

SUMMER 2017

vanderbiltnurse



The Vanderbilt Model

Nurse-managed clinics grow VUMC delivery and service

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VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

MISSION AND VALUES
STATEMENT

We value excellence and innovation in preserving and advancing the art and science of nursing in the scholarly domains of education, research, practice and informatics. These values are pursued through the integration of information technology and faculty-student interactions and transactions, while embracing cultural and academic diversity.



The Vanderbilt Model 10
 VUSN and VUMC collaborate to grow a network of nurse-managed clinics in Middle Tennessee

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SUMMER 17 CONTENTS

features

8 New School of Nursing Building Planned

Construction of \$23.6 million building begins soon

10 The Vanderbilt Model

Nurse-managed clinics grow VUMC delivery and service

18 What I Did Before

Varied student backgrounds, ranging from football to rocket science, led to Vanderbilt

24 Compassion and Criminal Justice

How one mental health professor changed the justice system

departments

2 Message from the Dean

Breaking ground

3 By the Numbers

Full census

4 News Around the School

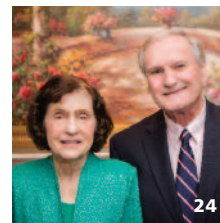
A sampling of alumni and school accomplishments

26 Class Notes

Promotions, personal achievements, moves, marriages, babies and other news from classmates

29 Photo Gallery

Reminiscences and reconnecting were the themes for Reunion 2016



Dear Alumni, Colleagues and Supporters,

As dean of the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing (VUSN), I have the opportunity to make a lot of announcements and speeches. I speak at Commencement and pinning ceremonies; address prospective students at our fall and spring open houses; talk at receptions for alumni, students and visitors; deliver remarks to alumni at Reunion; and present information about the school to faculty, staff, students and friends. But this spring I had the opportunity to make what might just be the most exciting announcement about the School of Nursing in the past decade: I was able to announce that we are starting construction on a new \$23.6 million building expansion.



That new building has been a long time coming. Plans for an expansion of VUSN were first proposed under Dean Colleen Conway-Welch but put on hold when the Great Recession hit in 2008. The need for the expansion only continued to grow with increased student enrollment, new technological requirements, commitment to providing unified and enhanced student services, increased number of research-active faculty and teaching faculty, and so on. Late last year, Chancellor Nicholas S. Zeppos and the Vanderbilt Board of Trust agreed that the time was right to start a new building and they approved the expansion plans.

You can read the details on page 8 of this issue of *Vanderbilt Nurse*, and you may be sure that I'll talk more about the construction in the months ahead. We are all very excited about the building and what it will mean to the school. I hope you are, too.

Shortly before we unveiled our building plans, *U.S. News & World Report* announced its 2018 Best Graduate Schools rankings. VUSN again made an excellent showing. Our DNP program ranked as No. 11 and our MSN program ranked No. 15 out of all programs in the U.S. Two of our specialties, Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner and Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, now rank as the No. 2 programs in their specialties out of all the graduate nursing programs in the country. We are so proud of them and of the rankings for all our specialty programs, which are based on assessments from other nursing schools. We—and you—know the quality of our nursing education, but it is very satisfying to see peer nursing institutions recognize it as well.

This issue's cover article explores the model that VUSN and Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) have established for opening and operating nurse-managed health care clinics. Although the first clinics VUSN established were geared to meet the needs of specific low-income neighborhoods, today VUSN/VUMC clinics also serve the general population, businesses and pregnant women—and that's just a start. As you'll read in the article on page 10, VUMC plans to partner with the School of Nursing to add up to 10 more nurse-managed clinics in the next three years.

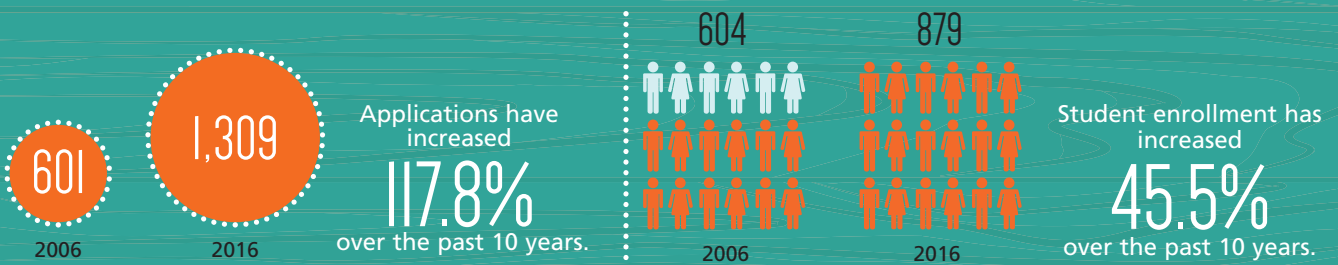
A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Norman".

Linda Norman, DSN, R.N., FAAN
 Valere Potter Menefee Professor of Nursing
 Dean of the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing
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FULL CENSUS

Being one of the country's top graduate nursing programs means more people want to gain a VUSN education—and we need more space. It's a good problem to have.



As VUSN has grown over the years, the need for space has grown with it.



GODCHAUX HALL
Built 1925, renovated 1971 & 2006
41,923 sq. ft.
6 floors
3 behavioral labs for research
The 3rd floor houses our current simulation lab



NURSING ANNEX
Built 1977
14,107 sq. ft.
1 floor
8 classrooms
226—capacity for largest classroom, Annex room 155
Is completely underground and serves as a storm shelter



PATRICIA CHAMPION FRIST HALL
Built 1997
Contains Frist Nursing Informatics Center
23,274 sq. ft.
3 floors
Room 144 is a health assessment lab



2 OFF-CAMPUS LOCATIONS
Clinical Placement and the Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner specialty are off campus due to lack of space

The new expansion will add 29,947 square feet.
(See page 8 for more details)



ANNE RAYNER



The lecture drew students from all programs. From left, DNP student Marcia Smith, Rear Admiral Sylvia Trent-Adams, Dean Linda Norman and PreSpecialty Nursing student Shannon Davies.

VUSN welcomes the future U.S. Surgeon General

Editor's Note: Rear Admiral Sylvia Trent-Adams was named acting U.S. Surgeon General on April 21, making her the first U.S. Surgeon General who is not a physician. She had been deputy U.S. Surgeon General.

Rear Admiral Sylvia Trent-Adams, the then U.S. Deputy Surgeon General, visited Vanderbilt University School of Nursing (VUSN) in January to speak to a packed audience of students, faculty, alumni and campus leaders.

In her presentation, “Health Policy Priorities for Nursing: Past, Present and Future,” the nation’s top nurse gave an overview of factors that influence the health policy process and health care delivery system in the U.S., and urged nurses to be bold in assuring the nursing profession has a voice in the nation’s health care discussion.

“If you hear nothing else that I say, please know that the take-home message from my entire talk is I believe that nurses are the power force that can change health care delivery in this country,” said Trent-Adams, Ph.D., FAAN. “I think that the knowledge and experience

and the passion that is in this room can have a dramatic impact on the future of health care not only for this country but for the world.”

Nurses are innately qualified to help shape policy, she said. “Nurses have the strongest stance in health care: being an advocate for patients. Nurses are putting hands on patients more than any other provider in the system. You have your finger on the pulse, both from a policy perspective and a clinical perspective.”

Trent-Adams said it is critical that advanced practice nurses and nurse leaders today understand the challenges the profession faces.

“We have to make sure from a policy perspective that we take control of making (nursing’s) voice heard for the nursing profession, because we don’t need medicine, pharmacy or dentistry telling us what’s appropriate for nursing in practice, in leadership or in scope of practice,” she said.

At the time of the lecture, Trent-Adams was second in command at the U.S. Surgeon General’s office. Before being appointed Deputy Surgeon General, she was the chief nurse officer for U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, a group of more than 6,700 uniformed public health officers working in federal government. In addition to other responsibilities, she helped lead the Commissioned Corps response to the Ebola outbreak in Liberia, which included staffing and managing a 25-bed field hospital for health care workers possibly infected with Ebola.

Trent-Adams’ lecture was the inaugural presentation in the new VUSN Dean’s Diversity Lecture series. The lecture series explores the diversity of backgrounds, cultures, ideas and viewpoints in our world today.

U.S. News & World Report rankings again put VUSN among nation's best

The Vanderbilt University School of Nursing (VUSN) has once again been named to the "Best Graduate Schools" in the country by *U.S. News & World Report* magazine.

The School of Nursing's DNP program was ranked No. 11 in just the second year of ranking by *U.S. News*. Its MSN program is ranked No. 15 in the country in the magazine's 2018 Best Graduate Schools rankings, tied with the University of California, Los Angeles.

Several of VUSN's nursing specialty programs were also ranked, with its Adult-Gerontology Acute Care and Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner programs both rising to be No. 2 among their peer graduate nursing programs. The rankings were released in March.

Linda Norman, DSN, R.N., dean and Valere Potter Menefee Professor of Nursing, commended the school's faculty, students, staff and alumni for making VUSN a strong and relevant nursing school.

"The School of Nursing plays a vital role in assuring that advanced practice nurses are well-equipped for the changing world of health care,"

she said. "Our DNP program is graduating doctorally prepared leaders who can translate new knowledge and discovery to improve health systems. These rankings reflect VUSN's place in shaping the future of health care in our society."

To determine scores for schools of nursing, *U.S. News & World Report* uses a ranking methodology based on a weighted average of 14 indicators. It ranks specialty programs based solely on assessments by nursing school deans and deans of graduate studies who identify up to 10 schools offering the best programs in each specialty area.

"It's an honor to see how highly our peers regard our school and individual programs," Norman said. "I credit our students, graduates and faculty for adding to that reputation every day through their professionalism and patient-focus."

The VUSN specialty programs ranked in the top 10 were:

- Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner—No. 2
- Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner—No. 2 (tie with Rush University)

- Pediatric Primary Care Nurse Practitioner—No. 3
- Informatics—No. 4
- Family Nurse Practitioner—No. 6
- Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner—No. 7

VUSN's Nurse-Midwifery specialty remains ranked as the nation's No. 1 program (Nurse-Midwifery is ranked every other year.)

The *U.S. News & World Report* data comes from statistical surveys sent to administrators of 532 accredited schools of nursing which offer master's or doctoral programs and from reputation surveys sent to more than 16,500 academics and professionals. The surveys were conducted in fall 2016 and early 2017.



New members join VUSN Alumni Board

Fourteen Vanderbilt University School of Nursing alumni have joined the school's alumni board, President Tiffany Street, MSN '03, and Vice President Ty Williams, MSN '03, DNP '12, announced.

The members represent a variety of specialties, degrees, regions and eras. They are: Brooklyn Beaupre, MSN '14 (Adult-Gerontology Acute Care), Johnson City, Tennessee; Margaret McKinney Buxton,

MSN '98 (Nurse-Midwifery), Nashville, Tennessee; Christina R. Cardy, MSN '16 (Adult-Gerontology Acute Care), Tampa, Florida; Charlotte Mathias Covington, BSN '69, MSN '89 (BSN/Family Care), Nashville, Tennessee; Clarissa "Claire" Givens Crunk, MSN '08 (Women's Health), Sante Fe, Tennessee; Allison A. Davis, DNP '15 (DNP program), Gallatin, Tennessee; Jane Dempster, BSN '78 (BSN program), Garland, Texas; John

Derrick, MSN '13 (Pediatric Primary Care), Aurora, Colorado; Melissa D. Kalensky, DNP '15 (DNP), Chicago, Illinois; Hannah Carroll Lowe, MSN '14 (Family), Knoxville, Tennessee; Cathy A. Maxwell, Ph.D. '12 (Ph.D. program), Hermitage, Tennessee; Kaitlin C. Neary, MSN '13 (Adult-Gerontology Acute Care), Nashville, Tennessee; Tanya Sorrell, MSN '03 (Psychology-Mental Health), Aurora, Colorado; and Joshua

Thornsberry, MSN '12 (Primary Care), Powder Springs, Georgia.

The role of the alumni board is to steer the activities and interests of the Alumni Association, with particular attention to establishing and maintaining a strong alumni network, fostering positive student interactions with alumni, and increasing the community's awareness of the role of advanced practice nursing.

Dig out those photos and memories

Alumni from 1960s-80s, were you part of the Appalachian Student Health Coalition as a student or nursing graduate? Vanderbilt is working with University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill to gather materials and information for the Appalachian Student Health Coalition archive (studenthealthcoalition.web.unc.edu). If you have photos, stories, items or want more information, contact Collecting and Outreach Archivist Biff Hollingsworth at UNC-CH at 919-962-1345 or biff@unc.edu.

Right: VUSN student Betsy Weil, BSN '70, MSN '71, hones her examination skills on VUSM student Tod L'Hommedieu, MD '71, before heading to Appalachia, summer, 1970.



RICHARD DAVIDSON

VUSN professor receives American Cancer Society award to study self-care for cancer survivors

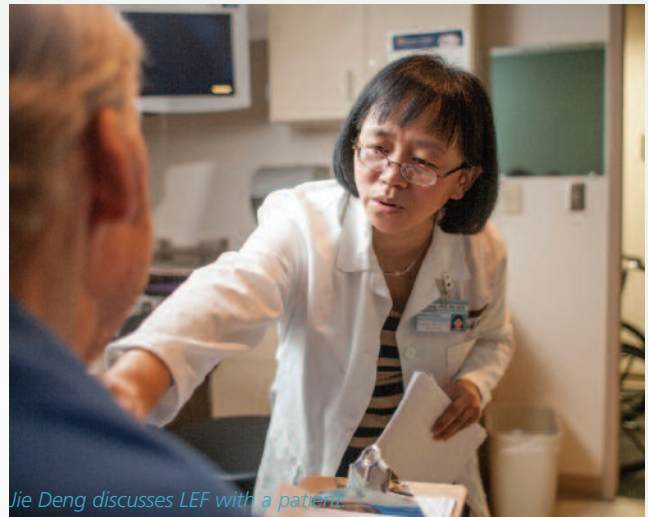
Assistant Professor Jie Deng, Ph.D. '10, R.N., OCN, FAAN, has been awarded a \$789,000 research scholar grant by the American Cancer Society to develop and test a self-care program for head and neck cancer survivors diagnosed with secondary lymphedema and fibrosis (LEF).

LEF causes swelling and the development of hard tissue in the head and neck region following cancer treatment. It impacts approximately 75 percent of the more than half a million head and neck cancer survivors in the U.S.

"Although not curable, LEF can be managed to minimize impact," Deng said. "LEF therapy needs to be lifelong, so it's important to develop a self-care regimen that patients can perform regularly."

Some patients have rated LEF as worse than their cancer, Deng said. Patients may experience external and/or internal swelling that causes decreased range of motion in the jaw, neck and shoulders; skin tightening and pain; and problems with critical functions like swallowing, speaking and breathing. These and other effects such as body image issues and lack of mobility decrease quality of life. Long-term self-care by the patient that includes manual lymph drainage, compression, exercise and skin care can help prevent LEF progression.

Deng said that currently there isn't a uniform standard for long-term self-care and some patients don't receive any self-care training. In her two-stage project, she will complete development of a LEF self-care program, then conduct trials to identify the optimal regimen before moving



Jie Deng discusses LEF with a patient.

DANIEL DUBOIS

onto a definitive Phase III trial.

Deng said that the intervention also addresses issues of health care disparity. "Our research found that 37 percent of HNC survivors live in rural areas without certified lymphedema therapists," Deng said. "About 20 percent have annual household incomes of less than \$20,000. This intervention is designed to provide those patients with a safe, innovative, accessible and practical self-care regimen."

Deng's research is supported by a Research Scholar Grant, RSG-16-207-01—PCSM from the American Cancer Society.

FRESH VISION FOR JULIA HEREFORD SOCIETY

M

embers of the Julia Hereford Society (JHS)

attended a special celebration recognizing their support of the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing in April. The event was hosted by Dean Linda Norman and organized as a way to honor and thank JHS members for giving to VUSN.

JHS is the School of Nursing's donor society, dedicated to fundraising for student scholarships. JHS was established in 1984 by Dean Colleen Conway-Welch to honor the legacy of former dean Julia Jane Hereford, Ph.D., R.N., for her significant contribution to VUSN and to honor those who generously support the School of Nursing.

As part of the festivities, Norman shared details about the new building expansion project for the school (see page 8)

as well as presented highlights and accomplishments of faculty and students.

JHS members were also able to meet this year's JHS scholar, Hannah Garrison Nolte. Nolte is a psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner student slated to graduate in August. "Being a nurse is truly a privilege," she said. "Ideally I would like to work with a population with a history of psychological trauma in a setting that emphasizes holistic care including therapy."

Norman told the members that one of her priorities is to have more money available for scholarships. "Our average scholarship for a MSN student is \$7,500, but if we could award a larger scholarship amount, it would help our students decrease their debt burden. Over 75 percent of our MSN students qualify for full federal financial aid—meaning that their income level upon entry to the MSN program is below what they could afford to contribute to tuition and living expenses," she said. "Every full-time DNP student is guaranteed a \$3,500 per year scholarship, but that is a small amount compared to the cost of tuition."

Norman also announced the formation of a new Julia Hereford Society Advisory Committee that will assist in promoting the society and recruiting new donors. The members are Naji Abumrad, M.D.; Ashley Bernard, MSN '15, expected DNP '17;

Tom Christenbery, MSN '87, Ph.D. '04; Marilyn Dubree, MSN '76; Mary Kate FitzPatrick, DNP '12; Cara Osborne, MSN '01; and Linda Rebrovick.

Julia Hereford Society members are donors who make annual gifts of \$2,500 and up to the School of Nursing. Alumni who received their Vanderbilt School of Nursing degrees within the last 10 years are eligible for membership with a commitment of \$1,000 annually. There are four recognition levels:

Member

\$2,500 (\$1,000 for Recent Graduates)

Benefactor

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Dean's List

\$10,000 - \$24,999

Cornelius Vanderbilt

\$25,000 - \$99,999

Lifetime

\$100,000 and up

To learn more, go to nursing/vanderbilt.edu/giving.



JHS members Claire Van Benschoten and Robert Laben



JHS members Adrienne Ames, MSN '75, Brad Akard, and Terrah Foster Akard, MSN '01, PhD '08

TERRY WYATT

Vanderbilt School of Nursing to break ground for new building expansion

BY NANCY WISE

The Vanderbilt University School of Nursing (VUSN) will soon break ground on a new 29,947-square-foot addition connecting to its existing buildings on the Vanderbilt campus. Construction is expected to begin in late spring and be completed in August 2018.

“This expansion will strengthen the School of Nursing’s position as one of the nation’s elite nursing schools, known for its graduate nursing education, advanced practice and research programs,” said Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Susan Wentz, Ph.D. “It will also elevate the school’s reputation in research by expanding its capability to support its growing faculty research endeavors.”

The \$23.6 million facility, approved by Chancellor Nicholas S. Zeppos and the Vanderbilt University Board of Trust, will be built at the intersection of VUSN’s historic Godchaux Hall and the Patricia Champion Frist Hall near the south side of the Heard Library.

The five-floor structure will house technologically advanced classrooms, conference and seminar rooms, student services offices, faculty offices, and a state-of-the-art simulation teaching lab that will allow complex skills development and real-time feedback on students’ clinical nursing skills. The building’s virtual classroom will incorporate leading-edge online and distance technology to facilitate distance learning and its interactive classroom will facilitate large and small group interactions with electronic methods that allow for sharing of group data and findings.



“The School of Nursing has experienced exponential growth in the past 10 years. In 2006, we had 580 students. This year, that number was 879, making VUSN one of the largest advanced practice nursing programs in the U.S.,” said Linda Norman, dean and Valere Potter Menefee Professor of Nursing. “The building expansion is needed to accommodate the increased number of students, faculty and staff, and to ensure the school continues to attract and recruit the best students and faculty.”

The project will also allow for faculty to be housed in contiguous, nonleased space, increasing communication and engagement for students and faculty. Student services such as admissions, financial aid, clinical placement and academic support will also be able to be located together.

The new addition will expand the space for teaching and will allow faculty to be located contiguous to the classrooms and labs, Norman said. In addition, the expansion will free space in Godchaux Hall that can be dedicated to research and research faculty.

The construction plans call for a five-story atrium that will connect Frist Hall, Godchaux Hall and the Nursing Annex. When finished, the light-filled and airy atrium will serve as the school’s new main entrance and lobby. The fifth floor of the expansion will include a green roof terrace and a rooftop conference room with a view of the city. The building’s exterior design is consistent with Godchaux Hall’s Collegiate Gothic style and will complement the Heard Library. The environmentally responsible building will be LEED- and WELL-certified.

The project also includes redeveloping the school’s frontage on 21st Avenue to incorporate a turnaround and wider entrance that will give more visibility to the school and the university on the eastern edge of campus.

Hastings Architecture Associates LLC is the project’s architects and the construction manager will be D.F. Chase.



■ Opposite: Architect’s rendering of the building’s exterior and green space. This page, top: A five-story atrium with stairs open to a skylight above will serve as the building’s hub. Center: The view from the atrium looking out the main entrance, which echoes Godchaux Hall’s Gothic design. The new construction is on the left and the exposed brick of Godchaux is on the right. Bottom: The new building’s lobby. The Annex is to the left and Patricia Champion Frist Hall is to the right. To see an interactive view of the atrium’s interior, go to <http://vanderbi.lt/vusnvr>.





The Vanderbilt Model

BY MATT BATCHELDOR
ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL AUSTIN

Metro Nashville Public Schools, Gaylord Opryland Resort and Mercury Courts housing all have one thing in common. Each is home to a Vanderbilt clinic that is managed by faculty nurse practitioners and offers health care to diverse populations. Vanderbilt University School of Nursing (VUSN) provides faculty for the clinics and operates them in partnership with Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC).

In all, the VUSN/VUMC partnership operates 10 clinics throughout Middle Tennessee.

They include clinics for private employers and four sites at Metro Nashville Public Schools, one of which has just moved into a new facility at district headquarters. VUSN midwives manage clinics at the West End Women's Health Center and in the Melrose neighborhood, and staff a Baby+Company birth center. The Melrose clinic, newly renamed Melrose Primary Care, has recently added primary care services, turning it into a location offering both midwifery services and primary care for women.

Vanderbilt pioneered the concept of nurse-managed clinics locally in the early 1990s. It is poised to add as many as 10 more nurse-managed clinics in a variety of locations throughout Middle Tennessee in the next three years to meet the demands of a growing and aging population, said C. Wright Pinson, MBA, M.D., Deputy CEO and Chief Health System Officer for VUMC.

"The monies that are available to pay for that expanding demand are limited," he said. "We have to look for new ways to deliver health care. Nurse practitioners represent an opportunity to accomplish that favorably. Working with physicians or independently with a supervising physician, nurse practitioners can serve those needs in a cost-effective fashion."

Part of tomorrow's health care model

Pam Jones, DNP, R.N., Senior Associate Dean for Clinical and Community Partnerships for the School of Nursing, said consumers are driving the market for nurse-managed clinics, looking for convenience and cost-effective care.

The VUSN/VUMC partnership works like this: VUSN faculty staff the

clinics, many of them as employees of VUMC. Nursing students gain opportunities to apply their learning in the community, and VUMC gains the expertise of nurse practitioners educated with the latest in advanced practice. Jones works as a team with Linda Norman, DSN, R.N., the Valere Potter Menefee Professor of Nursing and Dean of the School of Nursing; Marilyn Dubree, MSN, R.N., NE-BC, VUMC Executive Chief Nursing Officer; and April Kapu, DNP, APRN, Associate Nursing Officer for the VUMC Office of Advanced Practice.

"This is part of the health care model of the future, and we are helping drive that here," Jones said. "Everybody is trying to figure out how to add advanced practice nurses and advanced practice clinicians into their complements, and we really know how to do that here at Vanderbilt through this longtime partnership of the Medical Center and the School of Nursing."

In addition to her VUMC role, Dubree also sits on VUSN's executive committee. "I think the partnership is extraordinary in what it is not. It is not a health system looking just to create services as a business model. It's not just a school of nursing looking to create academic student placement sites," she said. "It is a partnership between a health system and a school of nursing to provide excellence in clinical care and evidence-based practice in those sites."

"You can only do that when you have a partnership between a school of nursing and a health system. It is an opportunity for us to work together to create access and opportunities for innovations in practice and to improve the value proposition for patients, payers and communities."

Jones said the deepening partnership between VUSN and VUMC will allow Vanderbilt advanced practice nurses to take 25 years of expertise with nurse-managed centers to a wider audience.

"The School of Nursing practices have a long history of serving some of Nashville's most vulnerable populations."

■ Pam Jones, BSN '81, MSN '92, DNP '13, (right) oversees the School of Nursing's nurse-managed clinics. Melissa Davis, MSN '03, is responsible for the operation of the Melrose Primary Clinic on Franklin Road in Nashville.



DANIEL DUBOIS

Mapping America's nurse-managed clinics

Bonnie Pilon, Ph.D., FAAN, knows and loves nurse-managed clinics so much she took a year off to visit as many as possible.

Pilon, now Professor of Nursing, Emerita, opened and oversaw nurse-operated clinics for the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing for 15 years as senior associate dean. In 2015, she took a sabbatical year to research the history and culture of nurse-managed clinics nationwide. She visited 22 organizations from Alaska to Florida to get a better idea of the landscape of nurse practitioner-managed health centers. "I tried very hard to get a diverse sample," she said.

Those clinics operate 82 sites, five of which are rural, 20 urban, 20 suburban and one on the Alaska frontier at the Dahl Memorial Clinic in Skagway, a town of less than 1,000 people.

"There are no doctors in the whole region," Pilon said. "If you get hit by a car, or a moose, you go there." The location is very remote from other medical facilities: six hours by ferry to Juneau, Alaska, or three to four hours by ambulance to Whitehorse in Canada's Yukon Territory.

The Alaska clinic offers everything from primary care to optometry to behavioral health. "These nurses are it," she said. "They do amazing stuff."

As she traveled, she shared her stories

on her blog, "Healthcare in the Shadows," which can be found at my.vanderbilt.edu/healthcareintheshadows/

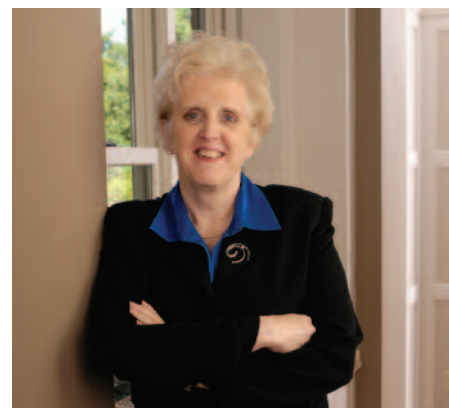
Her mission took her to clinics like the Prescott Health Clinic in Arizona, which serves those without access to primary care due to no insurance, high-deductible plans or shortage of primary care physicians.

One of the largest practices she visited was Johnson City, Tennessee, at the East Tennessee State University College of Nursing. The school has 13 sites, including five school clinics. "They are the student health service for the entire university," she said. "They do it all."

The 82 sites Pilon observed serve more than 65,000 unduplicated patients with more than 270,000 visits per year. In 62 sites, the target populations are uninsured, Medicaid recipients, high-deductible health plan participants and low-income patients, often with chronic illnesses. Fourteen of the sites target employees and dependents.

Pilon came to a number of conclusions, which she presented in September at the Ninth International Council of Nurses Conference in Hong Kong. Her overall finding: "Nurse-managed health centers have a major impact on individual health and the health of communities," she said.

She found that the centers and practices are often, but not exclusively, asso-



DANIEL DUBOIS

■ Bonnie Pilon documented the history and reach of nurse-managed clinics in the U.S., visiting 82 of them during her sabbatical.

ciated with schools of nursing.

However, there is no complete database of nurse-practitioner-managed sites nor any repository of their work or outcomes.

All sites, whether nonprofit or for-profit, are mission-driven. Financing is a constant challenge for the sites, as payers often discriminate against nurse providers. State nurse practice laws pose additional logistical and financial burdens, she said.

In addition to those conclusions, Pilon met wonderful people committed to their missions. "I was welcomed with open arms," she said. "People are happy to tell their stories."

— Matt Batchelder

We will continue the proud tradition of serving underserved populations with these very effective models," she said. "But we will also take those practices to a broader audience."

In determining where to place the clinics, Jones said Vanderbilt would consider where there is a need for additional primary care providers and populations that benefit from the comprehensive, holistic approach that is the hallmark of advanced practice nursing.

"We will work in collaboration with the Medical Center to identify sites that are needed and execute on rapid cycle implementation," she said. "We are very excited to bring this great model to more families and communities."

Evolution of nurse-run clinics

Nursing leaders are building on a strong 25-year track record of opening and managing clinics. Vanderbilt opened its first nurse-managed clinic in 1991 dur-

ing an era of brisk change for VUSN. Then-Dean Colleen Conway-Welch was revolutionizing nursing practice and the school transitioned into a graduate school from being an undergraduate program that also offered some master's degrees. The role of the nurse practitioner was still in its infancy, and VUSN leaders were looking for a way to have an impact in the community, said Bonnie Pilon, Ph.D., Professor of Nursing, Emerita. Pilon was instrumental in launching the first clinic

■
Top: Kameron Brainard, MSN '12, CNM, is one of eight nurse-midwives seeing patients at the Melrose Clinic.

Middle: Shelza Rivas, MSN '15, BA '12, APRN, with patient Stashia Emanuel, is the new primary care provider at Melrose.

Bottom: Medical Assistant Sarah Houston prepares to draw blood from patient Veronica Dennis.

DANIEL DUBOIS



DANIEL DUBOIS



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and continued to oversee VUSN clinics until 2015.

That first clinic was in the Vine Hill housing development in South Nashville, identified by leadership as an area of need. Vanderbilt incorporated a nonprofit organization, University Community Health Services (UCHS), to operate Vine Hill. VUSN faculty nurses directed the clinic, starting with just one full-time and one-part time nurse practitioner, but expanding quickly.

“The seeds that were planted at Vine Hill have grown into mighty oaks,” said Pilon, who recently returned from a year-long sabbatical researching the history and culture of nurse-managed clinics nationwide. “It was a tremendous start to the rest of the story.”

From there, Vanderbilt began offering clinic services to schools in lower income neighborhoods—starting in 1995 with a location at Fall Hamilton School, which serves the children of the Vine Hill neighborhood. Additional clinics soon opened at Park Avenue Elementary and Taylor Stratton Elementary.

In 2004, Vanderbilt expanded into providing clinic services for private employers, providing services for the Sanford Corporation in Lewisburg, Tennessee. The company paid for employees and their families to use the clinic for free. “That was a relatively new idea for nurse-managed health centers nationally in the mid 2000s,” Pilon said. “We were real pioneers in doing this.”

The clinic had immediate results, Pilon said. One patient survived neck cancer because clinicians spotted a lump on his neck and he was sent to a specialist for treatment. Another man was referred to cardiology for his symptoms and underwent a five-vessel bypass surgery the next day. “He would have died,” Pilon said.

In 2007, the UCHS clinics transitioned from the university to an independent community agency in order to qualify for federally qualified health center status, a key source of federal funding.

VUSN continued to seek opportuni-

“Everybody is trying to figure out how to add advanced practice nurses and advanced practice clinicians into their complements, and we really know how to do that here at Vanderbilt through this long-time partnership of the Medical Center and the School of Nursing.”

– Pam Jones

ties to open nurse-managed clinics where the need arose. In 2012, it opened the Clinic at Mercury Courts in collaboration with Urban Housing Solutions, a nonprofit that provides housing to the homeless.

Clinic growth

Around 1999, VUSN expanded into offering midwifery services and comprehensive OB-GYN care with the West End Women’s Health Center on West End Avenue. Nurse-midwives see patients there and women deliver at Vanderbilt University Adult Hospital or a new option, Baby+Company, a freestanding private birth center that opened in Nashville in 2015. VUSN nurse-midwives provide care at that center in a collaboration with VUMC and Baby+Company. VUSN midwives also can be found at the Melrose Primary Clinic on Franklin Pike in Nashville and at Cole Family Practice in Hermitage.

In addition to providing cost-effective care, nurse-managed clinics offer VUSN students opportunities to engage with diverse populations. That experience is invaluable to VUMC, as nurses trained at VUSN often become the nurses who practice within the Vanderbilt Health Affiliated Network.

“It gives the student a window to the community,” Pilon said. “It gives them a window to health-disparate challenges and meeting those challenges. It gives them a window to different cultures, different eth-

nicities, different economic situations. We do it because we’re a caring profession and our mission is to improve the health and well-being of people.”

VUSN was one of the first schools to place nurse practitioners and advanced practice nurses into collaborative practices with physicians and within agencies. Its innovative PreSpecialty programs allow students multiple entry options to go from a bachelor’s degree to a master’s or doctoral degree. *U.S. News & World Report* ranks its DNP program as the No. 11 program in the country and its MSN at No. 15.

“The Vanderbilt University School of Nursing is a gem for a number of reasons,”

Pinson said. “The focus that they have had on many different master’s level programs and doctoral-level programs is nationally renowned, and their ranking demonstrates that. The nursing school represents a tremendous strength to Vanderbilt University Medical Center and to the entire Vanderbilt Health Affiliated Network across the state of Tennessee.”

Empowering advanced practice

Supporting the continued growth in nurse-managed clinics is the rapidly expanding field of advanced practice nurses (APRNs), with about 930 at VUMC. APRN roles encompass certified registered nurse anesthetists, certified nurse practitioners, certified nurse-midwives and clinical nurse specialists. All APRNs are educated in nationally accredited programs, clinically trained and board-certified in their area of practice.

VUSN’s Jones works with community leaders to identify needs for new practices, and collaborates with VUMC’s Kapu on business models for advanced practice as

■ C. Wright Pinson, MBA, M.D., Deputy CEO and Chief Health System Officer for VUMC, sees nurse-managed clinics as a resource to meet the expanding demand for quality health care.



DANIEL DUBOIS



■ Taking part in the first opportunity for VUMC and VUSN leaders to round at the Melrose facility are, from left, VUSN Senior Associate Dean Pam Jones, VUMC Executive Chief Nursing Officer Marilyn Dubree, MSN '76, Nurse Practitioner Abby Luck Parish, MSN '05, Nurse Practitioner Shelza Rivas, Melrose Clinic Interim Director Melissa Davis and Assistant Director for Advanced Practice Nursing April Kapu, MSN '05, DNP '13. Jones, Parish and Davis are also VUSN faculty.

well as on creating leaders who will direct the next generation of clinics.

“In acknowledgement of the need for leadership structures that empower advanced practice, there is a nationwide trend to develop and appoint leaders who are APRNs and physician assistants,” Jones said. “VUSN and VUMC are national leaders in this arena through our innovative advanced practice leadership structure, which includes the Office of Advanced Practice, educating leaders through the Doctorate of Nursing Practice program and active mentorship of emerging leaders.

“Vanderbilt is one of the few places in the country that all advanced practice registered nurses and physician assistants have a link back to a leader who is an advanced practice registered nurse or physician assistant. And from the literature and our experience, we believe that’s crucial to creating a practice environment that’s supportive for them.”

Kapu said that clinics will continue to grow because they meet consumer needs for accessible, affordable and high quality care.

“The comprehensive, holistic approach to care delivered through our nurse faculty clinics unquestionably meets today’s consumer demand. ‘Clinic’ is increasingly becoming a broad term to mean primary care delivery through multiple access points such as after-hours clinics, walk-in clinics, house calls and virtual care. In addition, these clinics—Melrose is a great example—are increasing conven-

ience and affordability by bundling care services in a single location.”

Local and national impact

The advantages of nurse-managed clinics are multifold, Jones said. “From a Medical Center standpoint, we have this asset of being able to partner the School of Nursing with the Medical Center to create these clinics and create a practice environment that really allows people to thrive and grow and develop and meet the needs of the population,” she said. “And in a population health model, the holistic training of advanced practice nurses is very much in keeping with how you create quality and decrease cost in our system over time.”

Pilon is able to stand back and look at Vanderbilt’s nurse-managed clinics with an informed eye. “The Vanderbilt School of Nursing is seen nationally as a leader in this area,” Pilon said. “I think not only have we impacted health locally and regionally, which we certainly have, but we’ve influenced the development of a number of other sites. We’ve made a difference here, but also nationally. Our voice has been heard.”

■ The Vanderbilt nurse-managed health clinic at Metro Nashville Public Schools’ headquarters just moved into a new \$6 million health care center built by the district.



Rural need inspired Tennessee's first nurse-managed clinic

It was only going to be for a few years. Carolyn Whitaker, BSN '62, MSN '72, agreed to serve as the primary health provider in Red Boiling Springs, Tennessee, for a few years, and then she would return home to Nashville to work.

That was the condition she agreed to when she accepted an Appalachian Region Commission Scholarship grant to help finance her Master of Nursing Science degree at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing in the early '70s.

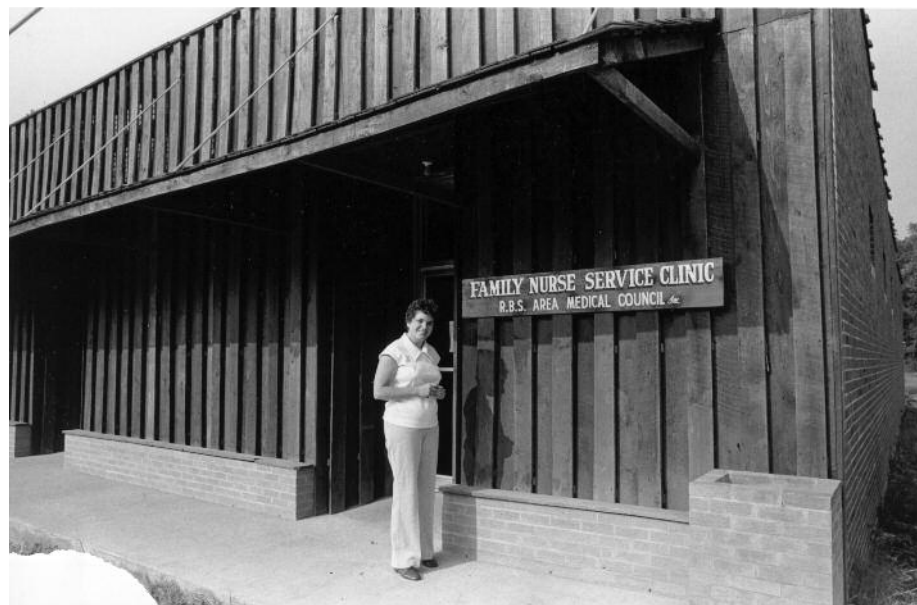
Nearly 45 years later, she's still in Red Boiling Springs and wouldn't be anywhere else. Whitaker was one of the first nurse practitioners to graduate from Vanderbilt and the little Family Nurse Service Clinic she founded in Red Boiling Springs was the first nurse-managed clinic in the state.

"There was no health care provider or drugstore in the town," she said. "I took care of anybody that came in. I probably served 6,000 patients in the region. My clinic was next door to the post office, which was very nice because we didn't have any laboratory service, and I had to mail everything to the state lab."

Whitaker ran the clinic with one assistant and a volunteer who helped clean. She worked five and a half days a week and it wasn't unusual for patients to show up at her farmhouse in the middle of night. "And I made house calls—this was before home health, before we had any emergency service in the county," she said.

"Nobody knew what a nurse practitioner was then," she said. "Everything was on a cash or charge basis and I charged the same fees the doctors in the region charged for office visits."

In addition to providing primary care, she did a lot of health education. "There was a tremendous need for



health knowledge in the area and I did a lot of health teaching," she recalled. "I asked the people what they wanted, and they wanted to lose weight. So we started a weight loss program up at the school gymnasium and we met at night, once a week. There is a high incidence of diabetes in this region and so it was very good to have the weight loss program. It kept them healthy."

Whitaker ran the clinic for eight years before joining her sponsoring physician in his practice. Soon after, Tennessee Tech University asked her to help set up a nursing program, and then to be one of its first faculty.

"When I came here, there were five registered nurses in the county," she said. "We needed nurses and couldn't get them to come to the area." Today, she notes, Tennessee Tech has a top baccalaureate degree program, offers master's degrees and is considering a doctoral program.

Whitaker is now retired and lives on the same storybook farm she bought soon after she moved to Red Boiling

■ Carolyn Whitaker, BSN '62, MSN '72, outside the Red Boiling Springs clinic she started in the 1970s.

Springs. She stays busy with volunteer service and civic projects (running away from housework, she calls it), and remains a key part of the community.

"Do you know they still call me, not a lot . . . we have that much more health care in the area, but they'll still ask me, 'What should I do?' and I tell them. Most of them do what I suggest or at least they put it into their decision-making mode. I'm seeing third and fourth generations among the people I live with."

"I took care of a lot of people and they were so good to me. Everybody couldn't have been nicer and helpful," she says. "I could never go anywhere that I didn't see my patients. That's what they liked about me—that I lived here with them."

— Nancy Wise

What I Did Before

PHOTOS BY DANIEL DUBOIS,
JOE HOWELL AND SUSAN URMY

Miss Mississippi, a seismologist, a paramedic, a football player and a Peace Corps worker walk into a nursing school.

No, no joke.

Those are the backgrounds of some current Vanderbilt University School of Nursing (VUSN) students. Discover what drew them to VUSN.



TRISTAN STRONG

Football Experience Comes in Handy

What would inspire a big, tough, immovable linebacker to become a nurse? First-year PreSpecialty student Tristan Strong said it was the stories his mother, Jodi Rodriguez, shared about her job. He remembers the passion she showed for nursing.

“She really loved her job. Seeing how passionate she was about her work influenced my career choice,” he said.

Vanderbilt football fans will recall Strong as a redshirt freshman who played three years for the Commodores before being sidelined with a career-ending torn ACL.

“I had aspirations for a professional football career throughout high school and most of college, but luckily I had people instill in me the fact that I needed to have a backup plan,” Strong said. He graduated from Vanderbilt’s Peabody College of education and human development in 2012 with a degree in human and organizational development.

He said his football career helped prepare him for his future as a health care provider.

“Being a student-athlete was time-consuming,” Strong said. “It was essential that I develop efficient time management skills. I also learned how to function effectively in a team environment. Perseverance was the major lesson I developed as a student athlete.”

One could say that the traits that made him a great linebacker—quickness, intelligence, versatility and strength—will also make him a great nurse.

“Nursing is something I felt I could excel in,” Strong said. “I always knew I wanted to do something in the health care field. While I was in college, I just wasn’t sure what direction I wanted to go in.”

Strong’s parents tell him how proud they are of his decision to enter into nursing. They say their son possesses the work ethic and moral compass to deliver quality care.

Yet it wasn’t until he landed his first job with a medical technology company that he looked to the clinical side of health care.

“That is the experience that drew me into the nursing field,” he said. “I knew I wanted to come back to Vanderbilt to get my nursing degree.”

While preparing for nursing school, Strong worked for Philips Healthcare in its Nashville medical equipment division during the day and took night classes to satisfy his prerequisites.

Strong, who holds the Hilliard and Nancy Travis and George R. Burrus scholarships, plans to graduate as a family nurse practitioner in 2018.

“I absolutely love the program,” Strong said. “I have the ability to provide care to families and patients across their lifespan. I will be able to build and continue relationships with them. That is the main reason I was attracted to family practice—I have a passion for helping people, just like my mom.”

- by Jessica Pasley

HELEN QIAN

From Science of NASA to Science of Nursing

Helen Qian was a young girl living in Beijing, China, when the July 1976 Tangshan earthquake occurred, claiming the lives of more than 240,000 people.

“People were very rattled. No one wanted to go back to their apartments. We lived in a crowded tent city for several months,” said Qian, a Vanderbilt University School of Nursing post-master’s certificate student. “As a child, it was an adventure to me, but as I grew up, it made me want to predict earthquakes.”

The tragedy awakened in her a desire to help people. Having moved to the U.S., Qian earned a degree in geophysics and applied geophysics, and then went to the California Institute of Technology to study seismology.

“I realized pretty quickly that earthquakes are not predictable, at least not within my lifetime. Most of the research is very esoteric,” Qian said. “While every seismograph

squiggle means something, I didn’t see the relevance of the study for average people.”

She left her graduate studies and worked in a seismology lab, taking evening classes at a community college.

She taught herself CD-ROM programming and landed a job at Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), a part of NASA. Qian developed educational interactive CD-ROMs about Jupiter, Saturn and Earth, and later became a database programmer and contractor with JPL.

When she wanted a career change, the idea of becoming a nurse surfaced.

“Nursing: It was just the spark I needed. I had always had an interest in the medical field,” she said. “I was already a certified wilderness EMT and volunteering my time with the Pasadena Fire Department at Rose Bowl events. So going into nursing was a natural transition. I did some more research and found out about nurse practitioners. I felt it was a perfect fit for me.”

At 40 years old, Qian entered the nursing program at Azusa Pacific University, earning her nurse practitioner degree in 2011. She worked at a health clinic in sparsely populated Eastern California for three years, then moved to an urban ER. “I love being able to help people and see the difference my actions make in improving others’ lives,” Qian said.

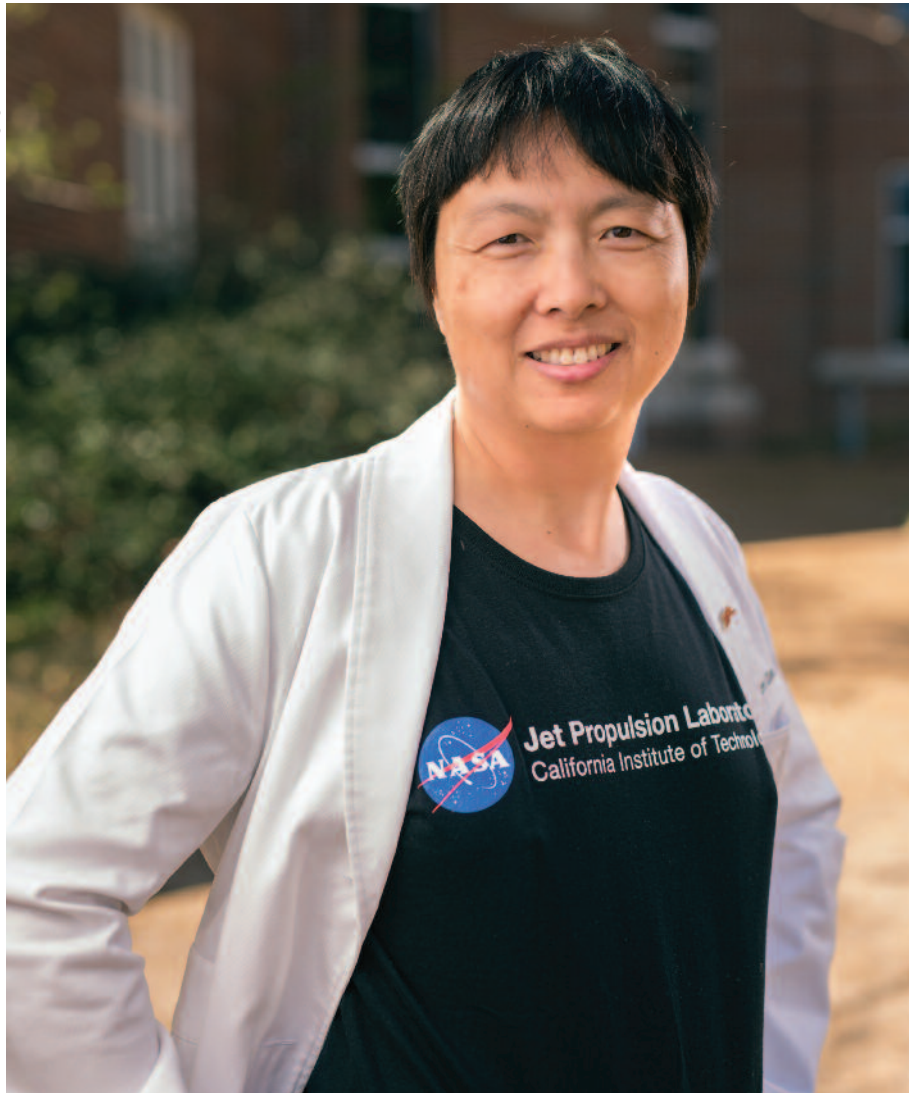
At an American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) conference, she learned about Vanderbilt’s post-master’s Emergency Nurse Practitioner Program and applied immediately.

She credits her love for knowledge in helping her transition smoothly into each field.

“The most important thing you learn at school is how to learn,” Qian said. “My training in seismology gave me a solid understanding of the scientific methods and how to evaluate evidence, which is very useful in implementing evidence-based practice as a nurse practitioner. Working as a software developer gave me the analytic and problem-solving skills. Learning how to learn is what enabled me to become a software developer, and it’s also broadening my knowledge as an NP—I’m not limited to the facts I can learn during school.”

- by Tavia Smith

DANIEL DUBOIS





RITA PETERS

A Nursing Career 20 Years in the Making

At 5:15 a.m. every weekday, Rita Peters makes a two-hour trek from Indian Mound, Tennessee, to Nashville for a full day of classes at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing.

She plays audio textbooks and recorded class lectures, ingesting and memorizing the material as she drives. The commute, four hours round trip, is her study period.

At age 50—the oldest member of the School of Nursing class of 2018—she’s far from a traditional student with anything but conventional studying methods. But she couldn’t pass up the opportunity, one she almost delayed in August 2016 to take care of her father, James, who was terminally ill with cancer. He wouldn’t hear of it.

Simultaneously, she’s been a daughter and caregiver for aging parents. She’s a wife to Steve, who is active duty military, and mother of two children: Michael, 26, and

Abbigail, 11. Peters works to find balance to pursue a nursing career 25 years in the making.

A choking scare in 1991 with then 1-year-old Michael led her to enroll in a CPR class. She got “bit by the bug,” she said. By 1994, she had a paramedic license and began working for Montgomery County EMS in Clarksville, Tennessee.

“I enjoyed the excitement of something different every time the phone rang. I enjoyed meeting people, and I enjoyed supporting my community,” Peters said.

In 2005, she was thrust into a different part of health care. Her daughter was born 10 weeks premature and has Down syndrome. Abbigail stayed 89 days at Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt. Peters became close with the nurses, and later called on those nurses for advice on applying to the School of Nursing.

“I love being a paramedic and I love that component of health and being on the frontlines, but I also recognized as I got older that I could not do it forever. It’s hard on you, working 24 hours,” she said.

Peters got the call Aug. 8—her dad’s birthday—that she had been accepted to the program, she recalls tearfully. He passed away Sept. 25, 2016. She wants to follow a nursing track in adult geriatric primary care, with hopes of continuing to care for the adult community of Indian Mound. She’s grateful to the School of Nursing for giving her this opportunity and the financial support of the Dr. Robert H. Elrod Scholarship Fund.

“The school is very pro-family and they do a lot of promoting of self-care. Everyone from the course coordinator to the instructors to the adviser, every person I have met goes above and beyond for the students,” she said. “They take time out for you. It is an amazing program that they can take 154 students and individualize the program for every student.”

- by Christina Echegaray

JENNIFER NECZYPOR

Global Focus Brings Nursing into View

Few can say they've been rescued from a tropical island as a smoldering volcano threatened to erupt, enjoyed an audience with the Dalai Lama, and written a screenplay about Sino-Tibetan politics, Tibetan history and Buddhist mythology—all before age 30. Jennifer Neczypor, a dual nurse-midwife/family nurse practitioner student who graduated in May, has done all this and more.

To track Neczypor's whirlwind adventures you'll need a world map, a handful of push pins and a hefty dose of caffeine. As a high school student in Sacramento, California, she went on her first service trip to a Mexican orphanage. In college, she took study abroad/service trips to Guatemala, Ireland and India while completing two degrees, one in

Spanish and philosophy and the other in screenwriting, at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. "My parents made sure we were all very socially conscious, and they encouraged us to follow our passions, no matter what they might be," she explained. "For me, I really loved traveling and meeting people from other cultures."

While in India, her student group enjoyed an audience with the Dalai Lama, an event Neczypor calls life changing. After college, she volunteered for the Peace Corps and served in Vanuatu, a South Pacific island chain formed by a collection of active volcanoes. This led to the dramatic airlift.

"I think the pilot hated me because I made him put all our pets on the plane with us," she laughed. "He was looking at me like, 'Seriously?' We put our cats in bags of rice. They were moving around and meowing, and he was really annoyed. It was a seven-person plane, and one girl even brought her pig."

Neczypor returned to California and tried putting her college degree to work in the film industry, but she realized her priorities had shifted. After some soul-searching, she decided the role of nurse practitioner, and especially that of nurse-midwife, best suited her mindset. Vanderbilt proved to be the perfect fit, and she was also able to complete a multidisciplinary Global Health certificate offered by the Vanderbilt Institute for Global Health (VIGH).

Neczypor's passion for service was recognized when she received the Frist Global Health Leader Award through VIGH, allowing her to head to Nepal after graduation to work with the nonprofit maternal-fetal medicine organization, One Heart World-Wide. In the same year, she received the American College of Nurse-Midwives' Jeanne Raisler International Award for Midwifery. At VUSN, she held the Hillard and Nancy Thomas Scholarship and the Pass It Forward Scholarship. "Service is definitely going to always be a big priority for me," she said. "My ideal job will be working with low-income or underserved women, and I would love to keep working with the Spanish-speaking population or the refugee community."

- by Jill Clendening



SUSAN URMY



KRISTIAN DAMBRINO

What Entertaining and Healing Have in Common

Kristian Dambrino competed in the *Miss America* pageant, sang on cruise ships, performed musical comedy in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, photographed weddings and recorded albums before she started classes at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing.

Oh, and she sang for Oprah once.

She performed for the billionaire celebrity in 2005 as the reigning Miss Mississippi. Winfrey was at the opening of the Oprah Winfrey Boys & Girls Club in Kosciusko, Mississippi, a year after the state was hit by Hurricane Katrina. Dambrino sang “Pearlington’s Prayer,” a song she’d written after witnessing the storm damage firsthand. The song led her to found the Pearlington’s Prayer Project, a nonprofit that helped raise \$20,000 for survivors.

After Dambrino’s year as Miss Mississippi was over, she used her pageant scholarship money to obtain a Bachelor of Fine Arts in graphic design from Delta State University. She then spent a couple of years entertaining on Celebrity Cruises’ Mercury

ship and performing at a theater in Pigeon Forge. In 2010, she moved to Nashville where she began working as a graphic designer and photographer. Like many other creative people in Nashville, she also continued making music.

It was only a few years later that she realized something was missing from her life.

“When I was younger, I was more focused on entertaining,” said Dambrino, now 31. “I now wanted to pursue another career that would bring as much excitement and healing as music.”

Although she enjoyed graphic design, she desired a job away from a desk where she could interact with people. Dambrino was interested in nursing, so her employer allowed her the flexibility to shadow nurses in various health care settings. Of all those she shadowed, it was psychiatric nurse practitioners who inspired her most.

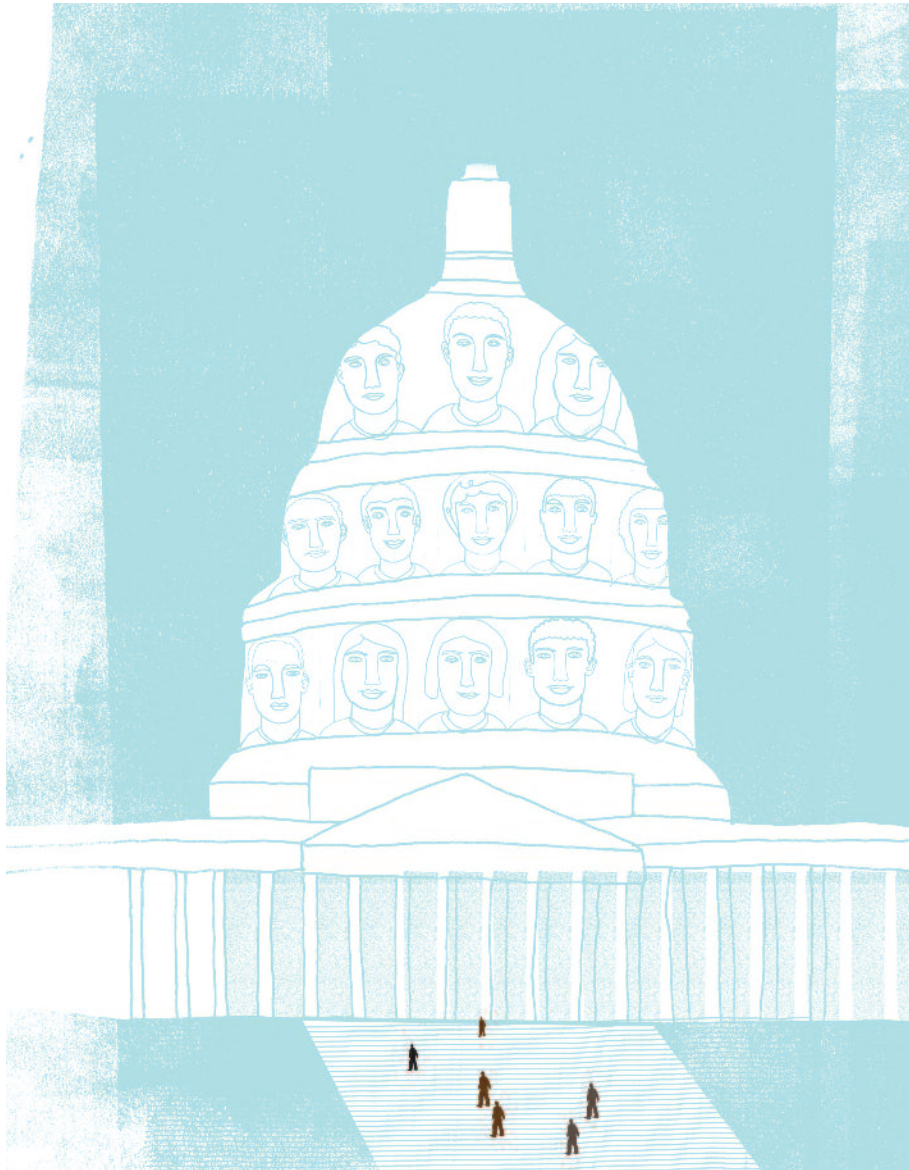
“My circuitous past has allowed me to meet many different types of people from all over the world, and I have learned mental illness does not discriminate,” Dambrino said. When she considered how she had lost friends to addiction and mental illness, she knew she wanted to be a psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner.

Despite having earned the BFA and a master certificate in music business from Berklee College of Music, she lacked the science and statistics prerequisites to apply to nursing school. While continuing to work as a graphic designer, she commuted back and forth to Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro to complete those classes.

In 2015, she was accepted into Vanderbilt’s Master of Science in Nursing program to become a psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner. The recipient of the Dean Colleen Conway-Welch Scholarship, she’s scheduled to graduate in August.

Even in the midst of the pressure and intensity of classes and clinical rotations, Dambrino found a way to keep making music a big part of her life. Last year, she put out a jazz album called “Bluer Than This” with respected blues and jazz keyboardist Fish Michie. The album recently won the Mississippi Institute of Arts & Letters Award for Best Contemporary Music Composition of 2017.

- by Tom Wilemon



Compassion and Criminal Justice

How one professor used her law and nursing degrees to change the mental health system

BY DEBORAH SETTLES
ILLUSTRATION BY MARK MCGINNIS

When Joyce Laben, JD, MSN, BC, FAAN, came to Vanderbilt University School of Nursing as an associate professor of Psychiatric Nursing in 1970, she didn't see herself as a reformer.

But encountering horrific treatment of inmates with mental health challenges in Tennessee prisons during her clinical practice transformed her into someone who was going to make change happen.

"I saw a prisoner with neurological defects who was being fed meals off the floor. I went screaming down the staff hall that day to stop it. There was another inmate detained for a psychological evaluation for 20 years. The city had lost the original case file so he was just in limbo. There was a detainee with glaucoma who they refused treatment," Laben said. "It just went on and on. You would be shocked at what passed for care, and most of those detained had no resources to defend their rights."

Pioneering reform

Laben understood legal rights. In 1969, she earned a law degree in addition to her nursing degrees; she would go on to pioneering work in forensic mental health, a sub-specialty of psychiatry, psychology and social work regarding mental health services for people involved in the criminal justice system.

It was in graduate nursing school, however, that she learned not to wait on someone else to fix a problem.

"One of my nursing professors used to say, 'If you look around for help and there is nobody there, then you just have to do it yourself.' That is exactly what I did."

Her determination to help those with mental illness in Tennessee's prison system received an assist with the 1972 Supreme Court decision, *Jackson v. Indiana*, which made it illegal for suspects and prisoners needing psychological evaluations for competency to stand trial to be imprisoned by states for more than three years.

Shortly after the court decision, Laben was approached to head a new forensic

services section at the Tennessee Department of Mental Health that would help reform the state system. She agreed and took a two-year leave from Vanderbilt.

“My staff at the mental health department and I made significant decreases in the population of the forensic mental health unit by having all of the detainees evaluated and transferred to another mental health facility when the charges against them were resolved,” she said. “I also recruited out-of-state expertise to aid in development of Tennessee’s evaluation tool for competency to stand trial. Tennessee’s law was rewritten and passed by the legislature and senate to conform to the Supreme Court decision.”

National reach

Laben even was able to secure state funding to develop a pilot project for community evaluation teams in Tennessee’s major cities so fewer defendants needed to be sent to an isolated maximum security unit for evaluation. That program caught the attention of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH).

“I had decided that NIMH funding could be a long shot since they might not grant an award to someone with my credentials,” Laben said. “But when the director of the Crime and Delinquency section of NIMH heard about what we achieved in our forensic mental health system, he awarded a grant for someone to come here and learn how we started it. Then he placed me on the NIMH Review Grant Committee as a result of the Tennessee community teams’ success.”

After her return to Vanderbilt, Laben continued shaping mental health policy. She co-wrote the report that was used to develop the first mental health court in the state, co-authored two books on mental health law for nurses and published multiple publications on forensic mental health. In 1978, Vanderbilt promoted her to professor.

In her nearly three decades at Vanderbilt, she mentored generations of advanced practice nurses and says she’s

proud that so many of her former students hold top positions in mental health care where they make differences every day. As a clinician, she co-founded the Vine Hill Community Clinic, served as executive vice president at Treadway Clinic, and provided counseling services through McKendree Village Clinic. In 2017, the University of Michigan—her alma mater—named her one of the school’s most notable graduates in its 200-year history.

Still helping

Now professor of Nursing, emerita, Laben isn’t quite done helping. “Although I am retired, people still call me all the time for help with mental health issues. I like to call myself a navigator. I don’t do counseling anymore, but I do guide them to services,” she said.

Laben was free to pursue her passion of helping and reforming, in part because she was not saddled with debt for her degrees. Concerned about the increasing cost of education, and seeing how debt affected her students both in school and after graduation, Laben and her husband, Robert, created the Joyce Kemp Laben Scholarship Fund in 1998 for students in

the Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Program. To date the fund has benefited 10 advanced practice nurses, and the bequest Laben documented in her estate plans will aid even more students in the future.

Jodi Robinson, the current recipient of the scholarship, came to Nashville by way of Anchorage, Alaska, to become a psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner. Robinson intends to practice in the area of palliative care, hoping one day to transform family end-of-life experiences.

“I want to help families have as positive experience as possible when their loved one faces a terminal illness,” said Robinson, who also has an interest in psycho-oncology and geriatrics. “In the future, I dream of opening a pediatric hospice house where everything is child-friendly and warm, and not only the patient stays, but the entire family. I envision it being where families come from all over the world to have a meaningful and peaceful transition.”

■ *Joyce Laben and her husband, Robert Laben, set up a scholarship fund and created a bequest so students in the program aren’t burdened with student loan debt.*



SUSAN URMAY

Class Notes



Marie Annette Brown, BSN '70, was inducted

into the Washington State Nurses Association Hall of Fame in 2016.

60s

Ellen Durham Davis, BSN '63, is a consulting associate at Duke University School of Nursing.

Cindy Stone Monroe, BSN '66, and her husband, Jim, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in June 2016.

70s

Beth Colvin Huff, BSN '74, MSN '79, received the American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology 2016 Distinguished Service Award.

Marilyn Dubree, MSN '76, was honored by the Academy for Women of Achievement in Nashville in October 2016.

Betsy Kerr Hay, MSN '76, is the president of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Vanderbilt University.

Patricia LeDrew Jones, MSN '77, is a professor at the Loma Linda University School of Nursing.



Ginny Place Myer, BSN '75, was appointed to the Vanderbilt

University Alumni Board, where she joins Eileen Campbell Hart, MSN '12.

Joyce Grimes Safley, BSN '77, MSN '83, joined the Law Office of Melinda Jacobs in Franklin, Tennessee.

80s

Darlene Armstrong Franklin, MSN '81, was published in the *Worldwide Leaders in Healthcare*; she is on faculty at the Whitson-Hester School of Nursing at Tennessee Tech University in Cookeville, Tennessee.

Pam Orebaugh Jones, BSN '81, MSN '92, DNP '13, was awarded the 2015 State Advocate Award from the American Association of Nurse Practitioners.

Michael Mezmar, MSN '81, is the mayor pro tem and commissioner for Harlingen, Texas.

Donna Ray Iverson, BSN '82, and her sister, **Lisa Ray Pascale, BSN '83,** are on staff at Wolfson Children's Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida, in the behavioral health unit.

Melanie Hall Morris, BSN '83, MSN '86, was awarded the 2015 Research Paper of the Year from *American Journal of Maternal Child Nursing*, and was the 2015 Scholarly Writing Contest winner from the Tennessee Nurses Foundation.

Suzanne McMurtry Baird, BSN '84, MSN '95, started an organization called Clinical Concepts in Obstetrics Inc.

Robin Rosen Schuman, BSN '84, received the 2015 Employee of the Year Award from the law firm of Aaronson, Rappaport, Feinstein & Deutsch in New York City, where she practices as a senior medical consultant.

Barbara Boone McGinnis, MSN '89, was named chairper-



Sharon Adkins, MSN '88, was honored by Nashville Medical

News in May 2016 at their annual Women to Watch Breakfast

son of the Tennessee Bar Association's Elder Law Section Executive Committee and president of the Life Care Planning Law Firms Association.

90s

Ginny Moore, MSN '90, received the Women's Health Research Award from National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health.

Sharon Hendrix, MSN '91, was named Public and Community Health Nurse of the Year by the Tennessee Chapter of the March of Dimes.

Kimberly Troy Sales, MSN '91, is a nurse practitioner at Community Health Care's Hilltop Regional Health Center in Tacoma, Washington.

Julie Tipton Higdon, MSN '93, leads a new Baptist Health walk-in clinic for the Lone Oak school community in Paducah, Kentucky.

Leslie Welch Hopkins, MSN '93, was named a 2016-17 SEC Academic Leadership Development Program Fellow at Vanderbilt University.



Bridget Wilson, MSN '94, was elected to the Accreditation Board of Specialty Nursing Certification and serves on the American Board of Neuroscience Nursing as secretary/treasurer.

Kelly Ambrosi Wolgast, MSN '93, received the President's Award from the American College of Healthcare Executives of Middle Tennessee.

Francie Likis, MSN '94, published the 3rd edition of her textbook, "Women's Gynecologic Health," in summer 2016. **Julia Cain Phillippi, MSN '99,** wrote a chapter; **Mary Ellen Egger, MSN '06,** and **Amy Hall Hull, MSN '94,** were reviewers.

Gina Haldeman, MSN '95, and her husband have created and launched an app called Step-by-Step Pregnancy Care.

Sharon Heinrich, MSN '96, traveled to Nigeria with a team of Rotarians from the U.S. and Canada to support polio eradication.

Connie Chenosky-Miller, MSN '97, works at the Cheyenne Veterans Administration Medical Center in a satellite clinic in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Jenny Hannagan Kim, MSN '97, published her DNP scholarly project in the *Annals of Long Term Care*, May 2016.

Margaret McKinney Buxton, MSN '98, is clinical director of Baby+Company in Nashville, which delivered its 100th baby on Mother's Day 2016. **Lauren Drees, MSN '09,** and **Heather Sevcik, MSN '12,** are on staff.

Patricia Detzel, MSN '98, and **Soheyl Asadsangabi, MSN '04, DNP '13,** staff the new Vanderbilt Center for Women's



Greta Fowinkle, MSN '94, DNP '11, is co-leading a population health course for BSN-level RNs at the Medical University of South Carolina College of Nursing in Charleston, where she is director of Case Management/Care Transitions.

Health clinic in Thompson's Station, Tennessee.

Julia Cain Phillippi, MSN '99, and Melody Castillo, MSN '14, co-authored a chapter in "Best Practices in Midwifery, 2nd Edition."

Clay Satterfield, MSN '99, is a family nurse practitioner at the Franciscan Prompt Care—Canyon Road Clinic in Puyallup, Washington.

Carl Wherry, MSN '99, is president of the West Los Angeles North chapter of the California Association for Nurse Practitioners, as well as speaker of the house for its annual House of Delegates.

2000s

Nancy Hollingsworth, MSN '00, is president and CEO of the Saint Agnes Medical Center Board of Directors in Fresno, California.

Liz Sharpe, MSN '02, is an assistant professor at University of Alabama Birmingham School of Nursing.



Patrick Palmieri, MSN '00, co-authored "Global

Advances in Human Caring Literacy." He was awarded the degree Doctor Honoris Causa by the Universidad María Auxiliadora in Peru in October 2016.

Valerie Turpen, MSN '02, joined Deaconess Primary Care for Seniors as a board-certified acute care nurse practitioner.

Traci Warner, MSN '02, is co-piloting a faith-based community health initiative in Nicaragua called Helping Hands. She trains lay people with some medical experience to meet the physical and spiritual needs of members of their community.

Kiersten Brown Espailat, MSN '03, was appointed to the American Heart Association Greater Southeast Affiliate Board, where she serves on the Tennessee Advocacy Subcommittee.

James Askew, MSN '05, is an acute care pediatric nurse practitioner in the pediatric intensive care unit at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

April Kapu, MSN '05, DNP '13, received the Tennessee Hospital Association's Clinical Nurse of Distinction Award.

Bette Moore, PhD '05, was named a 2016 American Academy of Nursing Fellow.

Nikole Gettings, MSN '06, started a new position in May 2016 at West Cancer Clinic in Memphis as a certified nurse-midwife/nurse practitioner.

Julie McFarlane Hamm, MSN '06, was awarded the Middle Tennessee Advance Practice Nurses President's Award.

Paul Kadetz, MSN '06, was named chair of the Department of Public Health at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia.

Amber Worrell Vermeesch, MSN '06, is an associate professor at the University of Portland School of Nursing in Oregon.

Emily Wachs, MSN '06, married Robert Kane in July 2016; she is a nurse practitioner at San Francisco Ear, Nose and Throat Medical Group.

Linda Upchurch, MSN '07, was named director of Ogeechee Area Hospice in Statesboro, Georgia.

Richard Aries, MSN '08, has a new position in medical staff services at Swedish Hospital and Medical Center in Seattle.

Louise Dobkins, MSN '08, is an adult nurse practitioner at Swedish Primary Care at Mercer Island, Washington. Her daughter, Caroline Leithner, graduated from Vanderbilt this year with a dual MSN/MDiv.

Stephanie Fisher, MSN '08, was selected for the 2016 Faculty Achievement Award for Undergraduate Teaching at George Fox University in Newberg, Oregon.

Cameron McGregor, MSN '08, was named among the *Dayton Business Journal's* 2015 Class of Forty Under 40 Winners.

Christine Gerson Suriani, MSN '08, is on staff at Centre Pediatric Associates in Brookline, Massachusetts.

Angela Hanor, MSN '09, is the student programs director for Christian Community Health Fellowship.



Letizia Baxter Smith, MSN '07, and Valery Parham, BE

'07 (Engineering) opened BuyWearShare, an online marketplace for peer-to-peer renting and selling of women's clothing; the site debuted in November 2016.

10s

Jie Deng, PhD '10, was honored as a 2016 American Academy of Nursing Fellow.

Melissa Armstrong Glassford, MSN '10, is a junior faculty teaching fellow in the Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching.

Melinda LaLonde McCusker, MSN '10, completed her Ph.D. at the Medical University of South Carolina.

Patty Sengstack, DNP '10, was named a Fellow by the American Academy of Nursing in 2016.

Mary Lauren Whitehead Pfeiffer, MSN '11, and her husband, Brandon, welcomed a new baby in June 2016.

Andrea Fuller, DNP '12, is lieutenant colonel and assistant professor at the Daniel K. Inouye Graduate School of Nursing of the Uniformed



Melissa Weinand Purvis, MSN '09, was named chief nursing officer

at Menorah Manor in St. Petersburg, Florida, in November 2016.



Meagan Hingle Casey, MSN '14, is a pediatric nurse practitioner at the Children's Hospital of New Orleans where she was the first PNP hired in the Emergency Department Fast Track.

Services University of the Health Sciences.

Cathy Maxwell, PhD '12, received the American College of Surgeons 2016 Trauma Quality Improvement Program Best PI Abstract Award.

Julie Omishakin, MSN '12, is a nurse practitioner at Neighborhood Health in Madison, Tennessee.

Mark Reinhardt, DNP '12, is an associate professor of Nursing at Texas A&M University College of Nursing and Health Sciences in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Barb Shultz, MSN '12, received Vanderbilt University Medical Center's Five Pillar Leader Award; she is administrative director of Surgical Services at Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt.

Emily Partin Sitomer, MSN '12, is a nurse practitioner at Cool Springs Internal Medicine and Pediatrics in Tennessee.

Sheila Umayam, MSN '12, DNP '14, married her college sweetheart of 11 years in October 2016. She is a pediatric nurse practitioner at Premier Medical Group, a pediatric walk-in clinic in Clarksville, Tennessee.



Gordon Gillespie II, DNP '15, was named to the American Academy of Nursing 2016 Class of Fellows; he is an associate professor and deputy director of the Occupational Health Nursing Program at the University of Cincinnati College of Nursing.

Mia Wallin, MSN '12, is a pediatric nurse practitioner at St. Thomas Community Health Center in New Orleans, where she also provides adolescent care in a school clinic.

Brandi Wilkerson, MSN '12, joined the Carthage Pediatric Clinic in Tennessee.

Bronwyn Backstrom, MSN '13, is a pediatric nurse practitioner in Ochsner Health System in New Orleans.

Courtney Cook, DNP '13, was promoted to assistant professor at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing.

Karen Hande, DNP '13, was named a 2015 American Nurses Advocacy Institute Fellow by the Tennessee Nurses Association.

Therese Jamison, DNP '13, was named in November 2016 to head the new nursing program at Lawrence Technological University in Southfield, Michigan.

John Shields, DNP '13, received the Clinical Excellence Award at Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia's annual gala in June 2016.

Lauren Barber Shurson, MSN '13, is a nurse practitioner at

Harrison Port Orchard Urgent Care in Washington state.

Sarah Allen, MSN '14, is a family nurse practitioner at the Family Health Center in Ashland City, Tennessee, along with **Joni Bauguss Cutshall**, MSN '14, and **Gretchen Burchett**, MSN '15

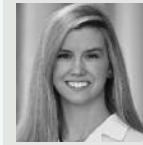
Cindy Cunningham, Post-Master's '14, joined Fellowship Health Resources in Delaware.

Aaron Hirsch, MSN '14, received the Vanderbilt University Medical Center Five Pillar Leader Award in May 2016. Hirsch is manager of the Urologic Surgery unit and two surgical stepdown units.

Kassie Padgett, MSN '14, is on staff at the Children's Hospital of San Antonio, and is an instructor at Baylor College of Medicine.

Charleen Tachibana, DNP '14, is senior vice president and chief nursing officer at Virginia Mason Medical Center in Seattle.

Julie Vasher, DNP '14, was



Janie Geyer, MSN '15, is an instructor at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

honored as Outstanding Alumnus by Northland Pioneer College.

Tania Washington, MSN '14, is a nurse practitioner at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center Occupational Health Clinic.

Cherise Williams, MSN '14, is a cardiothoracic surgery nurse practitioner at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital, Pennsylvania.

Maggie Logan Berghoff, MSN '15, started a virtual practice for functional medicine consulting called Higher Health Solutions LLC.

Kaitlin Divinnie, MSN '15, married Richie Lopez in October 2016; classmate **Rachael Prusha** was a bridesmaid.

Melissa Ferniz, MSN '15, is a

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pediatric nurse practitioner at the Children's Hospital in New Orleans.

Phyllis Raynor, '15, was selected for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration-funded American Nurses Association Minority Fellowship Program. She received her Ph.D. and is a first honor graduate from the Medical University of South Carolina.

Sally Callaway, MSN '16, married John Noel Rader in Birmingham, Alabama, in July 2016.

Jesi Campbell, MSN '16, was hired by her preceptor, the St. Louis Women's Healthcare Group in Chesterfield, Missouri.

IN MEMORIAM

Charlotte Conaway Scott, BSN '45, October 2016, Mobile, Alabama.

Verne Feedback Nesbitt, BSN '47, August 2016, Syracuse, New York.

Nancy Butts Armistead, BSN '49, July 2016, Decatur, Alabama.

Martha "Copie" Copeland Likins, BSN '52, July 2016, Eureka, California.

Mary Walley McCoy, BSN '54, July 2016, Tampa, Florida.

Patricia Patterson Tennent, BSN '56, May 2016, Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan.

Susan Hurley DeConcini, N '58, April 2016, McLean, Virginia.

Barbara Kiel Kaley, N '59, August 2016, Rancho Mirage, California.

Carol Thomas, BSN '63, September 2016, Sacramento, California.

Ann Keidel, BSN '69, July 2016, West Newton, Massachusetts.

Beth Inman Jordan, BSN '74, October 2016, Sea Island, Georgia.

Twila Williams Harmon, MSN '87, October 2016, Oneonta, Alabama.

Frances Carson, former faculty, July 2016, Franklin, Tennessee.

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Curious about what your classmates are doing? Looking to network and change jobs? Wanting to share updates about your life? News concerning VUSN alumni is now sorted by class year on our alumni website (see tab called Class Notes). Additionally, you can find information about other VUSN graduates in the Alumni in the News section of our website, the *VUSN Alumni News* e-newsletter, *Vanderbilt Nurse magazine* and *Vanderbilt Magazine*. So be sure to keep us up-to-date about yourself. VUSN relies on current demographics when requesting grants and support and when seeking preceptors for our students.

Reunion 2016

Activities ranged from a special luncheon for the new class of Quinqs (those alumni celebrating their 50-year reunion) to educational sessions and award presentations to alumni and friends of VUSN. Photos by Dina Bahan.

1. Dean Linda Norman presents the Alumni Award for Excellence in Nursing to Britney Broyhill, BA '06, MSN '08, DNP '13. 2. Professor of English, Emeritus Vereen Bell received the school's Friend of Nursing Award for his impact on nursing students. 3. The new Quinqs. 4. Alumni could earn CEUs at this class presented by Katherine Evans, DNP '12, FAANP.



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