

Fall 2016

# heartbeat

University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies



## **THE DISCIPLINE OF DISASTER**

Simulation training aims to help those hardest hit by effects of climate change

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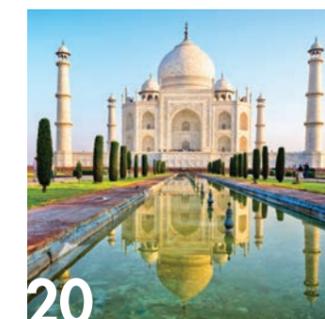
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### MISSION STATEMENT

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.

## A Fond Farewell from the Dean

Each issue of *Heartbeat* recalls happy memories, and this Fall 2016 edition is particularly meaningful. In 2003 I was warmly received into the UM SONHS family, and in 2004 we published the inaugural issue of this magazine. Today we come full circle with my final *Heartbeat* message as dean. I am privileged to say that, together, we have accomplished many of the goals we set forth for the School of Nursing and Health Studies.

When I stepped onto the University of Miami campus to undertake the job of dean of this school, it was a propitious time for all

Our dramatically expanded global studies program took our students on life-changing experiences to India and Ecuador. A recent hurricane simulation, one in a series of large-scale disaster simulations implemented at our school, showcased how the SONHS is leading the way in redefining the role of nurses to meet threats presented by climate change and other global phenomena. Aligned with UM's



As a team, we significantly advanced health care education, strengthened our bonds with the South Florida community, and prepared fully equipped graduates to lead health care in the 21st century. I am deeply touched by the manner in which everyone associated with the SONHS consistently pulled together to support our programs. I treasure our time together and thank you for all of your hard work.

This is not goodbye but rather Godspeed. The future calls us all, and I leave Miami looking not back, but forward to the dynamic continuation of excellence for the School of Nursing and Health Studies. It's great to be a Miami Hurricane!

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

“As a team, we significantly advanced health care education, strengthened our bonds with the South Florida community, and prepared fully equipped graduates to lead health care in the 21st century.”

of us in the health care professions. During the last 13 years we have witnessed an unprecedented overhaul of health care in the national and global arenas. Through the inspiration, dedication, and remarkable talent of our students, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends, the SONHS is front and center in that historic transformation.

The pages that follow describe some of the initiatives launched at our school to keep pace with a transformed health care landscape, and how these are thriving.

hemispheric initiative, which is part of the Roadmap to Our New Century, the school opened its doors to the nursing education leaders of 18 Caribbean island nations to discuss how to achieve universal health coverage through health care education.

The SONHS is poised for its next great chapter. Turn to page 18 for an update on the school's most ambitious undertaking ever, the Simulation Hospital, and how our committed donors, at all levels, are instrumental in making this dream a reality.

## A Legacy of Leadership and Academic Excellence

Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano, who fostered monumental growth and impressive improvement during her 13 years at the helm of the SONHS, will step down at the end of the fall 2016 semester. Peragallo Montano will become dean of the School of Nursing at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

“Nena’s leadership and the contributions of the school’s outstanding faculty led to many significant accomplishments,” said Thomas J. LeBlanc, University of Miami executive vice president and provost, noting that Peragallo Montano “elevated the School of Nursing and Health Studies into the ranks of the nation’s best.”

During her tenure, Peragallo Montano helped usher in a new era for the school, leading its move from a cramped World War II-era building to the M. Christine Schwartz Center for Nursing and Health Studies, a modern, 53,000-square-foot, four-story facility with smart classrooms and cutting-edge clinical simulation and research laboratories for which she raised a substantial amount of funding.

Assuming leadership of the SONHS at a time when an acute shortage of nurses began to affect the health care sector at alarming rates, Peragallo Montano rolled up her sleeves and got to work. She instituted new programs to address the crisis, including an Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (A.B.S.N.) that allows students with bachelor’s degrees in other fields to earn a nursing degree in one year. The A.B.S.N. is now one of the school’s most sought-after degree programs and has delivered a cadre of well-prepared nursing professionals to the field.

Peragallo Montano spearheaded other curricular expansion, too, introducing Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) and Bachelor of Science in Health Science (B.S.H.S.) programs; Florida’s first B.S.N.-to-D.N.P. in Nurse Anesthesia track; and South Florida’s first Bachelor of Science in Public Health (B.S.P.H.) degree.

Student enrollment at the school tripled during her deanship, and its Master of Science in Nursing Practice (M.S.N.) and D.N.P. programs are now ranked in *U.S. News & World Report’s* 2017 Best Graduate Schools issue. Peragallo Montano ramped up academic and clinical practice standards, which led to record passing rates on the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses.

Employing her standing as an internationally recognized nursing scientist, Peragallo Montano led the 2007 formation of the school’s Center of Excellence for Health Disparities Research: El Centro, funded by the first NIH P60 grant awarded to a school of nursing. Today the school is a leading recipient of National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants: No. 1 in Florida and No. 22 nationwide in NIH funding among nursing schools. The school is also designated a Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization Collaborating Centre, one of only ten such nursing centers in the U.S.

Recalling how she was welcomed into the University family in 2003, Peragallo Montano said, “I came here with a vision: to leverage the singular strengths of the School of Nursing and Health Studies to elevate its national and global standing, promote academic excellence, and prepare health care leaders for the 21st century. Through the remarkable dedication, talent, and generosity of our students, faculty, community

partners, and friends, we have achieved this dream. I leave the U with great pride and a firm confidence in the spectacular future that lies ahead for the School of Nursing and Health Studies.”

“I leave the U with great pride and a firm confidence in the spectacular future that lies ahead for the School of Nursing and Health Studies.”

Long a proponent of the benefits that simulation-based scenarios offer in preventing mistakes before nursing students work in live clinical situations, Peragallo Montano pushed for the creation of a Simulation Hospital at UM. The school will open such a facility next year, bringing her efforts to fruition.



## Founder of Nurse Practitioner Role Loretta Ford Visits SONHS



**Out-of-the-box thinking** helped establish Loretta C. Ford as one of the American Academy of Nursing’s Living Legends (1999), an honor bestowed on nurses who have made extraordinary contributions to health care. Ford, pictured above center in green, founded the nurse practitioner (NP) movement in 1965 in response to a physician shortage in rural Colorado. More than 222,000 NPs are now practicing in the United States.

“She’s a trailblazer,” says Associate Dean Mary Hooshmand, Ph.D. ’10, who helped organize Ford’s visit to the school in March. In addition to approximately 150 students and faculty, nurses from three local hospitals joined the discussion via the school’s e-learning platform.

During the discussion, Ford drew from her own experiences to encourage nurses to think innovatively. “The

profession has expanded beyond my wildest dreams,” Ford said.

“In forging the NP role, she really addressed a need,” Hooshmand says. “As nurse educators we need to expose students to these courageous pioneers of our profession—and encourage future nurses to emulate Loretta Ford by seeking creative ways to transform health care into a person-centered experience.”

## AAMN Chapter Hosts National Meeting

**Reflecting its commitment** to diversity and inclusivity in nursing education, the School of Nursing and Health Studies was selected to host the annual conference of the American Assembly for Men in Nursing (AAMN) at the Hyatt Regency in Miami, September 22-24, 2016. The AAMN is a national advocacy group that seeks to shape practice, education, research, and leadership for men in nursing while advancing men’s health. The SONHS houses the first chapter of the AAMN in Florida.

Pictured below with AAMN board members Ed Halloran, left, and Bob Patterson, right, SONHS Dean Nilda

(Nena) Peragallo Montano delivered opening keynote address for the conference, titled “Shifting the Tides: Promoting Diversity and Inclusivity in Nursing.” Considering the school has a 56 percent minority student population and exceeds national averages in terms of male faculty and male student enrollment, the theme is particularly relevant to the SONHS.

“Diversity and inclusivity is interwoven into the academic, research, and service mission of our school,” says Associate Professor of Clinical Anthony Roberson, faculty advisor for the UM chapter of AAMN, who also serves on the AAMN’s national executive board.

“It was an honor for a student organization like ours to have a role in hosting such an exciting three days,” says AAMN ’Canes President Brandon Hall, an accelerated-track nursing student who will graduate in December. “It gives our school’s AAMN chapter a very visible role in the national nursing community.”



## D.N.P. Accreditation Extended to 2026



The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) has accredited the School of Nursing and Health Studies’

Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) program for ten years, extending the accreditation to June 30, 2026. The D.N.P. is a terminal degree that represents the highest level of clinical nursing practice. The program was originally accredited by the CCNE in 2011.

In preparation for full accreditation, the school completed an extensive self-study, followed by an on-site evaluation in October 2015 by a team of CCNE reviewers who issued a report on their findings. The CCNE Board of Commissioners determined the D.N.P. program met all accreditation criteria.

## Hosting Hemispheric Transformation

In December 2012, the United Nations General Assembly called upon all governments to “urgently and significantly scale up efforts to accelerate the transition towards universal access to affordable and quality health care services.”

In the Caribbean, nurses and midwives, who deliver most health care services, are best positioned to support achievement of this aim.

“To transform health systems and achieve universal health coverage, it is essential to develop an appropriately educated, regulated, and motivated nursing workforce,” says Johis Ortega, B.S.N. '02, M.S.N. '06, Ph.D. '11, SONHS associate dean for Master's Programs and Global Initiatives and deputy director of its Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) Collaborating Centre. “To accomplish that, we need skilled nursing educators and competency-based curricula.”

The Caribbean came one step closer to this goal last summer, when leaders of nursing education from 18 island nations traveled to Miami for a workshop targeted at achieving Caribbean nursing

education reform. The SONHS PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centre partnered with the PAHO/WHO Office of Caribbean Subregional Program Coordination, based in Barbados, to host the June 27-29 Subregional Workshop on Capacity Building for Nurse Educators at the school.

Besides facilitating the venue and infrastructure support, SONHS faculty members served as key conceptualization and programmatic collaborators in this effort to create a nurse educator action plan for the Caribbean. Discussions centered on nurse educator competencies, nursing education reform, standardization of nursing curricula, and accreditation of nursing education programs across Caribbean nursing schools.

“We have a long history of joining forces with our Caribbean neighbors to capacitate nursing education and health

care workforce development in the region,” Ortega says. “With our location in Miami, the ‘gateway city’ connecting their countries and the U.S., and given our designation as a PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centre, the School of Nursing and Health Studies was a natural host for this event. This activity also aligns with UM’s vision to build lasting academic bridges across our Caribbean and Latin American hemisphere.”

While the formal meeting report is not yet available, Erica Wheeler of PAHO/WHO’s Office of Caribbean Subregional Program Coordination, who helped lead the meeting, issued a list of areas where participating countries’ representatives expressed special need. Technical assistance in the form of webinars, online courses, and other educational innovations to reach Caribbean nurses ranked high on the list. Wheeler also said, “I want to thank the UM School of Nursing and Health Studies for its great hospitality and collaborative spirit in hosting this meeting.”

Collaborative workshop delegates from the PAHO/WHO Office of Caribbean Subregional Program Coordination with faculty and staff from the SONHS PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centre.



UM students cook and share healthy meals during National Public Health Week.

## SONHS Celebrates National Public Health Week

The SONHS observed National Public Health Week from April 4 to 8 with campus-wide events to raise awareness of health issues.

The week kicked off with a cooking and nutrition class at the Patti and Allan Herbert Wellness Center, organized by health education intern and senior Asmaa Odeh, creator of Food for U, a program that teaches participants to cook nutritionally dense meals.

After a lecture by SONHS Research Assistant Professor Linda Parker on nourishing food choices, nutritionist and cookbook author Chef Robyn Webb taught participants how to prepare two delicious entrees—a New Orleans creole gumbo and an Asian stir-fry—using healthy ingredients. The class ended with a shared meal and discussion.

“The students learned how food choices affect their performance, and that anyone can cook,” Odeh says.

“I learned it’s easy to create a healthy meal using simple ingredients,” adds senior health sciences student Christine Impieri.

Tours of the University’s Well ‘Canes Farmers Market, held every Wednesday on the Coral Gables campus, taught attendees about crops grown by local farmers and

the benefits of eating organically. The vendors, who whipped up fruit smoothies and cooked hot dishes to order, also responded to questions about the diversity of ethnic foods offered.

“Our participants learned to appreciate our region’s agricultural bounty,” Parker says. “Many didn’t know that our neighboring farming community of Homestead is a center of the national farm-to-table



Linda Parker

movement. Our students enjoyed a hands-on activity that delivered valuable health-enhancing information to the public. We want them to take this lesson into their future as public health professionals.”

Health Studies students also set up information tables with games and posters in the Student Center breezeway. They shared their knowledge with passersby about simple things everyone can do to improve their own and the community’s health—from hand washing to recycling—and gave away T-shirts, water bottles, hand sanitizer, and fresh fruit.

“Education is key to addressing health issues and creating change,” says Impieri, who is president of the Health Studies Student Association. “That was our goal, and we all did a great job!”

## El Centro Cohosts ‘It’s On Us’ Campus Resource Fair

In a unified voice, UM organizations came together to speak out against violence and sexual assault at the It’s On Us Campus Resource Fair, held on February 24.

The fair increased students’ awareness of resources to prevent, treat, and educate the public about sexual assault and intimate partner violence among college students. It was timed just before Spring Break, a week when college students are known to engage in risky behavior.

Under the leadership of the SONHS Center of Excellence for Health Disparities Research: El Centro and the UM President’s Coalition on Sexual Violence Prevention and Education, a plethora of campus and community-based organizations convened to support the cause, including the UM Student Health Center, UM Counseling Center, Coordinated Victims Assistance Center, Survivors’ Pathway, University Compliance, MUJER, Roxcy Bolton Rape Treatment Center, UM Police, Futures Without Violence, Switchboard of Miami, The Journey Institute, Women’s Fund of Miami-Dade, and UM Sexual Assault Response Team.

“It is incumbent upon all citizens, but especially on those of us who have chosen health care as a profession, to join forces in creating an environment in which sexual assault is unacceptable and survivors are supported,” says SONHS Assistant Professor Jessica Roberts Williams, a violence prevention researcher and member of the UM President’s Coalition (see page 31). “The Campus Resource Fair brought us one step closer to that goal.”



# Jonas Scholarships Enable Emerging Nurse Leaders to Make Their Mark

**Three alumni** of the SONHS Ph.D. in nursing program who are making their mark as nurse leaders in research, teaching, and service—Lori Schirle, Ph.D. '16, Kimberly Hires, Ph.D. '12, and Debbie Anglade, M.S.N. '10, Ph.D. '14—are united by a common thread: They're all Jonas Nurse Scholars.

An initiative of the Jonas Center for Nursing and Veterans Healthcare, the Jonas Nurse Scholar program provides doctoral students with leadership development, networking support, and two-year scholarships to prepare them for faculty and leadership roles in nursing schools and clinical settings. In addition to completing a required leadership project, Jonas Scholars attend a leadership conference in Washington, D.C., where they forge enduring professional networks. The program is helping to advance the recommendations of the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) "Future of Nursing" report to increase the number of doctorate-prepared nurse leaders.

After a 31-year career as a nurse and nurse anesthetist, and while a SONHS Jonas Scholar, Schirle wrote a successful leadership project grant proposal funded by the Florida Center for Nursing to explore the county-by-county

economic impact of changing legislation that restricts advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) practice in the State of Florida.

She credits the Jonas Scholars program with launching her research career immediately upon graduation: "I gained valuable grant writing and



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research experience that helped position me for a postdoctoral fellowship."

Now a health services research postdoctoral fellow at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing, she's learning to conduct health services research using large databases to generate findings useful to legislators and policymakers.

"My study will look at opioid prescribing practices of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) in states that have restrictive or nonrestrictive regulations," Schirle says. "My goal is to write a fundable health services research grant by the end of my fellowship."

She adds, "The Jonas program was a breath of fresh air that provided the

assistance I needed, when I needed it the most. If not for the financial support, I wouldn't have been able to complete my Ph.D. in three years."

After several years as an assistant professor at Florida State University, where Hires explored the relationship between cultural identity and HIV risk behaviors in populations with African ancestry, she accepted a clinical assistant professor position at Georgia State University in Atlanta that allows her to focus on teaching.

"I love teaching and mentoring students and wanted the flexibility to do more of that," Hires says. "Having the support of the Jonas Center puts you light years ahead of where you would have been without it. I had a tenure-track faculty job waiting for me when I graduated. The Jonas Scholar program opened my eyes to how I can have an impact in teaching and entrepreneurship because we learn to identify and contribute to solving problems in nursing."

As a result, Hires launched her own consulting firm two years ago to help address the problem of retention in nursing, especially with millennials who come to nursing with different needs and expecta-

tions than prior generations. Working with hospitals and nurses, she helps identify how to improve job satisfaction at every stage of the nursing career, from entry level to CEO. "My focus is on how to teach them—and how to keep them," she says.

In 2013, the Florida cohort of Jonas Scholars was one of only four nationally chosen to present their projects to the national Jonas Nurse Leaders Scholars Conference in Washington, D.C.

"We were really proud of that," says Anglade, now a SONHS assistant professor, who represented Florida while she was a Ph.D. student.

Anglade's leadership project connected her to the Florida Action Coalition (FAC), the state entity responsible for implementing the IOM's "Future of Nursing" recommendations. As part of a FAC team, she surveyed Florida's nurses and identified a need for succession planning to address the significant numbers of nurse leaders soon to retire—and a corresponding need to prepare new nurse leaders.

"As a result, the FAC received a capacity-building grant to prepare nurses to enter the leadership arena by becoming board members," reports Anglade. "The program has already graduated its first cohort of new leaders."

The survey also found a lack of racial and ethnic representation in Florida's nursing workforce, leading to Anglade's involvement in the FAC's Diversity Council, which works to diversify Florida's nursing leadership.

Anglade credits the Jonas program for positioning her to join the SONHS faculty and broadening her circle of colleagues. She has emerged as a nurse leader at statewide and national levels through her work with the FAC and selection for membership on the Jonas Scholars Advisory Council. She continues to research the issues of nurse job satisfaction, and how compassion fatigue impacts patient safety.



SONHS alumni panelists discuss burgeoning career opportunities in the nursing profession. Left to right: Lissette Exposito, Jackie Gonzalez, Valerie Manno-Shurr, Natalia Villegas.

## Bedside and Beyond

A sitting judge. The senior vice president of a South Florida hospital. A successful local entrepreneur. An HIV researcher. What do these four individuals have in common? They are all nurses who graduated from the SONHS.

The SONHS Alumni Association brought these divergent professionals together on March 16 for an interactive panel discussion and networking session attended by alumni, community partners, faculty, and current students. The intent was to highlight the wide range of career options available in the nursing field.

The audience heard how Lissette Exposito, B.S.N. '86, combined her business and nursing education to become CEO of her own accountable-care organization. They listened as the Honorable Valerie Manno-Shurr, B.S.N. '88, J.D. '92, recounted her career journey from nurse to lawyer to circuit court judge. Jackie Gonzalez, M.S.N. '87, D.N.P. '13, senior vice president and chief nursing officer of Nicklaus Children's Hospital, explained her role in leadership and management of nursing, as well as in clinical quality improvement. Natalia Villegas, Ph.D. '12, a faculty scientist and SONHS assistant professor of clinical, described her use of technology to design and deliver HIV prevention interventions.

"The event was a great way to showcase the heights to which their nursing education has taken our alums," says Alumni Association President Debbie Anglade, M.S.N. '10, Ph.D. '14.



## Nurse Scientist Funded to Advance Program Implementation Quality

A newly funded National Institute of Nursing Research minority supplement grant will enable SONHS Assistant Professor Yui Matsuda to work with her mentor, Anne Norris, to explore how the skills an individual brings to one-on-one intervention encounters impact implementation quality.

“Programs have to be carried out correctly, or they won’t be effective,” says Matsuda. “Implementation quality helps us understand whether programs are being implemented in the way they were designed.”

Matsuda is working with data from Norris’s Mighty Girls program, which is designed for 7th-grade girls. However, her results will have implications for nurses and other health care providers working in a variety of care settings where interventions are delivered one on one.

“The challenge with one-on-one intervention is that implementation should be tailored to fit the skills individuals bring to the intervention setting. If we don’t tailor, we treat everyone the same, which is not effective,” says Matsuda. “If we do tailor, we can either boost implementation quality, or we can jeopardize it. I am working on how to detect when we are boosting it.”



R.M. LAMAZARE-ROMERO



**Pamela Garrison**, co-chair of the University of Miami’s School of Nursing and Health Studies’ *Momentum2* campaign, was honored at the Plaza Health Network Foundation’s Seventh Annual Women of Distinction & Caring Luncheon on November 17, held at the Jungle Island Treetop Ballroom in Miami. A long-time nurse, Garrison has over 50 years of experience in health care, having worked at Jackson Memorial Hospital, South Miami Hospital, Doctors Hospital, and Baptist Hospital. She serves as a board

## Pamela Garrison Receives Woman of Distinction & Caring Award

member for the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired and for the Florida Nature Conservancy.

The Women of Distinction & Caring Luncheon honors and celebrates women who have made significant differences in the lives of others locally and globally through their leadership, volunteerism, professional work, and philanthropy. Proceeds support programs and services that benefit Plaza Health Network patients and seniors in the community.

## Celebrating Thelma Gibson

**University of Miami** trustee and SONHS visiting committee member Thelma Vernell Anderson Gibson was honored by the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce on May 10 with the AXA Advisors Healthcare Heroes’ Lifetime Achievement Award.

The award recognizes those who have extraordinarily impacted the South Florida health care community. Gibson became a registered nurse and attained leadership positions at a time when racial segregation was the norm and women were not expected to earn college degrees. Later she served as president of the Theodore Roosevelt Gibson Memorial Fund and the Thelma Gibson Health Initiative, Inc., addressing the unmet needs of South Florida’s



disenfranchised populations.

“At a time when it was uncommon to find either women or racial minorities in high-level roles, Ms. Gibson’s story serves as an inspiration to me, and to all our students seeking to attain their goals in spite of life’s obstacles,” says Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano. “She is truly heroic, and we are proud that she is a member of our school family.”

## Focusing on Holistic Care for Black Men

“The saying ‘tomorrow is not promised’ is absolutely true for a young black boy growing up in the projects,” says Julius Johnson, III.

The 32-year-old SONHS Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) student grew up in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, one of New York City’s poorest and highest crime neighborhoods.

Johnson notes that his extended family, who still live in Brownsville, made all the difference in his life. “They are my backbone, my life support. Sometimes a person has to leave to make a difference. They told me, ‘Answer your calling, and when you get back, we’ll be here for you with open arms.’”

From an early age, Johnson knew his calling was to help people. He considered being a firefighter or a doctor. Then one day, while waiting for his father, a critical care nurse, to finish his shift, Johnson witnessed the medical team’s response to a code. “That turned me on to nursing,” he says. “I decided that was exactly what I wanted to do.”

Johnson earned his B.S.N. in upstate New York and began working in critical care at a New York City hospital. By this time he had begun to formulate an ambitious plan—to open a clinic in Brownsville. He knew an advanced degree would help him achieve his goal.

After earning a master’s degree as a family nurse practitioner, Johnson is now pursuing a D.N.P. at the University of Miami’s School of Nursing and Health Studies while simultaneously working for one of New York City’s largest medical house calls services. He provides primary care services to homebound Medicare and Medicaid patients, as well as transitional care for patients recently discharged from the hospital.

Johnson is one of several D.N.P. candidates who commute farther than across town to participate in the program. Once a month, he leaves work on a Thursday evening and flies to Miami to attend classes from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday through Sunday. He returns home to New York on Sunday night, arriving in time to catch a few hours of sleep before he’s due at work on Monday. He admits the airfare and hotel stays add up, and he’s already used all of his vacation days at work, but “At the end of the day, it’s worth it,” he says. “You have to be willing to make an investment in yourself.”

“My goal is to create an organization—Black Male Enrichment Network (B-MEN)—that will provide holistic care for black men and close some of the educational and health disparity gaps that we face,” Johnson says. “Ideally, B-MEN will link health care with social services and education specialists to create

a nurturing environment for black men to develop mentally, physically, and spiritually.”

Johnson credits his mentors at the SONHS with challenging him to advance his ideas from the conceptual stage toward a workable and sustainable program.

“At the University of Miami, I have learned what a D.N.P. really means,” Johnson says. “It teaches you how to build, create, take the evidence, translate it, implement it, and evaluate it. Once you can do that with something, you are capable of doing it with anything else within the nursing spectrum.”

Johnson’s D.N.P. scholarly project focuses on high-intensity transitional care at safety-net hospitals to help prevent readmissions. He is currently working with a New York City hospital where he is translating evidence from previous research into a pilot program, which he hopes to deploy throughout the NYC hospital system.

“We have a saying in our communities: ‘Get out of the hood,’” adds Johnson. “Nursing was my way out of the hood, and now nursing will be my way back in to make a difference.”



# Public Health House Calls Address Critical Needs

By Yolanda Mancilla

University of Miami public health and engineering students team up in rural Ecuador to conduct health surveys, test ground water, and connect sewer lines in an interdisciplinary effort to combat malnutrition and disease.



**It's nearing midday**, and a research team of University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) Bachelor of Science in Public Health (B.S.P.H.) students are making their way along a dirt road in the small village of Las Mercedes, Ecuador, located near the bustling southwest coastal town of Huaquillas, a crossing point into Peru. As they walk under a glaring, relentless sun, dust rises from the road. It's more than 90 degrees, and with few trees or other vegetation growing in the arid terrain, there's no shade to offer refuge from the oppressive heat.

The students pass brightly colored, one-story houses of blue and yellow, checking their map for the house they're visiting next. It's a small shack, home to an extended family of seven adults and children. A community translator working with the team calls a greeting from the gate, "¿A ver?" A woman comes out to welcome them.

The team is conducting a survey to assess the community's health needs. It's part of a global project that's bringing SONHS public health undergraduates together with students in the Miller School of Medicine Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) program and College of Engineering students in an unprecedented international service collaboration.



*Faculty mentor Diego Deleon conducts a door-to-door needs assessment survey in rural Ecuador about drinking water and sanitation, illness and chronic disease, access to health care, and more.*

Their day began hours ago at a small hotel in Huaquillas, where they piled into several “mototaxis”—three-wheel scooter-cars—for the ten-minute ride to Las Mercedes. Throughout the morning, two research teams of B.S.P.H. and M.P.H. students have been walking from house to house, interviewing residents about their health needs and collecting water samples.

Now, in their last visit before lunch, the students are dusty, tired, and thirsty, but exhilarated.

“What makes the Ecuador project unique is that it’s applied fieldwork rather than observational,” says SONHS faculty member Diego Deleon, who serves as the project’s faculty mentor. “The students feel like they’re doing something for the community and helping to make a difference.”

**“In the U.S., we take our sewage systems for granted,” says Bates. “But for those we are serving in Ecuador, it’s life altering.”**

“There are few global projects that allow undergraduates to get this much real-life experience,” says Melissa Lipnick, a junior B.S.P.H. student drawn to the project’s hands-on approach. Like the other participating SONHS students, Lipnick is enrolled in Deleon’s three-credit Global Health Practicum course, which requires students to participate in an international project.

While the research team interviews the family, a five-member technical team of UM engineering students gathers in the backyard of a house on the other side of town. Jessica Chabot, team co-leader and senior industrial engineering student, supervises another student taking precise measurements of the slope and distance between the home’s outhouse and the manhole that serves as access point to the town’s sewage line. They are making sure there’s sufficient slope to connect the

outhouse to the sewage line. Spiders and roaches scramble as co-leader Nathan Bates, a senior biomedical engineering major and SONHS public health minor, helps the others on the team remove the heavy concrete manhole cover to check the shaft that leads down to the sewage line.

The group is on a mission to ensure that every house in the village is connected to the main sewage line, which was installed by the local government in 2013. The engineering students are all UM chapter members of Engineers Without Borders (EWB), the organization that has already supported the connection of two-thirds of the village’s 450 homes to the sewage line. Today, the engineering team is assessing what’s needed to connect the remaining houses.

The rest of the day is just as demanding as the morning. After a home-cooked midday meal at the home of a Las Mercedes community leader, the three SONHS, medical school, and engineering student teams head back out, visiting several more homes before returning to their hotel in Huaquillas. There, the teams compare notes and review the day’s surveys over a shared dinner. In the evening they analyze the water samples collected that day.

## A shared goal to improve quality of life

The 14 UM students—six from the SONHS—traveled to Ecuador from May 7 to 17 for the ten-day mission, but the different disciplines first came together more than two years ago. In

2014, engineering major and SONHS public health minor Natasha Koermer approached Deleon about an EWB project. Intrigued, he traveled to Ecuador and helped dig ditches to connect Las Mercedes homes to the sewage line. (See Heartbeat, Spring 2016).

Deleon came home determined to organize an interdisciplinary project for SONHS B.S.P.H., medical school M.P.H., and engineering students to work together in a real-world initiative to improve population health. He soon recruited the teams of students, and the project took flight.

“This is known as service learning, and it presents an exciting opportunity because, for the first time, our institution’s undergraduate and graduate public health students came together as a team in the field to work towards the same purpose,” says Deleon. “This project teaches them leadership skills, as well as the role of civic engagement in creating sustainable solutions to health issues. These are lessons they can apply in their future public health careers.”

“Our shared goal was to improve the quality of life for the entire community,” says grad student Andrew Fisher, who was completing his M.P.H. capstone study during the project. “The engineers wanted to know how their work was impacting quality of life and whether certain diseases could be prevented, but they didn’t know how to assess the community’s health. That’s where we public health students came in.”

The public health student team set out to learn about the community’s needs and use their gained knowledge to design a sustainable, population health-focused intervention that would result in better quality of life for the local residents. The team developed a research-based, culturally competent needs assessment survey for Las Mercedes that focused on five areas: drinking water and sanitation; prevalence of illness and chronic disease;

access to health care; diet and exercise; and perceptions and interest about healthy living. A Springboard Award granted to Fisher by the Miller School of Medicine’s Department of Public Health Sciences helped pay for translators, materials, and equipment to test the water.

While on the ground in Las Mercedes, the public health and engineering students worked side by side to conduct 241 health surveys in five days—an average of 48 per day. They also continually updated their existing maps, noting homes that were abandoned or that didn’t appear on the maps.

## Overcoming obstacles and developing solutions

The families in Las Mercedes face many obstacles to getting connected to the sewage line, including lack of money to buy the pipes, being unable to install the pipes on their own, or being too far downhill from the line. To address these challenges, the students raised funds through EWB to purchase supplies and finance repair of structural elevation problems. They

supported the town’s economy by purchasing all needed materials locally.

“It’s one thing to lecture to public health students about how regional economics or government policies affect the health of communities across the globe,” says Deleon. “It’s quite another for them to experience this firsthand and participate in developing a solution. The entire process of conducting the needs assessment, and then helping the town build its infrastructure, showed the students the value of giving local residents the tools to improve their community’s health and chart their own town’s future.”



SONHS public health and College of Engineering students work side by side to conduct health surveys, test ground water, and connect sewer lines in Las Mercedes, Ecuador.





*UM students in Ecuador return to a temporary lab set up at their hotel to test ground water samples and track baseline data gathered during daily fieldwork, putting into practice what they are learning in their coursework.*

## Continuity ensures sustainability

The survey yielded a wealth of information that will help guide the team in coming years. “We now have the baseline data to perform an intervention,” says Fisher.

For example, the survey found that many families are eating a diet high in carbohydrates and sugars, such as rice, soda, and bottled juices, which may be contributing to a pattern of poor nutrition. The team also observed challenges such as obesity and teen pregnancy and a high prevalence of mosquito-borne diseases such as dengue fever and chikungunya. But most encouragingly, almost every resident was eager to learn about nutrition and healthy living.

The students are enthusiastic about future possibilities. Nutrition can be improved through education on healthy eating, and a community garden with an irrigation system can help residents grow their own vegetables in the arid soil. A well-equipped park can provide a safe place for children and adults to exercise. And health educators can teach families about topics from sex education and teen pregnancy prevention to how diseases are transmitted and how drinking water can be purified.

Next summer, they’ll explore new collaborative projects that can help meet community needs identified through the survey.

## “Having the different disciplines work together offers the most holistic approach to solving a problem.”

The work is as grueling as it is urgent. Most homes have outhouses with aboveground septic tanks, which often overflow. “The claylike soil doesn’t absorb the waste, and that creates standing water,” says Bates. “As a result, the groundwater that families drink can be contaminated with human waste, and stagnant water in backyards becomes a breeding ground for mosquitoes that can transmit diseases across the population. But once every outhouse is connected to the sewage line, instead of overflowing, sewage will pass through the line.”

“In the U.S., we take our sewage systems for granted,” says Bates. “But for them, it’s life altering.”

wellness-enhancing interventions. We look at the same problem through different lenses, and contribute different pieces towards the resolution.”

“We learned public health surveying techniques from the public health students,” says Bates. “Having the different disciplines work together offers the most holistic approach to solving a problem.”

Deleon agrees. “Participating in this initiative shows students they can leverage their passions in combination with their acquired knowledge to connect what they are learning in our academic programs, and apply these in practical fashion to improve the well-being of an actual population. That’s how it’s done in the real world of interdisciplinary practice.”

## Same problem, different lenses

The Ecuador project provided the public health students with a unique opportunity to learn about how engineering can impact public health needs. “We go to a home and discover the water is contaminated by raw sewage, but we don’t know how to fix that,” says Lipnick. “However, the engineering students do. Conversely, they need our public health students’ perspective in areas like disease incidence, obesity, and poor nutrition because even after the sewage lines are connected, this town needs other

The participating students agree that it’s important to participate in global development projects because they have an opportunity to put into practice what they’re learning in class, and to develop leadership, fieldwork and communication skills.

“We saw what life is like in a poor, rural community in Latin America, where a family of six lives on \$120 a month,” says Lipnick. “We saw people struggling to put food on the table and to keep their kids healthy. We learned to identify conditions such as malnutrition, and to see how families cope with health challenges. We learned about social issues as well as health issues.”

# BUILDING THE FUTURE

Generosity of donors helps to fund dream facility

By Yolanda Mancilla and Meredith Camel, M.F.A. '12

**MIAMI'S EARLY MORNING SUN** slants across the steel frame of a half-finished five-story building, casting long shadows along the pavement as faculty and students begin to arrive at the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) for another fulfilling day of teaching, research, and study. The construction workers are already busy at their myriad tasks.

As the day unfolds, the noisy sounds of construction are a constant companion to all. But week after week, as the edifice takes shape before our eyes, we know we're witnessing the realization of a dream—a Simulation Hospital that will revolutionize health care education.

The brainchild of Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano, the dream evolved from idea to blueprint to groundbreaking with help from University of Miami leaders, administrators, architects, and engineers.

At the heart of the dream is the compassionate spirit of the donors who were inspired by the vision, and moved by its possibilities.

Major gifts laid the solid foundation that raised the dream from the ground. Gifts large and small supported the dream, as firmly as the beams that now support the structure.

But we're not finished yet!

The campaign to ensure the full realization of the dream is ongoing, and there are still many opportunities for caring friends to contribute. Gifts of any amount will help us move forward.

*Heartbeat* spoke to three very different donors about the impact of health care education on their lives and their reasons for supporting the Simulation Hospital.

## Gift for the Future

The Mirantes of Ormond Beach, Florida, are truly a 'Canes family. Joseph, a physician and partner at Coastal Ear, Nose & Throat, P.A., and Lisa, a health care technician, are the proud parents of three

Miami Hurricanes: Eldest daughter Lara, B.S. '16, is a biology graduate, senior Alyssa is a nursing student, and Samantha is a sophomore studying civil engineering.

"Our daughters have greatly benefited from all the U has to offer," says Joseph Mirante. "And as their parents, we are thrilled at the big-school opportunities packaged in a small-school feel. They've had access to top-level faculty at a great research university, and also the excitement and fun of being a 'Cane."

After meeting Peragallo Montano last year, Mirante toured the SONHS simulation labs. In February, the family made a major gift to the Simulation Hospital.

"My wife and I are both health care

providers," says Mirante. "In fact, we met during training. We know quality educational experiences assure first-rate care and outcomes for patients. A great challenge facing educators, however, is that real-world patient encounters are episodic, and students can miss out on many learning opportunities. The Simulation Hospital will vastly increase the depth and breadth of training exercises and is an innovative, grand-scale approach to attaining excellence in nursing education in the 21st century.

"Lisa and I are privileged to have a part in advancing the school and a health care education program that's already topflight," he adds. "We're enthusiastic about the Simulation Hospital and the benefits to all those who will learn there."



**A** The second floor of the new Simulation Hospital begins to take shape during a flurry of summer construction. **B** A birds-eye view of the construction site from the M. Christine Schwartz Center for Nursing and Health Studies. **C** Utility trenches lead the way to the new Simulation Hospital. **D** Excavation crews clear the quad and ready the site for concrete pouring. **E** Architectural rendering of the front of the new Simulation Hospital as it will appear on opening day. **F** Premie HAL is one of the latest simulation tools that nursing students will train with in the new Simulation Hospital. **G** Rendering of a new lounge and balcony overlooking the campus.



of the school's *Momentum2* campaign] is a nurse who cared for my mother many years ago, and has been a friend ever since, so it was my great pleasure to donate to the new facility."

## Gift of Gratitude

When Quentin Derryberry III, UM assistant vice president for alumni relations, first set eyes on his newborn daughter, Farren, she weighed only 3 pounds, 4 ounces. Her mother's dangerously high blood pressure prompted doctors to perform a Cesarean section ten weeks before the pregnancy reached full term. Derryberry spent 12 hours a day at the hospital for ten weeks until Farren was healthy enough to go home.

Premature birth affects one in ten babies born in the United States. Nursing students are rarely allowed to provide these fragile, high-risk patients with hands-on care during clinical practice experiences. To give students these vital neonatal intensive care experiences, the SONHS launched a CaneFunder campaign to purchase a Premie HAL—a tetherless, wireless, and fully responsive simulator.

"We have other newborn simulators, but they are not the right size or weight to simulate preemie complications," says Susana Barroso-Fernandez, Ph.D. '16, director of simulation operations. "One of the goals of simulation is to create the most realistic environment possible. That would be very hard if we had to ask our students to imagine a ten-pound simulator is really a two-pound preemie."

Thanks to Derryberry and other CaneFunder donors, plus a commitment from the manufacturer, Gaumard, to help underwrite the cost, students can now practice procedures such as oral and nasal intubation, resuscitation therapy, ventilation, and diagnostic assessment using the school's new Premie HAL.

"I realized her survival and her potential were wrapped up in her nursing

care," Derryberry says with gratitude for the care Farren, now 4, received during her first few weeks of life. "It's amazing that all of a sudden you have this little—thing, and there are people working in the hospital who are as in love with your child as you are. It's hard to believe this is their nine-to-five job because it has such amazing impact. It's life and death."

## Gifts from Caring Faculty

SONHS faculty members are generous too, often contributing to the Simulation Hospital in memory of loved ones, or in support of a cutting-edge vision of science and pedagogy. Through their donations to the United Way—designated for the Simulation Hospital—they donate because they recognize the difference the facility will make in the lives of their students. Their heartfelt personal donations demonstrate their dedication to the students who will become tomorrow's health care professionals.

**TOGETHER**, these compelling snapshots depict how the confluence of all kinds and various levels of support has synergistically launched a groundbreaking dream. From students who choose the U and the far-seeing parents who love them, to friends from our community who value world-class nursing care, to our own devoted administrators and faculty, the building blocks of small and large gifts have come together to revolutionize health care education right here in our own backyard.

"All donations, regardless of size, have collectively made it possible to break ground, and to come this far," says Dean Peragallo Montano. "We couldn't have done it without every one of our generous supporters."

To contribute to the Simulation Hospital, please contact Karissa Grasty, assistant dean of development at 305-284-1563 or [kgrasty@miami.edu](mailto:kgrasty@miami.edu). Or donate online: [http://www.miami.edu/sonhs/index.php/simulation\\_hospital/giving](http://www.miami.edu/sonhs/index.php/simulation_hospital/giving)

## Gift of Friendship

Coral Gables resident and U alumna Joan Getz, B.Ed. '50, made her donation to the Simulation Hospital in memory of the late R. Kirk Landon, a longtime contributor to the University and the SONHS.

Landon was so inspired by the vision of the Simulation Hospital that he created a challenge gift to help launch the dream into reality. He was "a great friend and generous donor," says Dean Peragallo Montano.

Getz agrees. "Kirk was a great philanthropist who wanted to encourage others to support our future nurses. His longtime partner Pam [Garrison, co-chair

# Trip to India Yields Inspiring Insights

By Maggie Van Dyke

“**Eye opening**” is how Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (A.B.S.N.) student Fatima Ow describes the School of Nursing and Health Studies’ first immersion trip to India. A country of 1.3 billion people, India is the fastest-growing major economy in the world. Yet almost 30 percent of its population lives in poverty, mostly in rural villages, according to India’s census data. 🌸 Ow was impressed with the dedication of India’s physicians and nurses and how health officials have found ways to deliver needed care despite widespread illiteracy, a lack of transportation, and other challenges. For instance, when visiting a rural health clinic, Ow learned about village-accredited social health activists, called ASHAs. Mostly women, the ASHAs are trained by the government as health educators and paid small stipends to recruit 1,000 fellow villagers to give birth in a hospital, come to the clinic for immunizations, and take other healthy measures. 🌸 “Here in the United States, we have all this technology,” Ow says. “But there, they depend on one person to go out and round up all these people and do whatever is needed to improve health.”

University of Miami’s new international exchange agreement with Manipal University in India expands study abroad opportunities for undergraduate nursing students, including how to incorporate ancient healing traditions into conventional medicine.

Ow was one of 15 SONHS students to travel to India in August, as part of the SONHS’ most recently launched international exchange agreement with Manipal University, which is located in the southwest state of Karnataka.

During the two-week trip, led by Associate Dean for Master’s Programs and Global Initiatives Johis Ortega, B.S.N. ’02, M.S.N. ’06, Ph.D. ’10, and faculty member Diego Deleon, the students attended seminars about health care in India and visited hospitals, rural health clinics, and the public health department. They also fit in a tour of the Taj Mahal, rode in rickshaws and on elephants, tasted Indian cuisine, and enjoyed the hospitality and warmth of the Indian people, learning to greet everyone with “*Namaste*.”

Ortega is excited that the school’s study-abroad program now offers the opportunity to travel to India. He said, “It’s a country that has limited resources. In the United States, most students take for granted that we have access to everything needed to deliver quality

care. When students travel and see the reality that other countries survive with, it impacts the way they look at health care.”

## Integrating Ayurveda and Yoga

One unique aspect of India’s health system is the integration of Western medicine and ancient healing traditions. India is home to Ayurvedic medicine, one of the world’s oldest holistic healing approaches. Ayurveda practitioners treat patients with herbal medicines as well as lifestyle and dietary changes.

Patients can choose between going to Ayurvedic or conventional hospitals and practitioners. But even conventional health care providers employ Ayurvedic approaches. “Rather than reject these very ancient traditions, they have looked for ways to integrate traditional healing techniques into conventional medicine,” Deleon explains.

As part of a tour to an Ayurvedic hospital, SONHS students got to visit an Ayurvedic pharmaceutical factory,

which was on the hospital campus. This was particularly fascinating to health science student Amanda Mateo, A.B. ’13, who is in the pre-pharmacy program. “We got to see step by step how they create pills and ointments from plants or roots,” she says.

Yoga is also widely integrated into patients’ treatment plans in India, which Ow found enlightening. “Most people think of exercise when they think about yoga, but it’s also about breathing patterns,” she said. “They use yoga in India to treat mild to moderate cases, say for asthma or some kind of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) problem. Patients still have to take medication, but by practicing yoga, their lung muscles expand and they are able to breathe a little better.”

While there is a movement to integrate holistic medicine in American health care, the ability to see its widespread incorporation into the health care system of India provided the students with valuable knowledge on alternative therapies not readily observable in the U.S.





In addition to touring the hospitals, both the nursing and public health students were also able to visit India's rural clinics. "This was a huge learning opportunity for our students, because it gave them exposure to rural medicine not otherwise available in their curricula," said Deleon. "While the cost of travel for Indian students to our country is a challenge, their dean expressed personally their desire to have some of their students come to our school."

Associate Professor Shashidhara "Shashi" YN, head of the Department of Community Health Nursing at the Manipal College of Nursing, praised the exchange program. "My experience with the University of Miami students was very exciting. I appreciate their assertiveness and interest in learning. I could observe the sincerity among the students in following their faculty's instructions. Dr. Diego and Dr. Johis

are excellent and committed faculty coordinators. They were with the students throughout their clinical placement and explored all possible ways for future collaboration. We expect more student and faculty exchange in the coming years."

### Learning to Do Much with Little

Newly graduated nurse practitioner Ana Velasco, M.S.N. '16, was given the opportunity to collaborate with specialty physicians during hospital rounds and witness their bedside manner firsthand. She learned a lot from their efficient approaches.

"I could see how they worked diligently by scheduling all tests the same day," she says, "thus making it easier for patients to get the care they needed—

then and there—so that they would not have to make many trips. For example, in urology, the physicians would do comprehensive initial visits, including same-day lab work and ultrasound, so that the patient could be scheduled for surgery the next day."

Having fewer resources, they also relied more on their physical assessment skills instead of costly tests, Velasco says. "While speaking with residents during my dermatology rotation about patient population and care, Dr. Deepak Dubey [chair of the Division of Urology and Renal Transplantation at Manipal Hospital] said, 'We are here for them.' As I thought about what he said, I realized that I, too, as a nurse practitioner, would like to provide timely, efficient, and cost-effective care for my patients."

Mateo also came home from India inspired to look for ways to reduce

unnecessary health care costs. She noted how a hospital pharmacy that she visited made all the cleaning supplies used by the facility, including hand sanitizer, hand soap, and detergent to wash the floors. "Annually, they saved their hospital thousands of dollars, which was really motivating," she says.

### Uncovering Cultural and Health Differences

Students were also exposed to unique cultural and religious practices in India, says Deleon, who encouraged the students to ask thoughtful questions on the potential of these practices to impact health outcomes.

"For example, they don't eat red meat in India," he says. "So what is the impact of the consumption of red meat on diseases like cancer? India's rate of death by cancer is much lower than the Western world."

During their visit to a psychiatric

children's hospital, the students also learned that organizations in India are working to eradicate the stigma attached to children with developmental disabilities there. The facility they visited was built by a university official after his daughter was born with Down syndrome. "Because of her, he built this hospital and they have crafts and dances and things like that for the children," Ow says. "His daughter is actually participating in the Special Olympics as a swimmer. It's amazing because you see how much these kids can accomplish with their disabilities."

### Recognizing Signs and Symptoms of Unique Diseases

During study-abroad trips, nursing students also learn firsthand about diseases that are rarely seen in the United States. For instance, malaria and

leprosy are still a problem in India.

Such exposure is particularly important with the growth of international travel, and the increasing risk of diseases spreading from one country to another, says Ortega. He cites a student school trip to the Dominican Republic (D.R.) earlier in the summer, after the Zika virus had started to spread there. "Now it's easy for those students to diagnose people with Zika because they were exposed to that when they were in the D.R."

Given the value of global study, Ortega and Deleon hope to begin a scholarship fund that can be used to help deserving students without the financial means to participate in future trips to India and other countries.

"Any student who has the opportunity to participate in an international exchange program should take advantage of it," Ow says. "For me, it was life changing."



*Pictured far left, Associate Professor Shashidhara "Shashi" YN, head of the Department of Community Health Nursing at Manipal University's College of Nursing and other Manipal University faculty pose with students from the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) during the institutions' 2016 inaugural exchange. SONHS faculty Diego Deleon is also pictured, at the far right back row.*

# THE PERFECT STORM

By Patricia Connelly



Nursing students participate in major hurricane disaster preparedness simulation

As **Category 4 Hurricane Matthew** churned through the Caribbean in early October, leaving over 1,000 people dead in Haiti and tens of

thousands without shelter throughout the region, the

University of Miami and other schools and businesses in South Florida

battened down the hatches and except for emergency and

essential medical personnel, closed for several days. The 250-mile-wide

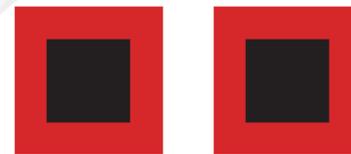
hurricane continued a northward trajectory as it traveled

125 miles off the eastern coastline of Florida, causing massive

wind damage, storm surge, and flooding as it moved

past Georgia, made landfall in South Carolina, and

severely impacted North Carolina.



For those who work in disaster preparedness and response, Hurricane Matthew and the 500-year flood that ravaged southeastern Louisiana in mid-August were the latest reminders that climate change will make such extreme weather events more and more common. Hurricane Matthew was the 13th billion-dollar disaster in the United States this year alone.

“We’re at a point now that...it’s no longer if something happens but when something happens,” says Susana Barroso-Fernandez, Ph.D. ’16, director of simulation operations at the University of Miami’s School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS). For that reason, starting in 2014, the SONHS expanded its simulation program to include disaster preparedness and response as part of its population health track.

While there is an expectation among the general public that nurses leave school disaster-prepared, this has traditionally not been the case. “Across the country [nursing students] may read a chapter on disaster preparedness in a textbook but few faculty feel comfortable teaching it,” says Barroso-Fernandez, whose Ph.D. dissertation was on nursing education and disaster preparedness and response.

## DESIGNING A DISASTER PREPAREDNESS CURRICULUM

Into this void, the SONHS has stepped up to lead by example. Not only do all senior baccalaureate nursing students participate in a full-scale disaster simulation, but by graduation they are also certified and badged to serve in the Medical Reserve Corps. A national network of health care volunteers established by the federal government after 9/11, they are activated to

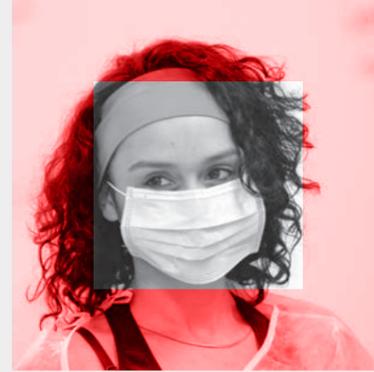
SONHS students conduct client intake and assessments according to Red Cross protocols during a disaster preparedness and sheltering simulation exercise.

assist during natural or man-made disasters.

According to Summer DeBastiani, who directs the school’s disaster simulations, “The role of nurses in disasters is changing, especially as we have more experience with disasters. UM is definitely leading the way. I am aware of no other nursing school that is doing disaster simulation to the scale we are.”

This is due in great part to the key role DeBastiani has played in developing the disaster simulations. When she arrived at the SONHS as faculty in 2014 (she is now a Ph.D. student) DeBastiani brought over ten years in disaster preparedness experience, including four years as a health scientist in the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response.

The SONHS’s first exercise was an Ebola simulation and the second



an infectious disease pandemic or “zombie apocalypse” simulation. The third was something a little closer to home—a Category 5 hurricane mass sheltering exercise.

Although Miami-Dade County is situated squarely in the Atlantic Ocean’s “hurricane alley,” it has enjoyed a fairly quiet period in recent years, in terms of major storms directly hitting the region. “We have a whole generation of nursing students who have no idea what Andrew was,” Barroso-Fernandez says, referring to Hurricane Andrew which made landfall south of the University of Miami in Homestead, Florida on August 24, 1992 and was, at the time, the costliest hurricane in U.S. history. Hurricanes Katrina in 2005, Ike in 2008, and Sandy in 2012, have since surpassed it.

Under DeBastiani’s leadership, the hurricane disaster simulation was designed using the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program, through which the students are prepared using a stepped approach. First they attend a lecture on the National Incident Management System (NIMS), Incident Command System (ICS), the nurse’s role in disasters, and disaster epidemiology (i.e., injuries associated with certain disasters). They then complete the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) online trainings for NIMS and ICS certification. For the third step, there is a tabletop discussion and a scenario-based exercise. For the hurricane disaster simulation, students participated in a Red Cross tabletop, acquainting them with standard intake and assessment forms used in a mass-shelter situation. The process details who is allowed in, who’s not, how to transfer someone out, and how to deal with issues that arise. The last step is the full-scale simulation.

## PRACTICING PROTOCOLS

On the morning of April 9, the first floor of the M. Christine Schwartz Center for Nursing and Health Studies at the SONHS was transformed into a Red Cross shelter, filling up with “evacuees” (volunteer actors recruited from UM faculty and students as well as local high school students and community members) seeking safety in advance of a major hurricane. The evacuees included the young and the old, the healthy, the sick, and the disabled. Some arrived alone and others with their families; some with dementia were confused; others sat in wheelchairs, and more than a few children ran around bored and hungry waiting for food to be distributed. The first task of the shelter workers (the nursing students, each with an assigned role) was to conduct client intake and assessments according to Red Cross protocols while carefully watching for signs of any infectious disease. They also had to operate the shelter employing NIMS and ICS protocols.

Before the students could settle into their roles, they were confronted with the exercise’s first element of surprise or “inject”—a gastrointestinal disease (GI) outbreak—which tested their knowledge and skills in how to isolate the people who were contagious and how to keep the other shelter members disease-free. Before long a second inject was introduced—mass casualties from an explosion at a nearby shelter—which tested their clinical disaster-based decision-making while conducting triage of people with mock injuries, some of whom had been exposed to a hazardous material. This included donning and doffing of personal protective equipment (PPE) according to protective equipment protocols.

“I was challenged by the vast range of

patient scenarios that were unexpected but true to life,” says Timothy Fiste, B.S.N. ’16, who played a registered nurse during the first half of the simulation and a patient during the second half to give other students the chance to experience a professional role. “I needed to quickly respond to a variety of unforeseen situations...I was grateful for the efforts of the volunteers and other students, as I learned the most from simulated scenarios for which I wasn’t as easily prepared.”

S. Paul Sloane, M.S.N. ’15, a captain with Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue who is also a SONHS Doctor of Nursing Practice candidate, was the simulation’s Incident Commander (IC). He is a veteran of past disasters, including being a first responder during Hurricane Andrew and running the county’s emergency management system’s infection control during the 2014 Ebola crisis. Sloane was impressed with the poise and competent performance of the students: “I didn’t take part in training them; I just showed up as the IC expecting them to do what I told them to do,” he says. “I was expecting more confusion than there was, and I was pleasantly surprised how well they did and how well they adjusted to the injected scenarios, which really is a testament to their preparation.”

## PROFESSIONAL TEAMWORK

As important as the knowledge and skills testing are to the students’ preparation, the hurricane simulation was also a valuable exercise in interprofessional collaboration. DeBastiani says that this is what distinguishes the SONHS’s simulations from the hospital-based exercises with which most nurses are familiar. “Many times in disasters, nurses are working in the field. In

Hurricane Katrina, for example, they were going out all over the place, giving injections, treating foot wounds.”

When nurses are out in the field they are not collaborating with doctors or hospital staff. There is a shortage of doctors during disasters. In these situations, nurses are instead collaborating with firefighters, police officers, health department employees, Red Cross workers, and others. And for this reason, representatives from all these local agencies took part in the school’s hurricane disaster simulation. “And that’s where ICS comes in,” DeBastiani explains, “understanding the roles these professionals play and what kind of language they use. Our students graduate knowing this.”

## ‘GROUND ZERO’ FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

There is another reason it is especially fitting that this cutting-edge hurricane preparedness exercise was conducted at the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies. UM Provost Thomas J. LeBlanc told hundreds of scientists visiting the University in November 2015 that Miami is “ground zero” for climate change and sea-level rise. The University of Miami’s 2016 Climate Change Special Report ([climate.miami.edu](http://climate.miami.edu)) states that public health risk increases as sea level rises. Citing a study by the Florida Institute for Health Innovation (FIHI), it states that communities from Palm Beach to Key West are at greatest risk for adverse health effects.

Roderick K. King, M.D., M.P.H., CEO of the FIHI Institute and associate professor in the Department of Public Health Sciences at the UM Miller School of Medicine says, “One of our findings represents an unexpected public health

concern. We normally think of populations with the lowest socioeconomic status as being the most vulnerable to public health threats. In the case of sea-level rise, however, the most vulnerable turn out to be the wealthier populations who can afford to live close to the ocean. They may also be older, with health issues that require regular treatment, and if they can’t access health care because the streets are flooded, it poses a significant problem.”

In conjunction with the South Florida Regional Planning Council and Florida Atlantic University’s Center for Environmental Studies, FIHI mapped the zones most prone to environmental sea-level rise impacts, described associated public health risks, and identified the region’s socially, economically, and medically vulnerable communities most susceptible to sea-level rise health effects. The study was funded by the Kresge Foundation.

The SONHS disaster simulation program, and particularly the hurricane simulation, represents the school’s commitment to UM’s institutional study on the issue of climate change.

The expansion of the SONHS’ simulation program through the disaster simulations and the school’s forthcoming state-of-the-art Simulation Hospital (see story on page 18) “means more opportunities for the nursing students to “put theory into practice,” says Barroso-Fernandez, “to put it all together, no harm to the patient, no harm to the students, in an environment where they can have those ‘ah-ha,’ connect-the-dots moments, learn from mistakes, and then transfer it all into the clinical arena.”

Barroso-Fernandez will next collaborate with the Miller School of Medicine to plan and implement an “active shooter” simulation scenario for nursing and medical students. In the meantime, she and DeBastiani are busy preparing professional publications that report on the simulation activities. The aim is to create an educational model on disaster preparedness that includes ICS and interprofessional collaboration for nursing students that could be adopted at other schools. ■■

## ON THE GROUND IN HAITI

The day Haiti became ground zero for extreme weather events after Hurricane Matthew devastated the island nation on October 4, a team of University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) students and faculty who were already familiar with the impoverished Caribbean country sprang into action.

Johis Ortega, B.S.N. ’02, M.S.N. ’06, Ph.D. ’10, associate professor of clinical and associate dean for Master’s Programs and Global Initiatives, regularly leads teams of advanced practice nursing students and other health care professionals on biannual missions to Haiti. They provide health care services, supplies, and medications to the Haitian people, as well as education and training in primary care delivery for Haitian nurses and physicians.

Upon hearing the news of Hurricane Matthew’s disastrous impact, plans for the group’s next scheduled trip to Haiti went into high gear. Two family nurse practitioner students, Tiffany Ojea, B.S.N. ’14, and Merrill Camel, B.S.N. ’15, launched GoFundMe webpages and raised funds for needed items, such as vitamins, antifungal gels, lightweight dried foods, diapers, clothing, blankets, and ibuprofen. Scott Sloane, M.S.N. ’15, a Doctor of Nursing Practice student, contacted local aviation authorities to waive shipment fees for the large load of medical and relief supplies that the SONHS team utilized and distributed during its October 26 to 30 visit to this Western hemisphere’s poorest nation.

During their five-day visit, the SONHS team facilitated health clinics for the local populace of Thomonde, a town in Haiti’s central plateau that is underserved by other relief agencies. They also knocked on the doors of huts in the rural region and asked permission to deliver care and supplies to the occupants.

“Though we travel to Haiti with our students several times a year, those affected by Hurricane Matthew need our help now more than ever. The SONHS is committed to helping the Haitian community,” affirms Ortega.

# Welcoming New Faculty

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



Steve L. Alves

## Steve L. Alves

*Professor of Clinical Nursing*

Steve L. Alves served for 15 years as director of the Nurse Anesthesia Program at Northeastern University School of Nursing and as project director for the U.S. Army Graduate Program in Anesthesia Nursing. He is a certified registered nurse anesthetist and teaches in the areas of nurse anesthesia, pharmacology, pathophysiology, collaborative practice, and more. He is a distinguished scholar and fellow in the National Academies of Practice.

## Cynthia Foronda

*Associate Professor of Clinical*

Cynthia Foronda is a certified nurse educator and Florida-licensed registered nurse (RN) with clinical, teaching and research interests in the areas of nursing education, patient safety, simulation, educational technology, and cultural humility. She earned a B.S.N. at Virginia Commonwealth University, M.S.N. at Cardinal Stritch University, and Ph.D. in nursing at Marquette University. She was a fellow in the Armstrong Institute for Patient Safety and Quality Leadership program at Johns Hopkins Hospital in



Cynthia Foronda

2014-15, and participated in the National League for Nursing's leadership development program for simulation educators.

## Susana Barroso-Fernandez

*Assistant Professor of Clinical and Director, Simulation Operations*

Susana Barroso-Fernandez, Ph.D. '16 in nursing, also holds a B.S.N. from Barry University. A Florida-licensed RN, she specializes clinically in pediatrics and pediatric intensive care. Her research and academic interests include simulation-based education, disaster preparedness and response, and patient safety.

## Giovanna Cecilia De Oliveira

*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

Giovanna Cecilia De Oliveira, Ph.D. '15 in nursing, also holds a post-master's certificate in Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing from the University of Miami. She earned both B.S.N. and M.S.N. degrees from Wayne State University. A Florida-licensed Advanced Nurse Practitioner, she is also certified by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners. De Oliveira's clinical expertise includes primary care, psychiatric



Susana Barroso-Fernandez



Giovanna Cecilia De Oliveira



Ruth Everett-Thomas

PHOTOGRAPHY BY IAN LAMAZARE-ROMERO

mental health, pain management, acute care, long-term care, and home health care.

## Ruth Everett-Thomas

*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

Ruth Everett-Thomas received her B.S.N. from Florida International University (FIU), M.S.N. from University of Phoenix, and Ph.D. in nursing from FIU. From 2000-2007 she served as Nurse Specialist II and UM site coordinator for the Miller School of Medicine's National Institute of Child Health and Development (NICHD)-funded multi-site clinical research trials. Her expertise is in critical and acute care; pediatric and neonatal care; and cardiopulmonary, respiratory, and trauma care.

## Ashley Falcon

*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

Ashley Falcon, Ph.D. '14 in epidemiology, also earned a B.S. from Duke University and an M.P.H. from the University of South Florida. She interned with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, studying health issues on the United States-Mexico border, and was a health education administrator and practitioner at UM's Herbert Wellness Center for over a decade. Falcon teaches in the areas of public health, epidemiology of population-based care, and public health statistics and data management.



Ashley Falcon

## Susan L. Prather

*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

Susan Prather received a B.S.N. from Hampton Institute, M.S.N. from Hampton University, and an Ed.D. from Grambling State University. She is a licensed registered professional nurse in Florida and Virginia, certified in Basic Cardiac Life Support, and Lactation. She served in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps for 20 years, and taught in diverse undergraduate nursing programs for 12 years, including at the University of Guam. Her research and academic interests include women's health, global health, culturally tailored interventions, recruitment and retention of minorities in nursing, and curriculum design.

## Beatriz Valdes

*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

Beatriz Valdes, B.S.N. '99, earned her M.S.N. and M.B.A. in health care administration from the University of Phoenix, and Ph.D. in nursing from FIU in 2016. She conducts research on sexual minorities and vulnerable populations. Her clinical nursing specialties include all levels of medical/surgical nursing, emergency room, critical care, pediatric, and HIV/AIDS. Valdes is a certified health care simulation educator and teaches simulation across the undergraduate curriculum.



Susan L. Prather



Beatriz Valdes

## Denise Christina Vidot

*Assistant Professor*

Denise C. Vidot, A.B. '08, Ph.D. '15, earned her M.A. in nonprofit management with a specialization in public health at the University of Georgia, and completed a doctorate in epidemiology at UM's Miller School of Medicine. Vidot has analytical, design, and implementation experience in the substance use and cardiometabolic disease risk research fields. A McKnight Doctoral Fellow, her research interests include health risk behaviors, substance and marijuana/cannabis use across the lifespan, metabolic syndrome, and related diseases.

## Adrian L. Mesa

*Lecturer*

Adrian Mesa, B.S.N. '06, earned an M.S.N. from Florida Atlantic University and holds a post-master's certificate as a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner. He has worked in Pediatric Intensive Care Units at Jackson Memorial Hospital and Children's Hospital of Los Angeles, served inpatient mentally ill populations at Aventura Hospital and Medical Center, and conducted targeted homeless outreach at Camillus House. He was honored with a Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust's Team Award in 2015, and an Award of Commendation for Medical and Humanitarian Services for his work during the Haiti Disaster Relief of 2010. A U.S. Army veteran, he has served on missions to Guatemala and the Dominican Republic.



Denise Christina Vidot



Adrian L. Mesa



Régine Placide

## Régine Placide

*Lecturer*

Régine Placide is a Florida-licensed registered nurse with 14 years of nursing experience focused on medical/surgical and public health nursing, and care-coordination for families of children with special needs. Her clinical expertise includes community health nursing, medical/surgical, maternal and child health, and community health. She earned a B.S.N. from Florida State University, an M.P.H. in behavioral health science and health education from Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University, and an M.S.N. in nursing education from Florida Atlantic University (FAU).

## Erick Zarabozo

*Lecturer*

Erick Zarabozo earned his B.S.N. at Miami-Dade College and M.S.N. from Barry University. He is a licensed RN and certified critical care nurse with expertise in intensive care unit (ICU), telemetry and cardiac catheterization lab. He was a Med-Surg/Telemetry nurse at the University of Miami Hospital (UMH), then entered the UMH Critical Care Residency Program as a Neuro ICU nurse in 2011, working closely with neurosurgeons to care for patients' post-brain and post-spinal surgeries to treat cerebrovascular accidents, brain tumors, and spinal deficits.



Erick Zarabozo

## Faculty Receive High Honors for Leadership, Research, Teaching, and Civic Engagement



Johis Ortega



Steve L. Alves

Two School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) faculty members were recently awarded fellowship status in the American Academy of Nursing (AAN): **Johis Ortega**, B.S.N. '02, M.S.N. '06, Ph.D. '10, associate professor of clinical and associate dean for Master's Programs and Global Initiatives, and **Steve L. Alves**, professor of clinical nursing. The selection is considered nursing's highest honor. The induction ceremony for Ortega and Alves took place on October 22 in Washington, D.C., during the AAN annual conference.

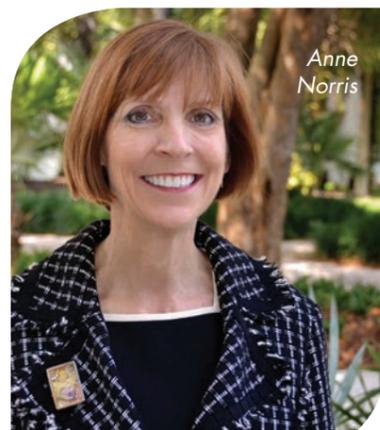
The Academy's highly selective criteria include evidence of significant contributions to nursing and health care, and the extent the nominee's nursing career has influenced health policies and the public's well-being. New fellows are eligible to use the FAAN credentials after their name.

"Selection for AAN fellowship is an amazing pinnacle of my nursing career," says Ortega, who was selected for his

contributions to global nursing education capacity and workforce development, and for helping to develop the U.S. nurse practitioner role. "I look forward to the opportunity to join the Academy's distinguished fellows in advancing health policy and practice through the nursing profession."

"I am honored to have been selected as a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing," says Alves. "Being recognized for my contributions by the Academy is clearly one of my highest accomplishments. It is my belief that nursing practice, education, and policy are interdependent and have shaped my role as a researcher, educator, and practitioner."

**Anne E. Norris**, associate dean for Ph.D. Programs and professor at the School of Nursing and Health Studies, was inducted into Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) honor society's Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame. It is an honor reserved for nurse scientists who have achieved national and international recognition for scientific contributions that have greatly improved the nursing profession and the people it serves. Norris is a globally renowned expert in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, and measurement of a variety of phenomena. The ceremony took place on July 23 in Cape Town, South Africa, during STTI's 27th International Nursing Research Congress.



Anne Norris



Andrew Porter



Juan Gonzalez



Kristin Levoy

**Andrew Porter**, assistant professor of clinical, was honored with the Excellence in Civic Engagement Award at the University of Miami's Celebration of Involvement on April 19. Students are also honored at the ceremony for their campus and community service. "The part of the event that truly stood out was how incredibly involved SONHS public health students are across the University," said Porter. "Our students were represented in nearly every category and we had winners throughout the night. It was definitely my proudest moment yet as a faculty member at UM."

At the SONHS's Spring 2016 awards ceremony, **Juan Gonzalez**, D.N.P. '13, assistant professor of clinical, was honored as SONHS Teacher of the Year and lecturer **Kristin Levoy** received the school's Clinical Faculty Excellence Award. As the honorees took the stage to receive their awards at the Donna E. Shalala Student Center a chorus of student cheers accompanied them. These awards have special value because students select the awardees.

## Building Bridges between Teaching, Research, Service, and Clinical Practice

**Jessica Roberts Williams** always knew she wanted to do work that would benefit people's lives, but she was also drawn to theory and research. These dual interests led Williams to pursue a double major in sociology and nursing at the University of Florida. Williams liked how sociology fed her "passion for understanding how society and the environments we live in influence our individual lives and health," while nursing gave her that tangible, direct link to patient care and health outcomes.

While earning a Ph.D. in nursing from John Hopkins University, Williams focused her research on the implementation of evidence-based practices within health and social service agencies, with a special focus on gender-based violence prevention. She participated as a pre-doctoral fellow in an NIH-funded research-training grant on violence prevention, then built upon that work to earn her own NIH-funded pre-doctoral fellowship on the relationship between relational aggression, dating violence, and health among adolescents. She says, "There is so much that can be done to influence risk behaviors early on and engage in primary prevention," rather than have to play catch up with treatments later.

Today, Williams is an assistant professor on the faculty at the SONHS, where she also co-directs the Community Engagement, Dissemination, and Implementation core of the Center of Excellence for Health Disparities Research: El Centro. She has taught across the curriculum but now primarily focuses on the Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) degree program, where her passion is teaching doctoral students to critically evaluate research. She wants them to ask themselves: "Is the science we are conducting good enough to justify changing our clinical practice? If so, how do we translate it into evidence-based interventions that improve the health of our patient populations?" As the only board-certified advanced public health nurse on faculty at the SONHS, Williams also lends her expertise to help enhance the public health nursing curriculum.

As a nursing scholar, Williams is currently principal investigator of three studies that examine how health care facilities can best respond to situations of intimate partner violence within their communities. Her research has been published in 27 journal articles and 16 U.S. government-commissioned reports. This summer she presented her research findings in South Africa at the annual meeting of the Sigma Theta Tau International, the honor society of nursing, where she participated in a SONHS-organized symposium on the rates of HIV testing among victims of intimate partner violence.

Much of Williams' University of Miami service activities focus on community engagement and she has served on the UM President's Coalition on Sexual Violence Prevention and Education since its inception in 2014. More recently she was named to a leadership role for a new \$11.6 million NIH-funded multi-site center on precision medicine and health disparities, a joint effort between the University of Miami, Vanderbilt University, and Meharry Medical College.

Williams credits several of her early faculty mentors with exposing her to the wide range of careers in clinical practice, public health, and research that are open to Ph.D.-trained nurses. She is also proud of her pre-academia research consulting experience—five years working with government agencies in Washington, D.C., after finishing her Ph.D. "During school, students are mainly exposed to the academic track, which is a valuable career choice, but we have to make students aware that in government and nonprofits there is also a great need for Ph.D.-prepared nurses whose research and clinical backgrounds are very valuable to policy makers."

Today, Williams' accomplishments as a teacher, scholar, and university leader exemplify for SONHS students just how much is possible.



# School of Nursing and Health Studies Honor Roll of Donors 2016

**We gratefully acknowledge** the following individuals, foundations, corporations, and associations for investing in the School of Nursing and Health Studies. The support has enabled the School to provide student scholarships, recruit stellar faculty, support research that improves lives in our local and global communities and help fund the new Simulation Hospital.

*Degrees listed depict all UM alumni.*

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 Judith A. Ormson, B.S.N. '86, and Daniel R. Ormson  
 Ivette Ortega, B.S.N. '88  
 Jose A. Ortega, B.E.D. '68  
 Barbara J. Osborne, M.S.N. '88  
 Skye J. Ostreicher, B.S.H.S. '11  
 Amber L. Owen, B.S.N. '96, and Christopher Wadsworth  
 Brenda Owusu  
 Martha E. Padilla and Fernando Padilla, B.S.N. '95  
 Maria Padron, B.S.E.D. '86  
 Elsie M. Paloschi and Arturo P. Paloschi  
 Jamie A. Panno-Plastina, B.S.N. '88  
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 Patricia E. Pepe and Richard K. Pepe, B.S. '75, B.S.N. '78  
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 Patricia Peraza, B.S.N. '14  
 Marcia E. Pereira, B.S.N. '14  
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 Mercedes Perez De Salazar, M.B.A. '04, D.N.P. '12  
 Joycelyn A. Petersen, B.S.N. '92  
 Pamela A. Petry Martinez, B.S.N. '14  
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 Alyssa M. Plisic, B.S.N. '13  
 Christel D. Plummer, B.S.N. '74  
 Tracy C. Poirier and John M. Poirier, Ph.D. '88  
 Rashida Polk, B.S.N. '15

The School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) received a \$2.5 million competitive grant award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). \*  
 The funding will provide critically needed scholarship support to full-time students from disadvantaged backgrounds enrolled in the Master of Science in Nursing degree programs.  
 "The financial barriers to advanced nursing education are insurmountable for many full-time students, forcing them to either abandon their nurse practitioner training or drop to part-time status so they can continue working," said Dr. Johis Ortega, B.S.N. '02, M.S.N. '06, Ph.D. '11, principal investigator of the grant and associate dean for Master's Programs and Global Initiatives at the SONHS. "These obstacles are more prevalent in minority student populations, who are the students we need to retain to diversify the nursing workforce. The HRSA award will significantly relieve that burden, accelerate graduation rates, increase the number of nurse practitioners from disparity populations, and help meet the growing need for primary care providers."  
 Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano said, "While we are fortunate to live in a region that is culturally diverse, the burden of chronic diseases and their associated risk factors are greater among minorities. The HRSA funding is timely and will help us prepare advanced practice nurses, many from minority groups themselves, to work in medically underserved communities and address serious health disparity gaps in Miami-Dade."

## SONHS Receives \$2.5 Million Grant from HRSA



\*This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), under grant number T08HP30147, "Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students," for \$2,520,000.

\*Deceased

+Donors who have made a gift to SONHS for two years or more

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 Dianne H. Quadros, M.S.N. '90 +  
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 Jessica Quintana, B.S.N. '06  
 Roslyn L. Ramacciato, B.S.N. '99, and Warren J. Bauer +  
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 Patricia K. Rister, B.S.N. '64 +  
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Sharon R. Simon, B.S.N. '85, M.S.N. '88, and Samuel J. Simon  
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 Amelia B. Vasquez and Elkin M. Vasquez, B.S. '92, B.S.N. '05  
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*We have made every effort to ensure the completeness and accuracy of this Honor Roll. If you discover an error, please contact the Advancement office at 305-284-5435 or email [NeryGarcia@miami.edu](mailto:NeryGarcia@miami.edu)*

## 1950s

**Ann Marie McCrystal, B.S.N. '59**, ran in the November 8 election and retained her seat on the Indian River Hospital District (IRHD) Board of Trustees. The IRHD is a taxing authority in Indian River County for indigent health care. Florida Governor Rick Scott appointed McCrystal one year ago to fill a seat made vacant by the resignation of one of the trustees.

## 1960s

**Clara Cox McElroy, B.S.N. '65**, and her husband Dale sold their company First Call Medical, Inc., and two schools named Florida Health Academy. They still operate CEUonline.org, a continuing education site for health care professionals. They live in Bonita Springs, Florida but travel frequently to Mexico, and also visit children and grandchildren in various locations. McElroy's daughter, Kimberly Cornell, B.S.C. '95, a broadcast communications alumna, lives in Los Angeles and has won 18 Emmy Awards. "We are both proud to be UM alumni and spread the good word about UM as often as we can," she says.

## 1970s

**Veda Andrus, B.S.N. '73**, is the first recipient of the 2016 Outstanding Support of AHNCC Certification Award, from the American Holistic Nurses Credentialing Corporation (AHNCC). In July, Andrus also presented the opening keynote entitled *Mirror, Mirror, On the Wall, The Art of Engagement Begins With ... You!* at the annual convention of the Association of Nursing Professional Development.

## 1980s

**Marilyn Holloman, C.N.P. '80**, ran for the Congressional House of Representatives seat in District 18, and was invited to attend the 2016 United Nations Counseling Business and Human Rights/Climate Control meeting. She has been ANCC board-certified for 35 years and is a current member of the Miami-Dade Planned Giving Council and a UM Kellogg Foundation Leadership Fellow.

## 1990s

**Richard G. Cuming, M.S.N. '95**, was recently named chief nurse executive by Christiana Care Health System. He worked previously at Philadelphia-based Einstein Healthcare Network, where he served as chief nurse executive and vice president for Health Care Services. This fall, Cuming was inducted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing. He is board-certified as an Advanced Nurse Executive by the American Nurses Credentialing Center and sits on the editorial board of the AORN Journal of the Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses. He is a 2015 alumnus of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Executive Nurse Fellowship Program.

**Karen R. Stephenson, M.S.N. '95, D.N.P. '09**, is happy to announce that she joined the medical staff of the Comprehensive Cancer Center at Mount Sinai Medical Center as a Board Certified Oncology ARNP in August 2016.

## 2000s

**Sonique Sailsman, B.S.N. '00**, recently completed her Ph.D. in Nursing Education at NOVA Southeastern University; her research focused on the lived experience of ESL students in an online R.N.-B.S.N. program. She currently serves as faculty for an R.N.-B.S.N. online program.

**William Sera, B.S.N. '02**, served in clinical and managerial positions at Royal Caribbean Cruises for 15 years including crew medical supervisor, care team manager, and pre-employment medical examinations manager. He provided domestic and international support to guests and crew following difficult circumstances encountered during their vacation or work such as medical evacuations, deaths, missing persons, victims of crime, coordination of air ambulances, helicopter transfers, and more. He recently returned to UM to work at UHealth at Bascom Palmer-Plantation where he is a Pre-Operative Services advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP).

**Anna M. Lozoya, B.S.N. '06**, will have her article, "Mandatory HIV Testing of Pregnant Women: Public Health or Privacy Violation?" published by the University of Houston's *Journal of Health Law & Policy*.

**Leonel Oliva, B.S.N. '06**, wrote and starred in the film *The Shift* alongside seasoned actor Danny Glover. The story focuses on one 12-hour shift in the ER where a veteran nurse Kayle (Leonel Oliva) and a new nurse, Amanda, struggle between what is right and wrong while assisting Emily, a girl dying of cancer whose bravery forces them to question where to draw the line between life and death.

**Meilin Diaz-Paez, B.S.N. '07, M.S.N. '14**, and **Luis Diaz-Paez, B.S.N. '15**, and M.S.N. candidate, are happy to announce the arrival of their baby boy, Sebastian, born this past May.

**Conchita Freitag, M.S.N. '09**, is pursuing her Ph.D. in nursing at the University of Phoenix, where she is an adjunct faculty member in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

### Send us your news!

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

## 2010s

**Debbie Anglade, M.S.N. '10, Ph.D. '14**, recently joined the SONHS faculty as assistant professor of clinical and is also president of the SONHS Alumni Association.

**Andrea Cassidy, B.S.N. '10**, started in the University of Tampa's adult nurse practitioner master's program in August 2016. She as worked at Tampa General Hospital for the last 2 ½ years in the cardiothoracic ICU, recovering open heart surgical patients as well as fresh heart and lung transplant patients. She is also part of a team of nurses that cares for patients requiring extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO).

**Charolette Jarrett, B.S.N. '10**, works at the University of Miami Hospital as an advanced registered nurse practitioner (A.R.N.P.) with the anesthesia department. "Thanks for the great foundation," she says.

**Raecene Rousseau, B.S.N. '10**, says she would "love to extend my greatest thanks to the University of Miami for giving me the best education. It has opened doors of opportunity and given many fond memories. I am currently in my third year at Barry University completing the post baccalaureate family nurse practitioner D.N.P. program. In my spare time I work at the University of Miami Hospital as a float pool nurse for the ICU. I enjoy reading updates on my fellow UM alumni in Heartbeat magazine."

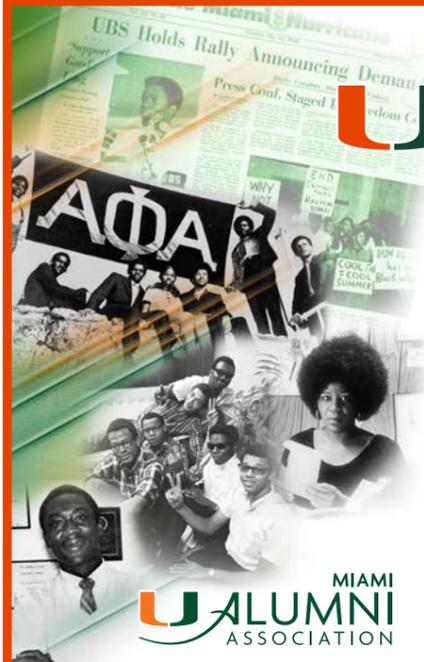
**Bernice Cassells, B.S.N. '11**, got married this year, and works at Northside Atlanta Hospital. She previously worked at other hospitals including the V.A. in Georgia and Piedmont.

**Kerry Jeanne Gaj, B.S.N. '11**, graduated from Northeastern University's Adult Gerontology Nurse Practitioner program in May 2016, and began their Doctor of Nursing Practice program this Fall. She also recently gained employment at Massachusetts General Hospital as a cardiac transplant nurse practitioner.

**Christopher A. Perez, B.S.H.S. '12**, recently published *Cuba: 50 Years of Playing American Football*. Perez also authored *Getting into Medical School: A Comprehensive Guide for Non-Traditional Students*.

**Aubrey Florom-Smith, B.S.N. '09, Ph.D. '13**, is "in New Hampshire now, believe it or not!" She is a post-doctoral research associate in the Space Medicine Innovations Laboratory in the Department of Medicine at Dartmouth College. "I am working on psychosocial countermeasures for long duration spaceflight," she reports.

**Candice L. Johnson, B.S.P.H. '16**, is pursuing a master's degree in Student Personnel and Higher Education and is a graduate assistant in the office of Campus Activities and Programming at the University of North Carolina Greensboro. "My undergraduate career made me fall in love with student affairs. I plan to correlate my lessons from public health to student affairs."



**U TRAILBLAZERS**  
CELEBRATING OUR FIRST BLACK GRADUATES

Thirty-five years after it opened for classes in 1926, the University of Miami admitted its first black students. Please join us this February to honor those who blazed a trail of courage, diversity, and inclusion.

Presented by the University of Miami Alumni Association and Black Alumni Society, the UTrailblazers celebration includes a library exhibition, an alumni-student forum, campus tours, and a grand gala. UTrailblazers is part of the UM First Black Graduates Project, an initiative to document the stories of black graduates from 1961 to 1979 and raise funds for life-changing student scholarships.

*Blazing the trail, building the dream*

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[miami.edu/firstblackgraduates](http://miami.edu/firstblackgraduates)  
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## High-Tech Nurse Inspires through Informatics

Amy M. Rosa, D.N.P. '13, remembers vividly, even as a child, watching her mother polish her white shoes, don her nurse's cap and, yes, her wool nurse's cape, as she prepared to go to work. A nurse-leader in the 1970s, Rosa's mother rose to become the first licensed female nursing home administrator in the state of Virginia, still finding time to teach prenatal classes for low-income moms-to-be, and raising two children.

"I thought my mother was Superwoman," Rosa recalls. "I saw that taking care of patients was very purposeful for her. She felt it was essential to life. As I followed in her footsteps, she taught me that, no matter what, my role in health care was to be a patient advocate."

After earning her R.N., Rosa worked at a hospital in South Florida, advancing from staff nurse in cardiac care to positions of increasing responsibility. She was on a fast track to becoming a chief nursing officer when her career took a new turn.

One of Rosa's mentors, Doris J. Peek, had just joined Broward Health, the tenth largest public health system in the country, as chief information officer. Peek offered Rosa a leadership position to assist with the conversion from paper to electronic medical records (EMR) for thousands of providers. This was Rosa's introduction to the nursing informatics specialty.

"The combination of health care information technology and

EMR clinical transformation truly became my passion, and I thrived on that," Rosa says. Energized by her new role, Rosa earned a master's degree in medical informatics in 2010. The following year she joined the South Florida Regional Extension Center in Miami, where she facilitated the implementation of EMR for more than 2,700 physicians. In 2013, she earned a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from the SONHS.

Today, as the chief nursing information officer (CNIO) for Baptist Health in Jacksonville, Florida, Rosa oversees a 50-person nurse informatics team, providing expertise to five hospitals, 43 primary care offices, and numerous satellite centers. She was recently named one of the 75 Most Powerful Women in Healthcare IT by Health Data Management, recognizing her pivotal role as a visionary leader in this fast-paced and evolving field.

Nurse informaticists are not computer engineers or network professionals, Rosa explains, addressing a common misperception. Their expertise lies in their

knowledge of nursing science and clinical practice and their ability to translate that for integration with computer science and information science.

"Health information exchange, particularly as we standardize nomenclature and the networks through which we share information, will improve patient care and safety as we have never seen before," Rosa says. "It will lead to increased efficiencies, improved continuity of care, decreased costs, and ultimately better management of health in the community."

Despite the key role of information technology in medical informatics, Rosa remains grounded in nursing. She makes clinical rounds in scrubs every week, and regularly attends operational meetings with the nurse-executives at each hospital. This involvement—she calls it "belly-to-belly"—is essential to her position as CNIO, as she must understand how clinicians are using the EMR and anticipate their future needs. Rosa says the values instilled by her mother are never far from her mind.

"Although our clinical documentation system is a thousand times better than paper, it is just a tool," Rosa says. "My credo, which I emphasize to my colleagues who nurse at the bedside, is that nurses still have to nurse. They need to touch their patients, look at them, talk to them, spend time with them, and know them holistically. A computer will never accomplish that, ever."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENNY ABREU

On May 6, the SONHS celebrated 134 graduates from the Ph.D., B.S.N., B.S.H.S., and B.S.P.H. programs at its Spring Awards ceremony. The occasion coincided with National Nurses Day, recognized each May 6 by the American Nurses Association in honor of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing. The event included the traditional pinning of the new graduates, a rite of passage that has signified the transition from health care student to professional for 130 years. New graduates also participated in University of Miami commencement ceremonies on May 5 and 6.

On August 5, it was time to celebrate again as 149 new nurse practitioners graduated from the Family Nurse Practitioner, Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner, and Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner master's programs.

The SONHS congratulates all of its newly minted professionals, and warmly thanks the faculty for their dedication to educating new generations of leaders.





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