

heartbeat

Spring 2015

University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies

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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.

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A Celebration of Firsts

Welcome to the Spring 2015 issue of *Heartbeat*. Our cover story reports on the first-of-its-kind Ebola Disaster Preparedness Simulation staged at our school. Ebola's arrival on U.S. shores last summer served as a wake-up call to the entire U.S. health care infrastructure, especially to nurses, who make up the largest segment of the health care workforce and are primarily the ones who risk their lives to save infected patients. Therefore, it is fitting that the School of Nursing and Health Studies has taken the lead to ensure the University and Miami-Dade County are prepared for an infectious disease outbreak in our community. I am proud that since December of 2014, all SONHS B.S.N. graduates are badged and certified to deploy with the Miami-Dade County Health Department's Medical Reserve Corps.

In this edition you will learn about a number of other exciting "firsts" at the school. We opened Florida's first chapter of the American Assembly for Men in Nursing, held the first Faculty Technology Fair and other initiatives that position us as a University-wide leader in innovative learning techniques, and designed and implemented one of the first fully electronic reporting systems to capture adverse events in a simulation program.

Turn the pages to learn how our Ph.D. program is rising to the challenge of national mandates, and how our global partners recently convened here to launch a novel program that will send promising undergraduates overseas to ignite their research careers. Closer to home, I invite you to read about other trailblazers within our school family—students, alumni, and faculty who continue to excel in the classroom, at



the bedside, and in the community. You will also read about the loss of a cherished member of the SONHS family, Mr. R. Kirk Landon, and how his legacy lives on in

his important contribution to our groundbreaking dream: building an on-campus Simulation Hospital.

From a solemn goodbye to a heartfelt final tribute, it is in this issue that we celebrate the remarkable leadership of the University's president, Donna Shalala. Neither the achievements recounted in this magazine nor our school's amazing progress of the last decade would have been possible without this fearless leader at the helm of the U. President Shalala, you have served as a model of leadership and service for all health care professionals, for our program, and as my mentor. I thank you, and I will miss you.

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

“The School of Nursing and Health Studies has taken the lead to ensure the University and Miami-Dade County are prepared for an infectious disease outbreak in our community.”

Shalala Leaves a Legacy at the SONHS

When Donna E. Shalala assumed leadership of the University of Miami in 2001, she had just finished an eight-year term—the longest in history—as secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, appointed by President Bill Clinton. Shalala brought her passion for public health to her new job at the U, and nowhere is this more apparent than in her longstanding support of the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS). The current academic year is her last as president, ending a 14-year era of historic progress for the U—and for the SONHS.

President Shalala recruited Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano to the role of SONHS dean in 2003, the same year that the University launched *Momentum*, the most ambitious fundraising campaign in institutional history. Both of these events proved transformational. The fundraising drive surpassed its \$1 billion goal a year and a half ahead of schedule and reached \$1.4 billion by its 2007 completion, making UM the first private university built in the 20th century to raise more than \$1 billion.

“Without President Shalala’s unwavering support, the SONHS would not be where it is today,” says Dean Peragallo Montano. “And I mean that literally; we would not be in our current home. It was President Shalala who spearheaded the enormously successful campaign that raised the funds needed to open our new building, the M. Christine Schwartz Center for Nursing and Health Studies.”

On the national stage, President Shalala’s vision and commitment to education helped empower a sweeping overhaul of the nursing profession, and she positioned the SONHS front and center in that initiative. She served as chair of the Institute of Medicine’s committee

that, in collaboration with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, resulted in the landmark *The Future of Nursing*



report, the most-viewed document in National Academy of Sciences history.

“She is a visionary who led a report that turned into a movement to advance health through nursing,” says SONHS faculty member Rosa

Gonzalez-Guarda, Ph.D. ’08, who served alongside Shalala on the Future of Nursing panel. “Her impact both on our school and the nursing profession elevated the role of nurses in improving the health of our nation.”

Among its many achievements during “The Shalala Years,” the school grew from 431 students in 2004 to more than 850 students today, added a host of new degree programs in nursing and related fields, and in 2014 was ranked first in Florida and 18th nationwide for NIH funding among nursing schools. President Shalala, who remains passionately committed to health care and teaches a course on the topic every spring semester, is proud of the gains the SONHS made during her tenure. The school’s forthcoming Simulation Hospital is a key priority of *Momentum2: The Breakthrough Campaign for the University of Miami*, a second campaign that is on its way to bringing the University’s fundraising total under President Shalala’s leadership to \$3 billion.

“My charge at the University of Miami was for our programs and our students to reach great heights,” President Shalala says. “We have proven during the last 14 years that you can make more than incremental changes. The accomplishments of the School of Nursing and Health Studies, like those of the University, are monumental and will have enduring impact.”

She credits the leadership of Dean Peragallo Montano, a dedicated faculty team, and unwavering donor support as “crucial to this success.”



Health Fairs with a Holistic Twist

UM nursing students have long delivered wellness education and health screenings to various populations in the school’s own backyard, but now they are expanding the tradition to encompass a higher level of holistic-based care.

On a sunny Saturday afternoon at St. Alban’s Child Enrichment Center in Coconut Grove, this year’s Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (A-B.S.N.) students delivered not only health screenings but also concrete skills, such as CPR training, positive coping strategies in the form of stress-reduction exercise, and community resource awareness. A-B.S.N. classmates Angie Zimmerman and Amber Curl handed out community maps pinpointing the area’s schools, churches, sporting activities, and parks.

“As care providers, we often know more about what health care services and facilities are available to a community’s residents than they do, and it is our job to educate and empower them,” Zimmerman said.

At the Report Card Table, student Sophia Walter showed local parents how to read a standard Miami-Dade County Public Schools report card.

“Nursing is all-inclusive,” Walter says. “We are really trying to own the holistic nature of our chosen profession. Nurses are not only charged with looking after individuals’, families’, and communities’ physical health, we are also concerned with our patients’ emotional well-being and place in the world. The family is a crucial unit of the community, and by promoting parents’ knowledge of the school system and the benefits of extracurricular activities, we are helping them set up bright futures for their children.”

The St. Alban’s event is one of many community health fairs UM nursing students host each year in partnership with the Thelma Gibson Health Initiative, the Coordinated Victims Assistance Center, and Lotus House. The fairs are part of the curriculum for NUR 440: Population Based Nursing, a core course that requires students to complete a community needs assessment intervention and evaluation so they can learn about the science of protecting and improving the health of populations.



CPR is one of many lifesaving skills and holistic care services SONHS students are now offering citizens at local health fairs.

SONHS Celebrates Its Community Partners

The School of Nursing and Health Studies’ extensive network of more than 250 clinical and community partners provides students with mentoring and real-world patient care experience opportunities in clinical settings across South Florida. At an annual reception on a February evening in the school’s courtyard, Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano thanked the assembled guests for imparting to students not just their professional skills and guidance but also their enthusiasm for patient care.

“The accomplishments of our alumni and students reflect the excellence of the education and mentorship they are receiving at their clinical sites,” said Dean Peragallo Montano. “We could not do what we do without you.”

The event was enhanced by a visual display commemorating past celebrations and showcasing the school’s future with renderings of the planned Simulation Hospital, a cutting-edge facility that will revolutionize health care education in South Florida.



Grants Pave Career Pathways for Aspiring Global Health Scientists

It was a global meeting of the minds—renowned health care scientists from four countries and three continents, as well as Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano and several School of Nursing and Health Studies faculty members, all focused on the best way to turn nursing students into researchers. Their mission during a February 2015 gathering at the school: Select ten students who will participate in the school's new Global Health Disparities Research Experience.

Funded by a National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities International Research Training (MHIRT) award of more than \$1 million over five years, the UM Global Health Disparities Research Experience will enable ten SONHS undergraduates to participate in summer 2015 research experiences under the mentorship of the school's global partners. The budding researchers will gain a global scientific perspective on topics such as the health of Australian aboriginal communities, Chilean families living in extreme poverty, tobacco use among Chilean adolescents, aging in the Dominican Republic, and vulnerable populations in Spain.

Selected students must have at least two semesters remaining in their education, be enrolled in any of the school's undergraduate programs, and belong to a minority group under-represented in research. The selection process also considers

applicants' GPAs, as well as how closely their scientific interests fit with projects of the foreign mentors, and aims to strike a balance between nursing, public health, and health science majors. MHIRT is the brainchild of John Ruffin, founding director of the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, now a visiting professor at the Miller School of Medicine and consultant to the SONHS on this project.

"The program is designed the way it is, for students to travel internationally for mentorship in health disparities science, because research has shown that minority students, even high-achieving ones, are less likely to go away for work, jobs, or study because of their close family and community ties, and they lose opportunities due to this cultural phenomenon," says Rosa Gonzalez-Guarda, Ph.D. '08, principal investigator of the program. "Supporting them through a foreign research experience while they are undergraduates encourages them to accept subsequent scientific career, graduate study,

and internship opportunities across the country and in international locations."

While MHIRT awardees are being mentored internationally, a group of students from UM and other South Florida nursing education institutions will be undergoing similar experiences in health disparities research this summer at the University of Miami. Funded by a Florida Blue Foundation grant to increase diversity and enrollment in nursing Ph.D. programs, the program pairs minority students with SONHS faculty researchers to break down barriers to graduate education that minority nursing students face. Both of these summer programs play a role in addressing a recommendation from the Institute of Medicine's *Future of Nursing* report that the number of doctorate-prepared nurses double by 2020.

"We are proud to partner with Florida Blue to help meet IOM report benchmarks in Florida," says Mary Hooshmand, Ph.D. '10, assistant professor of clinical and co-investigator of the Florida Blue program. "Also, by encouraging gifted students from minority backgrounds to pursue their Ph.D.s, we hope to advance the goal of having a nursing research workforce that mirrors the increasingly diverse demographics of South Florida, and of the nation."

Rewarding Reporting

As noted by pediatrician Lucian Leape, "the father of patient safety," a person is more likely to be injured or die as a result of medical error than from driving or flying. To further the School of Nursing and Health Studies' mission of developing ways to improve patient safety, Assistant Professor Mary McKay and Ph.D. candidate Jill Sanko turned their focus to the way adverse events are reported in a simulation education program. They were unable to identify even one publication in the professional literature citing use of an electronic reporting system in simulation, so they designed it.

"In today's environment of evidence-based clinical practice, the move is toward completely Web-based systems that professionals use to report errors and 'near misses,' creating a repository of such incidents in a spirit of learning," explains McKay, who also serves as the school's safety assurance director. "The online system we created and tested mirrors almost all of the components of the reporting system used in real-world clinical practice."

At the SONHS, there are usually six students involved in a simulation session—two interacting with the simulated patient and four watching the encounter via streaming video—followed by a debriefing session. McKay and Sanko inserted an extra step: After simulation but before debriefing, students receive a prompt to complete the new online system, reporting any medical errors they or their fellow students made during the simulation.

"Our results reveal a parallel between patient safety breakdowns in the simulation environment and what is actually happening in today's hospitals," explains Sanko, "with administrative delays and communication failures cited as the most frequent reasons for medical errors. But what is most important is the take-home lesson for our students: They should not be afraid to report errors but instead view them as learning opportunities. It will be much easier to change attitudes toward errors and 'near misses' in the health care system if we prepare professionals who are already comfortable with reporting as a learning opportunity rather than as a punitive tool."

This e-reporting system, now a permanent component of the school's simulation curriculum, was awarded a Program Innovation Award by the Society for Simulation in Healthcare. Medication errors reported in the system are being used to design a separate research study,

funded by the Florida Blue Foundation, examining simulation-based activities in pharmacology. A second spinoff study will measure the significance of the self-reporting aspect. Qualitative data collected by responses to the study's two free-text questions are being reviewed for analysis and publication.

"By operationalizing a permanent system to ensure that our students report, address, and talk about errors," says McKay, "we are increasing the safety and well-being of all future patients cared for by this emerging generation of nursing professionals."

SONHS Welcomes Final Cohort of RWJF New Careers in Nursing Scholars

This spring, the School of Nursing and Health Studies welcomed its final group of New Careers in Nursing Scholars. The school has successfully competed since 2008 for a total of \$720,000 in \$10,000 scholarship increments from the prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to support second-career nursing students from populations traditionally underrepresented in the field of nursing. RWJF, the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to health and health care, is phasing out the enormously successful NCIN scholarship program.

"NCIN scholarship funds represent a remarkable contribution to our school and to the nursing profession," says Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano. "The vision behind these scholarships has transformed not only the experience of our students and the face of the nursing workforce but also the lives of all the patients, families, and communities who will be impacted by our scholars' future accomplishments. We are proud that with the support of the RWJF, the SONHS currently houses the most diverse student body in school history."



AAMN Aims to Move Men Out of the Minority

The number of male registered nurses in the U.S. has more than tripled since 1970, but men still represent only about 10 percent of the R.N. workforce, according to a 2013 U.S. Census report. Their primary advocacy group over the past 40 years has been the American Assembly for Men in Nursing (AAMN), which opened its first and only Florida chapter at the School of Nursing and Health Studies during the fall 2014 semester.

“This is the only U.S. nursing organization that focuses on increasing and expanding the role of men in nursing.”

“This is the only U.S. nursing organization that focuses on increasing and expanding the role of men in nursing, in addition to addressing health care-related issues that are unique to men,” says Tony Roberson, associate professor and faculty advisor for the ’Canes Chapter of the AAMN. “I view participation in the AAMN as a way to

make a difference in both of these areas.”

Roberson has been involved with the AAMN since 2009 and has served as treasurer of the national organization since 2013. He established and developed the bylaws for the ’Canes Chapter and worked with fellow SONHS faculty member Juan Gonzalez to recruit student members and an executive board. The chapter today has about 30 student members, both men and women, who have been organizing events and fundraisers. Last semester the students organized a raffle that raised \$2,100 for operational costs and local charitable causes.

“I believe that one of the challenges

men face presently is overcoming the ‘traditional’ [female] face of nursing,” says Luis Diaz-Paez, senior B.S.N. student and president of the ’Canes Chapter of the AAMN. “We will be inviting licensed male nurses to speak at our monthly meetings to discuss obstacles male nurses face and ways to overcome them.”

In a profession that’s facing severe

shortages, particularly in faculty positions, encouraging men to become nurses will help strengthen the workforce. Gonzalez notes that increasing gender diversity also offers more flexibility for patients. For example, some male patients may feel more comfortable having a male rather than female nurse perform certain medical procedures.

“Over the past five to 10 years, we have experienced a significant increase in men who are nurses assuming leadership roles in academia and in hospital settings, which also has the effect of decreasing the assumption that nursing is a ‘female profession,’” Roberson says. “As more deans increase their emphasis on recruiting men into their nursing programs and to serve on their faculty, we will recognize that the stigma will decrease even more in the future.”

Men are well represented at the SONHS, accounting for 19 percent of undergraduate and 23 percent of graduate students. Diaz-Paez enjoys the sense of camaraderie for male nurses he’s found in the AAMN, but he emphasizes other benefits of membership as well: “It’s a means for professional growth and networking; my experience has opened many doors and established a vast network.”

Diaz-Paez and his fellow AAMN ’Canes are using that network to increase the chapter’s visibility in the community, exercise their leadership skills, and raise more funds so they can pass the reins of a successful inaugural year to the next generation.

AAMN president Luis Diaz-Paez, center, leads the organization’s inaugural year with guidance from AAMN faculty advisor Associate Professor Tony Roberson, right, and Assistant Professor Juan Gonzalez.



First Technology Fair Delights Faculty with Digital Tools

In an increasingly digital world, technology has become an integral part of education. At the first Academic Technology Fair at the School of Nursing and Health Studies, held in February 2015, faculty members learned about several multimedia tools they can use to enhance learning.

One display demonstrated the Flipped Classroom, whereby students receive didactic lesson content electronically on their own time, thus freeing up class sessions for role-play and other interactive activities. Faculty also gained strategies for integrating iClickers, gaming, and mobile technology into teaching. There were additional high-tech learning resources, including NBC Learn—a state-of-the-art

database that the University has recently purchased for students, faculty, and staff.

“What made the fair unique is that we didn’t have faculty sitting in a cubicle being trained by technicians. It was faculty who presented to faculty their own positive experiences in blending traditional and digital teaching tools,” says Khitam Azaiza, the school’s instructional designer, who coordinated the half-day event. “It was successful because it was a team effort, and presented from an educational rather than a technical perspective.”

It is the collaborative spirit between the school’s instructional design staff and its teaching faculty that has identified the SONHS as a leader in innovative learning techniques at the University of Miami. Hanna Inzko, director of learning innovation and faculty engagement at the University, noted in her presentation that a University-wide mini-conference on faculty technology is in the works.

“To see our professors and instructors turn out in such high numbers is not only rewarding, it shows we really need to make the fair an annual activity,” Azaiza says. “Next year, in keeping with the theme of interconnectedness, we want to stream the fair live through Blackboard Collaborate so that adjunct and part-time faculty members who are not on campus can participate in real time from their remote locations, as well as record the event for our e-archive of teaching resources.”



An Edgy Fundraiser for Lung Cancer Research

In December 2014, a daring contingent of philanthropists took in a heart-pounding view of Tampa Bay while funding a good cause. Jillian’s Dream: Rappel for Lung Cancer is an event created in honor of SONHS alumna Jillian Miller, B.S.N. ’07, M.S.N. ’13, who lost her valiant battle against lung cancer in 2013 at the age of 28. As a tribute to Miller’s zest for life, Jillian’s Dream, in partnership with United Against Lung Cancer and Parmenter Realty, issued a challenge to go over the edge of the Island Center Building in Tampa while raising funds for lung cancer research. Among the participants was Karissa Grasty, SONHS assistant dean for advancement, who rappelled down the 13-story building to commemorate Jillian’s life, raise research dollars, and increase awareness that anyone, including those who have never smoked, can get lung cancer.



PREPARED FOR THE WORST

By Meredith Camel, M.F.A. '12
Photography by Andrew Innerarity

The School of Nursing and Health Studies ensures its graduates can handle disaster scenarios with poise under pressure and the skills to keep themselves and their patients safe.

SARS. H1N1. Anthrax. Ebola.

Whether created by man or nature, these infectious agents—and many more yet to emerge—remind us that the human population is vulnerable. Globalization has opened channels for pandemics to spread world-wide in record time. The keys to mitigating health disasters are our frontline caregivers—doctors and nurses who treat the sickest and most contagious people.

An Ebola outbreak simulation sharpens students' clinical decision-making abilities and infection-control skills.

The deadliest outbreak of the Ebola virus in history began in early 2014 in West Africa and escalated quickly for the next several months, killing more than 8,700 people as of January 2015—including one person on U.S. soil. When two Texas nurses contracted the virus while caring for the U.S. patient, the on-the-job risks that nurses may encounter became all too real.

Following the drill, students became much more eager to respond in an Ebola-like outbreak and much more confident in their ability to keep themselves safe in a highly infectious situation.

In October, the World Health Organization and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updated their guidelines for the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). By November, the School of Nursing and Health Studies decided it wasn't enough to simply teach its students how to properly don and doff PPE. Determined to prepare nurses to be leaders in disaster situations, the school orchestrated an Ebola Disaster Preparedness Training Simulation—an exercise with a scope and magnitude never before attempted at the University of Miami.

Practicing Calm amid Calamity

On November 8, 15, and 16, 2014, the entrance to the M. Christine Schwartz Center for Nursing and Health Studies was transformed into the waiting room of a busy Miami-Dade County hospital during a widespread, uncontrolled Ebola outbreak. A palpable fear spread through the air as “patients” (UM faculty, staff, and student volunteer actors) displayed varying levels of distress. Some were pretending to vomit, some were slumped over chairs, and others were boisterously demanding to be seen.

Senior baccalaureate nursing students were covered head to toe in PPE, trying their best to triage and maintain a sense of order. Patients suspected of having Ebola were taken to an isolation room; those deemed negative for Ebola were led to a “clean” room. From time to time, a Coral Gables Fire Department truck pulled up, and paramedics who were practicing their own PPE skills coordinated with student

nurses to transport Ebola patients into the isolation room. Every 30 minutes, student nurses in contact with Ebola patients were supposed to rotate out of their PPE, as per CDC guidelines. Those who didn't follow CDC protocols were at risk to become “infected” with Glo Germ, a nontoxic powder detectable under a UV light that all Ebola-positive actors sprinkled on their hands and arms prior to the exercise.

“We designed the Ebola simulation using the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program,” explains Summer DeBastiani, who was a health scientist in the CDC's Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response before joining the SONHS faculty in August 2014. “This is the same framework for disaster exercising that the CDC and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) use.”

DeBastiani was impressed that most of the 167 nursing students who participated in the drill “really rose to the occasion; they stayed calm and did their best.” Only a handful became infected with Glo Germ, an important lesson in why the CDC protocols for PPE are so specific.

“We teach all nursing students to don and doff PPE during the first week of their first semester,” says Susana

Barroso, director of simulation at the SONHS and co-director with DeBastiani of the Ebola drill. “If you don't do it all the time, it's something that you might think is easy and take for granted. An exercise like this drives it home for students. They become much more cognizant.”

Beyond PPE, the Ebola simulation assessed students' clinical decision-making abilities, interaction with emergency first responders, and adherence to CDC infection-control guidelines for hospital settings. DeBastiani is presently compiling an “after-action” report that will detail all the observations and results of the Ebola drill, and she included some preliminary findings in a poster she presented in December at a national Emergency Management Conference in Los Angeles, California. Her results show that, following the drill, students became much more eager to respond in an Ebola-like outbreak and much more confident in their ability to keep themselves safe in a highly infectious situation.

“I feel that if a disaster were to occur, I would be less nervous and more focused on what needs to be accomplished,” says Jillian Lozada, B.S.N. '14, who played the role of charge nurse in the Ebola simulation and is now working at Emory University Hospital, where she has signed up to serve on the disaster team. “For me, the most challenging aspect of the exercise was remaining calm. I practiced being mindful, and this gave me the ability to have clarity and focus on the events unfolding, which aided my decision-making and critical thinking. As long as I was calm and confident in my decisions, I had the buy-in and trust of my staff, which is essential in disaster situations.”

DeBastiani notes that learning how to maintain calm will serve these future

nurses well in all job situations, not just during pandemics.

“Being a nurse is stressful,” DeBastiani says. “I started out as an ICU nurse at a level 1 trauma center, and we had emergency situations all the time. Exposing our students to a high level of stress in a safe environment is what's most valuable to them, though they might not even realize it until later on. Errors are more likely to happen when nurses experience high levels of anxiety. With drills like this, each student is one step closer to being a safer nurse.”

SONHS Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano and UM President Donna E. Shalala, both of whom are among the nation's leading public health experts, observed the Ebola exercises.

“We are using a real-world situation, the Ebola epidemic, and turning it into a teachable moment for our students,” says Dean Peragallo Montano.

“Everything they are learning is absolutely generalizable to prevention of other hospital-acquired infections, which are a public health issue.”

Learning how to properly don and doff personal protective equipment is a potentially lifesaving exercise for these future nurses.

From Anthrax to Zombies: Certified for Crisis

While the Ebola drill was the most complex, comprehensive simulation at the SONHS to date, it marks the beginning of an even bigger, bolder era of simulation for the school. At press time for this issue of *Heartbeat*, DeBastiani and Barroso were gearing up for a Zombie Apocalypse Simulation taking place at the end of the spring 2015 semester. In addition to reinforcing PPE and infection-control protocols, the zombie exercise will ensure that each participating student nurse is badged and certified to deploy with the Miami-Dade County Health Department's Medical Reserve Corps upon graduation. As a result, SONHS-educated nurses will be ready to assist the county during disasters and other public health activities.

DeBastiani explains that shortly after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and news of anthrax-tainted letters in the postal system, the CDC designed “a way to push medications and prophylaxis to all citizens in less than 24 hours in cases of bioterrorism or a pandemic.” The CDC now maintains a Strategic National Stockpile of medicines and supplies, which it can distribute nationwide through state and local health departments.

Through an agreement with the Miami-Dade County Health Department, the University of Miami is designated a closed Point of Distribution (POD), which means that all UM students, faculty, and staff and their family members can receive supplies, vaccines, medication, and assistance at the University during a disaster. Members of the Miami-Dade Medical Reserve Corps are the ones who staff the community's PODs.

“For this simulation, we are exercising UM's actual POD plan and



Student nurses wearing personal protective equipment learn how to properly identify and triage a "patient" suspected of having Ebola.

having our nursing and medical students support how the POD would be run in a real-life situation," DeBastiani says, noting that the exercise is mandatory for senior baccalaureate nursing students but optional for nurse practitioner and Miller School of Medicine students.

During the Zombie Apocalypse Simulation, the POD—located at the BankUnited Center Fieldhouse on the Coral Gables campus—also will be staffed by personnel from the University's own Office of Emergency Management and Miami-Dade Medical Reserve Corps volunteers. Other participating organizations include UM Police, the 'Canes Emergency Response Team, Miami-Dade County Office

of Emergency Management, UM Miller School of Medicine, and Coral Gables Fire Department.

In order to receive Medical Reserve Corps certification, all student nurses participating in the Zombie Apocalypse Simulation will first complete an online training course from FEMA. Upon completion of the drill, they will understand how a POD runs, be more comfortable with disaster triage, and solidify their experience with patient education and safety during stressful situations.

Simulation Works

The importance of simulation in nursing education cannot be overstated. With the development of high-fidelity, computer-driven simulators, students can practice every possible procedure and scenario before ever coming into contact with a patient. Clinical experiences are also part of the learning process, but as Barroso explains, "nursing students have fewer and fewer opportunities to do less and less" in the clinical setting. An increase in nursing schools competing for limited clinical sites, a shortage in nursing faculty, and recent patient safety initiatives that restrict student activities are all contributing to the need for more simulation.

Last year, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing published the first large-scale, longitudinal study comparing three groups of students: those with no more than 10 percent of clinical hours replaced by simulation, those with 25 percent simulation, and those with a 50-50 mix of simulation and clinical hours. The study found no differences among the three groups in participants' clinical competency, nursing knowledge, and NCLEX pass rates. In other words, simulation works.

"Lawyers, for example, don't try their first case right out of school," says Barroso, who has been working with UM's International Academy for

Clinical Simulation and Research since she joined the SONHS as a nurse specialist in 2006. "But nursing is the only profession that has to hit the ground running."

Barroso gives credit to Dean Peragallo Montano for having the vision to make simulation a major component of the curriculum. And as Barroso notes, "You can't just take a simulator out of the box; you have to understand how to run a simulation program."

The most advanced simulation experiences are yet to come, once the school completes its forthcoming, 40,000-square-foot Simulation Hospital. This forward-thinking initiative will change the paradigm for nursing education by enhancing students' clinical skills with focus on interprofessional collaboration—all in a true-to-life environment. Barroso says that disaster drills, such as the Ebola exercise, will be even more valuable when they can take place in the Simulation Hospital.

"If we had conducted the Ebola exercise in our Simulation Hospital, we would have had the same equipment found in a real ER, and we could have transported patients to real rooms instead of using our lobby and conference room," she says. "If we don't have to pretend as much, we can focus on the emotional and cognitive behaviors students need to learn. In simulation, we don't want you to have to simulate."

Real hospitals need to practice their disaster protocols, too, but DeBastiani notes that a simulation of the same magnitude as the SONHS Ebola exercise would be impossible on their own premises, since hospitals can't shut their doors to conduct a drill. They have to maintain continuity of care. This is one of the ways the school's Simulation Hospital will serve an urgent need.

"This will be one of our biggest contributions to the community at large," DeBastiani says.

The School of Nursing and Health Studies continues to develop new, intensive, multi-layered simulation

exercises, including a possible "mass-casualty" event next year. The school is one of the first in the country to incorporate Homeland Security, CDC, and FEMA protocols, and it will likely guide the way for others to follow.

Following her presentation at the Emergency Management Conference, DeBastiani fielded questions from representatives of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, who were interested in using the SONHS disaster drill model as an exemplar among nursing schools. It makes perfect sense, she says, that the SONHS is driving national progress in nursing simulation: "We are the Hurricanes, after all. If anyone is going to lead this, we should."

Volunteer actors portray patients in need of medical attention to set the scene for a realistic simulation.



Student-athletes at the School of Nursing and Health Studies balance a rigorous curriculum with a bustling competition and training schedule to pursue both their academic and athletic passions.

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

By Ginny Pickles

WHILE MANY COLLEGE STUDENTS

are enjoying REM sleep, Julia Koch is probably running. It's what she does. But it's not the only thing she does. On a typical Sunday morning last semester, for instance, she ran before dawn, showered, changed, hopped on the metro by 6:30 a.m. and headed out to University of Miami Hospital for her clinical practice experience, a makeup session for one she missed while on the road with the University of Miami's Track and Field Team. She presently holds a 3.8 GPA and will graduate this May with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.



Cross-country runner Julia Koch balances being a nursing student and Hurricanes athlete.



The University of Miami provides resources to help student athletes like Jokira Jiles, above, and Justin Vogel, below, achieve success in the classroom and in their sport.



Koch, a cross-country runner, is one of 17 student-athletes enrolled at the School of Nursing and Health Studies. They are examples of what it takes to be successful while juggling multiple time-consuming commitments. Intellect and skill are givens, but what sets these student-athletes apart are focus, determination, self-discipline, and drive. To ensure they thrive, the University of Miami provides a nurturing environment with resources and tools for body and mind.

“At the end of the day, it is worth it to be part of the University of Miami athletic family and wear the U on my chest,” Koch says. “They have given me so many opportunities to grow and develop as an athlete and person.”

Making the Leap to College Level

Students accepted into UM’s athletics programs have proven themselves in high school, but they’re often surprised at the intensity both in the classroom and on the playing field at the college level.

“Competing in sports, particularly at the Division 1 level, while earning a degree presents a unique set of challenges,” says David A. Wyman, associate athletic director at the University of Miami. “Incoming freshmen often don’t have any idea of the energy they’ll expend as student-athletes. Their mental, physical, and emotional output is much greater than what’s required of non-student-athletes.”

Throughout his 20 years at the University, Wyman has become adept at recognizing obstacles student-athletes face. He and his staff help student-athletes take full advantage of the University’s resources to manage their time and balance their lives. According to every SONHS student-athlete *Heartbeat* magazine interviewed, time management was, without a doubt, the number one challenge they faced coming into the University.

“I think most student-athletes are self-driven, but in high school, my time was much more structured,” says senior

Bachelor of Science in Health Science major Justin Vogel, a Miami Hurricanes punter who was recently named to the 2014 All-ACC Academic Football Team. “Even though sports and classwork take up a lot more time in college, you also have more freedom. It may sound counterintuitive, but the more time you have, the easier it is to put things off. You have to will yourself to go to class and stay on top of the work. Procrastination will get you.”

To help freshmen maintain their self-discipline while getting acclimated to this new lifestyle, the University requires them to log eight hours of study hall per week during their first semester. The required time drops to four hours per week in the second semester, as long as they maintain an acceptable grade point average.

In addition, student-athletes are encouraged to take advantage of academic tutoring. A top student in high school, Gracie Lachowecki was taken aback when her advisor wanted to sign her up for tutoring before classes had even started.

“I never had a tutor for any of my courses in high school, so I didn’t think I’d really want or need one, but it ended up being super helpful,” says Lachowecki, a sophomore B.S.N. student and soccer player. In fact, her advice for incoming freshmen is to accept tutoring help early on: “Don’t wait until after your first test to get a tutor. It’s really smarter to have one right at the beginning.”

One of the toughest time-management conundrums for student-athletes, particularly those at the SONHS, involves scheduling conflicts between classes and team commitments.

“We know our student-athletes have to allot 20 hours a week for practice, and that doesn’t include any training they might want to do on their own,” Wyman says. “They’re lifting weights. They’re running sprints. They also may be spending 10 to 15 hours a week rehabbing an injury or preparing for their next contest. So we help them design a manageable class schedule.”

Thanks to creative scheduling, Lachowecki has been able to take some prerequisite courses through the kinesiology



SONHS student-athletes, left to right, Gracie Lachowecki, My Fridell, Julia Koch, and Jokira Jiles.

department, which offers these classes at different times than the nursing school, allowing her to participate in early morning practices with her team.

“That sort of flexibility is a huge help,” says sprinter Jokira Jiles, who graduates this spring with a Bachelor of Science in Public Health. “I remember in my freshman year, class times were pretty concrete, but over the years, the University has been able to offer classes at different times.”

Wyman notes, “We want our student-athletes to be successful in both areas, academics and sports, so we work with their advisors to negotiate the prerequisites of each major—maybe move a course from fall to spring, for example—to make sure students stay on track to graduate in four years. We are a service department, and we are here to assist them.”

If new student-athletes have one consistent shortcoming, Wyman says, it’s their reluctance to ask for help. His message is clear: Help is always available, whether there’s a scheduling conflict, a housing issue, or a problem with coursework.

Lessons Relevant to Sport, Study, and Life

“Participating in a sport is almost like having a full-time job while going to school,” Wyman says. “In nursing and health studies, in particular, student-athletes have to be self-directed. I think that’s why their numbers are so small. They are some of our best and brightest.”

According to swimmer My Fridell, a junior pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Public Health, the key to any student-athlete’s success is planning ahead. A native of Sweden, Fridell has been swimming all of her life and has become accustomed to setting goals and planning ahead.

“We have practice every morning from 6 to 8 a.m. and again in the afternoon, twice a day almost every day,” Fridell says. “With classes and homework and traveling for competition, I have to keep an accurate calendar. Every week, I make a list; otherwise, I wouldn’t survive.”

Fridell also has found faculty members supportive, allowing her to take tests before or after her competitions. “Every professor I’ve had has been very flexible,” she says.

“I can also say all of my professors have been really understanding whenever I’ve had to travel with the team,” Jiles says. “If you go to them ahead of time and keep them up to date, they help you catch up with your notes and work around your exam schedules.”

Even with support from the University, student-athletes must be self-motivated to maintain their rigorous schedules. What drives them?

“Being an athlete and a student makes a person more well-rounded and helps you learn time-management skills,” Lachowecki says. “People act like I have a crazy schedule, but I can’t imagine it any other way.”

Jiles says being a student-athlete is all about creating balance. She offers this advice to incoming freshmen: “You have to be ready to put in some long hours. You have to be ready for change. You have to keep a good balance of getting your work done, turning in your assignments on time, and taking care of your body.”

Koch agrees. “Having such a tight schedule and commitments every day helps me stay organized and use my time incredibly efficiently,” she says. “It’s worth it because I get to do what I love to do.”

In fact, Koch’s love of sports led her to choose nursing as a career. “I know how I feel when I’m injured or sick and can’t run,” she says. “I think it will be very rewarding to help people get back to good health so they can do the things they love.”

REFUGE FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

One of the more visible signs of the University’s commitment to student-athletes is the Theodore G. Schwartz and Todd G. Schwartz Center for Athletic Excellence. Opened in the fall of 2013, the 34,000-square-foot structure houses an academic center and includes an expansion of the Hecht Athletic Training Facility, a sports medicine and training center that now includes in-ground hydrotherapy pools, private examination rooms, digital imaging, and extensive rehabilitation space.

These new facilities were made possible by contributions from more than 400 donors and a lead gift from the Schwartz Family Foundation, which also is a longtime supporter of the School of Nursing and Health Studies. Nurse and educator Christine Schwartz, along with the Schwartz Family Foundation, gave the principal gift that enabled the M. Christine Schwartz Center for Nursing and Health Studies to open its doors in 2006 as the school’s new home.

“The Schwartz Center for Athletic Excellence is a place where our student-athletes can study, receive tutoring, and meet with advisors; it’s a refuge, so to speak,” says Associate Athletic Director David A. Wyman.

Open six days a week, the center has study rooms, a 40-station computer lab, and the 118-seat Robert Mann Auditorium, where activities such as Hurricane 101, a course for freshmen on social media, personal responsibility, and academic integrity, are held.

“The Hecht Athletic Center is a great facility for rehab,” says cross-country runner and nursing student Julia Koch, who is recovering from knee surgery. “We have this amazing equipment—an antigravity treadmill, for example—that helps us to recover quickly. I’ve been doing physical therapy there every day, so I can get back to running as soon as possible.”



PH.DYNAMIC

By Ginny Pickles

The School of Nursing and Health Studies has revamped its Ph.D. program, attracting a diverse group of aspiring nurse scientists with an innovative, immersive curriculum.

Speed dating has taken on a whole new meaning at the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS). On a recent Friday afternoon, aspiring nurse researchers and faculty scientists discussed their interests over lunch—at five-minute intervals—looking for a match, or more accurately a mentor, at a networking event dubbed “research speed dating.”

“One of the things our Ph.D. students need to do right away is identify potential people for them to work with on research,” says Professor Julie Barroso, associate dean for Ph.D. “Bringing students and faculty together in one session was much more efficient for everyone than making individual appointments. The students really loved it, and the faculty enjoyed it, too.”

The research speed dating event is one example of the school’s monthly “brown bag lunch” meetings for Ph.D. students. Discussion topics fall into the “things you need to know outside of the classroom” category, Barroso says, such as how to search for grant sources, how to select a dissertation committee, and how to choose useful elective courses. It’s among several new initiatives that support nursing Ph.D. students as they navigate a demanding, full-immersion three-year curriculum. According to Barroso and Professor Victoria Behar Mitrani, A.B. ’80, Ph.D. ’87, associate dean for research, the program is attracting a diverse group of students committed to moving quickly into the workforce as researchers and educators, which is just what today’s nursing profession needs.



Accelerating the Ph.D. Pipeline

The nursing profession is facing a perfect storm. While the demand for nursing care is increasing, particularly among aging Baby Boomers and millions of newly insured individuals, the nursing workforce is dwindling. The landmark 2010 *Future of Nursing* report, published by the Institute of Medicine in collaboration with Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, recommends doubling the number of doctorate-prepared nurses by 2020. The SONHS is doing its part to meet this goal.

“The pipeline issue is becoming really critical,” Barroso says. “We’re going to see a huge number of nurse faculty retire in the next 10 to 15 years, and there are not enough people to replace them. All over the country, thousands of good applicants are rejected from baccalaureate

programs because there aren’t enough faculty members. We have to find a better, quicker way to get our students into and out of Ph.D. programs.”

To that end, the SONHS recently streamlined the curriculum for its nursing Ph.D. program and launched several innovative activities, including the brown bag lunches. In addition, students graduating with a bachelor’s or master’s degree in nursing have the option of immediately enrolling in the nursing Ph.D. program, which means they are relatively young with a long career ahead of them.

“Earning a Ph.D. in three years is a very ambitious agenda, but we’ve always had the philosophy here that our students should not linger in the program,” Mitrani says. “One of the ways we help them

Ph.D. student Winnie Adebayo chats with Associate Professor Tony Roberson during a research speed dating session in her effort to find a research mentor.

advance, which I think is not very common, is to provide free tuition and health insurance along with a monthly stipend. This financial assistance is provided with the expectation that the students will be fully immersed in the program and integrated into the life of the school, which helps them finish more quickly.”

O. Winifred Adebayo was looking forward to furthering her studies in such an environment. A native of Nigeria, she earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at South Carolina State University. After ten months in practice, she was ready to further her education and pursue her interest in research, raising awareness of HIV and sexually transmitted infections in young people.

“The opportunities offered by the



Professors Julie Barosso, associate dean for Ph.D., and Victoria Behar Mitrani, A.B. '80, Ph.D. '87, associate dean for research, are designing several new initiatives to support a diverse group of nursing Ph.D. students.

University of Miami interested me, particularly being able to complete the Ph.D. program in three years," she says. "I could tell, even during the application process, that this was a unique nursing school, where people were interested in not just you as a student but your success in your program, and that was very heartwarming."

Thus far, Adebayo says her expectations have been exceeded. "There is an open-door policy here," she says. "Everyone is willing to work with you, to help you fine-tune your topic, to make sure you have a clear target. They guide you through the process, matching you

Nursing Scholars award for \$150,000 from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which will enable two new students to enter the program, thus helping to increase the flow through the Ph.D. pipeline.

Increasing Diversity

Ethnic and racial minority groups account for more than one-third of the U.S. population, but nurses from minority backgrounds represent just 19 percent of the registered nurse workforce. The imbalance is even greater among nursing

population," Barroso says. "One unique and really strong aspect of our program is the diversity of our students and our faculty, as well as the populations we are able to access here in Miami."

Through the school's Center of Excellence for Health Disparities Research: El Centro, whose mission is to reduce health disparities among minority populations, SONHS Ph.D. students have the opportunity to learn firsthand from faculty who are performing cutting-edge research among Hispanics, blacks, sexual minorities, and people in Caribbean nations and Latin America.

According to Barroso and Mitrani, the same cultural sensitivity that enhances patient care is also an asset in research. Researchers who are of the same race or ethnicity as their study population have an advantage in terms of engaging research participants.

"With their heightened sensitivity and awareness, they are better able to understand the needs of the community," Mitrani says. "In addition, the more faculty we have doing research with minority populations in minority communities, the more minority students are attracted to coming here to earn their Ph.D. In fact, in our first-year class, six of our seven students are ethnic minority students."

New collaborations between the SONHS and other minority-serving institutions are also attracting minority students to the program. One such partnership enables students from the University of Texas at El Paso School of Nursing, which does not have a Ph.D. program, to obtain Ph.D. education at the SONHS and return to potentially fill faculty positions at their home university.

Jacob Martinez is the first student admitted through this partnership. He credits Elias Provencio-Vasquez, dean of the University of Texas at El Paso School of Nursing and a former SONHS faculty member, for urging him to consider a Ph.D. program.

"After Dr. Provencio-Vasquez hired me as his research assistant, he became my mentor," says Martinez, who earned

his Bachelor of Science in Nursing, then worked for a year as an emergency room nurse while also working part-time for Provencio-Vasquez. "He taught me what I could do with a Ph.D. in nursing, that I could be involved with research in the clinical setting and also outside the clinical setting."

Martinez will complete his coursework in Miami while serving as a research assistant at El Centro to fulfill the requirement for all Ph.D. students to work 20 hours a week teaching or in research. He will return to the University of Texas at El Paso School of Nursing in his final year to complete his research, which he plans to focus on men's sexual health and/or HIV.

Why Research Needs Nurses

Research is the cornerstone of the Ph.D. in nursing program, and as Barroso notes, the value of nurse-conducted research cannot be overemphasized.

"We are the largest group of health care professionals in the country," she says. "We're the ones who care for patients. We're the closest to them and their families. We see the problems in the health care system that need to be fixed."

Mary Ernst, B.S.N. '89, is pursuing a Ph.D. in nursing so that she can address the needs she has observed throughout her career.

"I would like to focus on parental stress in the ICU," she says. "My background is in pediatrics, and I worked in the ICU for many years. I'd like to see if there's anything we can do better or differently for parents who are in that situation so they can help their kids."

Ernst, who has a master's degree and has taught at City College, Miami Campus, says she considered pursuing a Doctor of Nursing Practice but decided a Ph.D. better aligns with her goals to teach and do research. Both are doctoral programs in nursing, but they differ significantly.

"The D.N.P. program prepares implementation scientists, and the Ph.D.

program prepares discovery scientists," Barroso explains. "The D.N.P. appeals to people who are in a clinical area and want to stay in a clinical area, or those who are in a management position and want to strengthen skills to be better leaders and managers. They want to be able to understand how to implement the evidence that's generated by the Ph.D. nurse scientists to improve practice. The Ph.D. nurses want to answer the questions that arise in practice and find better ways to care for patients."

As for why Ernst chose the program at the SONHS, she says, "Being a 'Cane already, I was excited that I would have the opportunity to earn my terminal degree from the University of Miami. I know it's a challenging and rigorous program, so I think it will make me very marketable when I complete it. Also, the school has programs in other countries, which might open up opportunities for research in those regions."

The ability to work with faculty researchers who study a broad range of topics and populations around the world is truly one of the most valuable aspects of the school's Ph.D. in nursing program. Additionally, the interdisciplinary nature of El Centro, a primary research hub at the school, provides students with a wellspring of research mentors who are renowned for their work in various fields, such as psychology, public health science, and epidemiology.

"To really advance the science, it's important to remember no single researcher will have expertise in enough areas to address complex problems," Mitrani says. "Students need to learn how to work in interdisciplinary research teams when they're dealing with clinical problems."

These interdisciplinary experiences at the SONHS are shaping its Ph.D. students into dynamic researchers who understand global health issues and appreciate the power of collaboration.

Research speed dating is one of many innovative lunch-and-learn sessions introduced this year to help Ph.D. students streamline the difficult process of selecting a research topic.



Welcoming New Faculty Yui Matsuda and Debbie Anglade



Assistant Professor **Yui Matsuda** obtained her B.S.N. from Liberty University School of Nursing and her M.P.H. and Ph.D. from Virginia Commonwealth University. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Nursing. Her scientific focus is on increasing the use of health care services among underserved populations, with emphasis on immigrant Latino families with young children. She has conducted research on family planning, couples' power dynamics and communication, and the mental health of mothers whose children have developmental delays. Clinical expertise includes adult acute care, community health, and public health nursing. She also has experience with people in faith communities. A native of Japan, she speaks Japanese, English, and Spanish. Matsuda was a Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing Emerging Scholar (2014), is a past recipient of Virginia Commonwealth University School of Nursing's Martha M. Borlick Research Award (2012), and has authored professional publications and presentations in her areas of expertise.



Assistant Professor of Clinical **Debbie Anglade**, M.S.N. '10, Ph.D. '14, began her career at NYU Medical Center as a nurse on a medical/surgical step-down unit. Her nursing experience includes inpatient psychiatry, perioperative care, and managed care. She also has management experience in hospital quality, infection control, and medical staffing. She is a Licensed Health Care Risk Manager (LHRM), a Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality (CPHQ), and Certified Case Manager (CCM). She received her B.S.N. from City College of the City University of New York and her M.S.N. and Ph.D. from the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies. Her areas of interest include patient safety, health care quality, performance improvement, and regulatory alignment. She is a member of Sigma Theta Tau, Beta Tau Chapter, a Jonas Nurse Leaders Scholar Alumna, and a 2014 Student Nurse/Graduate March of Dimes Nurse of the Year. She teaches adult health clinical classes and has a shared role with University of Miami Hospitals and Clinics/Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center as nurse researcher.



March of Dimes Honors SONHS Nurses

Recognizing that partnering with nurses is essential to achieving its mission, the March of Dimes celebrated its annual Nurse of the Year reception in Miami on November 14, 2014. As has become tradition, School of Nursing and Health Studies students and faculty won awards in several categories. **Debbie Anglade**, M.S.N. '10, Ph.D. '14, won as Graduate Student Nurse, while **Solange Sierra**, B.S.N. '14, won in the Undergraduate Student Nurse category. Faculty members **Goldie Wasman**, M.S.N. '79, and **Jessica Williams** were honored for their contributions in Women's Health and Public Health/Ambulatory Care.



Advancing El Centro

It was a day that advanced the mission of the SONHS Center of Excellence for Health Disparities Research: El Centro to place health equity front and center on a local, national, and global scale. Internationally renowned health disparities experts—from nursing scientists to psychologists, epidemiologists, sociologists, anthropologists, biostatisticians, educators, and communications professionals—convened at the school in February for the annual El

Centro Scientific Advisory Board meeting. The Scientific Advisory Board provides integral state-of-the-science expertise that informs El Centro's progress and direction.

Discussions kicked off with the keynote address, "Advancing Health Equity among Immigrants: Local and Global Challenges and Opportunities," led by John Ruffin, founding director of the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, and

of Hispanic Unity of Florida, the Refugee Health Assessment Program, the Jay Weiss Institute of Health Equity, and the UM School of Law Immigration Clinic.

The Scientific Advisory Board meeting was a productive follow up to the International Symposium on Minority Health and Health Disparities, held in December 2014 in National Harbor, Maryland. El Centro students and faculty were well represented, including faculty members Karina Gattamorta, A.B. '01, Ph.D. '10, and Tony Roberson, who presented data on predictors of heavy drug use in Hispanic adolescents and on the psychiatric mental health needs of adolescents in the juvenile justice system. Ph.D. students Chante Washington, B.S.N. '07, and Derby Munoz presented a poster about a community-based clinical trial with families affected by maternal substance use and other mental disorders. Associate Dean for Research and El Centro Principal Investigator Victoria Behar Mitrani, A.B. '80, Ph.D. '87, moderated the session "Rural, Migrant, and Immigrant Health."



SONHS Associate Dean for Research Victoria Mitrani, second from left, with international partners from Universidad Andres Bello (Chile) and Universidad de Alicante (Spain)

William Vega, provost, professor, and director of the University of Southern California Edward R. Roybal Institute on Aging. Also featured was a panel discussion among community leaders who provide services to South Florida's immigrant populations, including heads

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1980s

Wendi Jones, B.S.N. '87, is an Acute Care Nurse Practitioner in the Department of VP Affairs/Critical Care Services at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas. She was elected president of the Texas Chapter of the Society of Critical Care Medicine for 2015 and will be the delegate to the Chapters Alliance of National Society of Critical Care Medicine. She also will be speaking at the American Association of Nurse Practitioners Annual Conference for the fourth time this year. She and her fiancée are both native Floridians (as well as UM alumni), and they miss beautiful South Florida.

Ann-Lynn Denker, Ph.D. '89, has been elected chair of the Florida Board of Nursing. She teaches Health Policy, Research and Theory at Barry University School of Nursing and serves as project director for the RWJF FL Action Coalition SIP Grant: Promoting Nurses as Leaders in Florida to Advance Nursing and Health and Policy, which has been approved for another two years of funding.

1990s

Rick García, B.S.N. '95, received a Ph.D. in nursing science and nursing education from Barry University, Division of Nursing in Miami Shores. A recipient of New York University's postdoctoral and transition program for academic diversity fellowship, he will continue his research on the relationship of nursing faculty's level of cultural competence, as well as their use of transcultural teaching behaviors and sociodemographics. García will serve a two-year term as an assistant professor/faculty fellow at New York University's College of Nursing.

Grace Grau, B.S.N. '96, instructor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Nursing, has been named an associate of the American College of Cardiology. The associate designation, awarded to nurse practitioners, is the equivalent of the fellow designation for physicians. Grau also is enrolled in UAB's Doctor of Nursing Practice program with a research focus on the best time to treat women with non-chest pain myocardial infarction.

2000s

Nancy Auster, B.S.N. '00, has been with Vitas Hospice since 1991, presently serving as veteran liaison. Over the last two years, she received the Miami Chamber of Commerce Health Care Heroes Award and the Miami March of Dimes Nurse of the Year Award. She is active locally and nationally with the Hospice and Palliative Nurses chapter. Her biggest professional reward is helping veterans at the end of life, and her personal reward is enjoying the accomplishments of her son Andrew and daughter Olivia.

Sandra Nofal, B.S.N. '00, will be president of the Oncology Nursing Society for 2016.

Sonique Sailsman, B.S.N. '00, was recently chosen as a member of the American Association of Critical Care Nurses-Beacon Award Review Panel. The Beacon Award for Excellence is a national award given to recognize individual hospital units that distinguish themselves by improving every facet of patient care.

Prevention Pioneer

What does it take to be a health care pioneer in today's changing climate?

Just ask Lissette Exposito, R.N., B.S.N. '86, M.H.S.A., president and CEO of Orange Accountable Care of South Florida and Orange Accountable Care of New York, which she launched in 2014 and 2015, respectively. Accountable care organizations (ACOs) are networks of doctors and hospitals that coordinate care for large patient populations, with a focus on curtailing costs through disease prevention. The concept is only a few years old but is gaining traction, boosted in part by the federal government's use of ACOs in the Medicare system. Exposito jumped in on the ground level and is using her business acumen and wellness care advocacy to strengthen the model.

"We have to change the mentality of yesterday to the mentality of the future," Exposito says. "ACOs focus on true population health and value-based medicine; they are the future of health care."

Born in Cuba and raised in Miami, Exposito held both clinical and administrative positions before earning a master's degree in health services administration and launching her first business, MediPro Home Health Services, in 1995. Previously she worked as an orthopedic and home health nurse and as a consultant specializing in medical practice efficiency, but she was hungry for the chance to grow something from scratch.

"My love is the chase—the ability to start with a small idea and build it with teamwork," she says. "Leadership is all about empowering your team."

Exposito attributes her work ethic to her parents. Her father, a physicist and mathematician, and her mother, an internal medicine physician, never wavered in their pursuit of "ambition, prosperity, and the American dream." Her belief in the ACO model stems from her time as a home health nurse, where she saw great potential to stave off illness through education but was prohibited from seeing patients while they were well. The health care system at the time didn't emphasize prevention.

Exposito is designing a pilot program at Orange Accountable Care to reduce hospital readmission rates through patient education, and she plans on doing it with the help of School of

Nursing and Health Studies graduate nurse practitioner students. She explains that medication errors, noncompliance, and lack of care management are the biggest causes of hospital readmissions after discharge. The SONHS students will assess discharged patients in the home for adherence to disease-focused care plans and report back to each patient's primary physician, who can intervene before problems arise.

"It's a match made in heaven," Exposito says of the SONHS-Orange partnership, which is slated to begin later this year and will give students hands-on experience while introducing them to potential employers.

In her spare time, Exposito enjoys opera, European history, and spending time with her 29-year-old son. She's also a knitting enthusiast, which is fitting, as her most rewarding tapestry to date is the path she has woven back to her

alma mater. A member of the UM Citizens Board, she also made a significant gift this year to support the forthcoming Simulation Hospital at the School of Nursing and Health Studies.

"I believe the Simulation Hospital is going to change the way we educate nurses," says Exposito, who recalls facing a clinical skills learning curve when she first joined the nursing workforce. "To be able to come out [of school] comfortable enough in your own skin to treat a patient—that's priceless."



Duane Cunningham, B.S.N. '04, M.S.N. '11, works for Wexford Health, and **Carolina Cunningham, B.S.N. '05**, works for The Health Care Clinic at Walgreens. They celebrated their seventh wedding anniversary this year and welcomed another child to their family, Katherine, in 2013.

Mercedes Perez de Salazar, M.B.A. '04, D.N.P. '12, was appointed vice president of Patient Care Services/CNO, ADA Officer for Larkin Community Hospital.

Ashley F. Zephirin, B.S.N. '06, will be graduating from the Miller School of Medicine with her Master of Public Health this year. She is currently employed at the University of Miami Hospital Emergency Room.

2010s

Debbie Anglade, M.S.N. '10, Ph.D. '14, was awarded the 2014 March of Dimes Nurse of the Year, Student Nurse/Graduate

award; completed her Ph.D. with a focus on patient safety culture, nurse compassion fatigue and compassion satisfaction, and patient outcomes; and joined the UM School of Nursing and Health Studies as an assistant professor of clinical.

Lynn Flynn, B.S.N. '10, worked on an adult hematology/oncology unit for a year, where she learned a great deal about nursing and met a pharmacist intern who is now her husband. After a year of adult nursing, she got a job at All

MAKING ONESIES FOR TWOSIES

Inspired by the courage and the strength of the premature babies they care for in the Broward Health Medical Center NICU, Amanda Dubin, B.S.N. '11, and Kelly Meyer, B.S.N. '11, started the Luc&Lou clothing line, which sells brightly colored onesies featuring the footprints of their tiny patients. All the baby models on their company website (www.lucandlou.com) are babies they actually cared for, who are now thriving and forever bonded with the nurses who saved their lives. As if this wasn't heartwarming enough, the nurse-entrepreneurs partnered with nonprofit organizations to fulfill a philanthropic mission: For every onesie purchased from Luc&Lou, another is donated to a baby from a low-income family. While they are excited about launching Luc&Lou as a side business, Dubin and Meyer say the NICU is where they belong.

"It gets chaotic a times, juggling fulltime hospital work and running the company," says Dubin, who first discovered her affinity for neonatal pediatrics during her SONHS clinical practice experience at Jackson Memorial Hospital's NICU. "But then I watch my baby patients go from weighing one pound and fighting for every breath to hugging them goodbye a few months later as they leave the hospital with their parents to live healthy lives. If they can do that, then we can do anything. It is rewarding to run a business that also contributes to babies in need."



Children's Hospital in St. Petersburg, Florida, on the pediatric hematology/oncology/bone marrow transplant unit. She became a charge nurse and preceptor and started attending classes at the University of South Florida for her master's degree. She feels that working with children is one of the greatest challenges, but their perseverance and passion for life is something to admire. For her, pediatrics is definitely the place to be. After passing her boards, she is now a pediatric nurse practitioner and will soon be working at a pediatrician's office in primary care in Tampa. She is always be proud to be a 'Cane!

Elyse Feinerman, B.S.N. '11, gained tremendous experience working for three years at Jackson Memorial Hospital in the SICU. She is now at anesthesia school in Albany Medical College in New York. She is adjusting to the workload and cold temperatures but looks forward to graduating in December 2016.

Sarah Keirstead, B.S.N. '12, has been working for the past two years on a med-surg/oncology floor in Bradenton, Florida. She is now a nationally certified medical surgical nurse and is pursuing a D.N.P. in midwifery at the University of Florida.

Grace-Anne Stimpson, B.S.N. '12, has been practicing in a cardiothoracic surgery step-down unit and a medical-surgical telemetry unit. She recently achieved certifications in medical-surgical nursing, as well as cardiac-vascular nursing. She also earned her M.S.N. in nursing education this past fall and is waiting to take her Certified Nurse Educator certification in March. She began teaching as an adjunct at a local school of nursing this year and will be returning to the U this summer to complete a post-master's certification as a PMHNP. She is excited for this journey and new direction.

INSPIRE & ENGAGE FUTURE GENERATIONS

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

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

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

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



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Alumni Weekend & Homecoming

Whether it's been two days or 20 years since you last set foot on campus, Alumni Weekend and Homecoming 2015 is the perfect time to come back. There's a WHOLE NEW U to see, as Hurricanes past and present continue to transform the sights, sounds, and successes of our beloved University.

Mark your calendars today for the ultimate celebration of your place in Hurricane history!

For more information, contact the Office of Alumni Relations at alumniweekend@miami.edu or 305-284-2872.

Nanchesca Nelson, B.S.N. '13, worked in a telemetry unit in Broward County, Florida, for a year before moving to Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in the Pediatric ICU. Her message to the 2015 graduates: "Good luck. You've got this :)"

Harold David Rosales, B.S.N. '14, has been working as a registered nurse for more than six months at University of Miami Hospital on the Penthouse Floor - Med/Surg/Tele Unit. So far he has earned four Daisy Awards from patients who have written letters of thanks. He will be transferring to the Ninth Floor North - Med/Surg/Psych Unit and is taking classes to become Psych Certified in Nursing. He plans on pursuing graduate school to become a psychiatric nurse practitioner in the near future.

Solange Sierra, B.S.N. '14, works as an RN at the Emergency Department at University of Miami Hospital and is applying to the SONHS Family Nurse Practitioner program for next spring.

Send us your news!

Email Rosa Lamazares-Romero, SONHS Communications Manager, at rmlromero@miami.edu

In Memoriam

The University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies mourns the loss of a dear friend, **R. Kirk Landon**, a philanthropist and advocate of 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**, which provided him with the means to help others. His philosophy was, "Decide which fields interest you and where you think you can do some benefit for the world."

Landon's significant contributions to the SONHS include a \$1.25 million gift to help build the M. Christine Schwartz Center for Nursing and Health Studies and a pledge to match any gift toward the Simulation Hospital of \$50,000 or more, up to \$1 million. The inspiration for his support of nursing education was what he called "a life surrounded by nurses," including his sister, stepmother, and partner of 18 years, Pamela Garrison, a retired recovery room nurse who co-chairs the SONHS *Momentum2* fundraising campaign. Dean Nilda (Nena) Peragallo Montano describes Landon as "a visionary who helped us pioneer a new era of leading-edge health care education" and notes that the Simulation Hospital will be part of his legacy, "not only to our students and our alumni but to the global health care community."



R.M. LAMAZARES-ROMERO

SONHS Alumni Association Update

The School of Nursing and Health Studies Alumni Association has been very busy over the last several months, developing programs to serve our more than 6,000 alumni. We visited our Miami-Dade County community partners through Alumni at Work, and we are making plans to visit our alumni in Broward County later this year.

We are proud to announce that we won the University of Miami Alumni Association PRIDE award, which recognizes our alumni engagement in the following areas: Professional/social networking, Recruiting students and scholarship fundraising, Ibis sports programming, Devotion to community, and Education. We are excited to use our \$500 winnings to plan additional activities.

Our new mentoring program, Mentoring U, pairs new graduates transitioning into the workforce with SONHS Alumni Board members for a one-year mentoring relationship. Please stay in touch, get involved, and let us know your ideas for future alumni networking opportunities. It's GREAT to be a MIAMI HURRICANE!

Alumni Association Board for Fall 2015

Executive Committee:

- Sonique Sailsman B.S.N. '00, President
- Debbie Anglade, M.S.N. '10, Ph.D. '14, President-Elect
- Ivette Cardelli, B.S.N. '09, Secretary
- Diana Tershakovec, B.S.N. '88, M.S.N. '91, Treasurer

Board Members:

- Betsy Fernandez, D.N.P. '13, Member at Large
- Valerie Halstead, B.S.N. '12 Member at Large

Board Members (continued):

- Ruth Otto, B.S.N. '63, Member at Large
- LaToya Lewis Pierre, B.S.N. '02, Member at Large
- Carmen Sierra, B.S.N. '96, Member at Large
- Raeann Raisor, B.S.N. '14, Member at Large

Faculty Advisor:

- Deborah Salani, B.S.N. '86, M.S.N. '90, D.N.P. '13, Faculty Advisor

Research Interests Evolve for Expert Statistician

Born and raised in Miami, Karina A. Gattamorta, A.B. '01, Ph.D. '10, first became interested in research while working as a high school special education teacher and a psychologist in Miami-Dade County public schools.

"Working in a school whose population consisted mostly of bilingual immigrant students, I began to question the validity of the measures and tests we used with that population," she says. "That's what led me to pursue a doctorate in educational research with a focus on measurement."

As a doctoral candidate in the UM School of Education and Human Development with expertise in statistics, Gattamorta often assisted School of Nursing and Health Studies students and some faculty members who were earning their Ph.D.s. When the SONHS decided to add a statistician to the teaching staff in 2010, she was the logical choice to fill that position.

As a research assistant professor, Gattamorta is a highly sought-after resource and mentor to students and faculty. In

addition to teaching courses on statistics, she is active on five dissertation committees, has served as dissertation chair, and is a qualifying examination reviewer in the Ph.D. and D.N.P. programs.

In 2013 Gattamorta received a research supplement that enabled her to work with Daniel A. Santisteban, Ph.D. '91, a UM professor of educational and psychological studies, on a study of psychiatric disorders and co-occurring drug use among Hispanic adolescents. Recently she



DANIELLE PEREZ

participated in a two-week intensive training course also related to drug abuse in Hispanics, supported by a grant from the National Hispanic Science Network on Drug Abuse.

These experiences, as well as her work with SONHS Associate Professor Joseph De Santis, whose research focuses on LGBT populations, sparked Gattamorta's interest in studying the coming-out process for Hispanic LGBT adolescents and how that may be associated with mental health and substance abuse. As a recipient of a UM Provost's Research Award, she will start conducting interviews with LGBT emerging adults this summer. She is among 55 faculty members in 2015 to receive the award, which is designed to increase the overall research portfolio at the University.

"This is a fairly new area of research for me," says Gattamorta, who is a wife and mother of two young daughters. "Through the training I've received and working with Dr. Santisteban, I've learned about the health disparities related to drug abuse among Hispanics, and working with Dr. De Santis, I've become aware of the disparities that LGBT populations experience. There is very limited research related to Hispanic LGBT adolescents. I decided to focus on that population in particular because they are extremely vulnerable."

Gattamorta notes that traditional Hispanic values likely increase the stigmatization of LGBT people in that culture and make it harder for Hispanic adolescents to disclose their sexuality to their parents. She hopes her research will pave the way for development of new tools to help LGBT adolescents and their families.

"I would love to develop an intervention that would support adolescents and their parents to improve outcomes and family dynamics," she says, "and also lessen the risk for mental health disorders, substance abuse, and risky sexual behavior."

Navigating from Combat to Care

There's no doubt Willie Joseph, 24, could have had a long and successful career in the U.S. Navy. He graduated in the top 1% of his class at the Naval Technical Training Center and attained the rank of petty officer, second class, in just two and a half years. By the time he was 20 years old, he was an operations specialist managing 16 people in his ship's combat information center.

Joseph's decision to leave the navy certainly wasn't for lack of interesting, challenging, and rewarding work. During his service, he was part of an antisubmarine warfare team and was involved in the navy's counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia. He received two commendations: one as a member of the crew of the *U.S.S. De Wert*, which was instrumental in the rescue of a hijacked ship's crew and the capture of the pirates, and a second for his quick actions

that averted a collision with another ship during a hurricane off the coast of the Seychelles. He was also able to advance his education, earning an associate's degree while deployed, and he often spent his shore leave volunteering at orphanages and veteran's hospitals.

As it turns out, Joseph's aspirations exceeded what he felt he could accomplish in the military, and his seven-month stints at sea interfered with his role as a single father. He is now a senior public health major at the School of Nursing and Health Studies. He was the first student admitted to the school's combined B.S.P.H./M.S.P.H. program, which enables academically qualified students to earn both degrees in five years.

"The navy was just a stepping stone in my life," says Joseph, who is remarried and now has an infant daughter in addition to his 6-year-old girl. "I want to do more. I feel I can really make a change in the world, in the community."

Joseph has an affinity for military veterans, not only because of his own service but also because growing up, he became aware that many of the homeless people in his neighborhood, some sick or addicted, were veterans. "We need better care for our veterans," says the Miami native, a graduate of Booker T. Washington Senior High School in Overtown. "These are the people who served on the front lines for us."

Joseph sees several potential career paths once he earns his degrees. He is keen on researching the prevalence of chronic stress and cancer among military veterans in minority, low socioeconomic communities. He is also considering earning a nursing degree to gain hands-on experience.

"A master's degree in public health deals with populations on a macro scale," he says, "while nurses care for patients on a micro scale. I want to experience both aspects of health care."

He is hopeful his pursuits will lead to a position within the VA health care system, enabling him to implement programs that will benefit military veterans.



SONHS Celebrates Fall 2014 Graduates

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENNY ABREU

SONHS students received graduate and undergraduate degrees

at the University of Miami Fall Commencement Ceremony on December 18, 2014 in the BankUnited Center. Immediately afterwards, the newly minted Ph.D., D.N.P., M.S.N., B.S.N., B.S.H.S., and B.S.P.H. graduates, accompanied by their proud loved ones, were honored at the school's traditional Awards and Pinning Ceremony. Presentation of class pins to symbolize completion of health care degrees is a ritual of the nursing profession. CONGRATULATIONS!!!!





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