

The PULSE

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A PUBLICATION OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING

◆ Celebrating 35 Years of Leadership in Nursing Education ◆

School of Nursing looks to the future

Founded in 1970 with only 19 students, Fairfield University's School of Nursing (SON) today serves an annual enrollment of more than 300 undergraduate and graduate students. In fact, the School welcomed its largest-ever freshman class of 64 students this September.

Dean Jeanne Novotny, Ph.D, RN, FAAN, likes to say the School "is 35 years young," and constantly evolving to meet the diverse needs of healthcare professionals. This year, as the School celebrates its 35th anniversary, "the need for nurses nationwide is greater than ever, and we've established an aggressive four-year plan to respond to that demand," she says. "We're updating the School's skills laboratory, establishing a new multimedia classroom and a demonstration classroom, upgrading our wireless classrooms, and enhancing our curriculum." The School recently formed an Advisory Board that will focus on strategic planning and fundraising to accomplish these initiatives and pursue continued development.

It's a daunting game plan, but one that has already gotten a tremendous boost with two generous grants from the McKeen Fund, totaling \$51,000. The

School had been working to create an Advisory Board to guide it in strategic planning and development, when James Daly, former Fairfield University Trustee, and trustee of the McKeen Fund, expressed interest in helping. Besides allowing for the establishment of the Advisory Board, the grant has funded the launch of the nursing lecture series which will kick off on Oct. 26 with celebrated neurologist and author Oliver Sacks, whose books include *Awakenings* and *The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat*.

The Board has already secured 10 members (see article p. 2) but expects to expand to twice that number. Chairing it is Nancy Lynch, P'95, a volunteer in the development field for 30 years. Both the Advisory Board and the lecture series will help the School address many of the challenges facing the nursing field, including the nursing shortage, the nursing faculty shortage, and the evolving role of the nurse. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing estimates that 32,000 qualified nursing candidates have been turned away from nursing programs because of a critical shortage of nursing faculty, a bitter pill to swallow because the need for nurses is so great.

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Meet our Advisory Board

The SON's new Advisory Board will address specific projects and objectives aligned with the School's long-range plan, with a focus on gaining support and funding.

Moreen Donahue, N.D. **Greenwich Hospital**

Moreen Donahue is senior vice president of Patient Care Services and chief nursing officer at Greenwich Hospital. She is a member of the Yale New Haven Health System Senior Executive Management Group, Quality Council Steering Committee, and the Patient Safety Steering Committee Taskforce, and has more than 30 years of experience as a nurse leader in hospitals and home care. Dr. Donahue is a member of Sigma Theta Tau, the International Nursing Honor Society. She received her bachelor of science degree in nursing from Boston College, a master of science degree in education from the State University of New York, a master of science in nursing from Case Western Reserve University's (CWRU) Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, and has completed her doctorate in nursing at CWRU.

Daniel Hayes '68, M.D. **Maine Center for Cancer**

Daniel Hayes is the president and managing partner of the Maine Center for Cancer Medicine and Blood Disorders, where he has been practicing medical oncology since 1976, focusing on adult cancers with a concentration in lung cancer and palliative care. He is currently president elect of the Northern New England Clinical Oncology Society, and a member of the Carrier Advisory Committee, Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Spring Harbor Hospital Board of Trustees, and the Hospice of Southern Maine Board of Trustees. Dr. Hayes is board certified in both internal medicine and in medical oncology. He received his

bachelor of science degree from Fairfield University and his doctorate from Cornell University Medical College in 1972. Married to Phyllis Bernet with four adult children, he is currently a communicant at Holy Martyrs Church (the patrons are the Jesuit North American martyrs), in Falmouth, Maine.

Robin Bennett Kanarek, BSN'96

A registered nurse since 1979, Kanarek has worked in the fields of cardiology, spinal cord injury, insurance review and, most recently, as a certified diabetes educator at Stamford Hospital. She received her BSN at Fairfield University in 1996, summa cum laude. In 2000, Kanarek lost her 15-year old son, David, to lymphocytic leukemia after a five-year battle with the disease. Since David's passing, Kanarek has become involved in fundraising activities for The Teenage Cancer Trust, a foundation that raises funds to build in-patient cancer centers for teenagers and young adults suffering from the disease. She recently had a chapter published in the medical textbook *Cancer and the Adolescent*, and co-wrote a chapter in *The Parent's Perspective of Adolescent Oncology*. In March 2004, she was invited to be a lecturer at the International Conference on Adolescent Oncology at the Royal College of Physicians in London; she presented "The Parents Perspective of Teenage Cancer." Kanarek serves on the board of The Thumbelina Fund in Stamford and on the board of the Carl and Dorothy Bennett Foundation in Greenwich. She lives in Hampstead, London with her husband, Joe, and their 15-year-old daughter, Sarah.

Nancy P. Lynch, P'95, board chair

As a volunteer in the field of development for nearly 30 years, Lynch has focused her efforts largely on healthcare. She sits on the Board of Trustees at Greenwich Hospital and the VAN Hospice Foundation in Vero Beach, Fla.

For the past three years, she has led the capital campaign for Greenwich Hospital as its chairman, having raised \$58 million of its \$67 million goal to date. At Eagle Hill School, she served on the Board of Trustees for 11 years and started their first annual giving program. The campaign was completed in three years and the library was named after her. Lynch also sat on the boards and led the development committees of the Bruce Museum, the Family Centers of Greenwich, and The Convent of the Sacred Heart.

A graduate of Centenary College, she lives with her husband, Roger Lynch '63, a retired General Partner of Goldman Sachs, in Greenwich, Conn., and Vero Beach. They are the parents of three grown children: Roger, Stephen '95, and Aimee.

Elnor L. Morrell BSN'81, M.A. **United Health Group**

A senior information systems project manager at United Health Group, a diversified Fortune 100 company that provides a broad spectrum of resources and services to help people achieve improved health through all stages of life, Elnor Morell is also an invited member of the Connecticut Healthcare Informatics Network, a member of the Fairfield University Board of Trustees, and the Project Management Institute. She received her bachelor of science in nursing at Fairfield University, and her master's certificate in IT Project Management from George Washington University. She currently volunteers for the Vital Life Stories project sponsored by United Methodist Homes in Wesley Village in Shelton, Conn. Her areas of special interest include public health informatics, predictive modeling, health policy development, and administration.

Aimee Mueller '93, BSN'98

After graduating from Fairfield University in 1993, Mueller was

employed by SmithKline Beecham in Philadelphia, Penn. and then by Pfizer, Inc. in New York City. She worked in the field of toxicology, compiling information on the health and safety effects of final drug products as well as raw materials used in pharmaceuticals. She later returned to Fairfield University in the second-degree nursing program, and upon graduation worked as a staff nurse in cardio-thoracic surgery, then as a research assistant before taking a hiatus to raise a family. She is currently a member of Sigma Theta Tau International, the Honor Society of Nursing, and was editor of Fairfield's Mu Chi Chapter newsletter from 2000 to 2002. A full-time mother to three sons, she remains actively involved in various volunteer opportunities within the New Canaan school system.

**Jeffrey F. Otis,
Paul L. Jones Fund**

Jeffrey F. Otis is currently a vice president at Webster Bank in the area of trust and estate administration in which he has 37 years of experience. Webster Bank manages the Paul L. Jones Fund which provides scholarship support to assist students in medical and health-related fields. For more than two decades, the Paul L. Jones Fund has underwritten a scholarship in support of students in Fairfield University's School of Nursing. Otis is married with four children, and has lived in Southington, Conn., for the past 30 years.

Kathy Russo, R.T.R.

Kathy Russo graduated from Yale-New Haven School of Radiological Technology in 1968. She was a staff technologist at Yale-New Haven Hospital from 1968 to 1975, and the supervisor of the Emergency and Out Patient Radiology Department at Yale New Haven from 1975 to 1984. Russo is the past president of St. Vincent's Medical Center Auxiliary, past president of Bellarmine Guild at Fairfield Prep, and a past member of the University's Trustees

SON ADVISORY BOARD



Members of the new SON Advisory Board met in June for a weekend-long meeting and retreat. Front row (l-r): Dr. Sheila Grossman, Nancy Lynch, chairman of the board, Dr. Jeanne Novotny, dean, and Claudia Schechter. Second row (l-r): Kathy Russo, Elnor Morrell, Moreen Donahue, Aimee Mueller, and Robin Kanarek. Third row: Jeff Otis and Daniel Hayes. Not pictured: Olivia Weeks, Dr. Suzanne Campbell.

Advisory Council. She has four children and is a eucharistic minister at St. Pius X Church in Fairfield.

**Claudia Schechter,
Schechter Foundation**

Claudia Schechter is the vice president of The Schechter Foundation, which offers educational grants to students pursuing advanced degrees in the nursing, occupational, and physical therapy disciplines. The Schechter Foundation supports a scholarship for second degree students.

A professional photographer, Schechter has a degree from the Rochester Institute of Technology in biomedical communications and biomedical photography. She has sold professional film and cameras for FUJI and Polaroid, and pharmaceuticals for the SmithKline Beecham and Johnson & Johnson companies. Currently, Schechter is working as a freelance international documentary photographer, traveling all over the world recording other cultures and lifestyles.

Olivia Weeks BSN '05

Olivia Weeks graduated from Lake Forest College with a degree in art history. She began volunteering at Westport Emergency Medical Service 10 years ago, and it was shortly thereafter that she decided to pursue her studies in nursing. She is a 2005 graduate of the Fairfield University second degree nursing program, has recently passed her NCLEX exams, and is in the process of deciding where she would like to begin her formal career as a nurse. She has lived in Southport with her husband, Bill, for 24 years. They have four children, Alexa, William, Whitney, and Olivia.

Learning Resource Center slated for upgrade

One of the priorities identified by Dr. Novotny and the SON Advisory Board this past year is the need to upgrade the Learning Resource Center, making it current with state-of-the-art technologies and getting graduates ready for the high level of practice they will soon experience in the hospitals. The upgraded Resource Center will include a health assessment lab in which students can practice skills such as catheterizations; a multimedia classroom; a demonstration classroom where students can use simulation models to reach high levels of competency necessary for clinical practice; and wireless classrooms that will enable students to have up-to-date didactic instruction and access to current knowledge.

“Students would be able to perform a procedure in one room, for example, while their classmates observe from another. They could then critique the procedure and write care plans as they are observing,” explains Dr. Suzanne Campbell, Learning Resource Center project director. “We’ll be able to use the technology in simulation models, computers, and various programs to supplement our teaching.”

Indeed, the Center got a surprise shot in the arm on graduation day this past May, when new graduate Olivia Weeks handed Dr. Novotny an envelope. Inside: a check for \$35,000 for the SON to purchase a patient simulation mannequin, a life-like model patient that comes complete with a heartbeat, pulse, and chest movements. (See article, p 6.)

The model has arrived and should be available for students to begin using by spring 2006, after faculty pilot various scenarios for different nursing courses. In the meantime, consultants have begun work to assess the particular needs of the School and design a lab that would best meet those needs. This is a four-year initiative with a projected cost of \$570,000, including lab equipment, faculty development and curriculum, but excluding the cost of construction. Gifts are being sought from corporations, private foundations, individuals, and government sources. Anyone interested in learning more about this project should contact Dr. Suzanne Campbell at (203) 254-4000, ext. 2578, or by e-mail at

scampbell@mail.fairfield.edu

Spotlight on Students

Connecticut Post profiles senior

Readers of the *Connecticut Post* got to know Kara Rovelli '05 fairly well before she graduated in May. That's because the 21-year-old Massachusetts native was profiled four times throughout the year, in articles that showcased her demanding course load, long hours of clinical work, and time spent singing with the Glee Club.

At graduation, Rovelli was honored with a coveted award: the Elizabeth K. Dolan Award for the senior with a 3.25 GPA or better, who exhibits the professional attributes of caring, sensibility,



Kara Rovelli '05

leadership, and clinical proficiency. Rovelli, who is interested in pediatric nursing, recently

began working at Connecticut Children's Medical Center in Hartford as a nurse on the oncology and hematology floor.

To read the four *Connecticut Post* installments, log on to www.fairfield.edu/nursing

Nurse and playwright

Senior Lauren Satos is a nursing student with a creative flair and a love of the theatre. Taking the Creative Minds seminar in her freshman year was a welcome break from her rigorous core course load...but never did she imagine that the seminar would lead her to write a play.

Satos's play, *Let it Be*, concerns a man dying of AIDS and his overbearing mother as they struggle to accept his impending death. Satos began the one-act play during the seminar, drawing upon her background as a nurse-in-training and her personal experience of

having a relative with AIDS. She expanded the play last summer, and was delighted when it was selected to be read at Fairfield University's New Works Festival last March.



Lauren Satos '06

“I never thought an English class could offer this range of creativity,” says Satos. “I draw from my experiences of seeing pain and anxiety in a hospital and infuse that into the plays I write.”

The Creative Minds seminar was created in 2001 as a way to bridge the discipline of writing with that of the arts, says Dr. Kim Bridgford, professor of English, who designed the seminar.

Doris Troth Lippman, Ed.D, APRN, C.S.: Highest honors for a job well done

When Dee Lippman joined the Army Nurses Corps in 1967, she had no idea the next two years would not only shape her life, but her career as well. Now, almost 40 years later, her continued work with veterans has earned her the nursing profession's highest award – fellowship in the American Academy of Nursing.

Lippman, then just out of nursing school, joined the Army on the condition she and her husband Kenneth, a newly minted physician, could serve together. They were assigned to a M.A.S.H. hospital for surgical orthopedic injuries in Japan, where soldiers were flown from Vietnam and stabilized before being sent home ... or back to the front. "During the Tet Offensive in 1968, there were so many casualties, and most of these soldiers had not been in a place where they were not under attack since going to Vietnam," she remembers. "As they were recovering, they tended to open up, especially to the nurses, talking to us as if we were their moms or sisters or girlfriends. It's hard to find a place to put that." Some of the men would be sent home if their tour of duty was almost over, but many had to be sent back to Vietnam – a task that was particularly difficult for the people who had nursed them back to health. "When we came back home in '69, the country was so against the war that we never talked about our experiences there," Dr. Lippman says. "We didn't even discuss them with our families."

Fast forward 11 years. Dr. Lippman, now with three children plus master's and doctoral degrees from Columbia, landed one of two teaching positions at Fairfield's School of Nursing. "I was teaching a class and went to a veteran's hospital with my nursing students, and it was there that I first saw Vietnam vets with post-traumatic stress syndrome, something that was not recognized in the '60s." It struck her that the men she had patched up and sent home years ago

were still suffering, and Dr. Lippman — who had specialized in psychiatric nursing in school — promised she'd do whatever she could to help. She began volunteering at outreach centers, where the vets tended to go for their emotional care, and she joined the board of Homes for the Brave, which provides vets with transitional housing.



Dr. Doris Troth Lippman

In 1985, Dr. Lippman heard about the Vietnam Women's Memorial Project, a group dedicated to honoring the women who had served in Vietnam. "Since only military personnel are listed on The Wall in Washington, D.C., there are just eight women noted there," she says. She became actively involved with the group, trying for nine years to get a sculpture approved to honor the nurses who had served in Vietnam. The challenge was daunting for its endless bureaucracy, but when the sculpture was finally approved in 1993, a caravan of veterans escorted it from Santa Fe, where it was cast, to Washington. Dr. Lippman was in Santa Fe for the unveiling, and in D.C. when it was brought "home."

In 2003, Dr. Lippman was awarded an honorary Military Order of the Purple Heart. She is currently president of the Connecticut Nurses' Association (CNA), and lectures frequently on the emotional toll placed on soldiers and

nurses during war. "The psychological wounds of war are not recognizable the way wounds to the body are," she says. Her work has led her to focus not just on older veterans, but on the geriatric population in general. She has been honored by the CNA with its highest award — the Diamond Jubilarian Agnes Ohlson Award — for her contributions to nursing through political action. Through it all, Dr. Lippman has juggled a full teaching schedule in the School of Nursing, and even managed to complete a second master's degree (in marriage and family therapy) through Fairfield's Graduate School of Education and Allied Professions. "Dee is one of the most influential nursing professionals in the country," says Dean Novotny. "The role she played in establishing the Vietnam Women's Memorial is a tribute to her personally and to the University."

In November, her fellow nurses will honor Dr. Lippman when she is inducted as a Fellow into the American Academy of Nursing at a ceremony in Arizona. "Only 38 percent of all those who applied this year were actually selected," says Dr. Novotny. The Academy honors those who have done work well above and beyond their normal duties.

Dr. Lippman is pleased and honored to be receiving the award, though she's not entirely sure how being a Fellow in the Academy will affect her work. "I'll still serve on various boards for veterans' issues, and I'd like to focus my work more on post-traumatic stress and the care of vets now coming home from Iraq," she says. "The sooner they get treatment for mental health issues, the less likely those issues are to become chronic." As for nurses, the landscape for those serving in Iraq is quite similar to those who served in Vietnam. "They're under fire almost all the time," Dr. Lippman said. "The work hasn't changed. It's saving as many people as you can save and comforting those who lay dying."

Gifts and Grants

\$25,000 to train graduate student nurses

Local community health centers often provide society's safety net of care for underserved populations. The **Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** has awarded Fairfield University's School of Nursing \$25,000 for a project to prepare advanced practice registered nurse candidates to work at those centers.

Fairfield has teamed with Sacred Heart University's College of Education and Health Professions and the two federally qualified health centers located in Bridgeport — Southwest Community Health Center and Bridgeport Community Health Center — for the project.

The one-year grant will provide funding to allow advanced practice nursing students to train at local health centers and work with doctors and nurses there. The goal is to familiarize students with working in those settings and help them to develop culturally appropriate, community-based primary care interventions.

Ultimately, the project will encourage more nurses to take jobs at federally qualified health centers, said Dr. Jean Lange, associate professor of nursing.

Barcklow Grant allows SON to incorporate spirituality into geriatric curriculum

The **John J. Barcklow Foundation** awarded Fairfield University's School of Nursing \$5,000 to consider new ways of integrating spirituality into its geriatric nursing curriculum. An additional \$10,000 has been awarded for the fiscal year 2006.

Spirituality can be an essential aspect of care for older adults with medical problems, particularly those in long-term care situations, says Dr. Meredith Wallace, associate professor of nursing. However, as a secular society we often shun those needs, Dr. Wallace says, noting that Fairfield's Jesuit mission makes it even more important that the School address the issue.

The grant project will design a clinical rotation within Fairfield University's current geriatric course for Spring 2005, with a substantial emphasis on spirituality. Ten selected students and faculty members will be educated in faith-based nursing care through consultation with nursing experts specializing in this area.

The grant also funded the free lecture on spirituality and nursing given by Sr. Mary Elizabeth O'Brien of the Catholic University of America last December (see article, page 8).

The John J. Barcklow Foundation provides a wide range of services and products to promote compassion and quality of life for older adults.

\$25,000 grant to take geriatric nursing certificate program to the web

The success of a geriatric nursing certificate program launched by Fairfield University's School of Nursing last fall has enabled Dr. Meredith Wallace, associate professor of nursing and the Elizabeth DeCamp McInerney Endowed Chair in Health Sciences, to garner a second \$10,000 grant from **The Daphne Seybolt Culpeper Memorial Foundation**, to develop an online version of the program. In addition, \$15,000 was awarded from **The Adrian & Jessie Archbold Charitable Trust** over a two-year period for the same project.

Last year, The Daphne Seybolt Culpeper Memorial Foundation awarded the SON \$10,000 to develop a Geriatric Nursing Certificate Program for nurses who are seeking to increase their skills in working with older adults. The course ran last fall and graduated 18 students.

The Daphne Seybolt Culpeper Foundation was established in 1983 and focuses its giving on education, health care, and human services. The Adrian & Jessie Archbold Charitable Trust was established in 1976 and provides grants in support of medical sciences, hospitals, and other health-related organizations.

The certificate program provides students with 24 contact hours of work. With six more hours, registered nurses with two years of experience working with older adults can sit for the Gerontological Specialty Nursing Certification examination provided by the American Nurse Credentialing Center. The credential is a nationally recognized benchmark for excellence in geriatric nursing care, Dr. Wallace says. The School will begin offering the online course this fall.

A graduate's surprise gift

Most students breathe a sigh of relief when that last tuition bill is paid, but recent SON graduate **Olivia Weeks '05** turned the tables on her alma mater by presenting the School with a check for \$35,000 for new technology in the School of Nursing lab. Thanks to her generosity, future students will have

the benefit of hands-on practice using “SimMan,” a human patient simulator by Laerdal Medical.

The new technology makes it possible to have hands-on practice on a computer-activated, life-like patient, complete with a heartbeat, pulse, and chest movements. While a student at Fairfield, Weeks worked as a lab assistant to Diane Mager, director of the Learning Resource lab,

where students get lab experience before heading off to clinical assignments. She saw then how technology could enhance students’ educational experience.

Weeks worked with the Westport EMS for nine years and said the experience sparked her interest in the medical field. She completed most of her clinical work in pediatrics at Yale-New Haven Hospital and hopes to continue working in that field.

Scholarship money

The **Paul L. Jones Fund** has generously renewed the scholarship it has supported for more than a dozen years, providing \$50,000 in tuition assistance to Connecticut students enrolled in the School of Nursing.

Stepping up to the challenge

General Re Corporation has been extremely supportive of the School of Nursing over the years. This year, their \$5,000 gift was the first supporting the McKen Fund’s challenge to develop an annual lecture that will spotlight the importance of nursing and the healthcare profession. This year’s inaugural event will feature Dr. Oliver Sacks.



The Schechter Foundation has provided \$26,000 in scholarship monies to deserving second-degree nursing students for the 2004-05 and 2005-06 academic years. In May, the School of Nursing invited students in the 15-month program receiving scholarships in 2004-05 to a dinner with Claudia Schechter. Pictured here (l-r): Stephen Roberts, Sherry Lucke, Carrie Guttman, Carole Pomarico, director of the Second Degree Program, Claudia Schechter, Tsedron Normatsang, and Richard Arriaga. Not pictured is Thu-Hong Vu.

Government Funding

\$255,000 to prevent lead poisoning in children

The School of Nursing has received a three-year subcontract totaling \$255,000 from the city of Bridgeport as part of the Bridgeport Lead Free Families Program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The subcontract, directed by Dr. Philip Greiner, associate professor of nursing, will provide lead screenings in targeted neighborhoods, case management services to families with a child who has a blood lead level of 10 µg/dl or higher, and education for parents about lead poisoning hazards and for providers about the Bridgeport Lead Free Families Project. Other partners include the Bridgeport Office of Planning and Economic Development, Bridgeport Health Department’s Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, the Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust, and Matrix Public Health Consultants.

The subcontract is administered through the Health Promotion Center by Lydia Greiner, MSN, manager of Community Services for the School of Nursing, and outreach worker Grace Jordan-Kearney. Students will contribute to this work through various academic nursing courses.

Additional government funding

- A \$14,000 grant from the Southwestern Connecticut Agency on Aging will provide a combination of cardiovascular and mental health screening, plus education, for at-risk elderly.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources Services Administration has provided the SON with a \$30,477 Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship grant.
- The City of Bridgeport’s Department of Youth Services has awarded the SON’s Health Promotion Center \$90,000 to oversee recreational programs at Blackham school after school hours. The goal of the program is to bolster academic performance and thus lower the drop-out, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, and crime rates.

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Fortunately for Fairfield University's School of Nursing, "There has been tremendous growth in the School since its inception," Lynch said. "[The creation of the Advisory Board] is only going to enhance it and make it stronger."

The SON's Partnership Council, a dedicated group of professionals who provide professional and education expertise, continues to be an effective source of communication between faculty, community representatives, and clinical agencies. Their role, separate from that of the Advisory Board, is to help create appropriate clinical experiences for students and to identify resources in the community that will benefit the School and its students.

◆ Celebrating 35 Years of Leadership in Nursing Education ◆

THE SCHOOL OF NURSING PUBLISHES

Our faculty has been busy over the last two years! Besides their normal course loads, most have found time to publish. Check out their impressive list of articles, books, and presentations on our website:

www.fairfield.edu/nursing

Sr. Mary Elizabeth O'Brien on Spirituality and Nursing

When we as nurses stand behind patients and their families, God is also present," said Sr. Mary Elizabeth O'Brien, Ph.D., FAAN, of the Catholic University of America during her talk on spirituality and nursing last winter. Her presentation was funded by the John J. Barcklow Foundation, as part of a \$5,000 grant to the School of Nursing with the aim of finding ways to integrate spirituality into the geriatric nursing curriculum.

Traditionally, nurses have turned their patient's spiritual needs over to the minister, priest, or rabbi, said Sr. O'Brien. It wasn't until the '70s and '80s that the medical profession began to emphasize holistic care, assessing the patient's spirit and determining how that might impact his or her health. Today, she sees a new role for nursing, "not to take over the work of ministry, but to work hand in hand with chaplaincy," she said. She cited a study of 45 chronically ill older adults whose ailments left them marginalized from their church. After several weeks of pastoral care nursing, "they noted significant increases in their level of satisfaction and hope," said Sr. O'Brien.

A noted expert on the subject of nursing and spirituality, Sr. O'Brien's many books explore the topic in greater depth. "When the nurse takes the hand of a frail elderly who is trying to adjust to life in a nursing home, she is standing on Holy Ground," she said. "All nurses should be comfortable enough to assess a person's spiritual needs."

Spirituality can be an essential aspect of care for older adults with medical problems, particularly those in long-term care situations, said Dr. Meredith Wallace,

Elizabeth DeCamp McInerney Professor of Health Sciences and associate professor of nursing, who teaches primarily on long-term care and the elderly.

However, as a secular society we often shun those needs, Dr. Wallace said.

"We're in a culture that is afraid to address patients' spiritual needs because they may be in conflict with our own," Dr. Wallace said. Including spirituality in nursing care may be as simple as facilitating relationships between patients and their spiritual leaders; praying with patients; escorting them to religious services; watching a televised service; or responding in other ways to their spiritual needs.

She added that the Barcklow grant will allow 10 selected students and faculty members to be educated in faith-based nursing care with experts in the field.



Sr. Mary Elizabeth O'Brien

Partnerships: Local, National, and International

Fairfield University, Norwalk Community College expand partnership

This year, the Fairfield University School of Nursing and Norwalk Community College (NCC) Department of Nursing have joined forces to pave the way for graduates of NCC's two-year nursing school program to transfer to Fairfield University to complete studies toward a bachelor of science degree in nursing. The collaborative agreement between public (NCC) and private (Fairfield) institutions provides a seamless transition to further the education of nurses throughout the state of Connecticut.

The partnership allows NCC nursing graduates to transfer 67 credits from NCC to Fairfield toward a BSN degree. Fairfield University will then decrease NCC students' elective requirements from three to two.



Pictured (l-r) are Dr. Jeanne M. Novotny, dean of Fairfield University's School of Nursing; NCC President Dr. David L. Levinson, and Dr. Mary Schuler, director of the Norwalk Community College Division of Nursing and Allied Health.

Award for Fairfield University and Sacred Heart graduate nursing students

Two local graduate nursing students, Sharon Benard of Fairfield University and Jennifer Nelson of Sacred Heart University, have become the first nurse practitioners to win the Most Collaborative National Primary Care Week Project (NPCW) award.

The students were honored for a 2004 project in which they joined forces with the Bridgeport Community Health Center to host three free health lectures during Connecticut's National Primary Care Week. The American Medical Student Association Foundation offered a grant to defray the costs of providing the lectures; Connecticut's Southwestern Area Health Education Center made additional support available.

The project created by Benard and Nelson was selected from a pool that represented more than 230 schools that planned events for NPCW. Generally the honor has gone to a medical school. Benard was "quite shocked and really excited at having been the first nurse practitioners to ever participate and win."

Recruiting nursing students with scholarship aid

The School of Nursing is creating partnerships with local hospitals and healthcare agencies that wish to attract nursing candidates to employment via scholarships that help pay some tuition costs.

Tsedron Normatsang of Woodbridge and Paula Scotti Shevlin of Darien were each selected for a \$10,000 scholarship awarded by Stamford Hospital for Fairfield University accelerated degree nursing students, in exchange for a promise to work at the hospital for at least one year.

TransCon Builders, which owns several local rehabilitation, skilled care, and assisted living facilities, offers undergraduate and graduate nursing



At the NPCW award ceremony (l-r): Jennifer Nelson; Susan DeNisco, coordinator of the Family Nurse Practitioners program at Sacred Heart; Sharon Benard; Dr. Jean Lange of the Fairfield University School of Nursing.

scholarships of \$7,500 for one year and \$15,000 for two years of employment. White Plains Hospital offers scholarships of \$5,000 a year for up to two years of service.

Fairfield University is working on even more partnerships with healthcare employers, says Dr. Novotny. "This is truly a win-win for our students and the local hospitals and healthcare agencies looking to employ them," she says.

Study overseas

Nursing students have two study abroad options, thanks to collaborative relationships with two respected European universities. The University of Padova in Italy offers an intensive 2-week nursing research course, taught by Fairfield University's Dr. Jean Lange. Students can also opt to spend the spring semester of junior year at the National University of Galway on Ireland's west coast, a project coordinated by Dr. Meredith Wallace. For more information, log on to

www.fairfield.edu/studyabroad

Our alumni speak...

Last December, we wrote to you and asked you to respond to our 35th Anniversary School of Nursing Alumni Survey. More than 100 of you wrote back, and we are pleased and proud to confirm – through your comments — that nursing continues to be a highly flexible and rewarding profession. Here, just a few of the responses we received:

“Extreme satisfaction in my Fairfield education has led me to my career as an extremely satisfied nurse practitioner in Women’s Health.”

– Kathy Scannell Flynn ’94

“I can’t tell you how thankful I am for my education in nursing at Fairfield. I am constantly reminding students of the

three core values I took away with me from Fairfield – knowledge, communication & understanding. You definitely need all three!”

– Maria Ricciardi Hines ’83, Ft. Wayne, Ind.

“I really feel my Fairfield education prepared me both clinically as well as professionally. Mentors like Dr. Lippman and Dr. Grossman still influence me even 14 years after graduation.”

– Lisa Dittami Bradshaw, Andover, Mass.

“I would be happy to be a contact for students and/or faculty. Fairfield definitely prepared me for my role as a registered nurse and my education eased my transition into a master’s program for my nurse practitioner degree. In addition, the internship I completed at Greenwich

Hospital through Fairfield gave me quite an advantage when I began to look for a job as an RN. I recommend students to complete such an internship in addition to their clinicals.”

– Rachael Rowley McQuillan ’96, Boston, Mass.

“I try to contribute to mentoring and teaching new ICU staff. I started a unit journal club to encourage critical thinking and education within the unit. Also, we need more RNs to become certified CCRNs. I would be interested in your lecture series.”

– Charlene Reilly, Shelton, Conn.

Please, keep in touch! To fill out a survey, log on to our website:

www.fairfield.edu/nursing



Please detach and send

Fall 2005

Let’s Stay Connected!

Fall 2005

We love to hear from our alums and friends! We also want to do our best to keep you informed of events and plans at the School of Nursing. Please help us by filling out the form below. Send to: Maggie McCaffery, Fairfield University School of Nursing, 1073 North Benson Road, Fairfield, CT 06824.

Your Name		Class	Degree
<small>FIRST</small>	<small>(MAIDEN)</small>	<small>LAST</small>	<small>(IF APPLICABLE)</small>
Address		Home Phone ()	
City, State, Zip		Work or cell phone ()	
Check if this is a new address <input type="checkbox"/>		E-mail	
Comments?			
Spouse		Children, ages	
Signature		Date	

SON proudly welcomes our new staff

Joyce Shea, DNSc, APRN

For two years, Joyce Shea '79 has been an adjunct in the School of Nursing. Last September 2004, this Fairfield University graduate joined the faculty full time as assistant professor. Her responsibilities include providing clinical supervision for the undergraduate students in their psychiatric nursing rotation and teaching an undergraduate and graduate level nursing research course at Greenwich Hospital.

Dr. Shea is a nationally certified clinical nurse specialist in adult psychiatric-mental health nursing, with a special interest in those with schizophrenia. "The geriatric population is especially interesting, because it's a group about whom not much is known," she says. "I'm looking forward to doing some exploratory research with Bridgeport Hospital on the needs of

elderly individuals with severe mental illness, and whether or not those needs are being met."

Prior to her arrival at Fairfield, Dr. Shea taught at Quinnipiac and Yale, where she received both her MSN and DNSc degrees. In 2002, she received the Podium Presentation award from the Eastern Nursing Research Society for her dissertation study, "Coming Back Normal: The Struggle for Self in Those with Schizophrenia." She worked as a clinical nurse specialist at Danbury Hospital for seven years.



Joyce Shea

Sally Gerard, MSN, CCRN, CDE

Sally Gerard comes to Fairfield University from Stamford Hospital, where she was a critical care nurse and the coordinator of nursing education. She specialized in acute care education, with a focus on diabetes education. Prior to that, she was a diabetes educator at Bridgeport's St. Vincent's Medical Center from 1999 to 2003. She has lectured extensively at various hospitals and in the community on issues surrounding diabetes.

Professor Gerard has been an adjunct in the SON for three years and this year joins the faculty full time. She received her

BSN at Pace University, and her M.S. from the College of New Rochelle in 1993. Currently, she is enrolled in a clinical doctorate program through Case Western University, where she is concentrating on educational leadership. Her research focus is on diabetes education. For the past five years, Professor Gerard has been a mentor to a young girl in foster care.



Sally Gerard

Carol Fackler, MS

After years in Boston as an emergency nurse, Carol Fackler moved to Connecticut in 2003 to begin studies for her doctor of nursing science degree in health policy at Yale. She has been an adjunct professor in the School of Nursing for two years, teaching medical/surgical nursing and health care delivery systems to both undergraduates and second-degree students.

Professor Fackler received her BSN from the University of Rhode Island and her M.S. from the School of Nursing at UMass/Boston, where she later taught. She worked as a clinical nurse and manager in the Emergency Department of Boston Medical Center, Brigham and Women's Hospital, and in the

urgent care department of the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center. In 1989, she was nominated by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for Outstanding Achievement in Emergency Medical Services. Her dissertation topic will focus on nurses' perception of power and their professional roles. Professor Fackler has written for *Emergency Nursing Core Curriculum*, fourth edition (C.V. Mosby) and *CEN Review Manual*, 2nd edition (Emergency Nurses Association).



Carol Fackler

UPCOMING EVENTS

GRADUATE INFORMATION SESSION

Interested in going back to school? Join us for our next graduate information session. Wed., Nov. 9, from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Charles F. Dolan School of Business.

Register online at www.fairfield.edu/grad or call (203) 254-4184 or (888) 488-6840.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

Mark your calendars for June 17, 2006 when the SON will hold a professional development day here on campus. All are welcome! For more information, call Dr. Joyce Shea at (203) 254-4000, ext. 2575.



School of Nursing
1073 North Benson Road
Fairfield, CT 06824-5195

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Message From the Dean:



This is an amazingly exciting year as we celebrate two seminal events in the history of the School of Nursing: the celebration of our 35th year and the formation of the School of Nursing Advisory Board! We are blessed to have Nancy P. Lynch, P'95, a volunteer in the field of development for a number of years, as Advisory Board chair. I feel fortunate to be the dean of the School at this point in time and to have the unprecedented opportunity to work with the individuals who have agreed to share their outstanding talents with us.

The School of Nursing currently serves more than 300 graduate and undergraduate students. As a testament to the reputation and high standards of the School, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education granted accreditation in 2002. In congruence with the mission of Fairfield University, our goal is to provide our students with a Jesuit educational experience and teach them to become men and women for others. This experience takes place in a caring, diverse, academic learning environment that reflects professional nursing standards and provides our students with the highest level of education, one that is recognized at the local, national, and international levels.

Our goals for the future are based upon a foundation that reflects three key features of organizations in the 21st century: care of older adults, community, and partnerships. These themes, in conjunction with our Jesuit mission, are an integral part of all of our work.

In 1914, Florence Nightingale said, "Unless we are making progress in our nursing every year, every month, every week, take my word for it — we are going back." We invite you to join us in moving forward.

Please stay in touch. You can help us by filling out the form on page 10. We look forward to hearing from you.

Jeanne M. Novotny, Ph.D., RN, FAAN
Dean and Professor