



The

PULSE

Fall 2011

A PUBLICATION OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING

Dr. Campbell named Dean 1

Dr. Kazer earns top nursing honor 2

Richard Metz Reflects 3

The Art of Seeing 3

Wash Your Hands 4

Communication and Parkinson Disease ... 5

Recent Faculty publications 5

From Transition to Position 6

Simulation Operating Room 6

Dr. Diana Mager 7

Gifts and Grants 7

Message from the Dean 8

Dr. Suzanne Campbell Named Dean for 2011-12

Associate dean Suzanne Campbell, Ph.D., WHNP-BC, an esteemed member of the Fairfield faculty for 11 years, has been named dean of the School of Nursing for 2011-12. She assumed the position at the beginning of July, when Dr. Jeanne Novotny stepped down after 10 years of groundbreaking leadership.

Dr. Campbell says she is looking forward to shepherding the school through further growth, citing such initiatives as pediatric palliative care curriculum development and expanding international learning opportunities for students in Australia and Ireland. “I’m very excited about this opportunity to serve,” Campbell said. “Jeanne Novotny has set such a wonderful foundation, and I’m happy to have had the opportunity to work so closely with her and the Advisory Board over the years.”

Known for her energy and infectious enthusiasm, Dr. Campbell has been project director of the Robin Kanarek '96 Learning Resource Center, a state-of-the-art simulated hospital environment, as well as director of the school’s graduate programs, which now includes a doctorate program among them. She has also distinguished herself as a scholar and a clinician. She is co-editor of the book *Simulation Scenarios for Nurse Educators: Making it Real*, which has been translated into Korean. She has been certified as an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant since 2001. The recognitions that she has received

over the years include her recent induction into the Nursing Academy of the National Academies of Practice. She was awarded the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning (INACSL)’s Excellence in the Academic Setting Award - Mentoring category, after she was nominated by Fairfield nursing faculty.

University President Jeffrey P. von Arx, S.J., said that Dr. Campbell’s dedication to



Dean Suzanne Campbell will continue to teach, and is still involved with simulations in the Learning Resource Center.

her students and to the advancements in scholarship and research in her field make her an ideal choice for the post. “I know that under her guidance and stewardship, the School of Nursing will continue to excel, and to provide world-class training and education in the disciplines of nursing, infused with our Jesuit and Catholic emphasis on our obligation to form professionals dedicated to the care and well-being of others.”



Fairfield
UNIVERSITY

School of Nursing

Meredith Wallace Kazer Earns Top Nursing Honor

By Meg McCaffrey

Meredith Wallace Kazer, Ph.D., APRN, director of graduate programs and associate professor of nursing at Fairfield University, was inducted as a fellow into the American Academy of Nursing (AAN), an appointment reserved for nurse leaders at the forefront of the profession nationwide. A New Haven, Connecticut resident, Dr. Kazer's research interests focus on nursing care meeting the needs of older adults.



Photo: Sonny Odom

Dr. Meredith Kazer receives her certificate signifying her appointment as a fellow into the American Academy of Nursing. With her is Academy President Catherine Gilliss.

Selection is based, in part, on the extent to which nominees' nursing careers influence health policies and healthcare delivery for the benefit of all Americans. "Selection for membership in the Academy is one of the most prestigious honors in the field of nursing," said Academy President Catherine L. Gilliss, DNSc, RN, FAAN. "Academy Fellows are truly experts. The Academy Fellowship represents the nation's top nurse researchers, policymakers, scholars, executives, educators and practitioners."

Dr. Kazer, an adult and gerontological nurse practitioner, is currently working on several funded research studies aimed at supporting the psychosocial needs of older men with prostate cancer. She has varied her research to include independent and collaborative research projects focused on the education of nurses toward the care of older adults.

"I am so honored to be included among such a distinguished group of nursing colleagues in the American Academy of Nursing," said Kazer, who maintains a practice in primary care with a focus on chronic illness in older adults. "As my career progresses, I pledge to work tirelessly in the continuation of my research and wide dissemination of education and outcomes, in order to fulfill the mission and initiatives of this prestigious organization."

In becoming a fellow, Kazer, who earned degrees from New York University, Yale, and Boston University, joins Fairfield University Professors Kate Wheeler and Dee Lippman who are already members of this esteemed group. The mission of the AAN is to serve the public and nursing profession by advancing health policy and practice through the generation, synthesis, and dissemination of nursing knowledge.

SON Graduate Information Session

Interested in going back to school for a graduate degree? The School of Nursing will hold an online

**Graduate Information Session
on January 31, 2012 at 7 p.m.**

Find out about courses and credits, and ask questions of our faculty—all from the comfort of your computer! Just log on to:

www.fairfield.edu/graduatestudies

Reflection: A Wake-Up Call on Life's Priorities

Richard Metz '73, P'04, is a current SON Advisory Board member. He presented his perceptions of nurses and nursing care to a group of Second-Degree and RN-BSN students in a lively discussion at a dinner meeting funded by the RWJ Foundation.

My life changed dramatically four years ago when I was diagnosed with stage IV metastatic melanoma. Median life expectancy was 6-8 months after diagnosis and in my case, because I had a 12 centimeter tumor on my liver, it was likely to be much shorter. Since that initial diagnosis I've had four major operations on my liver, lungs and brain, and have partial loss of left side vision, but I'm very much alive, happy, and healthy in body, mind and spirit. Not a fun experience for sure, but when I look back on these four years I can honestly say, they have been the most memorable and rewarding in my life.

When I tell others how I feel, their immediate reaction is "how can you consider these years to be some of the best in your life?" Let me try to explain... When facing a life and death situation, one realizes that the most important things are not material possessions, social position, power, and prestige, but rather the value of solid relationships with friends, family, God, and the importance of wisdom, understanding, and spiritual knowledge.

From a friends and family perspective, this experience has made me realize how precious these relationships are. I'm

much more understanding and sensitive to other's concerns and issues and more open to express how I really feel about them. I've had some very open and honest discussions that have strengthened these relationships and have given all parties greater understanding and appreciation of each other. It is a comforting feeling to know that should something ever happen to me or any of my friends and family that we have taken the time to express our feelings for each other.



In facing my challenge I came to better understand and love God and feel much closer to God. I trust God and know that He has given me the strength, wisdom, inner peace, and confidence to handle all that I will face. I haven't spent much time wondering why I was the unlucky person to be inflicted with this terrible disease. He obviously picked me for a reason and over time I've come to realize that He wanted me to use my experiences as a teaching tool for others, giving people hope that with the power of prayer, trust in God, courage and wisdom one can help overcome very difficult situations.

I wake up each day and feel life is a blessing. My will to live has never been stronger and I savor every minute of every day. I don't worry about the possibility of cancer returning and what will be my next challenge but rather focus on what can I do today to make a difference in other people's lives.

The Art of Seeing

ekphrasis i: jeanne delarm-neri

It's no secret that accurate and objective observation is a critical component of clinical diagnosis. It's so essential, in fact, that nursing and medical schools have begun looking for non-conventional ways to increase students' observational skills.

That's where the University's Bellarmine Museum of Art comes in. According to several studies, "viewing works of art in a controlled setting increases critical thinking, visual literacy, and communication among students," explains Dr. Jill Deupi, director of the on-campus museum. A new program spearheaded by Dr. Sheila Grossman of the School of Nursing, the Bellarmine Museum, and the Health Professions Program run by Dr. Geoffrey Church will allow students to cycle through the museum on three separate occasions, participating in intensive exercises to hone their visual skills while they are there.

Step one, according to Museum Educator Kathleen Leito, is for students to examine a painting, then describe it with

careful attention to detail... and absolutely no subjective interpretation. It's not as easy as it sounds.

"We bring so many of our own assumptions and prejudices into our observations," said Advisory Board Member Carol Kwalwasser O'Neill '76, who engaged in a brief "test run" of the program during the fall Advisory Board meeting. "Yet, for nurses, one of the most basic skills we can develop is the skill of observation. Unfortunately, we get so used to looking at machines that we forget to observe."

The next steps allow students to interpret their observations, then finally to discuss them and reach one or multiple diagnoses.

The goals, according to Dr. Deupi, include improved evaluation and analytical skills, better communication and collaboration, increased sensitivity to others, and self-reflection, as students are required to write a summative reflection to evaluate the entire process.

Wash Your Hands: Nursing students teach preschoolers how to keep clean

By Meredith Guinness & Meg McCaffrey, Assistant Directors, Media Relations



Sean Young, a student in Fairfield University's Nurse Anesthesia program, and 3-year-old Eleni Braga in the campus' Early Learning Center (ELC).

Sean Young, a student in Fairfield University's Nurse Anesthesia program, crouched down at eye level with 3-year-old Eleni Braga at a sink in the Early Learning Center (ELC) on campus.

"Is it fun to make bubbles?" he asked, as the little girl scrubbed. "It is, right?"

"Yeah!" said Eleni, smiling at her handiwork. "My mommy always makes me wash my hands every morning and night!"

Young and his fellow classmates – Amy Li, Phil Werman, and Nancy Wallick – visited the ELC in October to teach toddlers and preschoolers how to wash their hands properly to help prevent the spread of germs at home and in their colorful classrooms. Their visit was part of the community outreach component to their master's degree program.

The students are taking "Epidemiology and Health Promotion" – a service learning course. Housed within the

University's Center for Faith and Public Life, the service learning program facilitates connections between focused academic learning, and meaningful and appropriate service that addresses needs identified by and with communities.

Assistant Professor Teresa Deshefy-Longhi, DNS, RN, said it's ultimately about teaching nurses that they can play a vital role in the community. "By partnering with community agencies and their members, they can work together to determine a relevant health problem," she said. "The nurses can then use their expertise to deliver an educational intervention tailored to that community's issues, being mindful of the overall goal to promote healthy lifestyle choices for all age groups."

To keep their message memorable, the nursing students brought along the "Happy Hands House," a decorated box equipped with a black light and a viewing window. Students had the children rub lotion on their hands to simulate germs that they could see under the black light. After they washed their hands, the purple "germs" magically disappeared. In addition, the students taught the children the "Wash, Wash, Wash Your Hands" song – set to the melody of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" – to help them remember their lesson.

They also posted a photo of proper hand washing technique at toddler eye level on the bathroom door. The students will visit the children again in a few weeks to see if they remember what they were taught. Their final report will include the entire experience, which was organized by Barbara Welles-Nyström, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Educational Studies and Teacher Preparation and the University liaison to the ELC.

"We're here to promote good health and prevention of disease," Young said. "And this is the type of place where you're going to spread things the most, so it's good to teach them early."

Congratulations!

The School of Nursing is very proud of **Nancy Andrews** and **Eileen Spenard**, two DNP students who were inducted into Alpha Sigma Nu last month.

Alpha Sigma Nu is the Jesuit Honor Society honoring students of higher education who distinguish themselves in scholarship, loyalty and service in their academic, professional and religious pursuits.

Eileen Spenard with University President Jeffrey von Arx, S.J.



Communication and Parkinson Disease

With a post-doctoral degree in aging and human development, assistant professor Tess Deshefy-Longhi was able to further her research on an aspect of Parkinson disease (PD) where she knew she could improve the quality of life for both the person with PD and his or her family: strengthening nonverbal communications skills.



“A full 70–90 percent of what we communicate to each other is non-verbal,” she explains. Yet those with PD gradually lose those traditional ways of communicating. “Their vocal tone and facial expressions often become flat, and fine motor skills are diminished leading to poorly executed, asynchronous gestures. Their expressions of anger or happiness may be basically indistinguishable, and many times are combined with raised eyebrows leading to a surprise-happy or surprise-angry expression.” Medications may also cause dystonic contractions, so those with PD can appear to be scowling when, in fact, they are not feeling upset. Compounding these effects of PD is the fact that most family members don’t understand how much these communication skills have been compromised, so they become annoyed that the PD person they love no longer “seems to care” about anything.

Imagine, then, the frustration for both the person with PD and his/ her spouse. “A spouse will often tell me they ‘miss’ their PD mate, when he or she is sitting right beside them. What they mean is that they miss the positive messages between each other – a wink or a smile, for example,” Dr. Deshefy-Longhi says. She is planning on developing a pilot program with colleagues at Duke University to help those couples living with PD develop new communication skills. For example, the PD person can give a thumbs-up or down to express their happiness or anger, and spouses can learn to sit next to the partner with PD, instead of across from them. The latter helps one to distinguish emotion using a person’s vocal tones and inflections because we’re not distracted by misleading visual cues.

The second phase of the project will be to work with healthcare providers, such as doctors, who work with people with PD. “When people with PD can’t express themselves nonverbally, doctors and other healthcare providers often assume that they lack cognitive function,” says Dr. Deshefy-Longhi. “We need to develop ways for providers and people with PD to better communicate.”

All her life experiences seem to point to this field of study, says Dr. Deshefy-Longhi, who joined Fairfield as visiting faculty last year and is now an assistant professor. “I was in the Peace Corps in Kenya, and had to learn Swahili,” she says. “That’s when I learned to appreciate the importance of non-verbal communication!”

Recent Faculty Publications

Davis, L.L., Gilliss, C, **Deshefy-Longhi, T.**, Chestmutter, D.H., Malloy, M. (2011). “The Nature and Scope of Stressful Spousal Caregiving Relationships.” *Journal of Family Nursing*, 17(2), 224–240.

Deshefy-Longhi, T. & Vorderstrasse, A. (2010). “Tremor and Fatigue.” In L. Neal-Boylan (Ed.), *Family Nurse Practitioner Case Studies*. Ames, IA: Wiley.

Deshefy-Longhi, T. (2010). “The Lucky Ones.” In N.L. Harless, (Ed.), *Caring Beyond Borders*. New York, NY: Kaplan Publishing.

Kazer - Wallace, M. & Grossman, S. (2011). *Gerontological Nurse Practitioner (GNP) Certification Review Book*. New York, NY: Springer Publishers.

Grossman, S. & Burke – O’Brien, M. (2010). *How to Run Your Own Business: A Guide for Nurse Practitioners*, New York: Springer Publishers.

Fitzpatrick, J. J. (Ed.) & **Kazer, M. W. [Wallace]**, (Assoc. Ed.). (2011). *Encyclopedia of Nursing Research*. 3rd Edition. New York: Springer Publishers.

Kazer, M. W. [Wallace] & Neal-Boylan, L. (Eds) (2011). Case Studies in *Gerontological Nursing for the Advanced Practice Nurse*. Ames: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing.

Campbell, S.H., Greiner, P., Shea, J., Grossman, S., Kris, A. & Miners, L. (in press). “Personal Transformation and Curricula Change.” In P. Schmidt, M.B. Combs (eds). *Justice in Jesuit Higher Education, Transforming the World and Being Transformed*, New York, N.Y.: Fordham University Press.

O’Shea, E., Pagano, M., Campbell, S.H., Caso, G. (in press) “Using Simulations to Enhance Health Communication in Undergraduate Nursing Curriculum: A Pilot Study,” *Clinical Simulation in Nursing*.

Campbell, S.H. (2011). “Role-playing: An underutilized tool for teaching students to think, act, and reflect like a nurse,” *Clinical Simulation in Nursing*, e1-e2.

From Transition to Position

It's no secret that, in this tight job market, graduating nurses have it better than their peers with a liberal arts focus; still, it can take 3-6 months for them to land a job. For that reason, the faculty was delighted that six graduates of the Class of 2011 were offered positions as a direct result of their transition experience.



contributed photo

Stephanie Stote was a nursing major; Jeff Collins studied math. They met their second day at Fairfield and graduated in 2005. Then Jeff joined the SON's Second Degree program and Stephanie is working toward her MSN – but they took time off to get married last month!

“At the start of their senior year, students identify two or three population groups they think they might want to work with upon graduation, and we work to find placements for them in the spring semester of senior year,” says Dr. Joyce Shea, undergraduate program director. “These transition placements are one-on-one mentoring positions with a staff person in the unit they are interested in. The fact that so many of our students were offered jobs immediately upon passing their NCLEX exams is a testament to the

solidity of their skills and knowledge. We've long had a good success rate in terms of our graduates being placed.”

Kylie McKeon was a student nurse tech at the Hospital of St. Raphael in New Haven before being offered a permanent position there. “My [transition] placement was very important in ultimately landing my current position. It provided me with the opportunity to become used to the hospital setting and to show what I was capable of,” she says. It's a win-win situation, as students who have a chance to become acclimated to the culture and expectations of their unit have a smoother transition to the new role of RN.

But it's not all about skills, points out Michael Cicirelli, who landed a position on the transplant ward of Yale New Haven hospital. “The transition placement gives the staff a chance to get to know you and observe how you interact with the rest of the team. It's about skills and work ethic, and also how you deal with your co-workers.”

Adds Suzanne Potter, who recently landed a spot in the cardiac step-down unit of St. Raphael's: “I would have never been offered a job without the help of Fairfield University, as this opportunity to work during my senior year gave the employer some insight to my work ethic, my personality, and my drive to be a great nurse. If I was just another application in a pile, I am certain that I would not have stood out enough especially with many nursing schools in the area.”

Simulation Operating Room

By Meg McCaffrey and Lindsay Walsh '12

The faculty of the School of Nursing is thrilled at the recent grant of \$446,856 from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The grant award is one of the largest the School of Nursing has ever received, and will add immense value to the Doctor of Nursing Practice program, which launched an Anesthesia track in early 2010.

Most of the grant will be directed towards the creation of a new, state-of-the-art mock operating room for graduate students enrolled in the University's Nurse Anesthesia programs, which are offered in conjunction with Bridgeport Hospital and Bridgeport Anesthesia Associates. Benefits from the “Comprehensive Anesthesia Training Through Simulation (CATTS) Project” will strengthen the students nursing capabilities in real life situations.

According to Nancy A. Moriber, Ph.D., CRNA, APRN,

Fairfield's Nurse Anesthesia Program track coordinator, “As part of the grant, we will be designing a mock operating room equipped with high fidelity, computerized adult and pediatric patient simulators, so that the nurse anesthesia students will be able to develop their skills in increasingly more complex patient care situations.” The elimination of risk for these clinical students is the most attractive aspect of the simulation lab, which is located in the School of Nursing Robin Kanarek '96 Learning Resource Center.

Other benefits of the newly introduced CATTS Project are the opportunities that the School of Nursing now has to assist the greater Bridgeport community. “Kids into Health Careers,” is a program that will take place in the second year aimed at providing experiential educational opportunities for secondary school children. It will also provide continuing education and certificate opportunities to certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) practicing in the community.

Mager League

As director of the Learning Resource Center for 13 years, Diana Mager has taught hundreds of traditional undergraduates and second degree students. Now, armed with a brand new Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from Case Western Reserve, Dr. Mager is moving into the classroom, teaching Nursing Therapeutics, Physical Assessment, and Community Health Clinicals. She's also the Principal Investigator on the Elder Project, funded by a major grant from HRSA, and is chairing the search committee to hire her replacement in the lab.

"I'm particularly excited to be able to engage more with my students, and to have time to conduct research," says Dr. Mager, whose areas of interest include homecare, community health, and medication errors. She has published in a number of peer-reviewed journals, including *Gerontological Nursing*, *Home Healthcare Nurse*, and *Med-Surg Nursing*.

Dr. Mager's students couldn't be happier to hear she's spending more time in the classroom. "I've learned a tremendous amount from her," says one who recently graduated from the Second Degree program.



Dr. Diana Mager, left, in the Learning Resource Center doing what she does best: teaching a new crop of nurses.

"She's an unbelievable, bright light, and one of the most intelligent people you'll ever meet," says Michael Cicirelli '11, who is now enrolled in the DNP program. "She's very reassuring and approachable, and helps you relate all the skills you learn back to nursing. Her nuggets of wisdom are constantly coming back to me."

Gifts and Grants

- A HRSA (U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration) Nurse Traineeship grant of \$20,508 will help students in need of financial assistance who are interested in pursuing a nursing career in anesthesia. Through the partnership with Bridgeport Anesthesia Associates (BAA) and Bridgeport Hospital, students will have the opportunity to serve in workforce areas with populations that are medically underserved and classified as low-income population zones, says Dr. Nancy Moriber, program director.
- A grant of \$22,891 from HRSA will support advanced nursing student tuition, providing opportunities for students to serve in medically underserved and low-income areas. Dr. Suzanne Campbell is project director.



Dr. Nancy Moriber

- A Southwestern Community Agency on Aging award of \$35,161 will help support the Health Promotion for Older Adults project. Assistant Professor Lydia Greiner, the principal director of the program, will lead co-workers and students in the mission of serving the elderly in the Bridgeport community. Two components of the project include (1) Matter of Balance, an evidence-based fall reduction program and (2) HomeMedsSM Medication Management Improvement Program (MMIP), an evidence-based program designed to prevent medication-related problems. The increase in the grant amount awarded compared to past years reflects the strong confidence in this program and its participants.



Assistant Prof. Lydia Greiner

UPCOMING EVENTS

Concert: Canticle of the Animals, Glee Club Christmas Concert. Fri., Dec. 2 at 8 p.m.; Sat., Dec. 3 at 2 p.m. \$10 For tickets, call the Quick Center Box Office (203) 254-4010.

Lecture: "Art and Spirituality in Healthcare," by Lindsay Farrell, Head of School, Arts and Sciences, Australian Catholic University. Wed., Feb. 29, 2012 at 5 p.m. Dr. Farrell's research is on the effects of artwork in helping people heal in hospitals and institutions. Campus Center Oak Room. Free and open to the public.



School of Nursing

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Message from the Dean



Exciting opportunities are presenting themselves on so many levels for the School of Nursing, and focus this year continues on programs that meet the needs of our students and their future employers. Consultation with our partnership council, Advisory Board, and cohorts of students (undergraduate through DNP), have resulted in three key themes: creating change agents who adapt to multiple fluctuating demands; developing opportunities for interdisciplinary and intra-professional collaboration; and enhancing knowledge and skills in the areas of health informatics, quality improvement, and genetics.

These themes are being met by interdisciplinary collaborations as described in the "Art of Seeing" and faculty research projects such as Dr. Deshefy-Longhi's work with Parkinson Disease families, Dr. Kazer's work with prostate cancer patients, Dr. O'Shea's work in pediatric palliative

care, and Dr. Mager's work with elder care and simulation. National and international recognition of the work of faculty and students includes presentations, grant awards, publications, and consultations in all parts of the world.

Our Jesuit mission encourages us to educate graduates in the reflective nature of Ignatius of Loyola, incorporating service learning opportunities into nursing courses, and focusing our efforts on care of the underserved to help us meet that Jesuit mission. We hold a vision of a world where healthcare providers from all disciplines collaborate to provide respectful, patient-centered care. It is no wonder our graduates are sought after and become leaders in nursing.

Wishing you all blessings, and time to reflect on those blessings, and be with those you love over the holidays.

Suzanne H. Campbell, dean