexual minorities, especially among Hispanics.

SONHS Assistant Professor of Clinical Alexis Koskan, who holds a Ph.D. in public health, is interested in developing community-based interventions aimed at the prevention and early detection of cancers caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV). HPV is most commonly known for causing cervical cancer in women. Similar to the development of cervical cancer, anal cancer is caused by persistent infection of cancerous strains of HPV. Also similar to cervical cancer, anal cancer can be prevented with timely screening and, if needed, treatment of precancerous lesions. HIV-infected populations, particularly gay and bisexual men, are at greatest risk of developing anal cancer and are 52 times more likely to be diagnosed with this rare disease than the general population. Koskan received a grant from the UM Center for AIDS Research to explore the barriers and facilitators to screen for anal cancer among HIV-infected gay and bisexual men. With doctoral student Natalie Leblanc, she has completed 60 in-depth interviews with English-speaking men and is conducting an additional 25 interviews with Spanish-speaking men. Her drive for this research is "to know what it takes, not just to get the information out but to push people to action." She plans on using her research findings to plan community-based programs aimed at increasing anal cancer screening among HIV-infected gay and bisexual men, helping them to prevent a preventable cancer.

Gattamorta, A.B. '01, Ph.D. '10, interview Hispanic LGB adolescents about their experiences "coming out" to friends and family members. Gattamorta's study, funded by a UM Provost's Research Award, explores how cultural factors may impact this formative part of their lives. Adolescents in general are susceptible to mental health issues such as depression, as well as substance abuse and eating disorders, but there's very

## Research Grounded in Reality

To ground LGBT-related academic research with community reality, Koskan identified various community leaders to serve on El Centro's LGBT Community Advisory Board (CAB). Composed of advocates, health care providers, and researchers who presently work with LGBT communities, the board fosters mutually beneficial partnerships to inform research and outreach while also extending academic resources and services to community partners.

"We provide the academic rigor, and they provide the community reality," Koskan says.

In exchange for their insight on SONHS research, CAB members receive guidance on their programs from UM faculty. Gattamorta, a skilled statistician and measures development expert, is helping CAB member Carla Silva, executive director for the Alliance for GLBTQ Youth, to design an assessment questionnaire that reveals client needs.

"Being able to meet and collaborate with other LGBT advocates has been the greatest reward," says Sanique Olkuch, M.S.N. '12, a CAB member and nurse practitioner at Care Resource, which

provides primary medical services, including HIV care, to the LGBT community in South Florida. She also partners with UHealth-University of Miami Health System researchers on studies about PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis), which involves prescribing a daily pill called Truvada to those at high risk for contracting HIV. Truvada has been shown to reduce risk of infection by 92 percent.

"LGBT people often seek care later due to a host of reasons, including fear of discrimination, lack of access to care, and lack of insurance or other resources," Olkuch explains. "Actively engaging the LGBT community is difficult because the community is hard to define and runs a large spectrum."

Collaboration between the school and the community is essential for keeping researchers relevant and helping social service organizations implement proven initiatives. To that end, El Centro recently partnered with the YES Institute—a CAB member and resource for education about gender identity and sexual orientation—to host a free training course for health care workers and the general public on LGBT health.

Sometimes reducing health disparities requires more than understanding risks; it requires a focus on human resilience. De Santis marvels at the people he's met who have been ostracized by their families, fired from their jobs, and shunned by their friends but somehow steered clear of the pitfalls. He recalls one person, a transgender woman who lost her wife and kids when she transitioned from male to female.

After a time of tragedy, she found love again, this time with a transgender man.

"It really challenges how we think about people," De Santis says. "Despite the horrible things that happen to them, there are a number of people who turn the negatives into positives, like advocacy. I want to find out what's protecting them."

In all of the LGBT research taking place through El Centro, there seems to be a recurring lesson: Acceptance and belonging in society are critical ingredients for good health. Antidiscrimination laws help protect the rights of minority populations, but legislation doesn't change attitudes; education does. And this is what drives purpose and progress every day at the School of Nursing and Health Studies.

**"Despite the horrible things that happen to them, there are a number of people who turn the negatives into positives."**

A native of Los Angeles who holds bachelor's and master's degrees in history, Rodriguez chose to pursue nursing after witnessing the care his former partner received while having health issues. Some of it was exceptional, and some of it exposed strong biases of health care workers who were not comfortable with LGBT people. The School of Nursing and Health Studies' Accelerated B.S.N. program attracted



The bear flag is a symbol for bears, a subculture of gay men who are generally large framed and hirsute. The flag was designed with inclusivity in mind; its colors represent all the fur colors and nationalities of bears throughout the world.

## Welcoming New Faculty

The School of Nursing and Health Studies is pleased to welcome the following exceptional educators, scientists, and clinicians to its faculty.

### Melinda Jenkins

#### Associate Professor of Clinical

Melinda Jenkins was scientific review officer for the NIH Biomedical Computing and Health Informatics and the Health Information Technology SBIR study sections. She served for two years as coordinator of consumer informatics in the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Primary Care Informatics Project. She earned both her B.S.N. and M.S.N. degrees from the University of Missouri-Columbia and completed a Ph.D. in nursing at the



University of Pennsylvania. Her dissertation, an evaluation of prenatal care services, received an NIH training award. She has provided primary care as a family nurse practitioner since 1982, and has taught nursing research, primary care, and informatics at Penn, Columbia, Seton Hall, CUNY, and Northwestern universities. She is a longtime member of the American Nurses Association and the American Medical Informatics Association, in the Nursing Informatics and the Primary Care Informatics working groups.

### Jill Sanko

#### Assistant Professor

Jill Sanko, Ph.D. '15, holds a B.A. from the University of Florida, a B.S.N. from Rush University, and an M.S.N. from the University of Maryland, in addition to her doctorate from UM. Her interests include patient safety, use of simulation in education



and research, and team dynamics. She is a former research and simulation education specialist at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Hospital Center for Patient Safety, where she taught teamwork and communication skills, invasive bedside procedures, and other high-risk, low-frequency clinical skills to a variety of health care providers. She is founding associate director of the NIH Clinical Center Simulation and Patient Safety Program, as well as active in the Society for Simulation in Healthcare—one of only 16 simulation-ists worldwide who is an Advanced Certified Healthcare Simulation Educator. She is an active member of the Florida Healthcare Simulation Alliance and serves on the planning committee for the 2016 Southeast U.S. Simulation Conference.



### Linda Mays

#### Assistant Professor of Clinical

Linda Mays, B.S. '84, recently held positions at HCA Physician Services, Quiet

Minds, Inc., and other clinical settings in South Florida, where she treated child and adult psychiatric patients. As instructor and administrator at the Mays Foundation, Inc., she directed clinical and administrative operations at mental health-certified assisted living facilities. As adjunct classroom and clinical instructor at Vance Granville Community College in North Carolina, she taught pharmacology and various levels of nursing education. She holds an M.S.N. degree from Duke University and is a member of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association, Florida Nurses Association, Florida Association of Nurse Practitioners, and Florida Nurse Practitioners Network.



### Patricia Amado

#### Assistant Professor of Clinical

Patricia Amado obtained her B.S.N. from DeSales University, her M.S.N. from Florida Atlantic University, and a Ph.D. from Barry University. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses across the curriculum and provides undergraduate student advisement and mentorship. Her research has focused on breast cancer and creating healthy post-treatment transitions. She has spoken at international venues on her creation of liminal pathways in transitioning through chronic illness. Her research forms the basis of a concept analysis framework that she is developing to advance nursing practice. Her most

recent project is publishing her dissertation: *The Lived Experience of Women with Breast Cancer*. She holds memberships in Delta Epsilon Iota, Sigma Theta Tau, the National League of Nursing, and the International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care.



### Shayne Hauglum

#### Assistant Professor of Clinical

Shayne Hauglum completed his M.S.N. in nurse anesthesia at the University of New England. He has been a certified registered nurse anesthetist since 2000, and in 2002 he founded an independent CRNA practice in northern New Hampshire, providing exclusive anesthesia services for a critical access hospital. His research interests focus on preoperative predictors and management strategies for acute and chronic pain; ultrasound technology in education and clinical practice; anesthesia simulation in improving the education of nurse anesthetists and patient care; and critical thinking development through simulation. He is a founding member of White Mountain Anesthesia, PLLC and a member of Sigma Theta Tau, the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, and the Florida Association of Nurse Anesthetists. He has received the Agatha Hodgins CRNA Memorial Award and the March of Dimes Nurse of the Year, Student Nurse/Graduate Category.

## Honoring Leaders in Teaching, Research, and Civic Engagement



Mary Mckay, B.S.N. '88, D.N.P. '10, associate dean for nursing undergraduate programs and assistant professor of clinical, received the 2015 UM Faculty Senate Outstanding Teaching Award, one of the institution's highest honors. Mckay was recognized for her contributions in spearheading patient safety initiatives, interprofessional education, and innovative high-tech teaching methods. Outgoing University President Donna Shalala described the awardees as "change agents" who have gone the "extra mile in their devotion to the University and to our mission."



Mary Hooshmand, Ph.D. '10, associate dean for D.N.P. programs and assistant professor of clinical, was named a 2015 Nurse.com Giving Excellence Meaning (GEM) award regional winner in the category of "Advancing and Leading the Profession." Hooshmand, who will represent Florida in the national GEM competition, said, "These are exciting times, as we see nurses taking on systems-wide health care challenges, moving forward with higher education, research, and practice initiatives, and truly leading the profession! This award is truly an honor."



Assistant Professor of Clinical Alexis Koskan was presented with the UM 2015 Excellence in Civic Engagement Faculty Award, recognizing her commitment to creating service-learning classes for undergraduate students and for their community-based research.



The UM Office of Civic and Community Engagement awarded summer stipends to five faculty members this year, including SONHS faculty members Yui Matsuda and Andrew Porter, for their commitment to creating courses that incorporate a significant amount of civic engagement and service learning into the curriculum.

# School of Nursing and Health Studies Honor Roll of Donors 2015

**We thank** the alumni and friends of the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies for their ongoing support. Because of their unwavering commitment, the school continued to make considerable achievements during the 2014-2015 academic year such as providing essential student scholarships, recruiting stellar faculty, supporting new research that improves lives in our local and global communities, and breaking ground for our new Simulation Hospital. We gratefully recognize those individuals, corporations, and foundations whose generosity has helped sustain the school with their gifts, which were received between June 1, 2014, and May 31, 2015.

## FOUNDATIONS

Aetna Foundation  
Blank Charitable Foundation, Inc.  
Cuna Mack Trust  
Cynthia Joann Cardarella Rev. Living Trust  
Dauer Family Foundation, Inc.  
Eileen M. Griffiths Rev. Trust  
Estate of Leonore M. Adamczyk  
Florence Bayuk Educational Trust  
Florman Family Foundation, Inc.  
Gale S Messerman Trust  
Harcourt M. and Virginia W. Sylvester Foundation, Inc.  
Helene Fuld Health Trust  
Hugoton Foundation  
Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence  
Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation, Inc.  
Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation, Inc.  
PNC Foundation  
Rickert Family Trust  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
**CORPORATIONS**  
CAC Florida Medical Centers  
Center for Creative Leadership  
Florida Blue Foundation  
Healthcare Performance Group, Inc.  
Jet Graphics, Inc.  
Orange Accountable Care of South Florida  
Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines  
Southern Wine & Spirits of America, Inc.  
VITAS Healthcare Corporation  
Walgreens  
West Side Cultural Center, Inc.

## ASSOCIATIONS

Beta Tau Chapter Sigma Theta Tau  
Nicklaus Children's Hospital  
Nurses Charitable Trust  
United Way of Miami-Dade County, Inc.  
**GEORGE E. MERRICK SOCIETY**  
**\$1,000,000 - \$4,999,999**  
Pamela J. Garrison  
R. Kirk Landon\*

## BOWMAN FOSTER ASHE SOCIETY

**\$500,000 - \$999,999**

Anonymous

## SOCIETY OF UNIVERSITY FOUNDERS

**\$50,000 - \$99,999**

Joan S. Antognini and Walter G. Antognini  
Lissette M. Exposito  
Rosalynne A. Miller and Arthur R. Miller  
Nilda Peragallo Montano  
Beverly L. Sulzberger and The Honorable E. W. Sulzberger

## NURSES LEADER

**\$10,000-\$24,999**

Allan T. Abess, III  
Joan Brick Getz

## RESEARCHER

**\$5,000-\$9,999**

Joanne C. Dauer and Edward A. Dauer  
Cathy H. Blank and Tony Blank  
Mary A. Hooshmand  
Martha O. Clinton and Bruce E. Clinton

## EDUCATOR

**\$2,500-\$4,999**

Arthur H. Hertz  
Arthur E. Newman  
Christine Pfeffer and Stanley R. Pfeffer  
M. Christine Schwartz and Theodore G. Schwartz

## PATIENT ADVOCATE

**\$1,000-\$2,499**

Leila E. Adderton  
Marina Alvarez  
Julie Barroso  
Margaret S. Edison  
Linda A. Ellis  
Marquessa D. Fisher  
Thelma V. Gibson  
Rosa M. Gonzalez-Guarda  
Leslie P. Gruskin and Steven M. Gruskin  
Ilene Lasky-Klein and David E. Klein  
Lori A. Lupe and Mark E. Lupe  
Ann M. McCrystal and Hugh K. McCrystal  
Victoria Mitrani  
Elise G. Morales  
Karen S. Muth  
Felicia B. Nash and Todd A. Nash  
Johis Ortega  
Anthony J. Roberson  
Eleanor P. Rosen and Alan A. Rosen  
Ellen S. Weston and James M. Tien  
David Zambrana  
**COMMUNITY CAREGIVER**  
**\$500-\$999**  
Irene Abel  
Debbie Anglade  
Julie A. Armstrong  
Kate M. Callahan and Peter M. Benjamin  
Janie L. Canty-Mitchell and Joseph S. Mitchell

Jacqueline L. Gonzalez and Nelson D. Gonzalez  
Eileen M. Griffiths  
Lynda F. Hale and Martin E. Hale  
Claudia M. Hauri  
Karla V. Hernandez and Michael A. Hernandez  
Michelle D. Melenwick  
Nancy D. Newbury  
Ngan D. Nguyen  
Anne E. Norris  
Juliette A. Robbins and Robert A. Robbins  
Doris N. Ugarriza

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

**\$1-\$499**

Alexa P. Aballa  
Nemuel Y. Abasta  
Daniel Acevedo  
Carol E. Adamek  
Dolores S. Adams and Michael E. Adams  
Joyce Adams  
Elizabeth A. Albers  
Dawn A. Albright  
Laura D. Albuja  
Donald M. Altemus  
Lisa R. Anderson  
Maria Andreu  
Paula M. Andrien-Riano and Hugo A. Riano  
Gertrude Armstrong  
Frances B. Aronovitz  
Mary E. Asher and Kevin Asher  
Justin Atrio  
Barney Barry Avchen  
Beppina M. Azrak and Russell C. Azrak  
Paulette A. Baldie and Leroy Panoo  
Cristina Ballesteros  
Marlene A. Barkley  
Faizline C. Barthelemy  
Michael J. Bartuseck  
Rachel F. Baruch  
Vilma A. Bates and Vandy Bates  
Louisa Beauboeuf  
Yvonne H. Beckman and Douglas E. Beckman  
Danielle T. Belliveau  
Marie-Lourdes Benoit  
Rebeca K. Bensabat and Elias Bensabat  
Cheryl K. Bernstein and David I. Bernstein  
Ryan W. Berry  
Flavia N. Berti  
Helen B. Bhagwandin and Surace N. Bhagwandin  
Lauren M. Biedron  
Carrie A. Bilek  
Rossana S. Bizzio  
JoAnn Bladow and Reid T. Bladow  
Kathleen K. Blais  
Francesca A. Blanchard  
Susan D. Bleiwise-Greenfield  
Thelma M. Bonner and John F. Bonner  
Kathleen A. Borghoff  
Arden A. Bradley and Arden J. Bradley  
Cheryl A. Braham  
Theresa R. Brahim  
Raylawni G. Branch and Alfred Branch  
Aeris M. Breit and Charles E. Breit  
Catherine Bridges  
Patricia L. Briones and Luis R. Briones, Jr.  
Elaine P. Britton  
Clrudy S. Brown  
M. Patricia Brown  
Martha S. Bryan  
Evelyn J. Budde  
Margaret A. Burkhardt and Joseph Golden  
Lucy M. Caicedo  
Zuzer Calero and William Valverde  
Nanci M. Callahan  
Meredith Camel and Merrill B. Camel  
Colleen S. Campbell and Keith B. Campbell  
Sharon A. Campbell  
Constance A. Camunas and Joseph A. Camunas  
Denise A. Canchola  
Feeta J. Caphart  
Ivette Cardelli  
Linda A. Cardente and Douglas T. Cardente  
Ellen B. Carroll and Gerard Carroll  
Corin Cashman  
Carole Castillo and Michael J. Castillo  
Joan H. Cauley and Jerry D. Cauley  
Arais Cavada and Ricardo Cavada  
Jacqueline Cereijo and Valentin Ruiz  
Elvira M. Cervantes

Wayne E. Chaplin  
Kellee Cheatham and John B. Cheatham  
Tiffany A. Chomko  
Joanne E. Christopher-Hines  
Rosina Cianelli and Eduardo Novoa  
Kathy J. Cibula  
Rosetta B. Clarrington  
Edward J. Clarke  
Meredith C. Collins  
Katrina M. Cooke  
Andria K. Coppersmith  
Daniel C. Cortelazzi Ferreira  
Lisa Anne Cosgrove and Raymond Spencer  
Janet S. Cote and Bernard T. Cote  
Amber J. Cotton  
Eleanor W. Cottrell and Ralph C. Cottrell  
Rebecca J. Craig  
Marielle O. Crawford and Jerry F. Crawford  
Christie M. Creamean-Moldovan  
Natasha D. Crovo  
Cynthia L. Dakin and William J. Dakin  
Donald E. Davis  
Levi M. De Cotto  
Lila De Tantiillo  
Natalie N. Del Rio  
Martha Del-Castillo  
Diego A. Deleon  
Ann-Lynn Denker  
Grace R. Dennis  
Amy M. Deperalta-Beltran and John A. Beltran  
David W. Dery  
Joseph P. De Santis  
Eileen A. Diaz  
Juan J. Diez  
Charlotte R. DiMaggio  
Susan L. Dingler  
Dianne T. Dimer and Michael J. Dimer  
Lissette Dorado and Fulgencio A. Dorado  
Sandra E. Douchand Brown  
Lindsay E. Drake  
Barbara Ann Dralnick  
Shalettha Edwards  
Mary L. Eiman  
Rama N. Escolin  
Denise R. Felsenstein  
Aury Fernandez  
Kimberly C. Fernandez

Madeline Fernandez  
Zuny B. Fernandez  
Judith L. Fields  
Latronica T. Fisher  
Elsa V. Fletcher and David A. Fletcher  
Cecilia C. Franca  
Maria F. Francis  
Joanne C. Friedman and Franklin P. Friedman  
Terri L. Frock  
Mary A. Gallo  
Maribel Galvan  
Jeannette G. Garcia Slanker and Christopher A. Slanker  
Nereida M. Garcia  
Karina A. Gattamorta and Anton Gattamorta  
Marjorie Gerver and Ira S. Gerver  
Annette R. Gibson  
Sara L. Gill and Michael A. Schiano  
Barbara D. Ginzburg and Enrique Ginzburg  
Lauren N. Gjolak  
Monica A. Glukstad  
Mae K. Goins  
Lisa R. Goldberg and Scott H. Goldberg  
Lauramarie Goldman  
Ginna P. Gonzalez and Nestor Sanchez  
Juan M. Gonzalez  
Marilyn D. Gonzalez  
Martha L. Gonzalez and Victor J. Gonzalez  
Joanne Gonzalez-Talamas  
Clare W. Good  
Karissa L. Grasty and Tom Grasty  
Tina M. Griffin  
Susana Guerrero  
Adina S. Gutstein and Howard A. Addison  
Betty Hanley  
Ramona M. Hartzler and Daniel W. Hartzler  
Kimberly Y. Henderson  
Cheryl D. Hernandez and Dennis R. Hernandez  
Julianne Hernandez and Antonio Hernandez  
Kimberly M. Hernandez  
Maria A. Hernandez  
Salma Hernandez  
Jessica A. Herrington  
Donna M. Hoffman

Dawn T. Holcombe and John H. Holcombe  
Moniqua T. Holton  
Marla A. Hoyos and Miguel Hoyos  
Betty S. Huber  
Mary E. Huckestein  
Holly C. Huffine  
Brittney K. Hutcheson  
Kathleen F. Izquierdo  
Erika J. Jamieson  
Theresa M. Jennings and John J. Jennings  
Gabriela Jiron  
Fortunata D. Joaquin and Alexander Joaquin  
Patricia F. Johnson  
Fabienne F. Jones  
Sandra G. Jones  
Greta J. Kaiser  
Shannon T. Kearns  
Yun Ji J. Kim  
Christie L. Kirchoff  
Susan F. Kirkpatrick and Robert C. Kirkpatrick, Jr.  
Bonnie J. Kleponis and Paul A. Kleponis  
Staci I. Kovelman  
Elaine J. Kresge and Keith J. Kresge  
Katherine M. Kuretski  
Rosa M. Lamazares-Romero and Eric V. Romero  
Rochelle A. Landrian  
Mary A. Lanzara  
Ruth Lapidus and Sidney Lapidus  
Debbie C. Larson and Tom E. Larson  
Kristin N. Levoy  
Karen S. Lewin  
Margaret A. Lewis  
Latoya J. Lewis-Pierre  
Cindy Liberal  
Susan E. Lord  
Jillian N. Lozada  
Debra T. MacDonald and Kenneth J. MacDonald  
Jennifer Magdelain  
Carrielle C. Mahoney  
Eleanor L. Malchus and Budd E. Malchus, Sr.  
Zully C. Maldonado de Valsang  
MaryKay Maley  
Kesia Botet and Gersom G. Manresa  
Janet H. Mar Eugene Y. Mar

Denise C. Marsh  
 Patricia A. Martely  
 Nanette L. Martin  
 Christina M. Matadial and  
 Christopher A. French  
 Chimene N. Mathurin  
 Sarah B. Matthes Clark  
 Louise M. McCarthy  
 Joan H. McDermott and  
 William J. McDermott  
 Mary E. Mckay and John Flint  
 Marta M. Medina  
 Kilea L. Melang  
 Michelle D. Melenwick  
 Vanessa I. Mendez  
 David A. Meropol  
 Jennifer L. Methot  
 Constance B. Miller  
 Samantha K. Miller  
 Mary Anne Milone  
 Stephanie K. Mitchell  
 Greta V. Mitzova-Vladinova  
 Janice A. Mongo  
 Maureen Monihan and  
 Brian Monihan  
 Becky J. Montesino-King  
 Claire A. Monzeglio-Barry  
 Karen M. Moosvi  
 Ann F. Morrisseau and  
 William L. Morrisseau  
 Ivan Munro  
 John Murphy  
 Lili K. Neale and  
 David Andrew Neale  
 Stephen Nicolais  
 Maidis Noguera  
 Carolyn R. North\*  
 Patricia C. Novoa-Vogt  
 Tracy D. O'Connell and  
 Mark T. O'Connell  
 Rebecca A. Orzechowicz  
 Brenda Owusu  
 Iris Padron  
 Maria Padron  
 Roberto Padron  
 Jamie A. PannoZZo-Plastina  
 Deborah S. Paris  
 Frances E. Parrish  
 and Kiff Parrish  
 Katherine Parry and  
 Robert E. Parry  
 Lornette D. Patrick and  
 Fergus R. Patrick  
 Patricia M. Paxton-Alan  
 and Mark A. Alan  
 Vanessa A. Paz  
 Kristyna Pena

Patricia E. Pepe and  
 Richard K. Pepe  
 Patricia Peraza  
 Danette Perez  
 Melissa Perez  
 Andreina M. Perez-Cisneros  
 Jacquelyn M. Peters  
 Joycelyn A. Petersen  
 Joan M. Petry  
 Dorothy G. Piedimonte  
 Louise S. Powell and  
 David Powell  
 Carmen R. Presti  
 Marcia G. Prieto  
 Ninoska Prince  
 Dianne H. Quadros  
 Erika L. Quattrocchi  
 Roslyn Ramacchiato,  
 and Warren J. Bauer  
 Nicholas A. Ramos  
 Amy Rein  
 Mabel Ribe and Ricardo Ribe  
 Marianne F. Rickert  
 and Brian M. Rickert  
 Deborah J. Riquelme  
 Patricia K. Rister  
 John A. Rivas  
 Ekaete J. Roberts  
 Mary E. Rodak  
 Roberto L. Roman Laporte  
 Angela R. Roman  
 Margaret T. Rosier  
 and John D. Rosier  
 Nancy T. Rosman  
 Kathryn G. Rothman  
 and Jason S. Rothman  
 Lendy Rubalcaba  
 Lillian M. Rucker  
 Christian G. Ruiz  
 Ivette S. Ruiz  
 Judith E. Ryan  
 Shirley A. Ryan  
 Deborah Saber  
 Aleida M. Saenz  
 Sonique S. Sailsman  
 Deborah A. Salani  
 and Riccardo Salani  
 Kimberly Salmi and  
 Michael C. Salmi  
 Michelle Sanay  
 Shelley A. Savage  
 Darla J. Schaller  
 Lee A. Schmidt  
 Marcia A. Schram  
 Kecia Scigliuto  
 Gillian C. Scott  
 Shirley Scott

Sandra L. Segura-Perez  
 Serge Sejour  
 Andrea J. Seymore  
 and John P. Seymore  
 Lois G. Shapiro and  
 Jerome B. Shapiro  
 Zoe A. Sheppard  
 Jane R. Shinn and  
 Robert L. Shinn  
 Carmen J. Sierra  
 Scott Silberlust  
 Michelle L. Singer  
 Christopher R. Slivka  
 Azona K. Smith  
 Denise J. Smith  
 Elizabeth L. Smith  
 and Walter R. Smith  
 Eric N. Smith  
 Mary C. Smolenski  
 Kenya F. Snowden  
 Luz Maria Solano Cutie  
 and Luis A. Cutie  
 Susan L. Sonson  
 Alejandro Sosa  
 Margaret M. Steinbach  
 and David N. Steinbach  
 Mary B. Stein-Ferrer  
 Vibeke S. Stewart  
 Arnold T. Stocker  
 Maureen A. Storey  
 and William B. Storey  
 Nicole L. Stroud  
 Gail V. Symonette  
 Deborah Szabo and  
 Attila Szabo  
 Antoinette R. Taylor  
 and Andrew L. Taylor  
 Deborah F. Terry and  
 James L. Terry  
 Diana L. Tershakovec and  
 George R. Tershakovec  
 Roxana D. Thalasinis  
 Doris H. Thompson  
 Pamela B. Thompson  
 Ann M. Thraikill  
 Sally A. Titus  
 Johnny J. Torres  
 Maria E. Torres  
 Colleen A. Trahey  
 and Mark V. Berger  
 Bonnie F. Treaman  
 and Steve Treaman  
 Gloria P. Trujillo and  
 Alejandro Trujillo

Mary E. Turner  
 Carol A. Tuttas  
 Richard A. Ulrich  
 Beatriz Valdes  
 Victor M. Valdivia  
 Gloria M. Vallina  
 Elsa Vasquez-Tomonto  
 and Charles V. Tomonto  
 Monica L. Velasco  
 and Sergio Velasco  
 Jahaira C. Villalobos  
 Lorraine J. Vitale  
 Heidi A. Von-Nieda  
 Andrea A. Walker  
 Cathy L. Walker  
 Tanya N. Wallace-Farquharson  
 and Marlon Farquharson  
 Marianne Walsh and  
 Michael M. Walsh  
 Tommy T. Warren  
 Goldie M. Wasman  
 and Roger Wasman  
 Melody A. Watral  
 Deborah L. Watson  
 and Frank S. Watson  
 Andrew J. Wawrzyniak  
 Lynn A. Weber and  
 Donald A. Weber  
 James J. Weidel  
 Robin J. Weidlich and  
 Christopher P. Weidlich  
 Diane L. Weisman and  
 Richard S. Weisman  
 Rebecca S. Wells  
 Marcella U. Werblow  
 Karolina Wiech  
 Alethia C. Wildman-Jackson  
 Jessica R. Williams  
 Marjorie Williams  
 Senoria Williams and  
 James Williams  
 Marion Wollum and  
 Arnold Wollum  
 W. H. Woodside, Sr.  
 MaryAlice S. Yoham  
 Sheyla K. Yuen  
 Ann P. Zani  
 Linda L. Zankl and  
 Patrick J. McEnany  
 Dean Zarriello  
 Yamile Zayas and John Llano

\*Deceased

*We have made every effort to ensure that the Honor Roll is accurate and complete. If you discover an error or omission, please let us know by contacting Jessica Herrington at [j.herrington@miami.edu](mailto:j.herrington@miami.edu) or 305-284-2046 in Advancement Services.*

## Health Studies Is in Good Hands

**Martin M. Zdanowicz**, associate dean for health studies and professor of clinical arrived at the School of Nursing and Health Studies in 2013 with a full-speed-ahead philosophy. In two very productive years, he developed the M.S.N. in Health Informatics and certificate programs in informatics, revised undergraduate majors in health science and public health, added a minor in health communications and established the Bachelor of Science in Public Health (B.S.P.H.) 4+1 program, enabling students to complete both a bachelor's and master's public health degree in five years.

Under his leadership, the number of students majoring and minoring in public health has increased from 12 to 60 and from 70 to 120, respectively. Zdanowicz also initiated the self-study process for the B.S.P.H. program to gain accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health.

To broaden career-specific learning opportunities for Bachelor of Science in Health Science (B.S.H.S.) students, Zdanowicz plans to develop three new tracks—pre-occupational therapy, health communication, and health informatics—that would join existing tracks in areas such as pre-pharmacy, pre-physical therapy, and health policy and management. Beyond the classroom, he is working to launch new global practicum options for health studies students in the Dominican Republic, New Zealand, and Australia, in addition to one presently available in Chile.

“We have tremendous potential to expand opportunities for our health studies students in Latin America,” Zdanowicz says. “We’re also well positioned to expand our offerings to other parts of the globe over the next five years and to make these experiences into something really special.”

Locally, Zdanowicz is developing new community partners “to increase our understanding of community needs so we can better prepare our students to meet those needs.” New program ideas emerging from these conversations include speech therapy, occupa-

tional therapy (OT), and emergency preparedness. Zdanowicz envisions an OT suite in the school's forthcoming Simulation Hospital and possibly establishing an OT master's program that could take full advantage of this extraordinary facility, which will host collaborations among all SONHS majors. He sees public health students, for example, participating in infectious disease outbreak scenarios, pre-pharmacy students conducting medication reviews, and health informatics students working with data generated by the hospital's activities.

“One goal is to find a common place for students from different disciplines to learn together,” Zdanowicz says. “Interdisciplinary electives and the Simulation Hospital will provide ideal settings in which to implement interprofessional collaborations.”

And while Zdanowicz is a skilled leader, his true passion is teaching. He has been voted Teacher of the Year an extraordinary eight times at three different institutions, including at the SONHS this year.

“Teaching keeps me grounded and brings me great satisfaction,” Zdanowicz says. “I’m always learning from my students and from watching other people teach.”

A pharmacologist by training, Zdanowicz also enjoys publishing with fellow faculty and is currently writing two textbooks, one on pharmacogenomics and the other on physiology/pathophysiology. He and his wife, Christine, as well as their teens, Alex and Olivia, have all enjoyed their move from Georgia to Miami.

“We love going on cruises, biking and hiking, and being outdoors all year round,” he says. “It’s great to be at The U.”



R.M. LAMAZARES-ROMERO

*Martin Zdanowicz, professor and associate dean for health studies, is expanding opportunities for health studies students locally and abroad.*

## 1950s

**Ann Marie McCrystal, B.S.N. '59**, was appointed by Florida Governor Rick Scott to the Indian River County Hospital District Board of Trustees. McCrystal, of Vero Beach, has over 50 years of public health experience, serving as the chief administrator of the Indian River Urology Association from 1966 to 2009. She currently serves as a member of the Visiting Nurses Association of the Treasure Coast, Florida Nurses Association, and Association of Fundraising Professionals, and she is a lifetime honorary member of the American Cancer Society. Her term runs to November 15, 2016.

## 1960s

**Marilyn Van Houten, B.S.N. '69**, is an inaugural member of The Heroines Choir, started in 2012 for breast cancer patients and their family and friends. The purpose of the choir is to improve health and spirits of both participants and audiences. While performing recently on the University of Miami campus for National Voice Day, the choir met representatives from the School of Nursing and Health Studies and Office of Alumni Relations and toured the campus and the Frost School of Music.

## 1970s

**Clare Good, B.S.N. '70**, is retired but still active in the Florida Nurses Association and Florida Organization of Nurse Executives, holding emeritus status in both organizations. The newest member of her family is a great, great granddaughter, born here in Florida. They are five generations, all residing in Florida.

### Send us your news!

Email Rosa Lamazares-Romero,  
SONHS Communications Manager,  
at [rmlromero@miami.edu](mailto:rmlromero@miami.edu)

**Veda Andrus, B.S.N. '76**, is co-presenting a podium presentation titled "Mapping an Innovative Future: Pioneering the Healing Organization" at the 2015 American Nurses Credentialing Center National Magnet Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. She also recently co-authored a chapter on Holistic Leadership in *Holistic Nursing: A Handbook for Practice* (7th edition; Jones & Bartlett Publishers).

## 1980s

**Rose Marie Prince, B.S.N. '82**, is an application systems analyst at Presbyterian Healthcare Services in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She was recently awarded the University Academic Excellence Award from American Sentinel University for her 4.0 GPA in the M.S.N. with informatics specialization. Prince was also elected as secretary on the Board of Directors for the New Mexico Health Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS).

**"Mimi" Mary Asher, M.S.N. '85, D.N.P. '11**, had her first book chapter published in *Nursing Leadership and Management: The Advanced Practice Role*, edited by Denise M. Korniewicz. The chapter, "Principles of Quality and Safe Patient Care," is derived from the work she did while in the D.N.P. program at the UM School of Nursing and Health Studies. She is teaching as adjunct faculty for Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina, and for Lees McRae College up the mountain in Banner Elk, North Carolina. She also works as a per diem resource nurse in the rehabilitation floor at Blowing Rock Rehabilitation. She recently received a new family addition—a Border Collie puppy.

**Ann-Lynn Denker, Ph.D. '89**, immediate past chair of the Florida Board of Nursing, has been named chief clinical officer at Plaza Health Network, a network of seven rehabilitation/nursing homes.



### 'CANES GIVE BACK

On behalf of the American Assembly for Men in Nursing (AAMN), faculty advisor Tony Roberson (above left) and AAMN 'Canes chapter president Luis Diaz-Paez, B.S.N. '15, presented Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano with a \$1,500 donation toward the Simulation Hospital at the Spring 2015 Awards Ceremony. The organization coordinated several activities throughout the year to help raise funds for the contribution.

## 1990s

**Cassandra Garcia, M.S.N. '90**, is a certified nurse midwife who has delivered thousands of babies over the years. She now works with Dr. Ruel T. Stoessel, a maternal fetal medicine specialist with two offices in West Palm Beach and an office in Port St. Lucie, Florida. They work with 80 OBs in five counties from Indian River to Broward. Prior to working with Dr. Stoessel, she worked for the Florida Department of Health and was fortunate to be granted a U.S. Public Health Service traineeship grant during her studies at the UM School of Nursing and Health Studies. For that, she is eternally grateful to her alma mater. "It changed my life and has allowed me to give back my time and energy over these past 25 years to the families I have served in Florida," she says.

**Altovise Williams-Ware, B.S.N. '97**, completed a Master of Science in Nursing, with specialization in advanced nursing practice, from South University in Savannah, Georgia (June 2015). He is currently employed with the Jackson Health System at Ryder Trauma Center.

**Yesenia Villalta, B.S.N. '99, M.S.N. '03, D.N.P. '13**, was promoted to the position of executive nursing director for the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County.

## 2000s

**Joyce Granda Chavarria, B.S.N. '05, D.N.P. '10**, was appointed executive director of patient services for UHealth International, beginning in October 2015.

**Jadine Louissaint, B.S.N. '05**, works at Jackson Memorial Hospital as the director of case management for the Behavioral Health Hospital. She has been able to take her passion for community health globally and is currently working on a nonprofit that will help transform Haiti. As always, she is proud to be a Miami Hurricane!

**Leo Oliva, B.S.N. '06**, wrote, produced, and starred in her own movie about nursing with Danny Glover called *The Shift*. The film is distributed through iTunes, Amazon, Google Play, etc.

**Orfirio M. Sanchez, B.S.N. '07**, is in charge of the Crohn's and Colitis Center, under the direction of Dr. Maria T. Abreu, at UHealth-University of Miami Health System.

## 2010s

**Fatma Sadaf Haiderzad, B.S.N. '10**, recently graduated from CRNA school at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. She is forever grateful to the faculty at UM for "giving me such a strong foundation during my B.S.N."

**Christopher Slivka, B.S.M.A.S. '10, B.S.N. '11**, completed a year in a telemetry unit at Albert Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, before working for two years on a MICU/SICU/CCU at Capital Health in Hopewell, New Jersey. He completed his CCRN certification as well as TNCC certification and moved into a per diem position in the trauma medical ICU at Capital Health Regional in Trenton, New Jersey. He is currently working in the trauma medical ICU per diem as well as at Penn Presbyterian Medical Center in a heart and vascular ICU per diem. He is in his second year of the Acute Care NP program at the University of Pennsylvania and will graduate in the summer of 2016. He would like to practice as a CT surgery NP or trauma NP after completing the master's program. "I would not be where I am today without the fantastic nursing base that I received while at The U," he says.

**Jennifer L. Mindell, B.S.N. '13**, is working as a ventilator nurse on the Ventilator/Infectious Disease Unit at Mount Sinai Medical Center and is excited to start the Family Nurse Practitioner program at Florida Atlantic University this fall.

**Maria Sosa, B.S.H.S. '13**, graduated this July with her nursing degree from Breckenridge School of Nursing at IIT. She and her fiancé, Stefano Cillis, B.B.A. '10, are expecting their first child this fall. "We have a future 'Cane to add to our 'Cane family!" she says. She is preparing for her NCLEX-RN boards at the moment and is looking forward to starting her career in nursing, with hopes of returning to UM in the future for an M.S.N., FNP or Nurse Anesthesia program.

**Raquel R. Bernal, B.S.N. '14**, is attending FIU to become a family nurse practitioner while also working as a PACU Nurse at Baptist Hospital.

## INSPIRE & ENGAGE FUTURE GENERATIONS

You don't have to be wealthy to leave a legacy – any size gift can make an impact for generations to come.

By naming the School of Nursing and Health Studies as a beneficiary in your will or trust, you can support the greatest need or your preferred program at the SONHS.

A bequest in your will or trust allows you to fulfill your philanthropic goals while minimizing your taxable estate and simplifying the probate process. You also retain full use and control of your assets during your life.

A bequest is easy – just ask your attorney to draft a codicil to your existing will, or if you don't have a will, now is a good time to have one prepared. A bequest to the School of Nursing and Health Studies can be a specific dollar amount or a percentage of your residual estate or trust.

### IT'S EASY TO LEAVE A LEGACY!

TO LEARN WAYS YOU CAN MAKE  
A BEQUEST, OR FOR SAMPLE  
BEQUEST LANGUAGE, CONTACT:

Cynthia L. Beamish, Executive Director  
Office of Estate and Gift Planning  
(305) 284 - 4342  
[um.plannedgiving@miami.edu](mailto:um.plannedgiving@miami.edu)  
[www.miami.edu/plannedgiving](http://www.miami.edu/plannedgiving)

## A Calling to Help the Community

Sharah Herise Kittles, B.S.N. '13, has taken a road less traveled in the nursing profession, but in doing so, she hopes—to paraphrase Robert Frost's poem—she will have made all the difference.

Kittles knew from a young age that she wanted a career in nursing, but it wasn't until her last semester of nursing school that she found her niche. Her defining moment came while she was teaching residents in an assisted living facility about diabetes mellitus, explaining their medications, proper nutrition, and how to stay healthy, as part of the community health nursing curriculum at the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies.

"I realized that community health nursing combines all of the things I love to do—outreach, medical missions, feeding missions, and things of that nature—into nursing," Kittles says. "The community needs more people to educate them about preventative care, to keep them from being in the ER frequently and using the ER as their primary care provider. I decided to make it my mission to advocate, educate, and heal, one community at a time."

Kittles completed her B.S.N. with minors in psychology and human services and development. She "blossomed" at the SONHS, encouraged by professors and staff who were "very friendly, very loving," she says. "It was a community, a home. Coming from my situation, that's what I needed."

Born and raised in Miami, Kittles, now 26 and married with a 4-year-old stepdaughter, entered foster care at the age of 8. After "aging out" of the system at 18, she was on her own. "Most young adults have parents to coach them, help them find an apartment, pay bills, shop for groceries," she says. "I didn't have that."

Kittles credits CHARLEE (Children Have All Rights: Legal, Educational,

Emotional) of Dade County for helping her safely bridge the gap between adolescence and young adulthood. In fact, a chance meeting while speaking on behalf of CHARLEE at a United Way Women's Leadership Breakfast at the University of Miami set her on a path that led directly to the SONHS.

"After I spoke, (then University of Miami president) Donna Shalala introduced herself," Kittles recalls. "She asked about my interest in the nursing profession and encouraged me to call her when I was ready to attend the University."

Kittles, who was taking nursing prerequisite courses at Miami Dade College at the time, called Shalala's office the following week, and by spring she was a full-time student at the SONHS. Now she works with children with special needs in the community and is considering pursuing a master's degree with a concentration in community health nursing.

"So many people—my teachers, my husband, my church pastors—have given me so much that right now, I'm in a place where I want to be able to give back what was given to me," she says.



The School  
of Nursing and  
Health Studies  
Celebrates  
Commencement  
2015

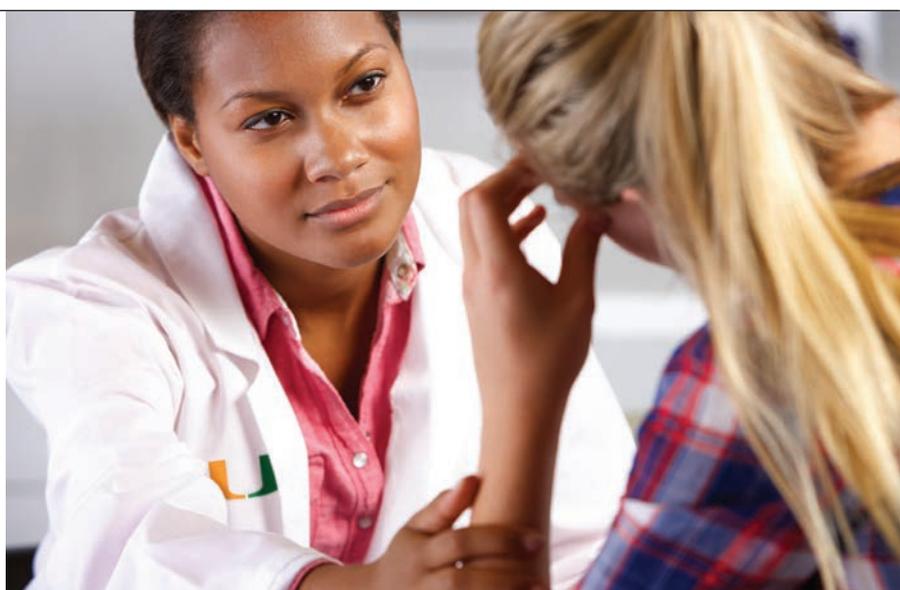
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENNY ABREU

It was a spring and summer to celebrate at the School of Nursing and Health Studies. The May 8 Spring Commencement exercises recognized the accomplishments of 149 Ph.D., B.S.N., B.S.H.S., and B.S.P.H. graduates. The day began with a time-honored tradition where family and friends gathered to watch graduates receive awards and official nursing pins. During the August 6 Summer Commencement ceremony, 117 graduates received their M.S.N. degrees. We warmly congratulate all of our graduates on their amazing achievements, and we acknowledge our faculty for their ongoing commitment to education and the health care professions!





# Expand Your Practice with Psychiatric Mental Health Certification



## **One-year post-master's program is ideal for working nurse practitioners**

There's a great demand in private practice and community settings for psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners, one of the most highly compensated specialties. Available to any nurse with an M.S.N. degree, our Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Post-Master's Certificate program prepares you to provide comprehensive and integrative care across the lifespan.

### **Why Choose the UM School of Nursing and Health Studies?**

- The only post-master's program of its kind in South Florida
- Only one year of full-time study (three semesters)
- Distance learning offers flexibility for busy professionals
- Supervised clinical experiences cover three treatment modalities—individual, group, and family psychotherapy
- Eligible for certification as a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner by the American Nurses Association, American Nurses Credentialing Center, and for state licensure/certification where available

### **Enroll Today!**

