

# heartbeat

FALL 2022

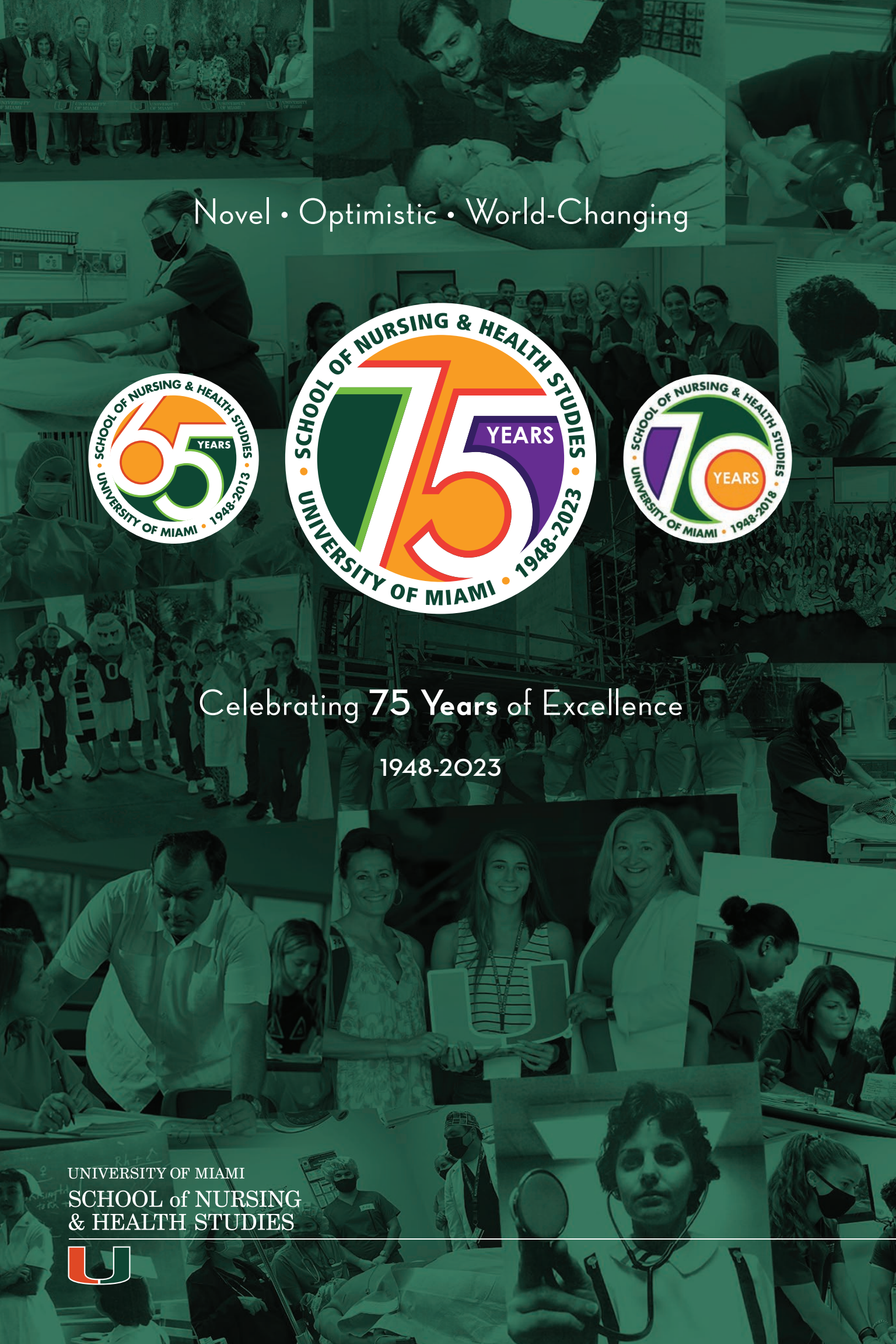
University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies



Building the Future of Nursing  
for Universal Health

**XVII PAN AMERICAN NURSING  
RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM 2022**





Novel • Optimistic • World-Changing

Celebrating 75 Years of Excellence

1948-2023

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
SCHOOL of NURSING  
& HEALTH STUDIES



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FALL 2022

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#### EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS

**Marina Parada**  
SONHS Senior  
Business Officer

**Rosa M. Lamazares-Romero**  
SONHS Assistant Director,  
Communications + Marketing

**Robin Shear**  
SONHS Senior Editor

#### WRITERS

**Jennifer Hudak**  
**Yolanda Mancilla**

**Paul Metcalf**  
**Marina Parada**  
**Robin Shear**

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Associate Dean for Health Studies and Associate Professor
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Associate Dean for Undergraduate Nursing Programs and Associate Professor of Clinical
- Ruth Everett-Thomas, Ph.D.**  
Associate Dean for Simulation Programs and Assistant Professor of Clinical
- Mary Hooshmand, Ph.D.**  
Associate Dean for Graduate Clinical Programs and Associate Professor of Clinical
- Johis Ortega, Ph.D.**  
Associate Dean for Hemispheric & Global Initiatives and Professor of Clinical
- Hudson P. Santos, Jr., Ph.D.**  
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Associate Professor of Clinical
- Régine Placide Reaves, Ph.D.**  
Assistant Professor of Clinical
- Deborah A. Salani, D.N.P.**  
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- Erick Zarabozo, D.N.P.**  
Lecturer

TAKING SONHS TO A NEW LEVEL

I could not introduce this issue of *Heartbeat* without first acknowledging the widespread destruction wrought by Hurricane Ian. Visiting Florida’s Southwest coast in late September, I witnessed massive power poles snapped in half, flooded homes, and washed-out bridges. It was déjà vu to my first days as this school’s dean, when a 2017 hurricane shut down the University of Miami for weeks. This time our campus was not affected physically, but Ian’s impact caused lasting effects in our ’Canes community.

One student living on a barrier island, for example, was instantly cut off from the rest of the state in the storm’s wake. To her and dozens of others with addresses in the hardest hit areas of the Gulf Coast, I relayed our fervent wishes for a safe recovery, assuring we will do everything we can to help them weather this crisis. On a personal note, if you want to pitch in, the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), which mobilized volunteers statewide, does tremendous work (for local information, call 786-792-5299 or email marc-eddy.chery@flhealth.gov).

Each emergency bears its own signature. Whether hurricane or pandemic, though, a common denominator is the need for preparation, coordinated response, and shared resources. I have been speaking a great deal lately on how to address ongoing education challenges from the COVID-19 emergency—first, at the PAHO/WHO Virtual Campus of Public Health-Caribbean Node Meeting, and again at the International Conference on the Future of Health Professions Education led by President Julio Frenk. My co-editor Aluko Hope, M.D., and I also tackled this topic in the American Journal of Critical Care in May. “In a global survey of nursing education conducted by the International Council of Nurses, 73% of national nursing organizations around the world reported that nursing education was disrupted by the pandemic,” we wrote.



“...[R]obust academic-practice partnerships ... are well suited to responding to the pandemic.”

For this issue of *Heartbeat*, we delve directly and indirectly into such matters. Our cover story on page 18 is about the fantastic XVII Pan American Nursing Research Colloquium we just hosted under the theme “Building the Future of Nursing for Universal Health.” In the feature stories on pages 14 and 22, we showcase other examples of robust local, national, and global collaborations aimed at building our immunity against the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA) that has become a baseline these past few years.

As this issue of *Heartbeat* demonstrates, our strategic inroads and ideological infrastructures ensure a healthy pipeline

for students, faculty, and alumni alike. From Miami’s Hialeah Hospital to Japan’s Juntendo University, each new venture we solidify for our students at SONHS helps us to strengthen the superhighway from education to practice.

In closing, as we look to our milestone 75th anniversary in 2023, our mission grows bolder and brighter. I am pleased to report we had 97 donors for Giving Day—a 198 percent donor increase over last year. Your generous support is fueling student scholarships, simulation programs, and other key initiatives. Thank you, and enjoy the magazine!

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



# Scenes from Fall 2022

**“This is my sixth year at the U, and I still get as excited as if it were my first!”** — Dean Cindy Munro welcomes students to a new academic year

## September

Faculty, students, and staff share in delicious foods and festive music from Latin America and the Caribbean in honor of the first in-person **National Hispanic Heritage Month** get-together at SONHS since COVID-19.



## October

Students and parents take part in **Family Weekend** activities.

The **Dean's Fall 2022 Lecture Series** opened with “Health Equity: A Nursing Research Perspective,” presented by distinguished speaker **Shannon N. Zenk, Ph.D., M.P.H., R.N., F.A.A.N.**, director of the National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR). Dr. Zenk spoke on October 6 in the S.H.A.R.E.™ Auditorium about the NINR’s strategic plan and new NIH initiatives, detailing approaches to optimizing health and advancing health equity. The head of the Neighborhoods and Health Lab at the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), she is known for investigating how aspects of community and built environments—such as food accessibility and food deserts—can be viewed as social determinants of health that impact health and health inequities.



Dr. Zenk and Dean Munro

# By the Numbers

Several positive metrics underscore exemplary preparation through pandemic

Released this fall, the 2022-2023 edition of U.S. News & World Report’s “Best Colleges” Best Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Programs ranked the School of Nursing and Health Studies’ (SONHS) **No. 29** out of 681 accredited schools ranked nationwide. The BSN program has moved up two spots from its ranking last year, which marked the first time U.S. News included nursing schools offering baccalaureate degrees. SONHS tied with two other private schools and seven public institutions for this year’s No. 29 spot. In addition to its four-year BSN, SONHS offers an RN-to-BSN track and a 12-month accelerated BSN program. U.S. News determines its rankings by scores received from surveys of top academics and officials at nursing schools or departments at institutions nationwide that are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education or the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing. Ranked institutions must be regionally accredited and have recently awarded at least 40 BSN degrees.



students started strong and quickly bounced back. After starting at 98.51 percent in 2019, it was 94.95 percent in 2020 and 91.29 percent in 2021. But as of 2022’s first two quarters (through June), NCLEX scores at SONHS are 97.39 percent—back to nearly pre-pandemic levels.

“There is a correlation between test scores and how long students were kept out of clinicals and simulation during the pandemic,” says Dean Cindy L. Munro. “Our NCLEX-RN pass rates started high before the pandemic, and we never dipped below 91 percent.”

Pass rates for graduate programs have been equally affirming of the work taking place at the school. The current average certification exam pass rates for graduate programs are as follows: 100 percent Nurse Anesthesia, 98 percent Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, 98 percent Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner, 96 percent Family Nurse Practitioner, and 89 percent Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner.

“This is just incredible data. Our undergraduate and graduate numbers are equally spectacular,” says Dean Munro. “Our students’ first-time pass rates are an incredible testament to how strong we are in promoting education for life. The next step is for us to stay at the top.”

## More Notable Numbers

As COVID-19 raised unforeseen challenges for health care education, SONHS faculty, simulation leaders, and community partners collaborated on new and inventive ways to prepare students to hit the ground running after graduation. Their efforts ensured that nursing students at SONHS maintained access to hands-on education, both simulation and clinical, to keep up with the requisite skills and experiences addressed on

competency tests like the National Council Licensure Examination, or NCLEX.

These achievements are particularly notable in Florida, which has the nation’s lowest average first-time NCLEX pass rate. Whereas the U.S. average first-time pass rate dipped from roughly 88 percent in 2019 to around 82 percent in 2021 and in the first half of 2022, Florida’s dropped from about 69 to 65 percent for the same period. Meanwhile at SONHS, the average first-time pass rate for



# Grad School Names Fellows

Outstanding Ph.D. students selected for prestigious award with significant benefits

The University of Miami Graduate School offers a number of prestigious scholarships. Among those competitive awards, the Dean's Fellowship represents the highest honor, carrying with it a stipend of \$38,000 each academic year for two years. In addition to the stipend, plus travel and health insurance benefits, the financial assistance package includes a full tuition waiver from the department for the cost of all program coursework.

At SONHS, 2 out of the 16 current Ph.D. in Nursing Science students are Dean's Fellows. One of these is Jiye Lee, who is in her second year of the M.S.N. to Ph.D. program. She was profiled with her mentor, Dr. Yui Matsuda, in the Spring 2022 issue of Heartbeat. Lee came to Florida from Pennsylvania, where she was a registered nurse at the University of Pennsylvania-affiliated Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. A new mother herself, Lee says she is focused on advancing understanding of "mental and behavioral health outcomes in children with chronic or medically complex illnesses" in the hopes of ultimately developing interventions that "alleviate some of the burden these vulnerable families go through by addressing the family unit more holistically and studying their mental health needs further."

The other Dean's Fellow from SONHS is Dalton Scott, who started the B.S.N. to Ph.D. program in Fall 2022. Scott graduated with his Bachelor of Science in Nursing with High Distinguished Honors from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) in 2020. In UAB's Honors Program, he assisted with HIV, cardiovascular, mental health, and nutrition research aimed at reducing health disparities among underserved urban populations. This research



Jiye Lee

experience combined with international volunteering solidified his desire to work with immigrant populations. Upon graduation, he accepted an RN position in UAB Hospital amid the pandemic, working in the Neuroscience intensive care unit, which was a designated COVID unit. During his time at the bedside, he also earned a Master of Public Health in health behavior at UAB and volunteered extensively with the Alabama Interfaith Refugee Partnership (ALIRP). His work with ALIRP focused on improving access to health care, language, housing, and transportation resources for asylum-seekers living in Alabama. The experience transformed Scott's interest in migrant populations into a passion.

At SONHS, where his faculty mentors are Drs. Nicholas Metheny and Rosina Cianelli, Scott plans to study violence among LGBTQ+ migrant populations and their health outcomes. Ultimately,



Dalton Scott

his goal is to craft and improve culturally tailored health interventions that meet the unique health needs of underserved immigrant populations. Scott is a member of the American Association of Critical Care Nurses and Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society. In 2019, as an undergrad, he won a group Hackathon Innovation Competition at Sigma's International Nursing Research Congress. Internationally, he has studied in Salamanca, Spain, and done outreach work in Quito, Ecuador.

"I grew up in a small East Texas town, and in middle school, I realized I wanted to help people through a career in the medical field," says Scott. "After job-shadowing several professions, I knew I wanted to pursue nursing based mostly on two observations: nurses connect with their patients on a deeper level than any other medical professional, and there are enormous opportunities for growth."

# Bringing Up Bebé's Health

SONHS scientist earns 5-year, \$764,996 NIH award to pilot early life obesity prevention intervention for Hispanics

Cynthia Lebron, an assistant professor in the public health program at SONHS and current president of the American Public Health Association's Latino Caucus for Public Health, has been studying racial and ethnic health disparities for a decade, and notes that weight-based inequity begins early in life. "Hispanic children have a higher prevalence of behaviors and determinants that put them at a high risk of obesity, including suboptimal breastfeeding, early introduction of solid foods, and poor infant sleep quality and duration," she says.

**"Preventing obesity as early as possible is critical."**

In fact, while nearly 14 percent of U.S. children are obese, Hispanic 2 to 5 year olds have a 16.7 percent prevalence rate for obesity compared with non-Hispanic Black (12.4 percent), white (9.3 percent), or Asian (9.1 percent) children. Children who begin life overweight are at least five times more likely to become overweight or obese adults, adds Dr. Lebron. "Once established, obesity and its comorbid medical conditions, many of which disproportionately affect Hispanics, are difficult to treat and usually persist throughout adulthood," she explains. "Thus, preventing its development as early as possible in life is critical to reduce health care costs associated with obesity-related chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease."

Dr. Lebron is principal investigator on a newly announced Mentored Research

Scientist Career Development Award from the National Institutes of Health's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI). To advance the science of early childhood obesity prevention, she will develop, test, refine, and pilot Caring for Bebé: Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Intervention for Hispanic Families. Her novel study addresses two critical gaps in the literature: obesity prevention for children younger than 5 years and minority health.

Despite evidence suggesting that successful obesity prevention interventions take place in infancy/early childhood and are family-based, few studies meet those criteria and even fewer target at-risk minorities, much less Hispanic mothers. Lebron's bilingual, multigenerational intervention will harness the power of social media and entertainment education such as video content to promote health behaviors



Cynthia Lebron

among 50 pairs of first-time pregnant Hispanic women and their mothers. Study participants will be randomly assigned to either the 12-week Caring for Bebé intervention or the control condition of "care as usual" and followed for 6 months. Changes in mother and grandmother health and social support



will be assessed secondarily, as will sociodemographic information, health history, measures of breastfeeding self-efficacy, and acculturation.

In addition to feasibility and acceptability measures, the research team will calculate Caring for Bebé's preliminary effect estimates to inform a subsequent R01 trial. The NHLBI states that K01 awards like this one are reserved for "highly innovative research in humans."

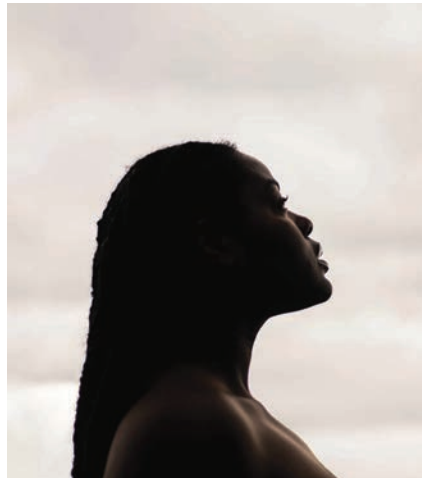
"There is plenty of evidence for parental influences on their children's eating behaviors, but minimal research examining feeding practices in Hispanic families, including socioeconomic, cultural, and acculturation influences," says Dr. Lebron, whose Ph.D. degree is in prevention science and community health. "Our data and findings on three generations of Hispanic families—grandmother, mother, and infant—will inform evidence-based pregnancy and early life obesity prevention interventions, and advise actionable recommendations for pediatric and family clinical care delivered to diverse families."



# PrEP-ing Women to End HIV

CFAR studies promote equity-focused prevention approach

From 2015 to 2020, use of PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) to prevent HIV infection increased from 3 to 25 percent, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). A national plan known as Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. (EHE) aims to double PrEP coverage to 50 percent by 2030 to help curb this country's decades-long HIV epidemic. However, at-risk populations poised to benefit most from the potentially life-saving PrEP regimen lag behind overall uptake. Only 9 percent of the nearly 469,000 Black people who could benefit from PrEP, for example, received a prescription in 2020, and only 16 percent of the nearly 313,000 Hispanic/Latino people who could benefit from PrEP were prescribed the medication, according to preliminary CDC data.



on two National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded studies examining potential barriers to PrEP use among minority women in Miami-Dade County, where HIV infection rates are historically high.

Women trail in PrEP use too. Rosina Cianelli, a School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) professor, notes that only about 10 percent of women versus about 28 percent of men use PrEP, with minority women disproportionately impacted by HIV and undereducated about PrEP. Data shows that HIV rates are 2.5 times higher for Hispanic women and 11 times higher for Black women than for non-Hispanic white women. Meanwhile, only about 11 percent of Hispanic women have heard of PrEP. “That is the reality we are confronting,” says Dr. Cianelli, principal investigator

The studies respond to EHE and were funded through the Miami Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) at the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine. Dr. Cianelli's first PrEP study—one of just seven the NIH selected nationwide in 2020 to help reduce PrEP use barriers among heterosexual women—focused on Hispanic/Latina women who are cisgender (that is, who identify with their birth sex). That study and her current investigation—SEPA+PrEP: An HIV Prevention Strategy for Cisgender Heterosexual Black Women (CHBW) to Access, Initiate, and Sustain Use of PrEP—build on a culturally tailored behavioral-change strategy known as SEPA. An acronym for Salud, Educación, Prevención, y Autocuidado (Health, Education, Prevention, and Self-Care), SEPA employs group discussions and role-playing to empower low-income heterosexual Hispanic women to negotiate condom use and better communication with male sexual partners.

Dr. Cianelli explains that a community-based approach and recognition of

social and structural determinants of health are key to her efforts to decrease health disparities and inequities among Hispanic and Black women. She and her co-investigators—SONHS associate professors Drs. Joseph De Santis and Giovanna De Oliveira, and Miller School of Medicine professor Dr. Jose Castro—collaborated with local women, health care professionals, and community organizations such as MUJER in south Miami-Dade to ensure a culturally appropriate adaptation of SEPA that would increase PrEP use among Hispanic women. Preliminary data showed that not only did study participants have little knowledge about HIV and AIDS, none knew of PrEP prior to the study. After evaluating the proposed intervention, participants expressed that PrEP would be excellent for preventing HIV in a “machista” (sexist) culture, where men do not want to use condoms. “Adding this biomedical component to SEPA will give at-risk women another possibility besides condoms to prevent HIV,” says Dr. Cianelli.

For the new study, SONHS faculty Drs. Renessa Williams and Régine Reaves have joined Dr. Cianelli's existing roster of co-investigators. Over the next two years, this expanded research team will assess sexual risk behaviors, social determinants of health, cultural norms, and stigma among CHBW ages 18 to 49 who live in south Miami-Dade's Homestead and Cutler Bay communities. “This study has the potential to bridge the gaps among research, practice, and policy by building a knowledge base that will allow us to adapt/refine SEPA into SEPA+PrEP as an effective HIV intervention for Black women,” says Dr. Cianelli. “This knowledge will be crucial for public health, for the overall well-being of the women and their families, and for informing future interventions addressing HIV testing and PrEP uptake.”

# Ever Brighter: Entrepreneurial Vision

With belief that healthy businesses are strengthened by healthy communities, donor drives investment in Science of Holistic Health Care campaign pillar

Innovator and philanthropist Michael Incorvaia Jr., who previously pledged a planned gift to the Simulation Hospital Advancing Research and Education (S.H.A.R.E.™), has donated a \$500,000 life insurance policy in support of researching the science of holistic health care at the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS).

Though from the Midwest, Incorvaia's connection to Miami came early. He grew up in football country watching former Hurricanes quarterback Bernie Kosar play for the Cleveland Browns and strongly identified with that era's well-known UM swagger.

To this day, Incorvaia maintains South Florida ties through family and friends. Now, with the University preparing to celebrate its centennial in 2025, he is proud to help lay a foundation to deliver novel advances in precision health care while supporting the U's Ever Brighter campaign.

“UM has a tremendous record of utilizing resources to produce practical results that can be applied to scale with the potential to improve lives across the entire country,” says Incorvaia.

A prominent business owner, Incorvaia employs innovative approaches to enhance both personnel and customer satisfaction. He believes a vibrant economic ecosystem is defined by the people who live, work, and play in it.

“Having a successful business is not just about the individuals inside of a single office. Yes, it's important to have ‘your house’ in order, but ultimately, the key to having any enterprise flourish is elevating the comprehensive health of the broader community,” he says. “I actually have



Michael Incorvaia Jr., left, connects with Bernie Kosar at a Hurricanes-Virginia Tech game.

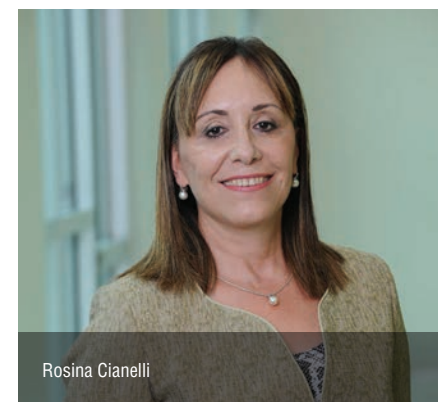
an entire platform in my business that is dedicated to showcasing what other successful entrepreneurs are doing to enhance the overall quality of life in the markets they serve. A rising tide lifts all boats, and that philosophy applies to both financial and physical health.”

In his native Ohio, Incorvaia has parlayed his business acumen into a highly successful real estate firm—The Incorvaia Team brokered by eXp Realty. He also recognizes the pressing need for the kind of high-quality, world-class scientific research being advanced at SONHS.

In particular, he is interested in driving his support behind the emerging

methods of integrative precision health care and wellness SONHS faculty are advancing, with a focus on prioritizing broader access to more effective, scalable interventions. This is because Incorvaia understands that, even as new therapies surge in popularity and potential, many remain under-researched and inadequately understood.

“I am a huge advocate for collaborative strategies that leverage the latest technological advances in consumer-focused devices, digital technologies, and data science to understand and improve health care,” he says. Incorvaia's generous gift to SONHS will spur such improvements.



Rosina Cianelli



# DEI Hire Recommended

Updates from the Dean's Special Advisory Committee on Faculty Diversity



Debbie Anglade



Victoria Behar-Zusman



Nichole Crenshaw



Charles Downs



Regine Placide-Reaves



Denise Vidot

A committee dedicated to advancing the School of Nursing and Health Studies' diversity and inclusion efforts is spearheading the search group for an associate dean for diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

The new position was recommended by the Dean's Special Advisory Committee on Faculty Diversity. Dean Cindy L. Munro established the committee in 2020, charging members with studying issues related to diversity and inclusion such as recruiting and retaining underrepresented faculty, explains Charles Downs, an associate professor and one of the six faculty members comprising the committee.

"We are aligned with diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives at UM, specifically completing a self-assessment related to DEI at the school, and we continue to make recommendations to the Dean as our work is ongoing," says Downs. His colleagues on the committee

are Debbie Anglade, Victoria Behar-Zusman, Nichole Crenshaw, Régine Placide-Reaves, and Denise Vidot.

According to Downs, this workgroup has been assessing the school's current standards and practices related to DEI, and is identifying potential opportunities to advance and improve DEI at SONHS.

"There are a wide range of benchmarks that can be used, such as racial and ethnic composition of the faculty, numbers of faculty who represent the LGBTQIA+ community, among others," says Downs. "Other metrics might include the number of minorities, women, and those in the LGBTQIA+ community who are in leadership positions, and the ability to retain a diverse faculty."

Not only does the committee reflect the gender, orientation, ethnic, racial, and academic diversity Downs references, it is a microcosm of overall

faculty diversity at SONHS. Besides recommending a school leadership position dedicated to advancing and overseeing DEI, the committee is focused on mentoring support and has suggested regular interaction with the University-wide DEI committee, "so that we are efficient in meeting our goals and in resource utilization," says Downs.

A key figure in fostering alignment with University DEI efforts has been committee member Crenshaw, associate dean for undergraduate nursing programs. Last year Crenshaw was named UM's associate provost for DEI. At the time of her appointment, she noted the importance of "taking deliberate actions to build a diverse, inclusive, and equitable community where ... all members of the University community feel valued and can add value."

The Dean's Special Advisory Committee on Faculty Diversity meets monthly.

# On the National Stage

Lessons learned, from COVID-19 to health disparities in Hispanic families

During National Hispanic Heritage Month, Graduate School Dean and SONHS Professor Guillermo "Willy" Prado contributed his expertise at two prominent public health discussions on the national stage.

First, Dr. Prado, a board member of Research!America, a nonprofit advocating for better health for all through science, discovery, and innovation, conducted an on-stage interview with Ashish Jha, M.D., M.P.H., the White House COVID-19 Response Coordinator for the Biden Administration for Research!America's 2022 National Health Research Forum.

He asked Dr. Jha about lessons from the nation's frontline response after two-plus years of the COVID-19 pandemic during a discussion billed "Becoming a Public Health Nation." "One of the biggest lessons of this pandemic is that partnership—public, private, academic, social, and civil society—is critical," said Jha. He emphasized the importance of ongoing vaccinations, treatment, and testing, as well as preparing for future pandemics by developing a stronger public health data infrastructure to be supported by a "robust public health workforce" engaging in contact tracing and bringing vaccines into communities. Dr. Jha encouraged scientists, public health leaders, and clinicians to combat disinformation. "Use opportunities to talk to people, to engage people, to listen," even to those who don't agree with you. "That is really critical for how we begin to build bonds back in our society." Dr. Prado agreed, noting that everyone—from academics to advocates—has an important role to play in promoting public health.

Following Research!America's Washington, D.C. event in September, Dr. Prado, also UM's Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, presented a Director's



Seminar for the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. The October 6 seminar, titled "Reducing Health Disparities in Hispanic Families: 20 Years of Research, Lessons Learned, and Opportunities," highlighted key findings from numerous National Institutes of Health-funded parenting interventions he and his team have implemented locally and nationally, as well as in Latin America.



Guillermo "Willy" Prado

Two decades ago, Prado and his team developed Familias Unidas (United Families), an internationally recognized evidence-based intervention that teaches parents to be change agents in the lives of their children. Facilitators for the 12-week program use parenting groups and family sessions to target "the adolescent's most important worlds: the family, peer group, and school," explained Dr. Prado. "It's not necessarily about focusing on a specific health outcome, but about changing the family dynamics and giving parents the tools to parent their youth better."

The fast-growing U.S. Hispanic population stands at about 61 million, with disparities in illicit drug use, pediatric obesity, and mental health issues on the rise among Hispanic youth. To reach more families with parenting skills, said Dr. Prado, his team adapted Familias Unidas into an online format in which an eight-episode telenovela (soap opera) is used to convey parenting topics. "The telenovela is culturally syntonic. There's a cliffhanger, it's overly dramatic, and parents want to come back to see what happens," said Dr. Prado, who shared a clip of an episode.

Asked for advice by early-career investigators attending the virtual event, he said it is all about people. "My team members are more than friends; they're family," he said. "It's really important to nourish those relationships over time so everybody feels valued. Surround yourself with the very best people who complement your skills." Dr. Prado also expressed gratitude for the chance to serve his own community through 20-plus years helping Hispanic youth. "I'm a product of the Miami-Dade Public School system, and it's been an absolute honor and privilege to be able to work in the same middle school and high school I went to," he said. "It's really gratifying to give back to the community that has given my family and colleagues so much." Days later, Dr. Prado was inducted into the prestigious National Academy of Medicine during its annual meeting.



# Joining Forces

A look at just a few of the thriving clinical collaborations SONHS forged in the midst of COVID-19

By Yolanda Mancilla and Robin Shear



Clinical resources are the lifeblood of nursing programs at SONHS. While COVID-19 raised significant challenges for health care educators, SONHS leadership adapted quickly to keep providing hands-on learning

opportunities for students, both through simulation and in real-world settings, whether hospitals, retail clinic systems, or managed care organizations. The innovative clinical collaborations highlighted in this

feature are just three of the successful community-based partnerships forged since the start of the pandemic with the aim of preparing well-rounded nurses to improve patient outcomes in a complex health environment.

## UHealth Clinic at Walgreens

On a typical day at the UHealth Clinic at Walgreens, you will find Master of Science in Nursing (M.S.N.) students from the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) helping patients with a broad range of acute care complaints. Whether caring for a toddler with a rash, a child with an ear infection, or an adult with respiratory problems, the students work closely with UHealth's board-certified nurse practitioners, learning advanced practice skills in a fast-paced, real-world setting.

"The clinics deliver patient-driven care that addresses health care access issues in the community," says Sarah Flory, M.S.N., A.P.R.N., F.N.P.-B.C., director of Clinical Operations for UHealth Clinic at Walgreens and Healthy 'Canes Clinics. "We are known for providing care for acute episodic illness—pinkeye, strep throat, UTIs, and most everyday things that come on suddenly. We also offer COVID-19 testing, vaccinations, and physicals for school, sports, summer camp, and employment."

UHealth operates the clinics—the University leases the space and staffs

interim executive for Advanced Practice Providers and assistant vice president of Connected Care for the University of Miami Health System (UHealth). "The visits are in and out. You can set your own appointment time, and we are open evenings and weekends, 363 days a year."

SONHS M.S.N. students, who are already licensed registered nurses, complete their semester-long clinical rotations at the convenient care clinics located inside one of 12 Walgreens stores in Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties.

"We have an excellent relationship with the School of Nursing," said Rubio-Delgado. "We work hand-in-hand to place 20 students from the NP programs every semester."

"The providers on our team love to teach, and the students receive a well-rounded clinical experience," adds Flory. "They are transitioning from being nurses to NPs, which is a different skill set, and our NPs guide them and teach them those skills. They need to develop



the clinics with its own employees—an advantage that allows the nurses to refer patients for follow-up in primary or specialty care and to facilitate those appointments.

"Patients love us because we are family NPs," says Cristina Rubio-Delgado, M.S.N., A.P.R.N., F.N.P.-B.C., L.S.S.G.B.,

that clinical knowledge and quick, critical thinking skills to be prepared for the unexpected—someone may be complaining of a headache, for example, and suddenly develop blurry vision and decompensate quickly."

The retail setting of the clinics also provides the students with learning



opportunities they do not usually encounter in the classroom or even in other clinical placements.

"Our NPs do everything for the patients—check them in, verify their insurance, write prescriptions, discharge them—so that's unique about the clinical experience," says Flory. "Students also sit in on telehealth visits and participate in e-consults with specialists in areas such as dermatology, ENT, and ophthalmology."

"The students interact daily with NPs who have demonstrated a high competency level and are working at peak efficiency," adds Matthew Weeks, M.A., M.B.A., director of business operations for UHealth's Office of Patient Experience. "Showing them how it's done in a very dynamic, real-world environment is invaluable."

The SONHS-UHealth partnership only strengthened during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, just when other clinical placements started closing down, and SONHS leadership struggled to provide students with the requisite hours for clinical practice.

"When it was near impossible to find clinical experiences for our students due to the pandemic, we were able to secure rotations through the UHealth Clinic at Walgreens,"



“It was an amazing rotation that tied together everything I was learning in my foundation classes.” — Gabriela Flit, M.S.N. '22

explains Elizabeth Markowitz, an M.S.N. program manager at SONHS. “They stepped up to help our students complete their required hours and graduate on time.”

“We were one of the only sites that stayed open,” recalls Flory. “We outsourced the supply chain to get enough PPE to keep everyone safe, and took on as many students as we could. Our team was grateful to have them, and the students were so thankful that we stayed open and provided that experience.”

The high-caliber of the clinical placement is evidenced by the recognition the UHealth Clinic at Walgreens has garnered: in 2021, they earned the Press Ganey Guardian of Excellence Award for maintaining an exceptionally high level of satisfaction among their patients for 12 consecutive months—over 95 percent of whom are likely to recommend the clinics. Building on that solid foundation of clinical excellence, both partners are looking to future collaborations with excitement and gratitude.

“As more preceptors and clinics become available, the partnership continues to expand,” says Markowitz. “We hear from our students that they are enjoying excellent clinical experiences, and the preceptors indicate they love having our students there.”

One of those enthusiastic FNP students was Gabriela Flit, M.S.N. '22. Flit, A.P.R.N., F.N.P., an August grad who as of press time was set to start a dermatology NP position, had her first clinical rotation at the UHealth at Walgreens last fall. “It was an amazing rotation that tied together everything I was learning in my foundation classes such as pathology and pharmacology,” she says. “Many of the preceptors had been students at UM as well, so they were able to provide a lot of insight and guidance. In addition, the clinic offers

services to both adult and pediatric patients, so the rotation offers a very comprehensive experience.”

It is a win-win clinical connection. “Another plus is that when positions open up at UHealth Clinics at Walgreens, we always give first interviews to students who have precepted with us because we know how they perform and that they like this type of setting,” notes Flory.

The CareMax Connection

One year into a clinical partnership between the School of Nursing and Health Studies and CareMax Inc., the prognosis for the collaboration is looking good.

“CareMax is a new partnership that allows our Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) graduate students to train at CareMax primary care sites,” explains Dr. Kenya Snowden, associate professor of clinical, who directs the Family Nurse Practitioner Program at SONHS. “It is an ideal site for FNP’s because these sites are engaged in true primary care—prevention and management of mostly chronic illnesses with some acute exacerbations of chronic illnesses.”



Antonio Sanchez-Gonzalez

“We plan to keep taking students to our absolute max capacity and continue this partnership. The collaboration benefits the students and the clinics, and we sure do enjoy it!” One year into a clinical partnership between the School of Nursing and Health Studies and CareMax Inc., the prognosis for the collaboration is looking good.

Currently about 12 clinicians—physicians and advanced practice nurses—precept over a dozen FNP students from SONHS at several of CareMax’s 37 medical centers located from South Dade to Broward County. Students placed at CareMax Hialeah, for example, get to connect with Antonio Sanchez Gonzalez, B.S.N. '19, M.S.N. '20, a preceptor who knows just what is expected of them in their M.S.N. program at SONHS. A double alumnus, Sanchez Gonzalez has been a primary care nurse practitioner with CareMax for the past two years.

Learning Whole-Person Health

Miami-based CareMax is a publicly traded senior-focused health care platform with approximately 2,000 providers and over 200,000 senior patients spanning 10 states and 30 markets. The CareMax platform provides a whole-person model of care, which includes comprehensive, coordinated health care, social services, and chronic disease management for seniors and a network of medical centers and affiliated providers.

Although their focus is largely on the geriatric population, CareMax offers students a couple of pediatric primary



Drs. Alonso and Agostinelli, at right, tour S.H.A.R.E.™

care rotations as well. Paola Pupo was one of those students. “I honestly had a great experience and great preceptor,” says Pupo. “She was very thorough in her teaching technique. She answered all my questions and engaged me in the process of decision making, diagnosis, and medication prescription. I loved it there and hope to get another experience to work with CareMax.”

Recently retired, Pablo Alonso, M.D., served as the medical director of CareMax’s South Florida market and helped shepherd the preceptor program to its present success. “CareMax is back to basics,” he says. “We identify the needs of our elderly and fragile patients and bring them in at a minimum of every three months. We spend time discussing nutrition, educating them, and reviewing medication compliance. As a practitioner, you can’t be too busy to look at the patient and see what is going on.”

Raised in Hialeah, Dr. Alonso pursued specializations in pediatrics and emergency medicine before going into

managed care. He respects the role of nurses in health care. “I come from a family of nurses,” he says. “My sister is an R.N., my niece is a nurse practitioner, and my mom always wanted to be a nurse in Cuba during the Depression.”

Dr. Alonso notes that wholly-owned CareMax centers have expanded into Tennessee, New York, and Texas. In fact, the company recently acquired all of the Medicare value-based care owned by Dallas-based Steward Health Care System (see page 17). Although Dr. Alonso has handed the reins of the preceptor partnership to his long-time colleague at CareMax, Dr. Cristina Agostinelli, he still has sage words for incoming students. “I love patient care,” he says. “Primary care is not only numbers; it is not just about what the patients are feeling physically. The office where primary care takes place is sort of sacred. Patients share stories, ask advice. You address health care and wellness but also act as an advisor and spiritual guide, like you would talk to a friend.”

In September, Drs. Alonso and Agostinelli came to SONHS to hold an orientation for a cohort of students preparing to start clinical rotations with CareMax. While there, the physicians took time to tour the Simulation Hospital Advancing Research and Education (S.H.A.R.E.™). After exploring all five floors, they noted how lucky students are to have such an expansive, comprehensive resource. But as seasoned clinicians, they know there is no substitute for interacting with patients. “It’s so good for the students because they learn real life, value-based care,” says Dr. Agostinelli, an internist with CareMax. “We keep people healthy. They get frequent access to care and preventive medicine.”

The positive relationship, she adds, is reciprocal. “It is also good for CareMax. You are a prestigious university,” she says. “It is a privilege to have these students. We at CareMax want to make sure we prepare good professionals committed to the health and wellness of our aging patient population. If we can share what we know, it is a good relationship to foster.”



Dr. Snowden agrees, putting the importance of this individual program into the broader context of the future of health care for the U.S. and beyond. “There continues to be a lack of available primary care providers to

meet the global and national demands,” she explains. “Nurse practitioners are well-suited to fill that gap and provide access to primary care for those who may not otherwise be able to obtain quality care. There is a tremendous

need for more A.P.R.N.s in primary care. Our graduates fill this critical slot, and are ready to see more patients and ease some of the stresses on the health care system, particularly in underserved populations.”



Drs. Alonso and Agostinelli lead a CareMax orientation at SONHS.

## Steward Health Care System

At the height of COVID-19, Dallas-based Steward Health Care System LLC (Steward) made a big move in South Florida, acquiring five South Florida hospitals. Not long after, SONHS joined forces with the large physician-owned health care network. This past Spring semester, SONHS announced a partnership that would include clinical rotations and preceptorships in all five of those recently acquired hospitals, as well as the creation of a significant scholarship fund for nursing students.

“Steward Health Care System and our thousands of team members are excited about this partnership with the University of Miami, and we are exploring other areas where we can collaborate clinically,” said Michael G. Callum, M.D., Steward executive vice president for Physician Services.

As part of the new partnership, Steward gave a charitable gift in the amount of \$100,000 to create the Rosa de la Torre Nursing Scholarship at SONHS. The scholarship is named for the (CK) mother of Ralph de la Torre, Steward’s chairman, CEO, and founder.

“The University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies enthusiastically welcomes Steward Health Care to South Florida,” said Dean Cindy L. Munro. “We are happy for the opportunity to partner with Steward, an innovator in community-based, value-driven, and outcome-focused care, to provide unique and beneficial clinical experiences for our nursing students throughout the community.”

Steward owns North Shore Medical Center, Coral Gables Hospital, Hialeah Hospital, and Palmetto General Hospital in Miami-Dade County, and Florida Medical Center in Broward County. Initially, clinical placements in these five hospitals focused on undergraduate student placements, with plans to expand to preceptorships for graduate nursing students, including those in the nurse anesthesia D.N.P. program.



“As part of the largest physician-owned and led hospital network in the country, this partnership will bring significant resources and a dedicated commitment to meeting Florida’s ongoing need for nurses,” said Marisela Marrero, Steward’s regional president for South Florida at the time. “We are honored to partner with the UM’s School of Nursing and Health Studies to provide outstanding clinical training and mentorship, while preparing the next generation of nurses to deliver the highest quality, compassionate care to our unique and diverse community.”

Steward created the Rosa de la Torre Nursing Scholarship at UM to provide scholarships for full-time students enrolled in the Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (A.B.S.N.) at SONHS. Preference is given to students in the A.B.S.N. cohort who desire to complete clinical rotations and pursue subsequent employment upon successful completion of their degrees.

“Clinical rotations at Steward’s South Florida hospitals provide a fantastic opportunity to develop our students’ capacity to care for patients in a wide range of clinical specialties supervised by world-class clinicians while honing their capacity for cultural humility, health equity, and patient safety,” said Nichole Crenshaw, associate dean for Undergraduate Nursing Programs and

associate professor of clinical. “This opportunity will enhance their ability to shine as the next generation of nurses caring for diverse populations.”

Dr. Callum noted that Steward is aware of the financial demands facing students in the A.B.S.N. program, which is designed for individuals who already have a bachelor’s degree in a field other than nursing. The scholarship enables UM’s Office of Financial Assistance to award ten scholarships in \$10,000 increments. The 12-month A.B.S.N. program helps address the nursing shortage locally and nationally. Because of the accelerated curriculum, A.B.S.N. students are limited in their ability to work outside of the classroom throughout the program year. Meanwhile, interest in this particular nursing program is expected to grow due to increased demand for nurses.

“Scholarship support is critical among A.B.S.N. students because they’ve often exhausted eligibility for financial aid while earning prior degrees,” noted Dean Munro. “This generous gift from Steward will result in recipients’ participation in clinical rotations for nursing students and offers of employment to qualified nurses throughout Steward’s health system.”





XVII PAN AMERICAN  
**NURSING  
RESEARCH  
COLLOQUIUM**  
MIAMI, FLORIDA USA  
NOVEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup> - 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2022

# Building <sup>the</sup> Future <sup>of</sup> Nursing for Universal Health

UM School of Nursing & Health Studies Hosts the  
XVII Pan American Nursing Research Colloquium

By Marina Parada

Photos by Andrew Innerarity

Nursing leaders, professionals, scientists, and students from the United States, the Americas, and beyond gathered at the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) campus in Coral Gables, Florida, from November 8 to 10, 2022 for the XVII Pan American Nursing Research Colloquium.





It was the second time SONHS was honored to host the prestigious biennial conference, which drew more than 200 in-person and many more virtual participants representing nursing professionals and students from over two dozen countries worldwide.



The conference was co-chaired by SONHS Dean and Professor Cindy L. Munro and SONHS Associate Dean for Hemispheric and Global Initiatives and Professor of Clinical Johis Ortega, who together serve as co-directors of the School's Pan American Health



Organization (PAHO)/World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Nursing Human Resources Development and Patient Safety.

The colloquium theme, Building the Future of Nursing for



Universal Health/Construyendo el Futuro de la Enfermería para la Salud Universal, focused on fostering international research collaborations and supporting the WHO's work toward the sustainable development goal of Universal Health Coverage.

"There has never been a more critical time to tackle pressing nursing research challenges and to foster international collaborations that will strengthen nursing research infrastructures in Latin America and the Caribbean in support of Universal Health," said Dean Munro. "The Colloquium addressed key issues facing the Pan American region and disseminated emerging advances in nursing research from around the globe."

The colloquium showcased keynote speakers Elizabeth Iro, chief nursing officer of the WHO, as well as Elizabeth Madigan, CEO of the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, and Pamela Cipriano, president of the International Council of Nurses. SONHS Professor Guillermo "Willy" Prado, who is the University's vice provost for Faculty Affairs and Graduate School Dean, delivered the closing address. Three plenary panels featured ten speakers presenting on health policy, research in Latin America and the Caribbean,

and the WHO's State of the World's Nursing Report.

The event kicked off Sunday with attendee arrivals followed by a full day of Pre-Colloquium workshops on a range of topics, such as writing for publication, communicating research, and strategies for clinical teaching with simulation. The latter took place at S.H.A.R.E.™, the school's state-of-the-art Simulation Hospital Advancing Research and Education, giving attendees the chance to tour the five-story facility.

The Maricel Manfredi Prize for an unpublished nursing research article was awarded to Sandra Patricia Osorio Galeano, a professor at Universidad de Antioquia, in Medellín, Colombia, for her submission, "Diseño y Evaluación Preliminar de la Intervención ACUNE: Acciones Para un Cuidado Neonatal Empoderado" ("Preliminary



Design and Evaluation of the ACUNE Intervention: Actions for Empowering Neonatal Care").

The Roseni Rosángela de Sena Award for the best scientific research on nursing practice in primary health care from a graduate student went to Dulce María Carranza Oropeza, of the nursing school at Universidad



Autónoma de Nuevo León, México, for her abstract, "Liderazgo resiliente en profesionales de enfermería" ("Resilient leadership in nursing professionals"). Maria Guadalupe Moreno Monsiváis and Maria Guadalupe Interrial Guzmán were her faculty mentors and coauthors.

"The colloquium is of vital importance in advancing nursing research and promoting international research collaborations among nurse scientists, and it plays a unique role in fostering the visibility and professional development of emerging nurse leaders, clinicians, and students from across the hemisphere," said Dr. Ortega. "In spite of the challenges presented by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the participants brought tremendous energy, hope, and promise to the gathering."

SONHS presented the colloquium with the support of the PAHO Unit of Human Resources for Health, Nursing Programs and Silvia Cassiani, advisor of Nursing and Allied Health Personnel Development for PAHO. SONHS has now successfully hosted the colloquium twice. Miami is the first and only U.S. site to host the conference to date. At the closing ceremony, it was announced that the XVIII Colloquium will take place in Chile.

Visit <https://colloquium2022.miami.edu>.





## A collage of images related to nursing education and research, overlaid with the text "Building the Future of Nursing for Universal Health". The collage includes: a group of people in a meeting; a woman speaking at a podium; a group of people in a meeting; a woman holding a certificate; a group of people in a meeting; a woman holding a certificate; a group of people in a meeting; a woman holding a certificate; a group of people in a meeting; a woman holding a certificate. The text is in a large, white, serif font, with "Building" and "Future" on the first line, "the" and "of" on the second line, "Nursing" on the third line, and "for Universal Health" on the fourth line.



# Research Day 2022

Participants present their Minority Health and Health Disparities Research Training Program posters at international nursing conference

By Robin Shear



Members of the MHRT program come full circle during Research Day 2022, reuniting with their mentors and presenting their findings from this exciting summer research experience.

The School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) welcomed its largest cohort of Minority Health and Health Disparities Research Training Program (MHRT) participants this year. Sixteen individuals from around the United States participated in the prestigious grant program, funded by the National Institutes of Health's National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) to improve diverse representation of research scientists from health disparity populations in the biomedical, clinical, and social sciences.

"We are incredibly excited to have such a large, diverse MHRT cohort this year," says Dr. Johis Ortega, principal investigator for the grant and associate dean for Hemispheric and Global Initiatives at SONHS. "Not only is this the largest cohort we've welcomed since COVID-19; it is our largest cohort since first receiving this prestigious grant in 2016."

Participants ranged from the undergraduate to postdoctoral level and assisted with research at the University

of Miami, as well as in country at the following global partner institutions: Nuevos Rumbos Corporation and Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá, Colombia; Universidad de Costa Rica's Center for Research in Tropical Diseases; Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra School of Health Sciences in the Dominican Republic; the University of the West Indies in Jamaica; and Universidad de las Américas Puebla (UDLAP) in Central Mexico.

Among the promising cohort were three



SONHS students. Jessica Garafola, A.B.S.N. '22, and Julia Byerly, B.S.N. '22, both completed their MHRT research experiences in Bogotá. At UDLAP for the summer, Kerri-Ann Scott (B.S.N. '24) helped investigate Puebla's endemic foods to improve the diet of children, pregnant women, and chronic patients or older adults.

With their program concluded, the participants were invited to present final research posters with their mentors and peers at the Annual MHRT

Research Day. This year, Research Day was held on site during November's XVII Pan American Nursing Research Colloquium at UM, allowing them to disseminate the work to a larger audience of health-focused scientists from around the globe.

One of the presenters, Cassandra Michel, a UM junior psychology and community and applied psychological studies major, worked in the lab of UM faculty member Dr. Roger McIntosh on his study to determine

whether HIV and/or pre-hypertension have an additive or interactive effect on cardiovascular reactivity. "I am exhilarated to further my research experience," Michel says.

*For more information, visit [mhrt.sonhs.miami.edu](http://mhrt.sonhs.miami.edu).*



# Introducing Dr. Santos

SONHS celebrates an inaugural endowed chair whose stellar rise in nursing spans São Paulo to South Florida

By Robin Shear

Growing up in Brazil with a mother who worked as an LPN and an uncle who led a hospital, it's no surprise Hudson P. Santos Jr. chose a career in health care. His ensuing education and experiences have resulted in a prestigious career as a nurse scientist and educator.

Since joining the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) this summer from the University of North Carolina (UNC), his reputation as a distinguished leader with expertise in maternal and child health has only grown.

In addition to being named the school's inaugural Dolores J. Chambrea, RN Endowed Chair in Nursing, Dr. Santos was recently informed that he is the 2022-23 president-elect of the board of directors for ISONG, the International Society of Nurses in Genetics, which fosters scientific and professional growth of nurses in human genetics and genomics worldwide.

Effective December 1, 2022, Dr. Santos began his tenure as Associate Dean for Research at SONHS.

"My research focuses on the developmental origins of health and disease for at-risk children, concentrating on the psychosocial and biological dimension of early life adversity and its effects on perinatal and child health outcomes," says Dr. Santos, a Fellow of the Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research.

In general, he is focused on evaluating how early life stressors interact with the genome and affect perinatal and child neurodevelopmental outcomes in high-risk populations, as well as across socioeconomic status levels and racially and ethnically diverse communities, with a strong emphasis on Latinx populations.



To this end, he successfully transferred three active National Institutes of Health grants to SONHS on which he is principal investigator (PI). Totalling over \$5 million in funding, the three grants are "Placental Origins of Positive Child Health Outcomes," "Healthy Mothers-Healthy Children: An Intervention



with Hispanic Mothers and Their Young Children," and "Genetic and Epigenetic Effects on Childhood Cognitive Trajectories." For the Placental Origins study, he and his team are exploring multi-omic (DNA methylation, mRNA, and microRNA levels) mechanisms that indicate in utero

programing of positive health in children born extremely premature.

Finally, amid his smooth transition to a new school, city, and work environment, Dr. Santos received news that he had been named to the American Academy of Nursing's 2022 class of fellows. The Academy's Fellow Selection Committee reviewed a record number of applications, representing a 30 percent increase from the previous year.

Prior to his induction, Dr. Santos served as chair for the Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science's State of the Science Congress. He returned to Washington, D.C., the following month for the FAAN induction ceremony, honoring 250 "dynamic and courageous nurse leaders." The event was part of the Academy's annual Health Policy Conference, themed "From Reflection to Impact: Positioning Nursing's Future." "I am honored to be part of this



prestigious class of new fellows of the American Academy of Nursing," says Dr. Santos.

"Dr. Santos is a brilliant addition to our world-class faculty," says Cindy L. Munro, SONHS dean and professor. "He is an exemplar of the Chambrea family's dream of supporting academic excellence at their beloved University of Miami. Through this endowed chair, Dr. Santos will continue to build on our foundation of top-tier nursing education and mission-driven research."

Dolores Jean and William J. Chambrea were generous UM benefactors who supported the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center through planned giving. Dolores, a registered nurse and hospital administrator, was among the first women tapped into UM's Iron Arrow Honor Society, served as a UM trustee from 1985-87, and helped establish the graduate nursing program at SONHS.

"I am honored to carry forward the vision of excellence for nursing



leadership the Chambreaus set forth through this endowed chair in my new academic home at the University of Miami," says Dr. Santos. "During this pandemic, we have all witnessed the importance of nurses to keep our society healthy and well. I am confident that bringing my program of research to the international, interdisciplinary environment fostered at SONHS will promote great synergy toward advancing health equity and improving health outcomes."

Dr. Santos completed his LPN at Bahia State College of Health and his BSN at the State University of Paraíba in Campina Grande in Brazil. He maintains his RN license in Brazil and the U.S. and is an adjunct associate professor at the Federal University of Bahia School of Nursing. Dr. Santos earned his PhD in nursing, summa cum laude, from the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil. He was a Visiting Scholar at UNC at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH), and the University of British Columbia before completing

a postdoctoral fellowship at Duke University School of Nursing.

He is an elected council member for the U.S. Developmental Origins of Health and Disease, and a member of the NIH Environmental influences on Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) epigenetics working group. At UNC-CH, he was the Beerstecher-Blackwell Distinguished Term Scholar and an associate professor at the School of Nursing. He also directed UNC's Biobehavioral Laboratory and was founding director of the Health Resilience and Omics Science (HEROS) Hub for identifying protective and risk factors and genetic/genomic mechanisms affecting child neurodevelopmental trajectories.

"My mission is to stimulate students to pursue science and use scientific knowledge to inform clinical practice and health solutions," he explains. "I promote and strive for inclusivity in my classroom so that students from different backgrounds can feel comfortable venturing into the learning process."



Honors & Awards



**Denise Vidot**, Ph.D., associate professor, is the principal investigator for a new project supported by the NIH’s National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. The two-year, \$100,000 study is titled “Racial/ Ethnic Differences in the Impact of Cannabinoids and Route of Cannabis Administration on Subclinical Cardiovascular Disease Risk among 18-to-30-Year-Olds in South Florida.” She was also among the first recipients of the Luis Glaser Mentorship Award at the University of Miami (UM) Provost’s Awards, selected for outstanding dedication to the student learning process and exceptional commitment to mentoring students.



**Nicholas Metheny**, Ph.D., M.P.H., R.N., assistant professor, received a Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) award for \$20,000 to study “Individual- and Community-Level Risk Factors in the HIV, Monkeypox, and Meningococcal Disease Syndemic.” He is also principal investigator on “Measuring the Impact of the Parental Rights in Education Act on LGBT-Identified teachers, parents, and high schoolers in Miami-Dade County,” which received a 2022-2023 U-Link award in the amount of \$50,000. In addition, he was recognized with a 2022-2023 Provost’s Research Award.



**Victoria Behar-Zusman**, associate dean for research and professor, in her role as principal investigator of the Center for Latino Health Research Opportunities (CLaRO), was awarded an Administrative Supplement for CLaRO in the amount of \$910,000 for the period starting June 2022 and running through April 2023.



**Ashley Falcon**, Ph.D., M.P.H., assistant professor of clinical, is a UM Provost’s Awards recipient. She was recognized with the 2022-2023 Excellence in Experiential Teaching Award.



**Nicole Gonzaga Gomez**, D.N.P., C.R.N.A., A.P.R.N., C.H.S.E., and **Greta Mitzova-Vladinov**, D.N.P., A.P.R.N., C.R.N.A., C.H.S.E., associate director and director, respectively, of the Nurse Anesthesia Program, presented “Decreasing Anesthesia’s Carbon Footprint Using ecoFLOW,” at UM’s first Climate Resilience Academy Symposium on behalf of Gomez’s advisee Nicole Hektner, D.N.P. ’21, whose scholarly project addressed anesthetic gas cost, waste, and environmental impact while raising awareness of more eco-friendly technology. Gomez also presented with Hektner, now a C.R.N.A. at Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, at the 2022 American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology Annual Congress.



**Yui Matsuda**, Ph.D., P.H.N.A.-B.C., M.P.H., assistant professor, is co-investigator on an interdisciplinary team selected for funding in the UM Climate Resiliency Academy’s U-LINK Resilience Challenge. Support is \$99,940 for a two-year project (2021-2023) titled “Developing Resiliency Tools and Metrics and Co-designing an Expert and Stakeholder Coalition to Sustain Predictions on the Health of South Florida’s Biome through a Human, Urban, and Environmental Transect.”



**Deborah Salani**, D.N.P., P.M.H.N.P.-B.C., A.P.R.N., N.E.-B.C., associate professor of clinical and director of the Post-Master’s Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Program, was elected to a three-year term starting in November as a member-at-large of the American Psychiatric Nursing Association (APNA) Board of Directors.



**Andrew Porter**, Ph.D., associate professor of clinical, is a UM Provost’s Awards recipient for 2022-2023. He was recognized with the Innovative Teaching Award during the event held in April.

New Faculty



**Giselle Garcia-Rivero**, B.S.N. ’11, D.N.P. ’21, A.P.R.N., PPC.N.P.-B.C., a board-certified pediatric primary care nurse practitioner, joined SONHS in Fall 2022 as an assistant professor of clinical, specializing in pediatric nursing care and advanced practice. Her interests include pediatric primary care, health promotion, breastfeeding support and benefits, and growth and development. Growing up in Miami, she began her clinical career over a decade ago in the neonatal intensive

care unit (NICU) of South Miami Hospital, where she remained on staff for four years. She earned her M.S.N. with honors, specializing in pediatric primary care. Her clinical experience as a nurse practitioner includes pediatric oncology and pediatric cardiology. After working in family-centered pediatric care with Miami’s culturally diverse communities, Dr. Garcia-Rivero returned to academia and her alma mater to obtain her D.N.P. Her doctoral scholarship was aimed at narrowing health care disparities among underserved women and infants by strategically improving access to postpartum breastfeeding support for those who need it most.



**Audrey Harkness**, Ph.D., is a psychologist who joined SONHS in June as an assistant professor. She has training and research experience in LGBTQ mental health, HIV, public health, and implementation science. Her interests include optimizing mental and physical health for sexual and gender minority and implementation science. She received her Ph.D. in Counseling, Clinical, and School Psychology from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and completed a clinical health psychology postdoctoral fellowship in the University of Miami Department of Psychology. Most recently, she was a research assistant professor in UM’s Department of Public Health Sciences. As principal investigator of the REACH (Research Engagement and Community Health) Equity

Team, Dr. Harkness is developing, adapting, and evaluating interventions and implementation strategies to achieve health equity among key populations affected by HIV and mental health disparities. She has NIH funding (K23, Ending the HIV Epidemic Supplement) to develop and evaluate culturally grounded implementation strategies for scaling up and disseminating evidence-based HIV-prevention (e.g., PrEP) and behavioral health interventions to Latino gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men. She has coauthored forthcoming companion books on LGBTQ-Affirmative Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy and is involved in community-based research to identify strategies for implementing and disseminating this treatment within LGBTQ-accessible community and clinical settings.



**Renessa Shamar Williams**, Ph.D., R.N., became an assistant professor at SONHS on June 1. She teaches Epidemiology for Population-Based Care (NUR412) among other undergraduate nursing courses, and conducts seminars and guest lectures on intersectionality research and theory, health disparities, qualitative research foundations, and HIV-related stigma. Dr. Williams is dedicated to advancing understanding of and mitigating intersectional stigma in persons living with HIV, particularly in relation to key mechanisms that contribute to poor health outcomes. She obtained her Ph.D. in nursing science and a certificate in psychiatric epidemiology at the University of Florida. In 2022, she completed her NIDA-funded T32 Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Miller School of Medicine’s

Department of Surgery. Her academic training and clinical experiences as a psychiatric registered nurse over the past five years prepared her to work on various community and state initiatives to reduce HIV-related stigma in Florida. In collaboration with the Florida Department of Health and University of Florida Southern HIV and Alcohol Research Consortium, she has coordinated efforts to document drivers of stigma and develop strategies to mitigate stigma in the state. The AIDS Institute recognized these efforts to promote policy development, inform intervention strategies, and highlight population-specific barriers to HIV prevention, care, and treatment. Dr. Williams is currently studying individual (e.g., depression, substance use), interpersonal (e.g., discrimination, violence), and structural (racism, heterosexism) factors that complicate health inequities among individuals with HIV, especially persons of racial/ethnic minority backgrounds (Blacks/African Americans) and/or sexual minority men.



Selected Publications

Spring/Fall 2022

Gerber, K. S., Alvarez, G., **Alamian, A., Behar-Zusman, V., & Downs, C. A.** (2022). Biomarkers of neuroinflammation in traumatic brain injury. *Clinical Nursing Research*, 31(7), 1203-1218. doi:10.1177/10547738221107081

Gong, S., Wang, L., Zhou, Z., Wang, K., & **Alamian, A.** (2022). Income disparities in obesity trends among US adults: An analysis of the 2011–2014 California Health Interview Survey. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(12), 7188. doi:10.3390/ijerph19127188

Sheikh-Wu, S. F., **Anglade, D., Gattamorta, K. A., Xiao, C., & Downs, C. A.** (2022). Symptom occurrence, frequency, and severity during acute colorectal cancer survivorship. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 49(5), 421-431. doi:10.1188/22.onf.421-431

Muheriwa Metemba, S.R., **Cianelli, R., Leblanc, N.M., Zhang, C., De Santis, J., Rodriguez Villegas, N., & McMahon, J.M.** (2022). Associations between home-and school-based violent experiences and the development of sexual behavior in young adolescent girls in the rural southern region of Malawi. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(10), 5809. doi: 10.3390/ijerph19105809

Baeza, M. J., **De Santis, J. P., & Cianelli, R.** (2022) A Concept Analysis of Self-Silencing. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 43(8), 766-775. doi:10.1080/01612840.2022.2053009

Sheikh-Wu, S. F., Gerber, K., Pinto, M. D. & **Downs, C. A.** (2022). Mechanism and methods to understand depressive symptoms. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 43(5), 434-446. doi:10.1080/01612840.2021.1998261

Lozano, A., **Estrada, Y., Tapia, M. I., Dave, D. J., Marquez, N., Baudin, S., & Prado, G.** (2022). Development of a family-based preventive intervention for Latinx sexual minority youth and their parents. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 28(2), 227. 10.1037/cdp0000506

Ochoa, L.G., Lee, T.K., Fernandez, A., Estrada, Y., & Prado, G. (2022). The intergenerational impact of adverse childhood experiences on Hispanic families: The mediational roles of parental depression and parent–adolescent communication. *Family Process*, 61(1), 422-435. doi:10.1111/famp.12652

**Foronda, C.L.,** McDermott, D.S., & **Crenshaw, N.** (2022). Prebriefing for cultural humility. *Clinical Simulation in Nursing*, 71, 141-145. doi:10.1016/j.ecns.2022.02.008

Luctkar-Flude, M., Ziegler, E., **Foronda, C., Walker, S., & Tyerman, J.** (2022). Impact of virtual simulations to promote cultural humility regarding care of sexual and gender diverse persons: A multi-site pilot study. *Clinical Simulation in Nursing*, 71, 146-158. doi:10.1016/j.ecns.2022.07.004

**Gattamorta, K.A.,** Salerno, J.P., & Roman Laporte, R. (2022). Family Rejection during COVID-19: Effects on sexual and gender minority stress and mental health among LGBTQ university students. *LGBTQ+ Family: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 18(4), 305-318. doi:10.1080/27703371.2022.2083041

**Hooshmand, M.,** Toledo, C.S., Moghaddas, R. Skordlis, E. (2022). Data analytics for diagnosis and prediction of central line-associated bloodstream infections in critical care units. *CIN: Computers, Informatics, Nursing*, 40(6):365-372. doi:10.1097/CIN.0000000000000794

Natale, R., Atem, F.D., **Lebron, C.N.,** Mathew, M.S., Weekaroon, S., Chang, C., Shelnutt, K.P., Spector, R., Altare, F., Messiah SE. (2022). Cluster-Randomized trial of the impact of an obesity prevention intervention on childcare center nutrition and physical activity environment over two years. *Public Health Nutrition*, 25(11), 3172-3181. doi:10.1017/S1368980021004109

**Liang, Z.,** Yip, H., Sena Moore, K., Ferreira, T., Ji, M., Signorile, J. F., & **Munro, C.** (2022). Self-managed music-guided exercise intervention improved upper and lower extremity muscle strength for ICU survivors—A pilot randomized controlled study. *Biological Research For Nursing*, 24(2), 145-151. doi:10.1177/10998004211050297

**Matsuda, Y.,** DeBastiani, S.D., Thalasinios, R.D., Ferranti, D., Norris, A.E. & **De Santis, J. P.** (2022). Cultural influences on Hispanic mother-daughter communication about sex. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, 33(3), 355-362. doi:10.1177/10436596221083030

**Matsuda, Y.,** Halstead, V., **Falcon, A., Valdes, B., Salani, D.A., & Reaves, R.P.** (2022). Exploring the utility of nursing student-led health fairs: Educating the college population. *Public Health Nursing*, 39, 847-855. https://doi.org/10.1111/phn.13056

**Matsuda, Y., Valdes, B., Salani, D. A., Foronda, C. L.,** Laporte, R. R., Gamez, D. M., & Sarik, D. A. (2022). Baby Steps Program: Telehealth nursing simulation for undergraduate public health nursing students. *Clinical Simulation in Nursing*, 65, 35-44. doi:10.1016/j.ecns.2022.01.001

**Munro, C. L.,** & Hope, A. A. (2022). Starting now: The power of research stories. *American Journal of Critical Care*, 31(5), 350-352. doi:10.4037/ajcc2022643

**Munro, C. L.,** & Hope, A. A. (2022). Improving nurse well-being: the need is urgent and the time is now. *American Journal of Critical Care*, 31(1), 4-6. doi:10.4037/ajcc2022603

**Munro, C. L. & Hope, A. A.** (2022). Future nurses. *American Journal of Critical Care*, 31(3), 174-176. doi:10.4037/ajcc2022249

Hope, A. A., & **Munro, C. L.** (2022). Rites of Passage. *American Journal of Critical Care*, 31(2), 90-92. doi:10.4037/ajcc2022229

Hope, A. A., & **Munro, C. L.** (2022). Sacramental moments: Presence as spiritual care in the intensive care unit. *American Journal of Critical Care*, 31(4), 261-263. doi:10.4037/ajcc2022346

Mulkey, M. A., Gantt, L. T., Hardin, S. R., **Munro, C. L.,** Everhart, D. E., Kim, S., ... & Olson, D. M. (2022). Rapid handheld continuous electroencephalogram (eeg) has the potential to detect delirium in older adults. *Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing*, 41(1), 29-35. doi:10.1097/DCC.0000000000000502

**Valdes, B.,** Martinez, J., Quidley-Rodriguez, N., **Salani, D.,** Provencio-Vasquez, E., & **De Santis, J. P.** (2022) Interventions for Hispanic/Latino gay, bisexual, and men who have sex with men: Critical appraisal. *Public Health Nursing*, 39(3), 572-585. doi:10.1111/phn.13022

Camacho-Rivera, M., Islam, J. Y., Rodriguez, D. R., **Vidot, D. C.,** & Bailey, Z. (2022). Food insecurity disparities and mental health impacts among cancer survivors during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Health Equity*, 6(1), 729-737. doi:10.1089/heq.2021.0120

SONHS in the News

The Josiah Macy Foundation’s “Macy Notes” blog recently featured an article coauthored by Drs. **Cynthia Foronda** and **Ruth Everett-Thomas** on how to make simulation-based education more inclusive. “Research has repeatedly demonstrated that racial diversity and cultural humility is lacking in simulation,” they write. “Our aim is to bring to light the initial steps to examine and redesign simulation-based learning environments. Go to https://bit.ly/3qE5gvU for the full post.

The Cutting Edge of Anesthesia Education

By Yolanda Mancilla

When she began her journey as an educator, Greta Mitzova-Vladinov, D.N.P. ’13, was a chief CRNA and served on a cardiovascular anesthesia team conducting clinical trial procedures at UHealth. Today, not only does she continue an active practice at UHealth, she is celebrating her tenth anniversary with the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS), readying the next generation of CRNAs for health care’s ever-changing expectations and environment.

“In recent years, greater numbers of doctoral-level Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) have been at the forefront of health care advancements, not only in their clinical role but also as leaders of change,” explains Dr. Mitzova-Vladinov, an associate professor of clinical and the newly appointed director of the school’s three-year nurse anesthesia track BSN-to-DNP program. “Our goal is to prepare them to enter clinical practice equipped with the highest level of evidence-based knowledge and skills to provide high quality patient care.”

With a doctorate in nursing practice from SONHS, extensive experience as a clinical preceptor, and national recognition as a certified health care simulation educator (CHSE), she is well-equipped to lead this effort. The current board certification pass rate is an exceptional 100 percent on first attempt for the program’s 35 to 40 annual graduates. One secret to this and other aspects of the program’s success is a robust simulation-based curriculum, including innovative use of virtual reality (VR).

“We’re moving forward, expanding our use of cutting-edge technologies in simulation, building our clinical partnerships, and addressing environmental concerns,” says Dr. Mitzova-Vladinov. “We provide



Javier Corrales

students with extensive simulation-based education early in their training to decrease anxiety and begin developing competencies before they ever go to their clinical sites. They learn how to manage anesthesia with a full range of patient populations and needs, from labor and delivery to pediatrics to administering nerve blocks for pain management.”

The program is also responding to emerging issues, such as the need for “green” anesthesia. As part of the University’s Green U initiative, Dr. Mitzova-Vladinov is looking at the relationship between anesthesia and global warming. “Living in Miami, we can’t ignore global warming and the carbon footprint created by anesthesia through the gases that are used,” she says, mentioning a poster on that topic that she and her team presented at the inaugural UM Climate Resilience Academy Symposium in 2022.

In addition to teaching anesthesia science, cardiothoracic anesthesia, and health care tech courses, Dr. Mitzova-Vladinov focuses her research on using simulation and VR in anesthesia

education. “Escape Operating Room” is a mixed-reality simulation application she spearheaded to teach students how to set up anesthesia equipment in an O.R. (see “Anatomy of an Operating Room,” Heartbeat Spring 2022). Recognized by a 2020 Provost’s Research Award, Escape O.R. is now licensed and under commercial development—the first technological innovation from SONHS to reach this stage.

As a member of the University’s “XR Initiative” advisory board, Dr. Mitzova-Vladinov helps other faculty who are creating extended reality (XR) projects across disciplines to access emerging technologies and integrate these resources into research and teaching. Nationally, she chairs the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiologists’ Simulation Subcommittee, which she helped found, and is the 2022-2024 vice-chair of the Society for Simulation in Healthcare’s Section of Anesthesia.

Recently she gave a podium talk on “Extended Reality – The Evolution of Anesthesia Training” at the 6th Annual International Virtual Reality and Healthcare Association’s Global Symposium, held at Vanderbilt University, and a panel presentation on “Innovation in Anesthesia Simulation” at the 2022 International Meeting on Simulation in Healthcare (IMSH). She will take the stage again at IMSH 2023 to discuss simulation use in developing competencies for anesthesia machine checkout.

When she’s not pioneering new dimensions in VR simulation for anesthesia education, Dr. Mitzova-Vladinov enjoys exploring nature, traveling, and promoting Bulgarian culture.



Message from the President



Renee Longini, left

I am very excited for the coming year and the opportunity to serve as your alumni representative! For those who don't know me, I have been active in the SONHS Alumni Association since 2017, and I teach part-time at SONHS. As our alumni group's newly named president, I urge other young alumni to get involved, help us steer this school's future, and gain leadership and networking skills in the process. Our meetings will be virtual to promote inclusivity and allow participation from anywhere in the world, but we also hope to host many fun in-person gatherings, like happy hours. As health professionals, you understand the importance of teamwork, so you know we can't pull this off without your valuable feedback and contributions. We are a welcoming, inclusive group looking to increase engagement as we prepare to celebrate our school's 75th anniversary of upholding educational excellence for the health professions in South Florida. To be involved, contact Jose Gonzalez, j.gonzalez36@miami.edu, 305-284-8593.

Go SONHS Grads, Go 'Canes!  
Renee Longini, B.S.N. '09, D.N.P. '16  
C.R.N.A., Jackson Health System



In Memoriam

By all accounts **Dylan Edson Santos, B.S.H.S. '23**, had a magnetic, exuberant personality and a smile so bright it lit entire rooms. Kind and caring, he was a protector to his friends and a hero to his little brother, Christian. At a Celebration of Life held November 11 in his honor at the School of Nursing and Health Studies, many from Dylan's large circle of loved ones spoke of his enduring values and qualities as well as the outsize impact he made

during his too-brief 21 years. Dean Cindy Munro presented Dylan's parents, Isabel and Edson Santos, with the cap, gown, and diploma their son would have received in May 2023 as a student in good standing of the school's health science program. Dean Munro said he was "engaged and selfless," qualities that made him perfectly suited to a career in health care. Born April 2, 2001 and raised in Long Island, New York, Dylan Santos excelled at soccer before setting his sights on becoming a physician. He was a premed student at SONHS when he passed away on September 24, 2022. The theme of his celebration of life was "Dream Big!" because, as all who knew him said, that is what Dylan always expected of himself and others. His memorial concluded with a candlelight vigil.

1970s, 1980s, & 1990s

**Ann Thrailkill, C.N.P. '76**, is enjoying her retirement from the Veterans Administration. In addition to doing community volunteer work that gives to a children's hospital and gang talks to older seniors at a local church, she is making new friends by playing Rummikub.

**Maura Farrell Miller, M.S.N. '84, Ph.D. '96**, is an adjunct faculty member at Florida State University College of Nursing and the director of the Hospice and Palliative Care and Therapeutic Gardening programs at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in West Palm Beach, Florida. She was recently honored for her remarkable contributions with an award in the Military & Veterans Support category at the sixth annual Sage Awards, hosted by the Council on Aging of Martin County at the Kane Center.



**Celia Garwood-Tomlinson, B.S.N. '90**, retired from nursing and now works in engineering. While visiting UM with her daughter, now a Miami Law

student, she toured S.H.A.R.E.™. "The simulated hospital is unbelievable!" she says. "I couldn't be more proud to be an alumni of the prestigious school of nursing at UM. ... Thanks for reigniting my 'Cane flame!"

2000s & 2010s

**Sonique Sailsman, B.S.N. '00**, is a University of Miami representative of the Atlanta 'Canes Community and an assistant professor at Mercer University College of Nursing.

**Emily Stauffer Rocha, B.S.N. '08, M.S.N. '13**, was elected chair of the Individual Membership Division (IMD) of the American Nurses Association.

**Conchita S. Freitag, M.S.N. '09**, earned her Ph.D. in nursing in 2021. Her dissertation, "Phenomenological Study of Nurses' Perceptions and Lived Experiences of Quality and Safety," was the first place research poster presentation at the 12th Annual South Florida Nurses Association South Region Symposium in 2022. After 22 years as a nurse educator at Jackson Health System, she has been promoted to the position of bariatric program coordinator at Jackson North Medical Center. She passed the Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program certification exam and joined the adjunct faculty of Ron and Kathy Assaf College of Nursing, Nova Southeastern University.

**Jenn Kuretski, M.S.N. '09, D.N.P. '11**, is president of the Nurse Practitioner Council of Palm Beach County 2022 Board of Directors. She is associate dean for graduate nursing at Palm Beach Atlantic University.

**Roselaure Anstral, A.B.S.N. '15**, an assistant nurse manager and Shared Governance chair at Baptist Health in Jacksonville, Florida, was recognized for her leadership on the UM Alumni Association 30 Under 30 list for 2022.

**Giovanna Cecilia De Oliveira, Ph.D. '15**, was the inaugural SAMHSA-ANA Frieda Outlaw mentorship award recipient. She and her mentee have coauthored manuscripts in refereed journals and collaborated on international podium presentations, research grants, and more.

**Shakira Henderson, Ph.D. '15**, was named assistant vice chancellor for clinical research at University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. She serves jointly as vice president for research at UNC Health and as Clinical Research Integration Officer with the UNC School of Medicine. She was featured recently on Becker's Healthcare Podcast.

**Sameena Sheikh-Wu, A.B.S.N. '15**, Ph.D. '22, successfully defended her dissertation, *The Effect of Positive Psychology on Symptoms and Quality of Life Among Acute Colorectal Cancer Survivors*.

**Mikayla Taylor, B.S.P.H. '16**, is a Health Communication Specialist for the Center for State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Support at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

**Catherine Nadeau, M.S.N. '17, D.N.P. '19**, is an assistant professor at the University of Southern Florida College of Nursing. She received a Rising Star Faculty Award for her immediate efforts and dedication in her first year on the job and is director of the college's Family Nurse Practitioner program.

**Lucia Alvarez, B.S.P.H. '19**, is pursuing a Master of Public Health degree in Health Policy and Management at Emory University.

**Kyra Freeman, B.S.P.H. '19**, an administrative fellow at Kaiser Permanente, is second author on "Physicians, prescribe education to address population health equity," which appeared in the publication *Preventive Medicine Reports*, Volume 29, 2022, 101950.

2020s

**Sandy Morel, D.N.P. '20**, received a check as the second place winner of the Mary Hanna Memorial Journalism Award for her work on "Improving On-time First Case Starts: An Integrative Review and Quality Improvement Project Plan," published in the American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses' *Journal of Perianesthesia Nursing*.

**Kelsey Boily, D.N.P. '21**, is a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist with TeamHealth in Stuart, Florida.

**Nicholas Cristofari, B.S.H.S. '21**, a D.O. candidate at Touro College of

Osteopathic Medicine in New York, presented "Understanding barriers and facilitators to voluntary medical male circumcision and Spear and Shield uptake in Zambian community health centers" at TouroCOM Middletown's 2022 Research Symposium; the study was published in the peer-reviewed journal *Translational Behavioral Medicine*, based on work Cristofari did as a SONHS practicum student. He serves as vice president of the TouroCOM Middletown Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA) chapter.

**Maya Symes, B.S.P.H. '21**, is continuing her education as a Master of Public Health (MPH) candidate at Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. She says the opportunities provided at SONHS "have allowed me to grow professionally and form connections that will last a lifetime."

**Bailey Reidy, A.B.S.N. '21**, is a neuroscience intensive care unit nurse at Emory University Hospital. She reports that she is involved in the unit practice council, LVAD dressing change team, evidence-based practice research, and simulation committee. She also serves as a preceptor.

**Julia Byerly, B.S.N. '22**, is a registered nurse at University of Miami Health System. "I am so grateful to start my professional career with my alma mater," she states.

**Jessica Garafola, A.B.S.N. '22**, is in a post-baccalaureate nursing residency program at the Jennifer Moreno Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in San Diego, California.

**Adi Rubin, B.S.N. '22**, is a nurse resident in the Pediatric Emergency Department at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in South Florida.

**Najy Sadig, B.S.P.H. '22**, is a health care associate at Guidepoint in Boston.



# Alumnus of Distinction 2022

Photos from the celebration honoring hospital executive  
Dr. David Zambrana



Dr. Zambrana with Jackson Health System's president, Don Steigman and CEO, Carlos A. Migoya



Dr. Zambrana with his family



**“I don’t see my role as molding people into what I think they should be, but instead supporting them to mold themselves to the strongest, smartest, and most honest versions of themselves.”**

Over 100 members of the business and health care community, including Jackson Health System CEO Carlos Migoya, filled the S.H.A.R.E.™ Auditorium this spring to show their love and admiration for the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) 2022 Alumnus of Distinction David

Zambrana, D.N.P. '09, Ph.D. '17. After hearing him speak, they gave a standing ovation. Dr. Zambrana, who started as a bedside nurse at Jackson and earned two doctoral degrees from SONHS, is now the executive vice president and chief operating officer for Jackson, which, with seven hospitals, comprises one of

the nation’s largest safety net health systems. The event was sponsored by Vitas Healthcare and emceed by Kim Baez-Williams, D.N.P. '18, an executive board member of the SONHS Alumni Association. Dean Cindy L. Munro introduced Zambrana as “a true leader in nursing and health care.”

# Health Literacy Champion: Adriana Arcia, Ph.D. '11

By Robin Shear

**Adriana Arcia's** welcome to the West Coast was wetter and windier than she expected. “We’re actually getting the outer bands of a hurricane,” she said. “I thought I was going to leave that sort of thing behind.”

After being an East Coaster most of her life, Arcia, Ph.D. '11, started in August as a full professor at the University of San Diego Hahn School of Nursing and Health Science and the Beyster Institute for Nursing Research, Advanced Practice, and Simulation.

Hurricanes may not have been part of the transition plan, but COVID-19 was. The pandemic inspired her immediate family members to converge in one city. “We were spread out all over the country,” she explained. “My brother has been here [in San Diego] for some time, so this was the winning location.”

For Dr. Arcia, that meant leaving her associate professorship in nursing at Columbia University Irving Medical Center. She retains an affiliation at Columbia Nursing, where she and Dr. Suzanne Bakken are multiple principal investigators on “Reaching Communities through the Design of Information Visualizations (ReDIVis) Toolbox for Return of COVID-19 Results,” funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research.

Having recently relocated to San Diego, Dr. Arcia is excited to explore the complex new opportunities for health information scholarship that this U.S.-Mexico border town presents. “It’s a very dynamic situation where we’re seeing the effects of diverse communities, refugees, and climate change,” she said. “My job now is to start building relationships within the community.”

Early in life, Dr. Arcia thought she might want to work in the arts, designing



Ismael Fernandez

costumes or jewelry. Although her desire for a more service-oriented career led to nursing, she says the invaluable skills and perspectives she gained as a theater major remain with her to this day. At the start of the pandemic, for example, she used her late grandmother’s collection of fabric remnants to sew over a hundred masks for neighbors, nursing home residents, and local essential workers.

In a larger sense, her research harnesses the theatrical art of storytelling to convey one very important story—that of people’s health. “Theater is about storytelling,” she says, “and storytelling is concerned with how we communicate a message clearly.”

To that end, Dr. Arcia works extensively with community members, using what she learns about their concerns and needs to tailor simple, clear visualizations such as infographics, illustrations, and charts designed to help them better manage their health. “We don’t do enough burden reduction,

where we eliminate barriers to informing people,” she said. “Caregivers are not getting enough information.”

Dr. Arcia’s Alzheimer’s Association-funded study, “Validity of Functional Assessment Staging by Caregivers,” aims to change that. She and her team are developing an app for Hispanic family caregivers of people with dementia in which questions, bullet points, and curated resources help caregivers learn to navigate their loved one’s changing abilities. One link, for example, might offer safety tips for bathing someone with moderate dementia who now needs assistance.

In recognition of these and other significant contributions to nursing, Dr. Arcia was inducted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing this October.

“I got excellent training at the University of Miami,” she said. “The Ph.D. program equipped me to be able to ask and answer a lot of different types of scientific questions.”



# Opening New Paths to Healing

By Jennifer Hudak and Robin Shear

Growing up in Portmore, Jamaica, Fabrizio Darby spent his youth watching and being inspired by his grandfather, a famed racehorse trainer. What impressed Darby most was his grandfather's devout work ethic and gentle approach to caring for the animals. "He always taught me to treat the horses the way you'd treat a human. If you treated them the way you want to be treated, they'd win for you," says Darby, a senior double-majoring in health science and biology. "That philosophy translated into how he interacted with everyone. He taught me always to leave a situation knowing that you were a good person."



At the U, Darby has been recognized for doing just that, combining his passion for medicine, creative writing, and social change. One example is his spearheading of a situation-based game called Answer Campus, created in collaboration with communications professor Clay Ewing, creative writing professor Jaswinder Bolina, and members of UM's New Experience Research and Design Lab (NERDLab), a student-faculty cooperative that develops social impact games.

"I never questioned my identity until I came to the U.S. I am sitting in my biology class. A peer I was growing close to uttered these words, unprovoked: 'You know, if you tell people you are Indian and not Black, they would believe you.' Silence. I did not know how to respond. However, at that moment I knew I had to do something to change the way people discussed identity on campus," he says.

Answer Campus engages users in complex conversations about race and other aspects of personal and social identity. In it, players get to explore situation-based scenarios anonymously in a simulated world, embarking on difficult conversations from the safe space of the game. As a writer, Darby curates situations inspired by some of his own

experiences. "No matter how good you try to be, I think we can all be villains in someone else's story," he notes. "What's important is being able to have these tough conversations and understand what changes can be made. That's the whole premise of this game."

Observing Darby's commitment to positive change, UM President Julio Frenk nominated him for Campus Compact's 2022-2023 Newman Civic Fellowship, for which Darby was selected. "Understanding the importance of having meaningful yet challenging conversations around identities, Fabrizio, along with other university stakeholders, has helped develop an interactive, dialogue-based game, Answer Campus," wrote President Frenk. "Through these experiences and others, Fabrizio has shown a dedication to using innovation and compassion to improve access to quality education, well-being, and social justice."

After earning the Fellowship and a Sherwood Weiser Memorial Fund for Student Community Service scholarship as a junior, Darby was tapped into UM's Iron Arrow Honor Society. Over the summer, he conducted research on the circadian nature of glioblastomas as an ENDURE Scholar at Washington University in St. Louis, and is now

studying the role of glycine in zebrafish circadian rhythms for his senior honors thesis at UM. Darby's community involvement continues as well, from leading professional development workshops for Jamaican youth through the Yes Effect organization to serving as a lead first-year fellow for Mahoney Residential College to volunteering with Bristol Hospice.

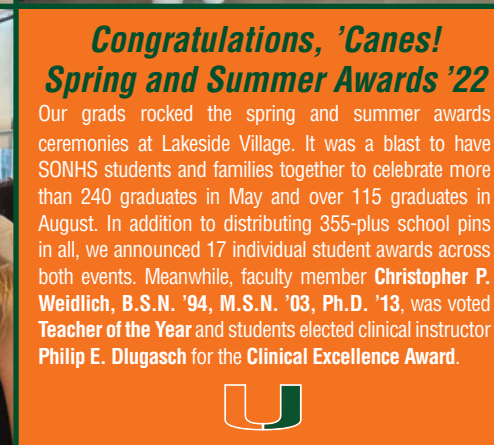
"Fabrizio is an incredible student leader who leads by example," says Andrew Wiemer, senior director of the Butler Center for Service and Leadership. "He genuinely pours his heart and soul into all of his involvements and fully commits to their success and growth. This young man truly cherishes others and has already left a lasting legacy upon the University of Miami campus."

Despite all of the accolades, Darby remains focused on being a mentor and advocate, just like his grandfather taught him to be. "There are many ways to heal people," says Darby. "Medicine also provides a platform for my writing and advocacy work. Why work hard and not lift the next generation to reap these benefits with you? It takes a village to achieve things. For me, it took several villages. I'm just trying to be a part of other people's villages, too."

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