

Fall 2013

# heartbeat

University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies

*years*

**CELEBRATING  
OUR HISTORY,  
SHAPING  
THE FUTURE**

NEW ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY LAB • • • LANDON ON TEAMWORK • • • INTERPROFESSIONAL DIALOGUES



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**At the School of Nursing and Health Studies, we know that superior care begins with superior education.**

Our cutting-edge simulation laboratories—among the most sophisticated in the United States—enable our students to work on the most lifelike human simulators available before they ever touch a real patient. Our “patients” act just like the real ones—they can talk or make noises, have babies or have heart attacks, exhibit vital signs, and perform most human bodily functions.

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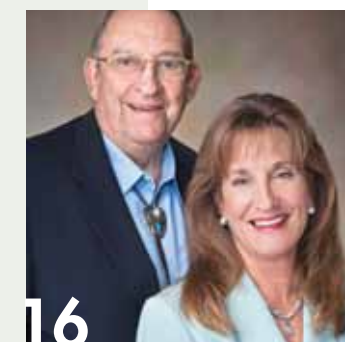


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### MISSION STATEMENT

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

## Looking Back, Reaching Forward

**Welcome** to the Fall 2013 edition of *Heartbeat* magazine, celebrating the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies' 65th anniversary. In the pages that follow, you will encounter highlights from an amazing six and a half decades. There have been countless moments of inspiration, perspiration, and jubilation along the way.

It was my great honor earlier this semester to join our school's students, alumni, and friends in remembering this history, as we kicked off a yearlong celebration of what has become one of the University's most dynamic and cutting-edge schools. We came together to acknowledge 6,000 graduates who have taken their education to every corner of the nation and the world. We celebrated our 825 currently enrolled students, a solid NIH-funded research portfolio, more than 250 clinical and community partners, and an NCLEX-RN passing rate well above the national average. For these accomplishments, I want

to congratulate our hard-working students, exceptional faculty, community partners, University leadership, and the pioneers who believed in our mission and made it a reality. We would not be where we are today without their vision and courage.

The history of our school is inextricably interwoven with the history of our students, our alumni, our community, and of the nursing profession. In this issue you will read about how our curriculum has been redesigned with the changing and increasingly interdisciplinary direction of 21st-century health care education. You will learn about the launch of an interprofessional patient safety course and the opening of our new Anatomy and Physiology Laboratory, initiatives designed to bring together nursing and health science students, as well as future leaders representing a diverse range of the health professions.

Inspirational as our journey has been, our school's 65th birthday is not only a time to look back; it's also a time to reach forward. Plans are under way to lead the field of health care education and research into the 21st century with the largest-scale

undertaking in our history: one of the nation's first education-based simulation hospitals. I would like to extend a special invitation to all of you to read about how one of the leaders of our community is partnering with the School of Nursing and Health Studies in a unique and exciting way to help build this world-class facility right here in our own backyard (See "A True Team Player," page 16).

I hope you enjoy the stories in this issue, and please keep us apprised of your own news. I want to thank you again for being part of our school's history—as well as its future.

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

“We came together to acknowledge  
6,000 graduates who have taken their  
education to every corner of the  
nation and the world.”





## New Anatomy and Physiology Lab Engages Today's Tech-Savvy Students

**Most students today** can't imagine a world without the Internet, a household without a computer, or life without a cell phone. Research shows that interactive, hands-on instruction is the preferred learning method for this generation, and that's what's taking place in the new Anatomy and Physiology Laboratory at the School of Nursing and Health Studies.

The lab, which opened last fall on the third floor of the M. Christine Schwartz Center for Nursing and Health Studies, is a place where SONHS health science students conduct virtual dissections, use online anatomy software and physiology simulations, work with anatomical models, and dissect "organs" such as hearts and kidneys on state-of-the-art synthetic cadavers composed of sophisticated synthetic tissues and body parts. The cadavers bleed, breathe, and have hundreds of replaceable muscles, bones, organs, and vessels, all made from materials that mimic the mechanical, thermal, physical, and chemical properties of live tissue. The lab also contains computerized equipment that health science students can connect to a live person to view in real time on a computer screen the myriad physiological processes taking place in the human body.

"There is only so much you can learn from a computer or a book," says Associate Dean for Health Studies Martin Zdanowicz. "From an anatomical standpoint, there is nothing like the multi-dimensional, hands-on experience, and that is what the new lab provides for our students."

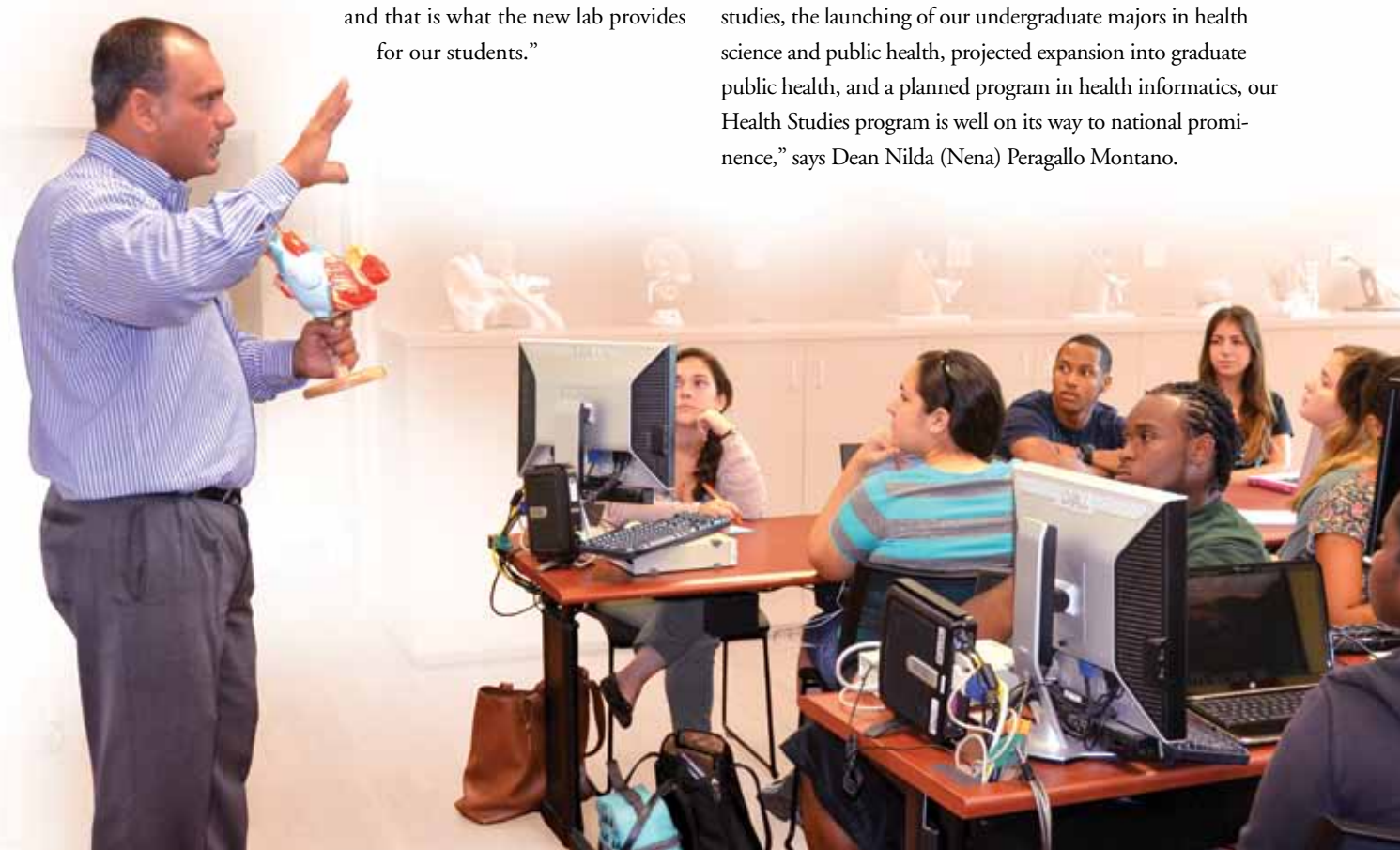
Moreover, Zdanowicz explains, research shows that delivering the same information via different modalities helps today's learners absorb and retain data. "So now we have multiple mechanisms of presenting anatomical and physiological content to our students, all consolidated in one lab."

In keeping with the nationwide initiative to increase interprofessional collaboration in health care, the school's anatomy and physiology courses and the new lab are open to all University of Miami students, not just nursing and health science majors. The lab will also engender an enhanced feeling of community at the SONHS.

"Some schools of nursing and health studies have their students fulfill their basic sciences requirements outside the school, usually in the college of arts and sciences," explains faculty member Diego Deleon. "By having our students take their anatomy and physiology lab courses right here at the school, and come together in the new lab, we are promoting an increased sense of collaboration among our students, who will develop their careers in different fields but will always remember that their basic education occurred within these walls."

The Anatomy and Physiology Lab is a valuable asset to the school's Health Studies program, which has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years.

"With the recent hiring of an associate dean for health studies, the launching of our undergraduate majors in health science and public health, projected expansion into graduate public health, and a planned program in health informatics, our Health Studies program is well on its way to national prominence," says Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano.



## UM-NSNA Chapter Represented at National Meeting



**Having the opportunity** to attend their first professional conference during their final semester at the School of Nursing and Health Studies is an honor that Caroline Swets, B.S.N. '13, and Nevinsthon Alcindor, B.S.N. '13, will never forget. The SONHS sponsored their trip to Charlotte, North Carolina, to represent the UM Chapter of the National Student Nurses Association (NSNA) at the organization's annual convention in April 2013.

While there, Swets and Alcindor attended an NCLEX-RN mini-review session and a discussion on the impact of the Institute of Medicine's *Future of Nursing* report. They cheered when UM President Donna Shalala's name was mentioned as chair of the committee that produced the report. The student representatives also met Linda Sylvester, author of their nursing textbook.

"It was surprising, empowering, and inspiring to see such an experienced and well-known nurse at the convention, rooting for the students and encouraging us," says Alcindor, who wants to become an international travel nurse.

The most valuable information the students came away with, however, is the importance of NSNA involvement, both at the school and national level.

*B.S.N. students Nevinsthon Alcindor and Caroline Swets represented the SONHS at the NSNA's annual convention in North Carolina in April.*

"At the convention, people who were once in our position spoke of how they are now CEOs of health care organizations, deans of nursing schools, and in charge of departments and hospitals," says Swets, who looks forward to beginning her nursing career in a neonatal intensive care unit. "Leadership is a huge concept that nursing students need to grasp, and membership in the NSNA is a great way to do it."

Professor and Vice Dean Doris Ugarriza, M.S.N. '82, says that NSNA membership is practically essential for any student hoping for a successful future in today's health care arena.

"The School of Nursing and Health Studies is for faculty, administrators, staff, and most of all, its students," Ugarriza says. "UM-NSNA activities bring students together to connect on key issues in nursing education, nursing leadership, and career networking. Attendance at the annual convention helps them to make important connections at the national level."

### UM-NSNA Fall 2013 Board

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## Student Scholars Earn National Honors

**Diana DeJesus**, D.N.P. '12, and **Angela Smith**, D.N.P. '12, were designated Bob Woodruff Foundation-Jonas Nurse Scholars for their research on veterans' health care. Their work focused on the "invisible wounds of war," including post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury.

Bachelor of Science in Public Health student **Cristina Ballesteros** completed a Summer Research with NIDA for Underrepresented Students internship at New York University, serving as a research assistant under the direction of renowned researchers at NYU's NIDA-funded Center for Health, Identity, Behavior and Prevention Studies.



## All in the Family

When **Virginia Avozani** joined the University of Miami as a staff member in the Office of the President, she was pleased that as part of the UM family, a college education was now within her children's reach. Thirteen years later, Virginia still has a job she loves, and the dream of her offspring becoming the first generation in their family to complete a college education is becoming a reality. Doing their part to tackle the nursing shortage, all three Avozani children have chosen to attend the School of Nursing and Health Studies.

"After deciding in elementary school that being an astronaut was a long shot, I thought about nursing, and nothing else ever seemed to be as appealing," says Virginia's oldest, Abby Avozani, B.S.N. '12, who got married in the Newman Alumni Center two weeks after graduating from UM.

Abby is now a pediatric nurse in the Wake County Human Services Children's Clinic in North Carolina. She especially loves the patient advocacy part of her work and credits her years at UM with giving her the tools to make a difference in her patients' lives.

Ally Avozani soon followed in Abby's academic footsteps, down to wearing the same scrubs that her sister wore during her clinical practice

experiences. Ally has decided to specialize in maternal and child health when she graduates with her B.S.N. in 2014. Then there's younger brother Angelo, who at one time thought about becoming a firefighter but reconsidered after both of his sisters enrolled at the School of Nursing and Health Studies.

"I wanted to do something that made a difference," says Angelo, now in his junior year. "Hearing about my sisters' clinical experiences made me realize that nursing is not just for one type of person."

The Avozani siblings share more than scrubs. "They share rides to campus, textbooks, class notes, and even stethoscopes," explains their mom. "They are a support system for each other."

Virginia never expected that her children would all end up in the same profession, but she is glad they did. "In retrospect, they always wanted to care for people," she says. "Abby went to Africa as a missionary while she was still in high school. Ally and Angelo have traveled on humanitarian missions to Romania and Peru. And even with their very different personalities, nursing is so diverse and has so many specialties that they quickly figured out there would be a place for all of them. Their father and I couldn't be prouder of our children or feel more fortunate to be a part of the UM family."

UM President Donna Shalala is delighted at the way things have turned out for the Avozani family.

"Virginia is a valuable employee," Shalala says. "Offering a college education to those willing to work hard is what we do here at the U. The fact that Virginia's children have all gone into nursing makes it even more special. This is an amazing time to be a nurse."

Virginia Avozani    Ally Avozani

Abby Avozani    Angelo Avozani



## In Print

The July 2013 issue of the *Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care*—a special issue that focuses on abuse, violence, and neglect in the context of HIV infection—features original research by School of Nursing and Health Studies faculty members Rosina Cianelli, Natalia Villegas Rodriguez, Sarah Lawson, and Shonali Choudhury, as well as Dean Nilda Peragallo Montano and adjunct faculty Lillian Ferrer and Lorena Kaelber. Associate Professor Joseph De Santis served as co-editor of this special issue and co-authored the editorial, in which he cites work being done at The Center of Excellence for Health Disparities Research: El Centro that focuses on the intersection of HIV infection and abuse, violence, and neglect.



Doris Ugarriza



Rosa Gonzalez-Guarda

## Honored for Excellence

**Doris Ugarriza**, M.S.N. '82, professor and vice dean, and **Rosa Gonzalez-Guarda**, Ph.D. '08, assistant professor and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Nurse Faculty Scholar, have been named 2013 Florida Nurse.com Nursing Excellence regional winners. Ugarriza was selected in the category of Volunteerism and Service, and Gonzalez-Guarda was honored for her contributions in the category of Advancing and Leading the Profession.

## Giving Daughters and Sons a Day to Remember

The School of Nursing and Health Studies once again welcomed the children of University of Miami employees for the annual Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day on May 2, 2013. The young visitors had a taste of life as nursing professionals, participating in activities ranging from taking the vital signs of the lifelike patient simulators at the school's International Academy for Clinical Simulation and Research to donning surgical masks and gowns as they entered the realistic "OR." The experience was intended to be both fun and educational while perhaps inspiring some future 'Canes and School of Nursing and Health Studies students. Youngster Adrian Baron, who dreams of studying nursing at the U, could not have been more impressed with his tour of the school. As he explained it, "Nursing is my entire life's dream."





## NCIN Scholarship Helps Journalist Pursue a New Story

**While Lila de Tántillo** was developing her career in journalism at *The Miami Herald* and *The Washington Post*, she began to feel that she wanted to contribute more to society.

“As a journalist, I pursued stories. Sometimes they were meaningful and sometimes not,” she recalls.

After caring for both grandmothers and an infant son during serious illnesses, de Tántillo discovered a new calling. “I don’t believe you can become a nurse unless you’re motivated from your heart to care for others,” she says.

Today de Tántillo is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation New Careers in Nursing (RWJF NCIN) Scholar in the School of Nursing and Health Studies’ Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (A-B.S.N.) program, which enables individuals with a bachelor’s degree in a field other than nursing to earn their B.S.N. in as little as 12 months.

The School of Nursing and Health Studies is a four-time recipient of the prestigious NCIN program, launched by the RWJF and American Association of Colleges of Nursing in 2008 to expand enrollment and retention in A-B.S.N. programs and to increase diversity in the nursing workforce. During 2013-2014, the SONHS will receive \$100,000 to award ten \$10,000 scholarships to A-B.S.N. students from groups that are underrepresented in nursing. Since 2008, the SONHS has received \$600,000 to provide scholarships to 60 students.

“At this time when the nation’s need for highly educated nurses is growing, we are delighted to be able to support nursing students who will bring diverse and valuable perspectives to the field and become capable, culturally competent nurses,” said David Krol, RWJF senior program officer.

**“I don’t believe you can become a nurse unless you’re motivated from your heart to care for others.”**

A focus on leadership, mentoring, and pre-entry immersion helps NCIN Scholars meet the demands of the intensive A-B.S.N. Last summer Deborah Salani, D.N.P. ’12, assistant professor of clinical and interim RWJF NCIN program director, facilitated a Principles of Leadership workshop where the NCIN Scholars shared their reasons for pursuing the A-B.S.N.



*Former journalist Lila de Tántillo is a recipient of a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation New Careers in Nursing Scholarship, among other scholarships that support her studies in the Accelerated B.S.N. program.*

“When I had to do CPR on my newborn son, I became interested in the power of nursing,” said Francisco Coronado.

“What I wanted to do as a physician, I realized, is what nurses do: be on the front lines with patients,” Giuliana Ascenso told the group.

On course to graduate in December 2013, de Tántillo also is a recipient of a Breakthroughs in Nursing scholarship from the American Association of Critical Care Nurses and a Bachelor’s Scholarship from the Oncology Nursing Society Foundation. She plans to be “a floor nurse like the nurses who cared for my grandmothers.” And she will also bring critically needed cultural competencies and language skills to her work.

“I grew up in Miami and speak Spanish, which is so important to my career,” she says. “In my clinical practice experiences, so many patients speak only Spanish, or Creole, or another language, and I wonder if there are enough nurses with the language and multicultural skills to care for patients from so many different backgrounds.”

## Team SONHS Celebrates Fitness and Fun at Corporate Run

**In their distinctive** “Peace-Love-Heal” T-shirts, School of Nursing and Health Studies faculty, staff, and students showed their nursing pride at the annual Mercedes-Benz Corporate Run in downtown Miami on April 25, 2013. The Corporate Run, which celebrated its 28th year, promotes running and walking as a means to a healthy lifestyle for people from a diverse variety of organizations and walks of life.

“Exercise is beneficial for mind and body, especially when you can exercise with friends,” says Victoria Mitrani, A.B. ’80, Ph.D. ’86, associate dean for research at the SONHS. “As health care educators, we are proud to practice what we preach. Everyone really enjoyed themselves at this year’s event.”



*Faculty and staff show their SONHS pride at the annual Mercedes-Benz Corporate Run in downtown Miami.*

## Global Initiatives Expand beyond Undergraduate Exchange

**The School** of Nursing and Health Studies’ strong collaborative relationship with international partners includes bi-directional exchange agreements with hospitals and health care institutions in Chile, Haiti, Mexico, Brazil, Spain, Taiwan, the Dominican Republic, and Australia. Now the school is building upon these undergraduate opportunities with global initiatives that enable traveling groups of graduate students, faculty, and even alumni to represent the school around the world.

In March 2013, a group of volunteer SONHS alumni and graduate students joined the University of Miami’s Project Medishare on a humanitarian mission to rural Thomonde, Haiti, where they provided health care to the local populace. They were led by Johis Ortega, B.S.N. ’02, M.S.N. ’06, Ph.D. ’10, director of international programs.

“While it is gratifying to see undergraduates earn elective credits as they gain an international perspective,” says Ortega, “seeing our alumni and graduate students participate in this project purely for altruistic reasons takes our international collaboration efforts to a whole new level.”

Rosa Gonzalez-Guarda, Ph.D. ’08 assistant professor and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)

Nurse Faculty Scholar, led an interdisciplinary group of students to Universidad Andres Bello in Santiago, Chile, in January 2013. It was the first time public health students, and even one business major, joined the visit.

“The development of interprofessional collaborations to improve the well-being of populations is a hot topic in health care right now,” says Gonzalez-Guarda. “This trip was timely and exposed our public health students to international issues in their chosen field.”

In February 2013, SONHS Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano accompanied Gonzalez-Guarda and Ortega to the Dominican Republic, where they met with the leadership of Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra, Facultad de Ciencias de la Salud (School of Health Sciences). The mission of the trip was to generate ideas for collaborative research and explore ways for SONHS faculty to contribute to the development of the health care workforce in the Dominican Republic.

The undergraduate exchange program exposed nursing students last year to the health care systems of Australia, Chile, and Spain and hosted international visitors from Chile, Mexico, and Taiwan.





## Welcoming New Faculty

The School of Nursing and Health Studies is pleased to welcome the following exceptional individuals to the faculty. Their expertise strengthens our ability to prepare students to be leaders in patient safety and health care in the 21st century.



Julie Barroso

### Julie Barroso

*Professor and Associate Dean,  
Doctoral Programs*

Julie Barroso is an Adult Nurse Practitioner whose research and practice focus on improving the lives of people with HIV. She has published more than 50 peer-reviewed articles and co-authored a book and book chapters. Her early work involved long-term AIDS survivors and HIV+ non-progressors. With the evolution of HIV infection into a manageable illness, Barroso shifted her focus to symptom management. She was funded through the NIH/NINR for a longitudinal study examining physiological and psychosocial factors that influence HIV-related fatigue. She is the developer of the HIV-Related Fatigue Scale and was co-principal investigator on an NIH/NINR-funded study to develop qualitative metasynthesis techniques. Barroso is completing a feasibility study to test a stigma-reducing intervention in HIV-infected women. She is the recipient of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care Researcher Recognition Award and President's Award and a member of Sigma Theta Tau and of the American Nurses Association. In 2012 she became the first nurse invited to serve on the Board of Trustees of the International Physicians in AIDS Care.

### Anthony (Tony) James Roberson

*Associate Professor*

Tony Roberson holds a Ph.D. in nursing science from the University of North Carolina and an M.S. in counseling psychology from Troy University. He is certified by the American Nurses Credentialing Center as a Family Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner. His research endeavors include assessing the mental health needs of incarcerated adolescents and developing community-based programs to address mental health care disparities in this population. He has served in nursing faculty and administrative roles at universities in Florida, North Carolina, and Alabama. Most recently he was associate professor, director of practice and community partnerships, and interim



Anthony  
(Tony) James  
Roberson

assistant dean for undergraduate programs at the University of Alabama. His professional memberships include the Southern Nursing Research Society, American Nurses Association, American Assembly for Men in Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau, and the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners.

### Alexis M. Koskan

*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

Alexis Koskan received a doctorate in health promotion, education, and behavior and a certificate of graduate study in health communication from the University of South Carolina, where she focused on



Alexis M.  
Koskan

sustainability of community models of health communication and outreach. She completed a postdoctoral research fellowship in behavioral oncology at Moffitt Cancer Center, where she led public health communication research initiatives using digital media channels to send health information to medically underserved populations. She was a trainee of the NCI-funded Tampa Bay Community Cancer Network's Community Base Participatory Research Training Core, working with multiple community partners to devise strategies to impact cancer health disparities within the Tampa Bay region.



LaToya  
Janelle  
Lewis-Pierre

### LaToya Janelle Lewis-Pierre

*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

LaToya Janelle Lewis-Pierre, Ed.D./CI, M.S.N., B.S.N. '02, completed her doctorate in education with a specialty in curriculum and instruction. Her dissertation topic was "Workplace readiness of new graduates entering the ICU." She is an experienced ICU nurse leader, clinician, and educator. Her clinical specialties include critical care and telemetry. Her educator experience consists of didactic, clinical, and distant-learning programs. Her honors include the UM Student Nursing Leadership award in 2002, the best poster award at the "Building Collaborative and Community Focused Evidence-Based Approaches Conference" in 2008, the JMH Shared Governance Leadership award in 2009, and the faculty Affordable Learning Solutions award from California State University-Dominguez Hills in 2013. She is a member of the American Association of Critical Care Nurses and Sigma Theta Tau. She has served as a member of the AACN-Continuing Education Review Panel and AACN-Research Grant Review Panel.



Andrew  
Porter

### Andrew Porter

*Lecturer*

Andrew Porter completed his B.A. at The Pennsylvania State University, where he is presently a doctoral candidate; his dissertation topic is "Dissemination of health education information through peer networks." In 2009 he won the Harold F. Martin Outstanding Teaching Award and the Biobehavioral Health Outstanding Teaching Award. He has been involved with drug-resistant strategies intervention research targeting at-risk rural adolescents as well as the creation and implementation of human sexuality and HIV training for K-12 teachers through a grant he co-authored for the Pennsylvania Learning Academy for Sexuality Education. Prior to joining the SONHS, Porter was an instructional consultant at the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence.



Deborah A.  
Saber

### Deborah A. Saber

*Assistant Professor of Clinical*

Deborah Saber completed her Ph.D. in nursing at the University of Central Florida. Her more than 30 years of clinical experience in adult critical care nursing environments encompass medical, surgical, vascular, and coronary practice. Her research interests include work environment, job satisfaction, retention, and generational differences in the nursing workforce. She has expertise in meta-analysis and has taught leadership/management and introductory research courses.



Nichole A.  
Crenshaw

### Nichole A. Crenshaw

*Lecturer*

Nichole Crenshaw completed her M.S.N. at Florida International University School of Nursing. She is a certified Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner with more than 20 years of professional clinical experience in supervisory capacities and as a critical care educator. She has been a member of the FIU School of Nursing adjunct faculty since 1997.



# Critical Communication

By Maria Padron

**It has been a little over a decade** since a landmark Institute of Medicine (IOM) report revealed: “In its current form, habits, and environment, American health care is incapable of providing the public with the quality health care it expects and deserves.” The report estimated that approximately 98,000 yearly deaths in U.S. hospitals were due to medical error, at a cost of about \$38 billion annually. While these revelations ignited a patient safety and quality movement that reduced hospital-acquired infections and saved lives on the ground, much remained to be done at the organizational, infrastructural level of the health care system.

**Patient safety depends on nurturing the nurse-physician dialogue at the student level**

In 2010 another watershed IOM report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, created in partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, called on health professions educators to instill in all students the tools for interprofessional collaboration via combined clinical and classroom training opportunities, with the patient at the center of this cooperative effort. The University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies and Miller School of Medicine have taken these mandates to heart.

## Digital-Age Engagement

From June 17-21, 2013, 68 second-semester Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing and 150 third-year medical students came together for the inaugural

Summer Patient Safety Course, a unique collaboration at UM designed to teach future nurses and physicians how to work together to improve patient outcomes through enhanced patient safety practices. The students alternated their time between the Gordon Center for Research in Medical Education (GCRME) and the UM-JMH Center for Patient Safety (CPS) at the Miller School campus and the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) on the Coral Gables campus. The end result was a true partnership experience.

“A key mandate of the IOM *Future of Nursing* report was interprofessional collaboration,” says SONHS Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano. “I am thrilled that our nursing and medical faculty and staff have partnered to

establish the framework for those dialogues at the student level.”

David Birnbach, vice provost for faculty affairs of the University of Miami and associate dean and director of the UM-JMH CPS notes, “We are proud to join forces with the SONHS to create this unique interdisciplinary educational program that will improve communication skills and strengthen both our curricula.”

The course’s format and design featured cutting-edge technology and placed student interactions, not didactic lecture, at center stage of the learning process. Mixed nursing-medical student groups participated in a variety of learning activities, including online discussion boards, wiki assignments (collaborative creation of online content), Blackboard



An interprofessional health care team participates in a patient safety training scenario.



modules, an interactive Twitter feed, and role-play. Most of these students had been previously exposed to blended courses, which combine live class sessions with online technology, but the extent and diversity of revolutionary virtual communication tools in the summer course was a first for both schools.

"The medical and nursing faculty who designed the course thought it was important to tailor its format to these students' status as digital technology natives, which refers to people born during or after the general introduction of digital technology," notes Mary McKay, D.N.P. '09, assistant professor of clinical, safety assurance director, and Wallace Gilroy Endowed Chair in Nursing at the SONHS.

The wiki assignments, for example, included a video in which a patient fell into a coma as a result of medical error. After viewing the scenario on their computers or smartphones, the members of each student group communicated virtually with each other to create a script for how they would disclose the error to the patient's family.

The online discussion board functioned in much the same way as the wiki assignments, except the students reacted individually and not as a group to the presented scenarios. All students had access to the entire virtual discussion and were asked to evaluate each other's responses. As in the wiki assignments, students were not required to be logged in and communicating simultaneously. Instead, in what is called "asynchronous" virtual learning, they contributed to discussions at times most convenient to them.

Asynchronous learning has been linked to greater depths of student engagement, due to the extended time available for participants to construct their responses and comment on others' postings. Thoughtful discussions build over time and end at their natural conclusion rather than at a pre-determined point. Other benefits of asynchronous learning include the ability to archive discussions for later review and the opportunity for shy people to shine in their responses, some for the first time in their

student experience.

The Twitter feed component of the course incorporated a well-known social networking service that enables users to send and read online messages of up to 140 characters each, known as "tweets." The faculty tweeted one or two thought-provoking questions per day, such as, "What did you take away from today's class session?" or "What was enlightening to you about day two of the course?" Using their laptops and smartphones to respond while the day's events were fresh in their minds, the nursing and medical students responded with tweets that described how their different and unique skill sets were "making it come together" and "putting it all into perspective."

## Simulation Solidifies the Concept

When it came to the face-to-face sessions of the summer patient safety course, the centerpiece was simulation training with an emphasis on patient safety. The GCRME, SONHS, and UM-JMH CPS all house state-of-the-art simulation laboratories where computer-driven, high-fidelity simulators allowed the students to take an active role in patient safety scenarios. Students also worked with standardized patient actors. In these exercises, the combined nursing-medical student teams discovered that by working together, they increased their situational awareness, problem-solving, and higher-level clinical reasoning abilities, which allowed them to uncover underlying clinical issues.

"Even if each individual has tunnel vision, when you all work together you have wider vision and can see the whole picture," Birnbach explains.

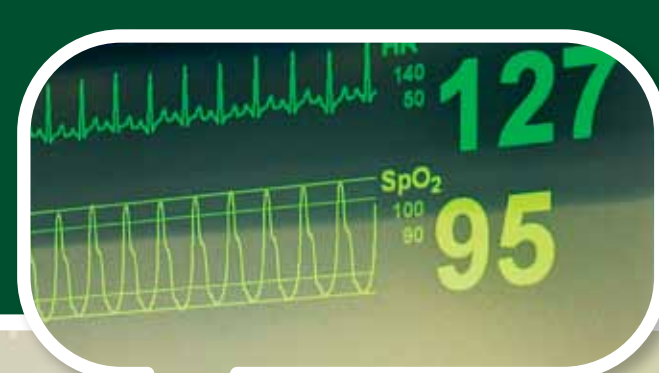
Miller School student Christine Pao stated that the simulation exercises were her favorite part of the course. "It was in those few minutes of trying to keep our

patient alive, and doing it as a physician-nurse team, that the concept of interprofessional collaboration really solidified for me," she says.

"It's basic common sense that nurses and physicians should learn how to work together," adds Pao's classmate Ryan Dauer, "and this week's course has brought that message home. Putting our skills and knowledge together is the best way to care for patients."

Nursing student Sandy Alias called the class "an excellent experience. It really put into perspective for us how the actual work environment will look when we get into the field and how the only way to succeed is for the different disciplines to work together."

The simulation exercises were followed by reflective learning discussion because, according to McKay, "Debriefing and learning from errors and 'near-misses' is the most important part of simulation training. We hope this course will be the first of numerous interprofessional collaborations between physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals that will extend from the classroom setting into their clinical practice."



*Nursing and medical students join forces in a clinical simulation exercise.*

## SONHS Celebrates Patient Safety Awareness Week

The National Patient Safety Foundation designated the theme for Patient Safety Awareness Week 2013 as Patient Safety 7/365: 7 days of recognition, 365 days of commitment to safe care. At the School of Nursing and Health Studies, March 25-29, 2013 was a week that raised awareness of SONHS patient safety initiatives and how patient safety is integrated into the school's infrastructure.

At a staffed lobby display, faculty and students facilitated interactive activities such as a hand hygiene demonstration and a simulated patient experience. Students, faculty, staff, and visitors all had a chance to test their patient safety knowledge via a "safety statistics" quiz, and promotional materials such

as brochures, hand sanitizing gel, and patient safety buttons reinforced the school's commitment to safe health care delivery. The exhibit was enhanced by prominently displayed architectural renderings of the planned Simulation Hospital, a cutting-edge facility that will revolutionize patient safety education at the SONHS.

"The School of Nursing and Health Studies is committed to the provision of innovative learning environments that empower current and future health care professionals to provide safe services to our community, our nation, and our world," says Dean Nilda Peragallo Montano. "I am excited about our school's participation in patient safety awareness week."

Participating student Ruby Francois added, "The exercises of patient safety awareness week really forced me to pay attention at the bedside to ensure all is well with my patients. These activities benefit students in the long run."







R. Kirk Landon and  
Pamela Garrison

## A True Team Player

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

**Philanthropist  
R. Kirk Landon  
challenges others to join a  
visionary plan for  
improving patient  
safety**

**I N 1944,** just three years after R. Kirk Landon moved with his family from Baltimore to South Florida, the teenager took a job as an orderly at Jackson Memorial Hospital. The experience gave Landon a first-hand look at the inner workings of a bustling hospital, but it wasn't the only time he'd witness the critical role nurses play in the health care system.

"My stepmother was a nurse, my sister was a nurse, and my significant other is a nurse," Landon says. "I've been surrounded by nurses as long as I can remember. It goes back a long way; it's sort of in the blood."

It's not surprising, then, that Landon has made nursing education a priority among his philanthropic activities. During the University of Miami's historic *Momentum* campaign, which concluded in 2007, Landon contributed \$1.25 million to the School of Nursing and Health Studies to help build the M. Christine Schwartz Center for Nursing and Health Studies. The school honored Landon's contributions to its landmark new home by naming the Eileen Guilmartin, R.N. Clinical Nursing Laboratory in memory of his sister and the Dorothy P. and Kirk A. Landon Nursing Research Suite in memory of his father and stepmother.

Now during *Momentum2: The Breakthrough Campaign for the University of Miami*, Landon has extended his commitment to the School of Nursing and Health Studies by urging others to join him in an initiative to make health care safer. Through the R. Kirk Landon Challenge, he has pledged to match any gift of \$50,000 or more, up to a total of \$1 million, toward construction of one of the nation's first education-based simulation hospitals. A key *Momentum2* priority, the 39,000-square-foot Simulation Hospital will be an interactive learning environment that captures the true-to-life flow of activities in the clinical setting, ranging from birth to end-of-life care and from inpatient to home health care experiences.

Landon shares his dedication to the School of Nursing and Health Studies with his life partner, Pamela Garrison, who is the school's *Momentum2* campaign co-chair. Garrison, for whom Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano's office suite in the Schwartz Center is named, is a retired recovery room nurse who has volunteered in multiple leadership roles at the school and was instrumental in raising funds for the Schwartz Center. Both Garrison and Landon support various arts, education, medical, and humanitarian causes throughout South Florida.

Landon's charitable giving dates back to the 1999 sale of his business, American Bankers Insurance Group. His father had been an insurance entrepreneur since 1917, and American Bankers was one start-up that "turned out to be very successful," says Landon, who

joined the company in 1952 after completing his service with the U.S. Navy. Father and son worked together for three short months before Landon's father lost his battle with cancer. Landon worked his way up to CEO in 1979. He holds a degree in industrial management from Georgia Tech, though he originally entered college as a chemical engineering major.

"My philanthropy really began to be a major factor after we sold American Bankers because that's the time I realized a great deal of cash, and most philanthropy requires cash," says Landon, who asserts that there are only three things you can do with money. "You can leave it to the children and other relatives, but there's been enough written that says if you leave them too much, it does more harm than good. Second, you can give it to the government, which is very nice but not satisfactory. Or third, you can use it for philanthropy. The obvious choice is philanthropy. Then it's just a question of deciding which fields interest you and where you think you can do some benefit for the world."

Landon's gift to the school's *Momentum2* campaign brings Pamela Garrison and her co-chair Maria Shojae, A.B. '85, M.B.A. '13, closer to their goal of taking the Simulation Hospital from ambitious vision to reality. Creating the R. Kirk Landon Challenge encourages more people to participate in establishing what will be a new paradigm in health care education.

"To me, its greatest value is in the residents, interns, nurses, and other health care professionals who will all be working together as a team," Landon says, "because that's what's lacking in actual medical practice. You get people who've had a lot of education but not a lot of experience working as a team. I've seen it in fields other than nursing, too. At American Bankers, the more we put teams together, the better results we had."

Landon's lifelong advocacy of teamwork is another reason he's proud to support the University of Miami.

"I'm a great admirer of [UM President] Donna Shalala and the team she's put together," Landon says, affirming his confidence that the Simulation Hospital will deliver on its promise to promote collaboration among faculty, students, and community partners with the goal of improving patient safety. "I know it will be successful, and I'm glad to be a part of it."





## ONE STEP AHEAD OF THE CURVE

BY YOLANDA MANCILLA  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENNY ABREU

**It's the first meeting** of the “Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding” course, and instructor Shakira Henderson is playing the role of a teen mother. The young mom, sulking and bored, is apathetic about breastfeeding her newborn. One of the students takes on the role of the maternity unit nurse and tries to capture the new mother's attention by talking to her about the benefits of breastfeeding. The teen remains indifferent—until the nurse tells her that breastfeeding promotes rapid weight loss after pregnancy. The new mother's interest is finally piqued, and as she begins to breastfeed her baby, the mother-child bonding process is strengthened. • Launched in spring 2013 as an activity of the school's WHO Collaborating Centre for Nursing Human Resources Development and Patient Safety, “Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding” places the school at the forefront of a global movement that is preparing nurses to educate new mothers about optimal, evidence-based breastfeeding practices. Through this course, the SONHS is changing the way people—including nurses—think about breastfeeding.

SONHS students gain an opportunity to graduate with breastfeeding certification



## A HEALTHY CHOICE

Ensuring that nurses are certified in breastfeeding education is a service to mothers and infants, hospitals and clinics, the economy, and even the environment. Every nurse who completes the training learns that the health benefits to mothers include reduced risk for postpartum blood loss and infection; reduced risk of developing osteoporosis, ovarian cancer, and breast cancer as they get older; and increased post-pregnancy weight loss. Mothers benefit emotionally through enhanced maternal-infant attachment and decreased incidences of postpartum depression.

Infants benefit from better nutrition and the production of antibodies. Breast milk immunizes them through passive immunity to many diseases and infections such as pneumonia and bacterial meningitis. Babies also receive long-term protection against diseases and conditions including diabetes mellitus, asthma, leukemia, and obesity. Breastfeeding enhances babies' cognitive development and has a positive impact on later educational achievements.

And the benefits don't stop at moms and babies. Healthier babies mean fewer infant medical bills and fewer lost workdays, which is a boon for the entire family as well as employers and the larger economy. Without having to purchase formula and bottles, breastfeeding can save a family \$400 during the child's first year of life. It's estimated that if 90 percent of American mothers breastfed, the U.S. economy would save \$13 billion per year. Breastfeeding, which has been called the "green infant feeding option," reduces the amount of formula packaging that ends up in landfills, and less fuel is used to manufacture and transport formula.

But people tend to have deep-seated and often erroneous assumptions about breastfeeding, which may have been passed down over generations or rooted in popular culture. This means new mothers may be discouraged by a lack of information and support to help them breastfeed successfully. Breastfeeding education can help, but first

nurses and other hospital personnel must learn how to educate new mothers and how to help them address problems that may arise in the breastfeeding process.

As part of its commitment to maternal and child health, the SONHS introduced the "Ten Steps" course as a free extracurricular education option to all students who want to obtain their breastfeeding certification before graduation. The course is not part of the required curriculum, but students are seeing great value in taking advantage of the opportunity.

## ANSWERING THE DEMAND FOR A DIFFERENT APPROACH

Nurses who enter the workforce with their breastfeeding education certificate in hand are highly valuable to hospitals, particularly in light of the U.S. Surgeon General's mandate that all health care professionals who care for mothers and infants receive 20 hours of mandatory breastfeeding training. Providing local hospitals with nurses already certified in the WHO/UNICEF "Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding" curriculum saves them from having to invest extra time and resources in offering this required training to their new hires. Until recently, standard nursing curricula offered only basic instruction in breastfeeding, but changes based on "best practices" are demanding a different approach. The "Ten Steps" course answers the call. Certified nurses are a plus for hospitals seeking certification from the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) USA, a national accreditation body for evidence-based lactation support practices within the hospital setting.

Given the rigorous B.S.N. curriculum, and the fact that breastfeeding education falls outside of students' required activities, the SONHS faculty knew they'd have to be enterprising in their methods to engage

students. With this in mind, "Ten Steps" facilitators Rosina Cianelli and Natalia Villegas Rodriguez, Ph.D. '12, worked with the school's instructional designer to streamline and adapt the WHO/UNICEF breastfeeding curriculum into a hybrid model that combines live class sessions with online modules. The Web-based component is a novel approach that allows students greater flexibility in how and when they assimilate the basic knowledge sections of the curriculum. The live sessions consist of highly interactive classes in which they review the online material and join in class discussion.

The course developers also integrated three innovative activities into the live-session component to help reinforce the material in a fun and memorable way. In each session, students role-play nurses and lactating mothers interacting in diverse scenarios. They also participate in interactive learning games such as "Breastfeeding Charades," in which the students act out key words or phrases associated with the material, and "Breastfeeding Jeopardy," which drills them in the basic concepts of the curriculum.

The spring "Ten Steps" training was facilitated by Shakira Henderson, a certified neonatal nurse, international board-certified lactation consultant, and SONHS Ph.D. candidate who is completing her dissertation on breastfeeding instructional methodologies. Cianelli and Villegas Rodriguez completed their breastfeeding certification last spring and taught the summer 2013 course session. Though the breastfeeding training is not part of the B.S.N. curriculum, Cianelli,



Villegas Rodriguez, and Henderson

have volunteered to lead it because of their personal commitment to empowering women with evidence-based knowledge to make informed decisions about their infants' and their own health.

All the "Ten Steps" students already completed clinical rounds on maternity wards, so they have experience working with mothers and infants. Still, every live-session class presents surprising new concepts and helps them reconsider their attitudes about breastfeeding. Case in point is the common misconception that some women just don't have enough milk to breastfeed successfully. As Cianelli passed around a tiny, marble-sized ball that represents the size of a newborn's stomach on the first day of life, she explained that this tiny "belly ball" is a lactation education tool these future nurses can use to reassure new moms they will be able to produce enough milk to fill their babies' tummies. In addition to lactation education tools, students receive a set of evidence-based facts to share with new mothers—including the fact that WIC, the federal program designed to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants and children—provides significant financial incentives to mothers who choose to breastfeed.

One of the most vital lessons the students learn is the importance of earlier and more prolonged "skin-to-skin"

contact. They hear about the benefits of placing the newborn on the mother's chest immediately after birth, allowing mother and baby to bond. Students are surprised to hear that even babies delivered via C-section can enjoy "skin-to-skin" contact with their mothers right away and can breastfeed within an hour after delivery.

"We want students to learn that a new mother's decision on whether or not to breastfeed, whether to breastfeed exclusively, and how long to breastfeed should be based on evidence and facts provided by their nurse, the health care professional with whom they interact most frequently during their hospital stay," says Cianelli.

## ASSESSING AND EXPANDING OUR TEN STEPS

The "Ten Steps" course leaders are planning exciting developments to be implemented in future classes at the School of Nursing and Health Studies. They hope to include work with cutting-edge simulators for the students to practice breastfeeding education on lifelike lactating "mothers." They are planning to disseminate the students' experience with the hybrid online-live session course via publications and scientific presentations at national and international meetings, including a questionnaire developed by Cianelli and Villegas Rodriguez to assess changes in students' attitudes about breastfeeding as a result of completing the course. They are also working on translating the course into Spanish and Haitian Creole to disseminate their hybrid training model to international health care providers in low-resource countries.

"There is an urgent need to educate mothers in Latin America and the Caribbean about the value of breastfeeding," says Cianelli. "For example, Haitian mothers often believe it's better to buy formula rather than to breastfeed. While use of formula is believed to convey a higher social status to the mothers, its use is also associated with poor health outcomes, such as higher rates of diarrhea among the babies."

The ultimate goal is to equip nurses educated at the SONHS with the tools to empower mothers to make their own informed choices about breastfeeding. If this happens, the "Ten Steps" course will have accomplished its mission.

## PRACTICING WHAT WE PREACH

To better support students, staff, and faculty who are new mothers and wish to breastfeed their babies, the University of Miami provides multiple Nursing Mothers Rooms across the Coral Gables, Miller School of Medicine, and Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science campuses. Each of the rooms contains designated space where nursing mothers are welcome to pump or nurse.

A private space within a nursing mother's building may also be used, and employees are encouraged to work with their supervisors to identify appropriate locations within their building.

The University's new Break Time for Nursing Mothers Policy provides guidelines for offering a workplace that supports a working mother's decision to breastfeed and prohibits discrimination and harassment of those who exercise this right.





# A CAUSE FOR Celebration

By Maria Padron and Meredith Camel, M.F.A. '12

**When Ann Marie McCrystal**, B.S. '59, began her studies at the University of Miami in what was then the Department of Nursing in the College of Arts and Sciences, the country was in the midst of a postwar boom. Classes were held in temporary World War II barracks that the students of that era described as the “cardboard college.”

The height of the U.S. civil rights movement was still years away, and the feminist revolution was barely a blip on the radar screen.

**The School of Nursing and Health Studies looks back at 65 years of excellence in health care education and leadership**

Against this national backdrop, McCrystal and her fellow students in Coral Gables, guided by a team of dedicated faculty, were hard at work advancing the vision that has defined the UM nursing program since the nursing major was first introduced in 1948: sharing knowledge, providing service, and educating a new generation of health care professionals.







## Program Pioneers

In 1956 the Department of Nursing, chaired by Dora Eldredge Blackmon, graduated its first class of ten students. In addition to her departmental duties, Blackmon taught a class for nurses in local hospitals on “team nursing” as a way to quicken response times in clinical settings and better triage patients who needed the most urgent help.

Most hospitals today require the bachelor’s degree as a condition of hiring, and numerous studies link college-educated nurses to better patient care. But in the 1950s, nursing majors often had to justify to others, including their own parents, why they felt that a college degree, rather than a certificate course or a non-degree hospital-based program, was necessary for the job.

McCrystal recalls her mother’s difficulty in understanding why she wanted to change her major from music and drama to nursing. “I explained that the only added expense would be the cost of a uniform, and that if I didn’t like it, I would return to my original major. But as soon as I spent the first day at Doctors Hospital, I knew all the drama I was looking for was right there! That summer, after spending six weeks in the OR, I knew I had found my home.”

McCrystal went on to become a founder of the Visiting Nurse Associa-

tion and Hospice Foundation of the Treasure Coast, where she was instrumental in building what is still the only hospice in Indian River County, Florida. She is among a distinguished list of early UM nursing program graduates who became trailblazing health care professionals, including Janet Pitts Beckmann, B.S.N. ’68, who served as dean of the School of Nursing at the University of Alabama in Huntsville and is a former associate dean for graduate and continuing education at the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies.

“What sets our students apart, then and now, is a willingness to commit to a process of lifelong learning for the well-being of individuals, families, and communities.”

Other graduates became book authors, college professors, health care administrators and, of course, care providers at the bedside.

“Times were different, but the one thing through the years nursing students need to remember is that no matter what you learn, caring for the patient is what’s most important,” says Sima Gebel, B.S. ’53, C.N.P. ’76, who, 60 years after graduating from the UM nursing program, has acknowledged the

School of Nursing and Health Studies with a gift in her estate plans.

Professor Georgie Labadie was a full-time faculty member between 1981 and 2003 and remains involved with the school as a faculty development consultant. She notes that the students who choose to specialize in nursing or health science have always been those who “master and apply knowledge as it becomes available, long after formal education has ended. What sets our students apart, then and now,” she says, “is a willingness to commit to a process of lifelong learning for the well-being of individuals, families, and communities.”

The nursing program transitioned out of the College of Arts and Sciences, becoming its own school in 1968. The first dean of the school, Gwendoline MacDonald, was appointed in 1970. By 1976 the Master of Science in Nursing program had been established. In 1978 one of Florida’s first midwifery programs was started at the school and in 1985 the school launched what is now one of the most established Ph.D. in nursing programs in the United States.

## New Decade of Historic Change

In 2003 the energetic Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano stepped into the role of dean, and the first decade of the new millennium proved transformational for the school. The year 2004 marked two watershed moments. First, the school broke ground on the M. Christine Schwartz Center for Nursing and Health Studies, a 53,000-square-foot facility that became its new home in 2006. Next, the school added a Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences to its degree offerings and changed its name to the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS).

In 2005 master’s programs in nurse anesthesia and adult acute care were added to the degree offerings, and not even a hurricane could derail the school’s skyrocketing momentum. As Hurricane Wilma was barreling down on South Florida in October of that year, Dean Peragallo Montano and the SONHS leadership were in the midst of applying for accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

The storm knocked out power for six weeks in the administrative building on Corniche Avenue, but the SONHS team set up shop in UM President Donna Shalala’s office and completed the detailed reports that earned the school full accreditation in 2006. The

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education reaffirmed accreditation of the SONHS in 2010 for the maximum terms of ten years (bachelor’s and master’s programs) and five years (D.N.P.).

The first decade of the new century heralded revolutionary change not only for the SONHS but also for the nursing profession itself. In 2008 The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the Institute of Medicine (IOM) launched a two-year initiative to assess and advance nursing as a discipline. The resulting landmark report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, recommended revolutionary changes in practice, education, training, workforce planning, and policy making.

Today the report is the best-selling and most frequently viewed publication in the National Academy of Science’s 150-year history. At the helm of the committee that led this national effort was President Shalala. Its youngest member was SONHS Assistant Professor Rosa Gonzalez-Guarda, Ph.D. ’08.

“We cannot improve the quality of health care in America without nurses in key management roles,” President Shalala said in 2010.

This sentiment is echoed by David Zambrana, D.N.P. ’09, who was in the school’s first D.N.P. graduating class and is now chief operating officer of University of Miami Hospital, South Florida’s first University-owned, multi-specialty, acute health care facility. Zambrana is also a student again; his

interest in research has led him back to the SONHS, where he is now pursuing his Ph.D. When asked to name the most important skill for today’s nursing professionals to master, Zambrana answers, “Leadership, leadership, leadership.”

“Whether they are clinical care providers, educators, or scientists,” Zambrana continues, “today’s nurses have an opportunity to create their own place at the table and, with their unique skill set and knowledge of clinical dynamics, provide a valuable perspective. My own education at the SONHS helped me hone these valuable leadership skills.”

Other D.N.P. graduates have been recognized for their leadership and drive to improve the health care setting in which they work. Marie Etienne, D.N.P. ’11 was named 2011 Haitian Woman of the Year by the National Center of the Haitian Apostolate for her contributions in aiding survivors of the devastating earthquake that struck her hometown of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, in 2010. Rebecca Suzanne Wells, D.N.P. ’11, is the first of the school’s D.N.P. graduates to be awarded the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship, which took her to Ufa, Russia, to teach community and mental health to nursing and medical students at Bashkir State Medical University. As director of Ambulatory Care Clinical









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 Judith A. Ormson, R.N., B.S.N. '86, and Daniel R. Ormson  
 Ivette Ortega, B.S.N. '88  
 Belen J. Ortiz, B.S.N. '90  
 Martha E. Padilla and Fernando Padilla, B.S.N. '95  
 Deborah S. Paris  
 Frances E. Parrish, R.N., B.S.N. '75, and Kiff Parrish  
 Lorette D. Patrick, B.S.N. '91, M.S.N. '94, and Fergus R. Patrick  
 Patricia M. Paxton-Alan, M.S.N. '95, and Mark A. Alan, B.S. '81  
 Carolina P. Penaranda, B.S.N. '13  
 Patricia E. Pepe and Richard K. Pepe, R.N., B.S. '75, B.S.N. '78  
 Hadee A. Pereda, B.S. '03  
 Ricardo Perez  
 Joan M. Petry, R.N., B.S.N. '58  
 Katriya Phanidasak, B.S. '99  
 Nathacha Pierre-Louis, B.S.N. '02  
 Janine Plavac, R.N., B.S.N. '76, and Thomas G. Plavac, M.D.  
 Runar G. Polluson, D.N.P. '10  
 Jo Nell E. Potter, M.S.N. '87, Ph.D. '03, and George H. Potter  
 Charles M. Powell, Jr., B.S.N. '10  
 Louise S. Powell and David Powell, M.S.N. '93  
 Carmen R. Presti, D.N.P. '13  
 Jessie V. Price, M.S.N. '13  
 Shannon N. Price, B.S.N. '06  
 Dianne H. Quadros, M.S.N. '90  
 Akilah A. Quallo, B.S.N. '08  
 Erika L. Quattrocchi, B.S.N. '07  
 Irene Rathbun  
 Bertha Redondo, B.S.N. '08  
 Lucienne Y. Reese, B.S.N. '85, and Richard A. Reese  
 Annette Q. Requena, B.S.N. '04, and Roberto L. Requena

Violet Rhagnanan-Kramer, B.S.N. '95  
 Mabel Ribe, B.S.N. '86, M.S.N. '09, and Ricardo Ribe  
 Darnella C. Richardson, M.S.N. '12  
 Patricia K. Rister, B.S.N. '64  
 Marisol M. Rivera-Almonte, D.N.P. '13  
 Susan H. Roberts, M.S.N. '09  
 Mary Keen Robinson, M.S.N. '97  
 Jose I. Rodriguez, B.S.N. '05  
 Nicole L. Rosen, B.S.N. '00  
 Cara L. Rosenfeld, B.S.H.S. '10  
 Margaret T. Rosier, R.N., B.S.N. '01, and John D. Rosier  
 Wendy J. Ross and Michael R. Ross, B.S.N. '89  
 Lillian M. Rucker, R.N., B.S.N. '86, and Roger D. Rucker  
 Eileen Ruiz Cruz  
 Shirley A. Ryan, R.N., B.S.N. '79  
 Marian Sager and Jeffrey E. Sager, O.D.  
 Sonique S. Sailsman, B.S.N. '00  
 Deborah A. Salani, B.S.N. '86, M.S.N. '90, D.N.P. '13, and Riccardo Salani, B.S.C.E. '85  
 Kathryn Salinero, B.S.H.S. '09  
 Shelley A. Savage, R.N., B.S.N. '77  
 Katharine K. Sawal, B.S.N. '87  
 Marilyn E. Schactman, M.S.N. '85  
 Darla J. Schaller, R.N., B.S.N. '64  
 Valentina Schmidt and Alexander Schmidt  
 Lee A. Schmidt, Ph.D. '01  
 Gillian C. Scott, A.R.N.P., B.S.N. '96, M.S.N. '99  
 Serge Sejour, B.S.N. '95  
 Silia M. Serrano, B.S.N. '06, and William Serrano  
 Betty J. Severyn, R.N., B.S.N. '63  
 Lois J. Shapiro, R.N., B.S.N. '65, and Dr. Jerome B. Shapiro  
 Karen R. Shelly, R.N., B.S.N. '77, and Christopher Shelly, B.Ed. '76  
 Elena Siegel and Dr. Yoel J. Siegel  
 Christine E. Skow, R.N., B.S.N. '73  
 Susan Z. Slotnick, R.N., B.S.N. '65, and Michael C. Slotnick, A.B. '57, J.D. '60  
 Azona K. Smith, B.S.N. '01  
 Eric N. Smith, B.S.N. '11  
 Ruth A. Smith, R.N., B.S.N. '88  
 Mary C. Smolenski, A.R.N.P., C.N.P. '80  
 Alejandro Sosa, B.S.N. '94  
 Margaret M. Steinbach, Ph.D. '10, and David N. Steinbach  
 Vibeke S. Stewart, B.S.N. '67  
 Arnold T. Stocker, D.N.P. '13  
 Maureen A. Storey, M.S.N. '01, and William B. Storey

Nancy A. Sweeney, A.B. '73  
 Gail S. Sznajstajler, B.S.N. '86, and David Sznajstajler  
 Antoinette R. Taylor, M.S.N. '83, and Andrew L. Taylor, M.D.  
 Danielle M. Tehrani, B.S.N. '97, and Nasser S. Tehrani  
 Deborah FisherTerry, B.S.N. '88, M.S.N. '92, D.N.P., ARNP-BC, and James L. Terry  
 Samantha A. Thiry, B.S.N. '10  
 Pamela B. Thompson, R.N., B.S.N. '67  
 Ann M. Thrailkill, C.N.P. '76  
 Johnny J. Torres, B.S.N. '06  
 Bonnie F. Traiman, R.N., B.S.N. '60, and Steve Traiman  
 Dr. JoAnn T. Trybulski and Edward W. Tybulski  
 Marilyn Turner, A.R.N.P., C.N.P. '78  
 Nico Tyne  
 Lilia M. Ugarte, B.S.N. '88  
 Jorge A. Valdes, B.S.N. '97  
 Marilyn S. Van Houten, R.N., B.S.N. '69  
 Elsa Vasquez-Tomonto, B.S.N. '88, and Charles V. Tomonto, B.S.M.E. '80, Ph.D.  
 Margaret B. Velinova-Hipp, R.N., B.S.N. '77  
 Dayamis Veliz, B.S.N. '08  
 Erika M. Vila, D.N.P. '13  
 Lorraine J. Vitale, M.S.N. '79  
 Peggy L. Vreones, B.S.N. '98  
 Nancy P. Wade, B.S.N. '63  
 Sheyla Wallace, B.S.N. '97  
 Tommy T. Warren  
 Chante E. Washington, B.S.N. '07  
 Melody A. Watral, R.N., B.S.N. '80  
 Deborah L. Watson, R.N., B.S.N. '83, and Frank S. Watson  
 Susan D. Watson, M.S.N. '08, Ph.D. '11  
 Lilly S. Webster, B.S.H.S. '09  
 Marta S. Weeks-Wulf and Karleton Wulf  
 Julis M. Welcome, B.S.N. '87  
 Barbara A. Wheeler, R.N., B.S.N. '68, and Robert T. Wheeler  
 Kathryn L. Williams, M.S.N. '12  
 Helene G. Wittner, R.N., B.S.N. '80, and Stuart Wittner  
 Marion Wollum, M.S.N. '83, and Arnold Wollum  
 Nicole B. Wyatt, B.S.N. '13  
 Nathalia Zambakari, B.S.N. '13  
 Ann P. Zani, R.N., B.S.N. '72  
 Nini K. Zoppel, M.S.N. '79, and Robert V. Zoppel  
 Helen M. Zurlo, R.N., B.S.N. '64, and George J. Zurlo, Esq.

## Leading from the Heart

**Julie Barroso**, the new professor and associate dean for doctoral programs at the School of Nursing and Health Studies, has South Florida in her blood. Her grandfather came to Miami during the 1920s, and she was born and raised in Fort Lauderdale. Her baccalaureate degree is from Florida State University, her master's degree is from the University of South Florida, and her mother and sisters still live here. So when SONHS Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano offered her the position, she was delighted.

"The quality of the school was tremendously important in making my decision," Barroso says. "I thought, 'This is a place I really want to be.'"

When she arrives here in January 2014, Barroso plans to conduct a "listening

tour" to learn more about what faculty, students, and staff envision for the school. "Then my job is to help make that happen," she says.

**"The older I get, the more I realize any success I've had is because others saw something in me and supported me."**

Barroso sees the role of nursing research as "critical to understanding how people go through transitions like birth and death, how they cope with change, with symptoms." She offers one example from her own investigation—the quest to develop a stigma intervention for HIV-infected women that would not inadvertently disclose the women's diagnosis. "Nurses 'get' those nuances that make a huge difference," she says.

Barroso is also an ardent believer in the power of mentoring. "The older I get, the more I realize any success I've had is because others saw something in me

that nurse scientists are prepared to ask the questions others don't think to ask. Barroso's discovery early in her career

that fatigue was the top complaint among her AIDS patients led to more than 15 years of research on AIDS-related fatigue. She is now one of only three investigators in the United States who are studying this problem.

and supported me. To see someone I mentored get their first article published is one of my greatest joys.

"I want to lead with love," Barroso continues, "and I see that in Dean Peragallo Montano, too. She cares deeply about the faculty, students, and staff."

At Duke University, Barroso's doctoral students call her the Den Mother. "They say, 'If you're hungry she always has food, and she has tissues if you need to cry.' I'm there for them when I'm needed, and I hope to be that kind of leader at the School of Nursing and Health Studies."





1960s

**Janet Pitts Beckmann, B.S.N. '68**, has received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Macalester College (May 2013). After earning a Ph.D. in 1974 from the University of Washington, Pitts Beckmann served as associate professor and associate dean of graduate and continuing education at the UM School of Nursing, where she helped to implement the M.S.N. program. In 1977 she became dean of the School of Nursing at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. She has authored books concerning nursing errors and negligence and is now retired from a medical-legal consulting practice in Seattle.

**Susan Mitchell, B.S.N. '68**, is co-owner of the Ediba Diabetes Center of Excellence, a diabetes consulting and education company, in Oklahoma City.

**Marilyn S. Van Houten, B.S.N. '69,** celebrated the 25th anniversary of her company, Rehabilitation Case Management, Inc., which provides medical and vocational services.

1970s

**Veda L. Andrus, B.S.N.** '73, is vice president of education and program development for The BirchTree Center for Healthcare Transformation. She is also on the board of directors for the American Holistic Nurses Credentialing Corporation and on the editorial review board for the *Journal of Holistic Nursing*.

1980s

**Mary Beth Patterson, B.S.N. '81**, returned from a trip to Ghana, Africa, on a medical mission. She was awarded the Nurse of the Year 2012 by the Heart Institute.

**Jamie Pannozzo-Plastina, B.S.N. '88**, has entered the Psychiatric A.R.N.P. Program at Florida International University, going back to school for the first time in 27 years since graduating from the University of Miami. She currently works as a psychiatric home health nurse in Broward and Palm Beach counties.

**Sharon McGuire, M.S.N. '89**, contributed a chapter called "Borders, Centers and Margins: Critical Landscapes in Migrant Health" to a book called *Philosophies and Practices of Emancipatory Nursing: Social Justice as Praxis*, edited by Paula Kagan, Marlaime Smith, and Peggy Chinn and published in July 2013 by Routledge.

**Rhonda J. Smith, B.S.N. '87, M.S.N. '89**, retired from Jackson Memorial Hospital after 30 years. She worked as an A.R.N.P. for the bone marrow transplant unit for 19 years. She has been married for 35 years and has two grandsons.

1990s

**Julie Luengas, B.S.N., M.B.A. '98,**  
was promoted in April 2013 to vice president  
of informatics/chief nursing informatics officer  
of Saint Thomas Health, Nashville, Tennessee.

2000s

**Linda R. Curran, M.S.N. '02**, recently worked on a book project with her sisters, Amy Curran Baker and MaryBeth Curran Brown, called *Now What? A Patient's Guide to Recovery After Mastectomy*. The book includes chapters on key issues, including wound management, scar massage, dressing and bathing, emotional recovery, and more.

2010s

**Yamina Alvarez, D.N.P. '10**, is the recipient of the Florida Nursing Association South Region 2012 Nurse Educator Award and the Joan K. Stout R.N. Endowed Teaching Chair in Nursing at Miami Dade College.

**Marie O. Etienne, D.N.P. '11**, was named Haitian Woman of the Year by the National Center of the Haitian Apostolate. She has been appointed to serve on the National Nursing Committee of the American Red Cross. She also was recognized by the Florida Nursing Association with the South Region 2012 Advanced Practice Nursing Award.

**Veronica Scott-Fulton, D.N.P. '11**, has joined Wolfson Children's Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida, as vice president of operations and patient care services.

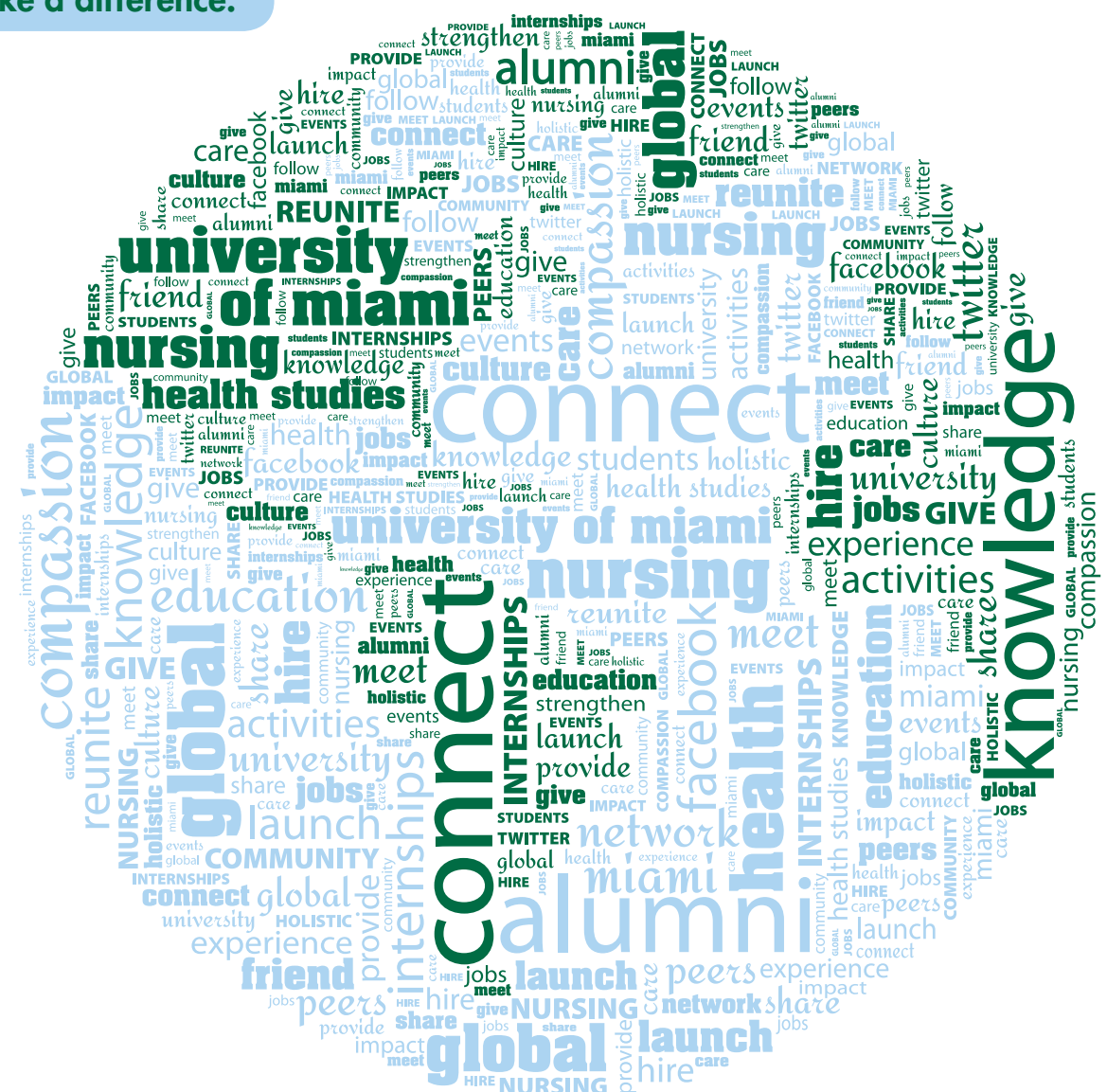
**Marie A. Smith, B.S.N. '11**, has worked as a registered nurse at Shands hospital in the Surgical Intensive Care Unit (ICU), Cardiac ICU, and Cardiac Intermediate Care Unit. Following an experience with a patient that had ICU psychosis, she became interested in psychiatry and began working at the behavioral health branch of Shands Vista. She subsequently earned a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Florida and is now a board-certified Family Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner in the outpatient Mental Health Clinic of the local Veterans Affairs hospital.

**Rebecca Suzanne Wells, D.N.P. '11**, has been selected as a 2013-14 Fulbright Scholar. The award supports her to lecture for the School of Nursing at Bashkir State Medical College in Ufa, Russia, in the nursing, medicine, and psychology programs. Wells is a full-time professor and interim program director for the R.N.-B.S.N. Program at Edison State College in Fort Myers, Florida.

**Michelle “Wilderness Girl” Diaz, B.S.N.**  
'12, immediate past president of the UM chapter of the National Student Nurses Association (UM-NSNA), is the new resident critical care nurse in the trauma ICU at San Jose Regional Medical Center. She was the top candidate among a pool of 400 applicants for the position. San Jose Regional Medical Center is an approximately 300-bed acute care regional facility in the heart of California's Silicon Valley.

**Constance B. H. Miller, D.N.P. '12**, received the Community Engagement Educator Award from the Florida Campus Compact in 2010 and the Florida Nursing Association's South Region Community Action Award in 2012.

**Susan Sonson, D.N.P. '12**, was interviewed on National Public Radio for a segment on health care in South Florida. Her capstone was accepted for publication the journal *Nursing Management*, and she is serving on the state FL-AC Practice Action Team.



# Top 10 Ways to Stay Connected

## WITH THE SCHOOL OF NURSING AND HEALTH STUDIES

1. **SIGN UP:** Fill out your UM alumni profile at [miamialumni.net](http://miamialumni.net).
2. **SIGN ON:** Friend us on Facebook. Follow us on Twitter.
3. **REUNITE:** Come back to campus for Alumni Weekend and Homecoming.
4. **NETWORK:** Join your peers at School of Nursing and Health Studies events.
5. **SHARE YOUR STORY:** Visit [storiesofu.com](http://storiesofu.com).
6. **PROVIDE EXPERIENCE:** Create internships for our students.
7. **LAUNCH CAREERS:** Hire our alumni.
8. **STRENGTHEN NURSING:** Recruit students for our programs.
9. **SHOW LEADERSHIP:** Host an alumni event.
10. **GIVE BACK:** Make a difference with a financial gift.

Visit [miami.edu/sonhs/alumni](http://miami.edu/sonhs/alumni)

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SCHOOL of NURSING  
& HEALTH STUDIES



Contact Karla V. Hernandez, Executive Director for Advancement,  
at [khernandez@miami.edu](mailto:khernandez@miami.edu)





2010s *continued*

**Maria Sosa, B.S.H.S. '12**, works as a phlebotomist-medical assistant for a pediatrician in South Miami and is in school for her R.N. degree. Future plans include returning to the University of Miami to earn a Family Nurse Practitioner master's degree.

**Erika Vila, D.N.P. '12**, has received funding from Miami Children's Hospital (MCH) for an A.R.N.P. pre-operative transitional video project to increase parental education on the pediatric congenital heart surgery process. This research project, will be conducted in collaboration with the MCH Heart Program's A.R.N.P.s, nurses, intensivists, anesthesiologists, child life specialists, and the marketing and cardiothoracic surgical team. She is currently nurse director of MCH's Heart Program.

**Liz Kuebler, B.S.N. '13**, is working in the critical care residency program at Tampa General Hospital.

## In Memoriam

**Jillian Miller, B.S.N. '07**, age 29, died Saturday, May 4, 2013 in Tampa after a courageous battle with cancer. She was a nurse in the neurosurgical unit at Jackson Memorial Hospital and was pursuing her master's degree as a nurse practitioner at the UM School of Nursing and Health Studies. Miller, who was born in Denver, Colorado, and lived all over the world as a "military brat," was a big Miami Hurricanes fan. Her parents, Art and Ros Miller of Tampa, Florida, request that those wishing to honor her memory make a contribution in her name to the School of Nursing and Health Studies.

**Felipe Novoa, B.S.N. '13**, is a chemotherapy nurse in the Comprehensive Treatment Unit (CTU) at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, where he administers chemotherapy and participates in phase 1, 2, and 3 clinical trials for treatments. He is also finishing the Family Nurse Practitioner program at the University of Miami.

**Mercedes Perez, D.N.P. '13**, has been named dean of the School of Nursing for the University of Southernmost Florida, together with Don Slesnick as the dean of public administration. She is thankful to UM for preparing her for this role.

**Christina Rabadan, B.S.N. '13**, passed the NCLEX in June and was offered a job as a pediatric registered nurse at St. Mary's Medical Center in West Palm Beach, Florida.

**Nicole Soares, B.S.N. '13**, recently accepted a position as a registered nurse at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in New Hampshire as part of their Nurse Residency Program.

## Stay Connected on Facebook!

The SONHS is on Facebook – receive the latest exciting news, learn of upcoming events, research and so much more!

It's the best way to stay in touch with alumni, students, faculty, and the many who follow the SONHS.



Like us on Facebook today!

[www.facebook.com/CaneNurse](http://www.facebook.com/CaneNurse)

Getting Engaged,  
Staying Connected

There's a new School of Nursing and Health Studies Alumni Association Board, composed of 13 members with a common goal: advance the school's mission and vision and serve the school's nearly 6,000 alumni worldwide with opportunities for engagement and professional development.

"We want to connect back to our community at large and encourage our alumni to re-engage and reconnect with the school," says Jennifer Lopez, B.S.N. '09, president of the SONHS Alumni Association Board.

Board members meet on a monthly basis to plan alumni programming, including events like Alumni Weekend and Homecoming and Continuing Education Units.

"We'd like to open the lines of communication with our alumni and establish a dialogue," says Sonique Sailsman, B.S.N. '00, president-elect of the board. "It is a two-way process."

One initiative in the works is a mentoring program that pairs new graduates entering the workforce with professionally established alumni in the health care field, academia, and other settings who can offer invaluable advice.

"This program gives our older alumni an opportunity to become engaged and give back to their alma mater while providing younger alumni with an avenue to immediately engage with their Alumni Association," Sailsman says. "It is a win-win for everyone."

Many graduates don't realize they are automatically part of both the UM and SONHS Alumni Associations.

"I was not aware of the Alumni Association when I first graduated, but when I returned for my master's, it became very clear to me that I needed to get involved and help reconnect fellow alumni to the great resources the school has to offer," recalls Assistant Professor Johis Ortega, Ph.D. '10, M.S.N. '06, B.S.N. '02. He served on the board for three years, including as president in 2004, and has now rejoined the board as its faculty advisor.

"Our graduates are a vital asset and an integral part of our program," says SONHS Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano. "I urge all of our alumni to maintain their connection to the school, as we want to hear about your accomplishments and take great pride in how you represent us throughout the world. It's our alumni and their many accomplishments that help make our school one of the top health care programs in the nation."

All alumni are encouraged to attend events, help connect fellow alumni back to the school, and communicate their ideas to the board. When you receive phone calls from students as part of the SONHS Annual Giving drive, feel free to ask the callers

SONHS ALUMNI  
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Faculty Advisor

about their experiences and share your own. You can show support to your alma mater in these ways, as well as by purchasing a brick for the Brick Campaign, donating to the new Simulation Hospital fund, or providing much-needed scholarship donations. Alumni gifts are a special seal of approval from the school's most important constituency: its own graduates.







## Former Soldier Answers a New Call of Duty

**Just three years** after moving to the United States from her native Peru, 17-year-old Paola Barragan graduated from high school in Broward County, Florida, and joined the U.S. Army. She spent the next five grueling years in Korea and then Iraq, but she always kept an eye on her dream of becoming a police officer. Despite working 12- to 14-hour days in Iraq, she would then tackle her online coursework toward a B.S. in criminal justice.

Barragan returned to Florida in 2008 and completed her degree and an internship with the police department. Her hard work culminated in a job offer, and it seemed her dream was about to come true. Then she was diagnosed with lymphoma.

"I came to the School of Nursing and Health Studies with ideas, but now they are becoming possibilities," Barragan says. "The professors are amazing! They keep up with technology, and they're so into the class material. It's so nice to be surrounded by people who really care and want to teach us.

and courage toward helping patients fight their battle against cancer.

"In my early 20s I thought I was invincible, until cancer gave me a wake-up call," Barragan says.

Now she's a survivor who's preparing to help cancer patients replace pain and fear with hope and peace.

**"I came to the School of Nursing and Health Studies with ideas, but now they are becoming possibilities."**

"Everything I had worked so hard for was at risk," Barragan says.

The extraordinary courage that saw Barragan through her tours overseas served her well. She underwent six months of aggressive, experimental treatment, and it took a severe toll on her body. But it worked, and in the process of healing and surviving, she received an unexpected gift—a new vocation.

"When I had cancer I spent a lot of time in the clinic, and I fell in love with the nurses, with the way they treated people," says Barragan. "I realized this was my true calling."

Barragan became driven to bring the discipline and leadership skills she developed as a soldier to her new role as an oncology nurse. She realized that being a nurse is more than providing physical care and emotional support; it's also about being a leader in the health care system.

In spring 2013 Barragan was accepted into the Accelerated B.S.N. (A-B.S.N.) program at the UM School of Nursing and Health Studies, her top choice.

I feel like I'm finally getting the tools I need to go out there and make a difference in people's lives."

Through her professors, Barragan is developing the diverse and advanced competencies that will prepare her to lead at all levels of an organization. They've also broadened her vision about the diverse roles nurses can play.

"Dr. Carole Wilkinson has become my mentor and role model," Barragan says. "She's helped me to imagine all the different ways I can contribute as a nurse, like providing free health care in developing countries [through international service projects]."

After she graduates this December, Barragan will channel her tenacity



## Leave a Legacy!

***Help the School of Nursing and Health Studies continue its vital mission well into the future by donating all or a portion of your retirement assets.***

100% of your gift will go to the School to support its goals. Naming your heirs as beneficiaries of your retirement assets, on the other hand, can trigger taxes that may significantly reduce these assets. Consider making a gift to the School of Nursing and Health Studies and providing for your heirs in a more tax-wise manner.

It's easy – complete a change of beneficiary form with your retirement plan administrator naming the School as a beneficiary and advise us of your commitment so we can include you as a supporter of the School's **Momentum2** campaign.

And if you are 70 ½ or older, a special tax provision allows you to donate up to \$100,000 directly to the School of Nursing and Health Studies from your IRA without including that amount in your taxable income. This benefit expires December 31, 2013, so don't miss out on this opportunity!

If you have already named the School as a beneficiary of your retirement plan, or named the School in your estate plans, please let us know so that we can thank you appropriately and include you in our prestigious Heritage Society!

**For further information, contact:**

**Cynthia L. Beamish**  
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# Help Us Pioneer a New Era in Patient Safety

## Join the R. Kirk Landon Challenge

A new, 39,000-square-foot Simulation Hospital is on the horizon at the School of Nursing and Health Studies—a first-of-its-kind facility that will ignite and fuel a nationwide patient safety transformation. To engage people who care about the future of health care, R. Kirk Landon has pledged to match any gift of \$50,000 or more, up to \$1 million, toward the Simulation Hospital.

Participating in the R. Kirk Landon Challenge doubles the impact of your gift and brings us closer to our goal of making health care safer and more affordable for all.

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