100 Years of Service to the VCU School of Nursing
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Cover Feature: Three longtime faculty members will leave a special legacy

Hard work, dedication and persistence
Student Feature: Indira Miller balances academics and community service

Alumna Tracy Williams
Alumni Feature: Tracy Williams succeeds in developing people, processes and programs

Reunion Weekend
Alumni enjoyed a lecture, a research poster showcase and more during Reunion Weekend 2015

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Reunion Weekend’s activities included the presentation of Alumni Awards. From left to right are Jim Jenkins, chair of the VCU School of Nursing Alumni Division; award winners Fay Parpart and Susan Lindner; and Jean Giddens, dean and professor.
Hello Alumni and Friends.

What a wonderful year it’s been here at the School of Nursing! I continue to be amazed at the outstanding work of our students, faculty and staff. We are making tremendous strides in elevating our school to even greater heights of nursing excellence.

In this edition of Connections, I encourage you to read our cover story about three retiring faculty who have educated thousands of students and helped shape our research program into one of the top among nursing schools nationwide. Drs. Betsy Bampton, Mary Jo Grap and Nancy McCain are leaving a legacy of 100 years of combined service to the VCU School of Nursing. We will greatly miss them and wish them the best on their retirement.

In other retirement news, we have launched a national search for a new Associate Dean of Academic Programs, as Dr. Ann Hamric has recently announced plans to retire this fall. An internationally known leader in advanced practice nursing and nursing ethics, Ann is leaving huge shoes to fill. It is our intention to bring in another dynamic innovator who can continue the great work she has done for our school. One of the major initiatives Ann led is the development of our DNP program. At press time, we are waiting to hear from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia on whether our DNP program has been approved. We hope to welcome our first cohort in fall 2015 pending approval.

As shared in the last edition of Connections, a number of new faculty members have joined us and they are already engaging in innovative scholarship and research endeavors. I encourage you to read about their activities and about all of the wonderful faculty and student achievements in this edition of Connections.

In development news, I would like to bring your attention to transitions in personnel. Kelly Gotschalk, formerly the Director of Annual Giving and Alumni Engagement, has left our Development Office to become Director of Development and Major Gifts for VCU Libraries. Kelly made an extraordinary impact in building our relationships with alumni and donors during her ten years with the School of Nursing. We thank her for her efforts and wish her well on her new opportunity. In the interim, please direct any development and alumni inquiries to our new Senior Director of Development, Kate Haydon.

Finally, I would like to thank all of the alumni who came back to be with us for Reunion Weekend 2015. Your energy and pride made the weekend a truly inspiring occasion. I also want to extend a special acknowledgement to Alumni Award winners Fay Parpart, Susan Lindner and Dr. Shelly Buck.

Thank you for supporting our school. We appreciate all that you do.

Jean Giddens,
Ph.D., RN, FAAN
Three visionary faculty members whose combined experience represents more than 100 years of service to the VCU School of Nursing will cross a new threshold this summer and fall.

When these accomplished nurse scholars retire, they will leave the VCU School of Nursing (SON) an illustrious legacy of individual and collective work that elevated its reputation, enrollment, programs and research.

Retiring are: Betsy A. Bampton, Ed.D., RNC-E, WHNP (B.S. ’60; Cert. ’80), associate professor emeritus and RN to B.S. academic advisor; Nancy L. McCain, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, Nursing Alumni Distinguished Professor; and Mary Jo Grap, Ph.D., ACNP, RN, FAAN (Cert. ’97), Nursing Alumni Distinguished Professor.

For Bampton, who works part time, her upcoming retirement marks her second attempt at leaving the world of work and her SON family. She officially retired in 1992 only to come back. “I can’t believe I have worked here 50 years,” she said, chuckling. “I’ve worked with five deans,” said the 1960 (MCV) graduate, who joined the faculty in 1965 and retired in 1992. Since then she has worked two days a week.

Bampton is credited with developing the RN to B.S. program that has produced thousands of graduates. The program made it convenient for working RNs to continue their education.

“For Betsy developed the weekend program for these nurses,” said JoAnne Henry, Ed.D., associate professor emerita, who served as chair of the school’s...
maternal/child nursing department at the time. “The program used a modified class format and classes were offered specifically to meet the needs of registered nurses. It was an instant success.”

Bampton said another career highlight was writing *A Proud Heritage—100 Years of Nursing Education*, which traced the school’s history. “My dissertation related to how the school developed, so in going to the archives I learned a lot of things and I was interested so I just kept them.” She chronicled the development of the eight schools and programs that formed the SON’s foundation for the centennial celebration. “It was interesting and I enjoyed doing it,” she recalled. The popular book is also available in an electronic version.

Bampton credited her career longevity to a workplace that allowed her to bloom where rooted. “I had so many different things I was involved with and taught at so many different levels... I never wanted to move on,” said Bampton.

Bampton started her nursing education by earning a B.S. from the MCV School of Nursing in 1960 and a M.S. in maternal-child nursing at the University of Maryland, minoring in education, in 1965. Shortly afterwards, she was hired at MCV’s School of Nursing to teach maternal child nursing and continued in her role as an assistant professor until 1973, when she was granted tenure and the rank of associate professor. In 1982, Bampton became director of RN to B.S. education. She also served as interim director of the Undergraduate Program, which included the traditional and RN to B.S. programs, from 1988 until she retired the first time in 1992 and was named an associate professor emerita. She was gone for only one month when she decided to come back part time as an academic advisor.

During her career at VCU, Bampton was very active in the Nurses Association of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists at the state, district and national levels. She also completed VCU’s Obstetrical-Gynecological Nurse Practitioner Program and went on to earn an Ed.D. at the College of William and Mary.

Of the many changes she has seen during her five decades at SON, she considers the impact of technology the most profound. “I’m advising, it’s online now and I miss the student contact on a face-to-face level, but that is the way the direction is going and it’s been interesting to watch how the school is moving forward in the variety of areas they have,” Bampton said.

As leaders in biobehavioral clinical research, nurse scientists McCain and Grap are heralded as research luminaries who played significant roles in building a world-class research program. Their efforts helped to position the SON among a few elite schools nationwide focusing on the development of biobehavioral science to advance nursing knowledge and patient care. Known for their drive for excellence in teaching, research, clinical practice and service, McCain and Grap were among the SON’s first endowed professors.

McCain, who joined the faculty in 1995, is most proud of “the school’s early leadership in the development of biobehavioral science, which lead to our renowned research centers, along with, and the significant contributions of our researchers to nursing science.”

What she will miss most is “the unique climate of collaboration, cooperation, and support for achieving the tripartite mission, particularly as we built our research capacity.”

“I had so many different things I was involved with and taught at so many different levels... I never wanted to move on.”

– BETSY A. BAMPTON
McCain was the principal investigator for the P20 Center grant that established the Center for Biobehavioral Clinical Research (CBCR), which transformed the research enterprise at the SON. She also served as director of the Biobehavioral Science Core for the P30 Center grant, which expanded the CBCR into the Center of Excellence for Biobehavioral Approaches to Symptom Management.

Nationally acclaimed for her research on stress management in persons with HIV and women receiving chemotherapy for breast cancer, McCain has significantly contributed to advancing the science of psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) through clinical interventions research. Her work advanced knowledge related to biobehavioral mechanisms, and PNI-focused nursing interventions, measurement systems and patient outcomes.

McCain’s numerous prestigious honors include selection as the Southern Nursing Research Society’s 2008 Distinguished Researcher, the University of Alabama in Birmingham School of Nursing’s 2004 Distinguished Alumna and the first recipient of the VCU School of Nursing Senior Research Award in 2002.

She received her B.S.N. and M.N. from the University of Mississippi and a Ph.D. in nursing from the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Nursing.

For Grap, retirement means she will miss “the great relationships with faculty and students and the excitement of new discoveries in nursing research. She is most proud of “making a difference in the nursing care of the critically ill.”

Retirement just feels right, said Grap, who joined the faculty in 1984. “Thirty years were wonderful; I had a great time and we accomplished so much. I don’t think I will necessarily miss it,” she said chuckling. “I’m ready to move on to a new chapter of my life. We had a run that I don’t think we would have been able to find almost anywhere else, most importantly because of our research colleagues. With Dr. McCain and our present and past colleagues, especially Drs. Rita Pickler, Cindy Munro, R.K. Elswick and Debra Lyon, we were just all together at the right time to build a foundation for research that resulted in two center grants and research support for many SON faculty. We had wonderful support especially from the dean, Dr. Nancy Langston, and our department chair, Dr. Patty Gray,” she said. “To be part of that building was just really magical.”

Grap is a founding member of the CBCR. She served as the principal investigator for the P30 Center grant. Grap’s own research is focused on optimizing pulmonary function in critically ill adults undergoing mechanical ventilation and included four federally funded projects. As a result of her investigation of clinical issues that directly impact their nursing care, hospitals across the nation have substantially improved the management of patients on mechanical ventilators.

She also participated in the development and testing of the Richmond Agitation Sedation Scale, a global sedation evaluation tool.

Prior to joining VCU and throughout her academic career, she served in the U.S. Army. In 2002, Grap retired as a colonel in the Army Reserve. Among other awards, she was recognized with a special commendation for Excellence in Critical Care Nursing by the U.S. Army Surgeon General. In 2009, she was the recipient of the American

“I am most proud of our early leadership in the development of biobehavioral science, which lead to our renowned research centers and the significant contributions of our researchers to nursing science.”

–NANCY L. MCCAIN
Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) Distinguished Research Lecturer award and in 2011 AACN’s Flame of Excellence Award.

A prolific author with more than 100 articles, she has presented her work at more than 75 national and regional conferences. She serves as associate editor of the bimonthly American Journal of Critical Care.

Grap received a B.S. in nursing from Kent State University, an M.S. in medical-surgical nursing from the University of Colorado, and a Ph.D. in higher education/educational administration from Georgia State University.

McCain and Grap were always generous with their time, expertise and guidance, said their mentees.

"Many have been blessed to have Nancy McCain as a role model and mentor," said Jo Robins, (M.S. ’91/N; Cert’91/ANP; Ph.D’99/N), an assistant professor at SON. "Her willingness to share her knowledge and expertise has helped us to believe and trust in our abilities as educators, scholars and scientists."

Alison Montpetit, Ph.D., RN, an assistant professor at SON, said Grap’s tutelage made a measurable impact. "Mary Jo Grap has made incredible advances in critical care nursing practice yet she remains humble and giving, leading by example. Her mentorship is empowering and clear; truly one of the most valuable gifts I have ever received," Montpetit said.

With retirement approaching, each professor is excited about the opportunity to unwind more, pursue other interests and journey to distant locations.

"I will be traveling extensively through our beautiful country," said McCain, “and a bit more of the world!” She has already visited six continents. As a retiree, “Antarctica remains a possibility!” McCain, who will retire on June 30, is looking forward to visiting France again this summer. Future return visits to Egypt and Israel also rank high on her list of possible destinations.

Grap, who will also retire on June 30, looks forward to spending more time on the road. “We have a RV and we have always enjoyed camping especially at all our state and national parks. We spend about three-quarters of our time on the road,” said Grap, whose time at SON was reduced to 20 percent last July as part of a faculty transition program (to assist faculty as they were developing grants and publications.) Retirement means “traveling all over the country, especially to see all the places we have yet to see,” she said.

Bampton, whose last day is Sept. 9, said she is looking forward to doing more volunteering and traveling. “I have done a lot of traveling over the years in Europe and have really enjoyed Riverboat traveling. At some time when it is calmer in Europe, I would like to go on the Danube River again and go from Budapest to the Black Sea. In the meantime I would like to see more of Canada and also go to some of the areas out west where I skied and visit them in the summer.”

In recognition of the years of service and accomplishments of our three faculty members, the VCU School of Nursing is establishing the McCain-Grap Research Endowment and the Betsy Bampton RN to B.S. Scholarship. If you would like support these funds, please contact Kate Haydon, senior director of development, at 827-0020.

“I will miss the great relationships with faculty and students and the excitement of new discoveries in nursing research.”

–MARY JO GRAP
Indira Miller’s interest in a nursing career dates back to when she broke her left fibula in two places playing soccer at the age of five, while living on the island of Okinawa, Japan. Doctors told her she needed surgery and might not ever play soccer or any other sport again. But a nurse made a suggestion that changed her outlook.

“The nurse taking care of me heard of a new type of cast treatment plan in Hawaii that was a good alternative to surgery,” she said. “She first opened my eyes to a future in nursing.”

Miller and her family traveled to Hawaii for the cast fitting and returned back to Okinawa, Japan. After her father finished his tour of duty on Okinawa, the family returned to Jacksonville, N.C. in May 2003. There she was able to start physical therapy and continue when the family moved again to Virginia Beach, where they now call home.

“The cast treatment worked well and I was able to play sports again with a brace within a year,” she says, noting that eventually she was able to play without a brace.

After graduating from Ocean Lakes High School in Virginia Beach, Miller decided to pursue her interest in nursing. She applied to VCU with the goal of enrolling in the nursing program.

“It is the best nursing school in Virginia,” said Miller. “The school has a long history of developing great, well-rounded nurses and strong NCLEX-pass rates among the graduates.”

A traditional B.S. student, Miller is already showing promise as a well-rounded future nurse. She carries a 3.9 G.P.A. and was recently selected to receive the VCU Board of Visitors Scholarship in recognition of her outstanding academic achievements and service to the University and the community. The one-year award is equal to in-state tuition and fees.

“This is a big weight lifted off my shoulders,” Miller said.

Her university service includes being active in the Student Government Association on the Monroe Park Campus and serving as a secretary for Nursing Students Without Borders, where she also helps pre-nursing students with the application process and mentoring. In addition, Miller volunteers at the VCU Medical Center’s NICU, teaching parents and guests proper hand hygiene and entertaining siblings.

The nursing sophomore has also made a memorable impact in class, said Susan Lindner, M.S.N., RNC-OB, clinical assistant professor, who taught Miller in the Health Assessment course last fall.

“On the first day of class, she stayed after class and waited to introduce herself to me and shared her dreams of becoming a nurse,” Lindner said. “After that she always arrived for class prepared, asked very thoughtful questions and collaborated with her peers.”

“I could see that she has the potential to not only be an excellent nurse, but also advance the science of nursing,” Lindner added.
Indira Miller balances academics and community service. Outside of her classes and involvement in student organizations, Miller has been involved in community outreach activities that include feeding the homeless, packaging food, helping to administer health screenings (blood pressure, blood glucose testing, A1C, health education) and much more. She said she learned of these various outreach activities through being a member of Emerging Healthcare Leaders, Health Occupation Students of America and the National Society of Collegiate Scholars.

“The warm feeling I get inside from helping someone, in addition to happy smiles and faces, is what motivates me to be so involved in student activities and volunteer in many community service events,” Miller said.

Miller is also a student ambassador for the School of Nursing, where she gives school tours and assists with activities in the Clinical Learning Center. After graduation, she hopes to work in a neonatal intensive care unit and return to school to become a nurse practitioner.

Until then, she follows advice that she offers to prospective nursing students – “anything you put your mind to can be achieved, especially through hard work, dedication and persistence.”

“Keep your head held high and engines running – there is light at the end of the tunnel,” she said. “The reward of being a nurse and helping others is worth the hard work.”
Nurse executive Tracy E. Williams, DNP, RN (M.S. ‘88/N) has built strong relationships, embraced innovation, produced results and generated growth as an award-winning leader at for-profit and not-for-profit health systems for 35 years.

The senior vice president and system chief nursing officer at Norton Healthcare (a five hospital integrated delivery network) in Louisville, Ky., credited the VCU School of Nursing (SON) for shaping her dynamic leadership style.

VCU SON “taught me to think. I had been schooled as most of us are from a baccalaureate perspective in a lot of the ‘how’. VCU really gave me the opportunity to understand the ‘why’ of it before I needed to wonder about the how,” Williams recalled.

“It really focused me to ask hard questions while trying to put together what I thought was important. It helped me shape what the agenda and needs were in order to care for the patients, families and communities I served.

“VCU also challenged me to define myself in a completely different way. I came into the program very clear that I was going to graduate and teach in a college of nursing; that was my ultimate direction. When I was presented opportunities from a career perspective, it allowed me to challenge my thoughts and see myself in a different way.”

Two VCU emeritus professors, Marya Olgas, Ed.D., and Jeanette F. Kissinger, Ed.D., served as her mentors back then, according to Williams.

“One of Tracy’s strong abilities was to use a theory-based framework to assess a patient’s situation,” Kissinger said.

“I surmise she has used this same type of conceptualization in pursuing her career.”

Her mentors’ tutelage had a huge impact, Williams recalled.

“They knocked me upside my head when I needed it,” Williams said. “They challenged me and asked me the questions I needed to ask and then answer for myself.” Both professors challenged her “to see what others can see in you.”

Another major role model, one who instilled her drive for excellence, was closer to home. Her mother started off as a diploma-prepared bedside nurse and ended up as a master’s-prepared chief nursing officer of behavioral health hospitals.

Her mother’s decision to return to school after a divorce to “redefine herself and her career, to shape what she wanted and what she was going to strive for and deliver on during
the course of her life span, enabled me to see that sometimes you have to look at things differently... to deliver on promises you believe in and that you can deliver on,” said Williams, whose sister is also a nurse.

In high school, Williams wanted to be an attorney until her parents divorced “and the money dried up and I started looking late in the game for a scholarship. The one that became available was around nursing.” As she was beginning her collegiate career, her mom began pursuing her bachelor’s degree to advance her nursing career. “I followed her path and fell in love with nursing. I found very clearly I had an affinity for it and it had an affinity for me. I embraced it and never looked back.”

Williams earned a bachelor’s degree in nursing from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Va., a master’s degree in nursing from the VCU School of Nursing and a DNP, specializing in executive leadership, from Rush University in Chicago.

She has a lengthy list of noteworthy accomplishments, including being recognized as a Business First Partner in Health Care from 2007 through 2015. Williams received the Medstar 2014 Nurse of the Year award. In 2011, Williams received HCPro’s prestigious Nursing Image Award for her action-oriented leadership in implementing a culture centered on patients and their families. The Florida Nurses Association named Williams one of District II’s 100 best nurses in 2000 and District II Nurse Administrator of the Year in 1996.

Williams’ innovations include being the creator of the academic practice partnership between the University of Kentucky College of Nursing and Norton Healthcare. Within the partnership, Norton Healthcare and the University of Kentucky are preparing, over a seven-year period, 150 doctoral prepared advanced practice nurses to serve Norton Healthcare communities through an innovative B.S.N. to DNP program.

“WE are educating (and completely funding) our Norton Healthcare B.S.N. nurses to advance their careers and to serve our community. We believe fundamentally that this will positively impact patient outcomes in a significant manner. We believe in and value our partnership. I will feel very good about this investment when I eventually walk away from my career.”

Williams, her organization’s first system chief nursing officer, shapes her career around developing people, processes and programs. Developing leaders in organizations requires succession planning, she said. “That’s a hallmark area of emphasis for me. As for processes, I think about my doctoral work in the creation of an Integration and Alignment agenda for our organization that resulted in Norton Healthcare receiving the 2011 National Quality Forum’s National Quality Award.”

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–Tracy Williams

As for developing programs, “I think about innovation and how we do models of care that are individualized, customized and produce positive outcomes for patients. I am very clear on what my mission and my focus is as a system chief nursing officer. The first is to care for the patients, families and community we serve. My second mission is to care for the caregivers. That is clear and simple. If’s what I do, and it will, hopefully, be my legacy.”

When not working, she unwinds by reading and tinkering in the garden. “I’m not good at it, but I did get my first yield of tomatoes,” she said chuckling. “I like to bicycle and I love to send time with my daughter who just turned 21 and is in college. So when I have an opportunity to be with her, I’m with her.”
Gail Johnson receives March of Dimes Nightingale Award

Gail Johnson, RN, CFE (B.S.’67/N; M.S.’76/N), founder and owner of Rainbow Station, its franchising firm PRISM, LLC, and Rainbow Station International, was presented with the 2015 March of Dimes Virginia Nightingale Award and will also serve as the honorary chair of the 2015 March of Dimes Virginia Nurse of the Year Awards Gala. The annual award recognizes a Virginia nurse who is also a successful business leader in the Commonwealth. Johnson was honored for her compassion, devotion to the community and the discipline of nursing, as well as for her entrepreneurial creativity and success. Johnson is also chair of the MCV Foundation Board of Trustees.

Patricia Kinser elected to SNRS Board and is named a Clinical Faculty Scholar

Patricia Kinser, Ph.D., WHNP, RN (B.S. ’03/N; M.S. ’04/N; Cert. ’04/N), assistant professor at the VCU School of Nursing, was elected to the Southern Nursing Research Society (SNRS) Board of Directors as director of awards for 2015-2017. Kinser was also selected as a Clinical Faculty Scholar—a unique opportunity through the VCU School of Medicine and the VCU Center on Health Disparities.

The Clinical Faculty Scholars Program provides a personalized experience designed to provide junior clinical faculty with training in research methodology and extensive mentoring that culminates with the submission of a NIH grant proposal and peer-reviewed manuscripts.

Kenneth White publishes commentary in Frontiers of Health Services Management journal

Kenneth White, APRN, FACHE, FAAN (B.S.’95/N; M.S.’95/N; Ph.D.’96/AHP), associate dean of strategic partnerships and innovation at the University of Virginia School of Nursing, recently published “The Future of Nursing Leadership: A Commentary” in the winter 2014 edition of Frontiers of Health Services Management. The journal is published quarterly by the Foundation of the American College of Healthcare Executives.
Alumni earn best bedside manner honors in Our Health magazine

VCU School of Nursing alumni were among the 2014 Best Bedside Manner honorees presented by Our Health magazine. In the nurse practitioner category, Julie Shotwell, RN, CPNP (M.S.’05/N; Cert.’05/N) and Donna Mitchell, RN, CPNP (M.S.’88/N) of Children’s Hospital of Richmond at VCU tied for third place, and George Proffitt, NP-C (B.S.’02/N; M.S.’05/N; Cert. ’05/N) of the Colonial Heights Medical Center earned honorable mention. The awards honor medical providers who were voted by the local community for their kindness, empathy and attentiveness.

Allison Gregory to serve as agency subordinate for Boards of Nursing and Medicine

Allison Gregory, RN, FNP-BC (B.S.’99/N; M.S.’00/N), clinical assistant professor at the VCU School of Nursing, was appointed as an agency subordinate for the Joint Committee of the Boards of Nursing and Medicine. In her role, Gregory will complete the initial informal fact-finding proceeding for advanced practice registered nurses who may be in violation of a law or regulation and submit a recommended sanction for approval to the Joint Committee. Under the Code of Virginia, the Board of Nursing is authorized to delegate certain classes of cases to agency subordinates who must have experience in conducting hearings and knowledge of laws and regulations governing nurses. From 2010-2014, Gregory served on the Virginia Board of Nursing as an RN member as well as the Joint Committee of the Boards of Nursing and Medicine.

Kathy Jones receives teacher of the year award

Kathy Jones (B.S. ’71/N) was awarded the 2014-2015 Teacher of the Year Award at the Chesapeake Center for Science & Technology (CCST). Jones teaches “Nursing I” to area Chesapeake high school students who are enrolled in the CCST program. The Center for Science and Technology is a part of the Chesapeake Public Schools system and is the oldest career and technical school in Virginia.
A Letter from the Alumni Chair

During our time as students of the VCU School of Nursing our thought may have been that we were being prepared for a singular next step that is a career in nursing, when really our education and experiences were preparing us for a lifetime of transitions. Transition is defined as passing from one state, stage, or form of existence to another. It is a fluid existence where change is constant. Nursing is not a single subject. Our time at VCU was not spent focusing on only one topic. Our education consisted of learning about the complexities of health and wellness along the life span. It ranged in coursework and clinicals from understanding how to care for the single patient with a debilitating illness to assessing the dynamic health needs of a community. And it prepared us to serve as leaders, scientists, advanced practitioners, policy makers, and educators by way of programs and experiences that are unmatched in quality and content.

The value of a VCU Nursing degree can be measured and celebrated by our ability to readily transition across all spectrums of health care. This is a feature not found within many academic concentrations. It is an attribute that has made it so we nurses do not work, nor are we recognized, as a subset of any one profession, but rather operate on equal footing with other contributors to health administration.

As I write this letter, Reunion Weekend on the MCV Campus is nearly upon us and I look forward to seeing old friends, meeting new ones, and hearing about all the positive changes in their lives since joining the family of VCU Nursing Alumni. In addition, graduation is right around the corner – the most exciting time of the year – where students rejoicing at the completion of mandatory coursework also sense the innumerable possibilities that lie before them because of their VCU Nursing degree.

We have been dynamically prepared and are multi-faceted in our ability to answer the health needs of those around us. If you have transitioned or are considering entering a new phase in your nursing career, do not hesitate. Instead, celebrate!

James L. Jenkins, Jr., RN (B.S. ’07/N)
Chair, VCU School of Nursing Alumni Division
Vice-President for Nursing, MCV Alumni Association
VCU SON Accelerated Class of 2007
Development Update
By Kate Haydon, Senior Director of Development

As the newly hired Senior Director of Development for the School, I am proud to serve as an advocate for the continued support and advancement of excellence in nursing and education. I feel privileged to work under the leadership of Dean Giddens and see natural partners in both her and the outstanding faculty and staff at the School.

In my first few months at the School, it became rapidly evident that consistent and deep engagement with our graduates must take its place as the Office of Development’s highest priority. Enhancing our relationships with the many alumni who reside within Virginia, as well as expanding our network across the country, is essential to advancing our School.

On a recent trip to meet with alumni in the New York and New Jersey area, it was discovered that there is a desire from alumni to deepen the connection with the School of Nursing. Pride was evident and the desire to re-engage and invest in the future of the School was a common thread that came up again and again.

To answer this call from the School’s greatest investment, our alumni, plans are underway to create a more outwardly-focused, donor-centric culture of philanthropy at the VCU School of Nursing. Infrastructure is being put into place that will allow meaningful relationships between alumni and the School to develop and grow, be cultivated and stewarded.

I have already had the opportunity to consistently see that the VCU School of Nursing boasts steadfast, loyal and dynamic alumni, and I look forward to the opportunity to engage with you.

Kate Haydon,
Senior Director
of Development

Thursday, Oct. 29, 2015
GRAND OPENING CELEBRATION
The Langston Center for Quality, Safety and Innovation
2:30 p.m.
In the Hermes A. Kontos Medical Sciences Building Auditorium
Keynote address: “Envisioning Health Care Organizations to Achieve the Triple Aim”

Diana J. Mason, Ph.D., RN, FAAN
President, American Academy of Nursing
A panel discussion and reception will follow.
Reunion weekend 2015 features a lecture, research showcase and more

The VCU School of Nursing celebrated its 2015 Reunion Weekend with a variety of festive activities, including the Legacy Lecture, a State of the School address, a Sigma Theta Tau Research Showcase and more.

The Legacy Lecture in Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing featured Carrie Carretta, Ph.D., ANP, AHN-BC, associate professor and research faculty member at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, who spoke on the topic “Assessing, Prescribing and Examining the Evidence through A Forensics Lens.” This was the school’s last Legacy Lecture, thanks to a donor coming forward with the last $3,000 needed to proceed with moving it to a professorship.

Reunion weekend also included a State of the School address by Jean Giddens, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, dean and professor. In addition to sharing the school’s 2014-2015 accomplishments and next year’s priorities, Giddens acknowledged the new Younger Pavilion in the garden, donated by Janet and W. Carter Younger, and announced several scholarship gifts from the classes of 1960 and 1970. She also shared a surprise announcement - the new Betsy Bampton RN to B.S. Scholarship, which drew a standing ovation. The scholarship honors Betsy Bampton, Ed.D. (B.S. ’60; Cert. ’80), associate professor emerita and RN to B.S. academic advisor, who will retire a second time in the fall after 50 years at the School of Nursing. She initially retired in 1992, but came back to work part time.

A highlight of the weekend was the announcement of the following Alumni Awards:

• Outstanding Clinical Practice - Fay Parpart, M.S., RN, ANP-BC, AACRN (M.S. ’89/N; Cert. ’95/N), clinical assistant professor
• Outstanding Nurse Service Award - Susan Lindner, M.S.N., RNC-OB (B.S. ’04/N), clinical assistant professor
• Outstanding Nurse Alumnus - Shelly Buck, DNP, M.B.A., RN, NEA-BC (B.S. ’96/N), chief operating officer/chief nurse executive at Bon Secours Baltimore Health System

View a photo album from Reunion Weekend 2015 on the VCU Nursing Facebook page.
Shelly Buck, DNP, M.B.A., RN, NEA-BC (B.S. ’96/N) has joined Bon Secours Baltimore Health System as chief operating officer and chief nurse executive.

Mary Beth Willis, M.S.N., RN, FNP-C (B.S. ’98/N) is the women’s health resource navigator for HCA’s Henrico Doctors’ Hospital.

Jessica Ryan, RN (B.S. ’07/N) is working in the Endoscopy Unit at HCA Henrico Doctors’ Hospital. While not working she is spending time with her husband, Andrew, and beagle-dachshund puppy, Holly. The Ryans traveled to Iceland last Fall and have a trip to Costa Rica planned for the summer.

Jim Jenkins, RN (B.S. ’07/N) has joined VCU Health System as a nurse in the Neuroscience ICU.

Heather Pittard, RN (B.S. ’09/N) has just completed a two-year assignment as a computer teacher in Mozambique.

NOVEMBER 2014
Mrs. Frances P. Bracy (Diploma ’40/N)
Mrs. Mary P. Pearman-Copeland (B.S. ’85/N)
Mrs. Kathryn T. Ramsey (B.S. ’68/N)

DECEMBER 2014
Mrs. Sarah G. Edmondson (Diploma ’39/N)

JANUARY 2015
Ms. Joan A. Ambrose (B.S. ’69/N)
Mrs. Mildred M. Jones (Diploma ’55/N)
Mrs. Mildred M. Stephens (Diploma ’48/N)
Mrs. Julia F. Whitten (Diploma ’41/N)

FEBRUARY 2015
Mrs. Kathryn M. Clendenen (Cert. ’49/N)
Mrs. Frances G. Moore (Diploma ’50/N)
Mrs. Elizabeth B. O’Hanlan (Diploma ’49/N)
Mrs. Lisa S. Storm (B.S. ’81/N)

MARCH 2015
Mrs. Gladys F. Chapman (Diploma ’41/N)
Nursing Students Without Borders promote improved health among Guatemalan women

Nursing Students Without Borders of VCU (NSWB of VCU) participated in its annual community service trip to Guatemala, where students provided health screenings and education to women villagers. Thirteen students, accompanied by Genevieve Beaird, M.S., RNC-OB, assistant director of the Clinical Learning Center, participated in this outreach effort. Students who participated include Katherine Connell, Jessica Watts, Hannah Lacombe, Nicole Oliver, Brittany Ilagan, Erica Neary, Rachel Leatherwood, Megan Hulcher, Rebecca Johnston, Mark Comey, Katerina Deasy, Heather Buckner, and Allyson Bess.

Sigma Theta Tau inducts new members

The Gamma Omega Chapter of the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International, held its induction ceremony in Younger Auditorium at the School of Nursing on Dec. 12. With family and friends present, 53 students from the bachelor’s, master’s and Ph.D. programs were inducted. Membership to Sigma Theta Tau is by invitation to baccalaureate and graduate nursing students who demonstrate academic excellence and to nurse leaders exhibiting exceptional achievements in nursing. During the ceremony, inductees received orchid and white honor cords to be worn during graduation signifying academic achievement in the field of nursing. Visit the SON blog at http://wp.vcu.edu/nursing/2014/12/15/sigma-theta-tau-inducts-new-members/ to view the list of inductees.

Alison Montpetit appointed to international committee

Alison Montpetit, Ph.D., RN, assistant professor, has been invited to join the Scientific Committee of the International Association of Breath Research Summit 2015 in Vienna, Austria. She is the only nurse appointed to this committee. Montpetit conducts research focused on exhaled breath biomarkers and their relationship with clinical outcomes, specifically in the mechanically ventilated, critically population and adults experiencing rib fractures.

VCU and UVA to co-host SNRS 2016

The Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of Virginia Schools of Nursing will co-host the 2016 Southern Nursing Research Society Annual Conference in Williamsburg, Virginia. The conference dates are Feb. 24-27, 2016. Visit the SON website and click through the welcome page feature stories to view a special video promo for the conference. Stay tuned for more information.

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Tara Albrecht receives Massey Cancer Center grant

Tara Albrecht, Ph.D., ACNP-BC, RN, assistant professor, received a $50,000 grant from the Massey Cancer Center (MCC) Cancer Prevention and Control (CPC) Pilot Project Program for a year-long study, titled "Physical Activity as a Self-management Approach to Improve Health Outcomes in Acute Myeloid Leukemia." The study will evaluate the feasibility of a personalized physical activity intervention, as well as explore potential improvements in symptom severity, physical function and other health-related quality of life outcomes in adults receiving chemotherapy for acute myeloid leukemia.

Albrecht will be working with an interdisciplinary team that includes SON co-investigators R.K. Elswick, Ph.D., director of biostatistics and data services; Jamie Sturgill, Ph.D., director of biobehavioral lab services; and Michelle Wright, Ph.D., RN, post-doctoral fellow; as well as Danielle Shafer, D.O., assistant professor in the School of Medicine; and Tim York, Ph.D., assistant professor in the VCU Medical Center Department of Human and Molecular Genetics. Angela Starkweather, Ph.D., ACNP-BC, FAAN, associate professor and chair of the Department of Adult Health and Nursing Systems, is the project's scientific advisor.

VCU Nursing launches new website

As part of its new branding campaign, the VCU School of Nursing has redesigned its website to improve its functionality, aesthetics and content. The site includes videos on the about us, programs and research pages. Visit www.nursing.vcu.edu to check it out.

Victoria Menzies appointed to CANS policy committee

Victoria Menzies, Ph.D., RN, PMHCNS-BC, associate professor, was appointed to the Operating Guidelines, Policies & Procedures Committee for the Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science (CANS). The committee will develop policies and procedures for approval by the Leadership Council, as well as review and monitor the Operating Principles on an annual basis to insure they are up-to-date.

SON faculty elected NAP Fellows

Four School of Nursing faculty members have been elected to the Distinguished Fellowship in the National Academies of Practice (NAP) and the Nursing Academy as a Distinguished Practitioner & Fellow. The honorees include Lisa Brown, Ph.D., RN, associate professor; Pam Parsons, Ph.D., GNP, director of practice and community engagement, the Judith B. Collins and Joseph M. Teefey Distinguished Professor; Patricia Kinser, Ph.D., WHNP-BC, RN, assistant professor; and Candace Burton, Ph.D., RN, AFN-BC, assistant professor. Distinguished Practitioners, Scholars and Policy Fellows are elected by their peers from 10 different health professions. NAP members work together as an interdisciplinary force to influence national health policy and legislation, as well as promote quality health care through cooperative advocacy, practice, education and research.

Jamie Sturgill awarded a U.S. patent

Jamie Sturgill, Ph.D., director of Biobehavioral Lab Services, was awarded a U.S. patent (number 8,952,048) for her research, titled "Treatment of Immune Disorders using Kainate Receptor Antagonists." The patent states that Sturgill was the first to identify a new receptor in the immune system that when blocked controls allergies and asthma. Awarded only by the U.S. Government, patents for research are hard to obtain due to the rigorous application process. Sturgill started the patent process back in 2009.
Faculty receive Quest Global Impact Awards

Marianne Baernholdt, Ph.D., M.P.H., RN, FAAN, professor and director of the Langston Center for Quality, Safety and Innovation, and Shelly Orr, M.S.N., RN, CNE (B.S. ’02/N), clinical instructor, received a VCU Quest Global Impact Award for a virtual global classroom and global visiting scholars. Their project, “Teaching and Researching Quality of End of Life Care in the U.S. and England,” will involve developing, implementing and evaluating a joint EOL care curriculum for students in the United States and England to be taught in a virtual classroom. Co-collaborators include two visiting scholars from the University of Birmingham in England.

Another SON faculty member, Allison Gregory, RN, FNP-BC (B.S. ’99/N; M.S. ’00/N), clinical assistant professor, is a co-investigator on a cross-campus collaboration with colleagues in the School of World Studies. The team was awarded a Quest Global Impact Award for its proposal to develop a Spanish language and cultural competence course for nursing and other health professional students.

Dean Jean Giddens elected to AACN’s Nominating Committee

Jean Giddens, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, dean and professor, was elected by the Association of Colleges of Nursing membership to the Nominating Committee for a two-year term. As a Nominating Committee member, Giddens will assist with reviewing and evaluating applications submitted from individuals seeking to serve on the Board of Directors as well as the Nominating Committee.

In addition to her new role at AACN, Giddens will serve on the Program Planning Committees for the Master’s Conference, Executive Development Series and Faculty Development Conference.

Three faculty receive intramural grants for pilot studies

The Office of Research is pleased to announce the following recipients of the School of Nursing Intramural Grants Program (IGP) for the fall of 2014. The program was created to fund pilot work that will help faculty members prepare for the submission of larger external grants. Award winners and their projects include:

- Lisa Brown, Ph.D., R.N., associate professor – “Microbiota and preterm infant growth.”
- Candace Johnson, Ph.D., M.P.H., RN, assistant professor – “Preliminary testing of an internet-based, culturally-tailored, yoga activity in african-american women at-risk for the metabolic syndrome.”
- Alison Montpetit, Ph.D., RN, assistant professor – “Investigating exhaled breath biomarkers in dual users of cigarettes and e-cigarettes.”

Pam Parsons named Judith B. Collins and Joseph M. Teefey Distinguished Professor

Pam Parsons, GNP (M.S. ’84/N; Cert. ’92/N; Ph.D. ’04/N), clinical associate professor and director of practice and community engagement, has been appointed the Judith B. Collins and Joseph M. Teefey Distinguished Professor at the VCU School of Nursing. The Collins-Teefey Distinguished Professorship was established to honor Judith B. Collins, M.S., RN, WHNP, FAAN (Cert. ’75/N), for her distinguished career and lifelong commitment to women’s health and leadership on the faculty of the VCU School of Nursing, and her husband, Joseph Teefey, for his professional and personal commitment to health care, financial contributions to and leadership in establishing the distinguished professorship. Parsons is currently the project director of the of the HRSA-funded Richmond Health and Wellness Program for Older Adults.
SON students selected for Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program

Four accelerated B.S. students were selected for the highly competitive VCU Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP). The students will work on research projects this summer with faculty members who have collected data in the students’ field of study. They will present their findings at the Undergraduate Symposium/Poster Day in spring 2016. The students, faculty mentors and projects are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Faculty Mentor</th>
<th>Title of Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diana Naidoo</td>
<td>Nancy Jallo</td>
<td>Predictors of the Efficacy of a Guided Imagery Stress Management Intervention in Pregnant African American Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carey Evans</td>
<td>Suzanne Ameringer</td>
<td>Graphical Images of the Symptom Experience Created by Adolescents and Young Adults with Cancer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle Wickliff</td>
<td>Alison Montpetit</td>
<td>Exploring Acute Changes in Exhaled Breath Condensate pH of Mechanically Ventilated Adults: A Focus on Medications and Hemodynamic Variables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly Britton</td>
<td>Candace Burton</td>
<td>The effects health professional students’ experiences of encountering issues of race, class, gender, and other social and structural variables in their interactions with colleagues have on their interprofessional education and collaborations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stay Connected and Help Educate Students!

The Alumni Standardized Patient Program in the Clinical Learning Center is looking for alumni volunteers who can donate their time and expertise in the training of undergraduate or graduate nursing students through playing the role of a Standardized patient. The program will provide you with a very tangible and direct way to help our nursing students develop and become strong VCU alumni.

I’m interested in becoming a standardized patient. What should I do next?

Please email Dr. Carla Nye at cnye@vcu.edu or call 804-827-0629 to find out how to get involved!


Mary Lynn Davis-Ajami, Ph.D., M.B.A., M.S., NP-C, RN, is an assistant professor in the Department of Adult Health and Nursing Systems. She most recently served as an assistant professor in the Department of Organizational Systems and Adult Health in the program of Health Services Leadership and Management at the University of Maryland School of Nursing. She earned a diploma in nursing from West Suburban Hospital, a B.S.N. from the University of Evansville School of Nursing, an M.S. (Family Nurse Practitioner concentration) from the University of Southern Indiana, an M.B.A. from Wake Forest University, and a Ph.D. from The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy with a concentration in Health Outcomes Research from the Pharmaceutical Administration program.

Kate Haydon is the senior director of development, leading the school’s advancement team and overseeing major, annual fund and planned giving, as well as corporate and foundation giving programs. She most recently served as director of advancement at Benedictine College Preparatory. Haydon earned a bachelor’s degree in policy studies from Dickinson College.

Beth Hopkins, DNP, FNP, CORLN, is a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Family and Community Health Nursing. She most recently served as a family nurse practitioner - ENT, Asthma/Allergy and Sleep Medicine at Gregory G. Carnevale, M.D., LLC and the Finger Lakes Allergy Clinic in Geneva, N.Y. Hopkins earned an associate’s degree in nursing from Jamestown Community College in Jamestown, N.Y., an adult nurse practitioner certificate from the University of Virginia, a nurse practitioner in family health certificate from Community General Hospital of Greater Syracuse, and both a B.S. in nursing and a DNP from St. John Fisher College.

Demmie Pennix is the human resources administrator, responsible for time keeping, adjunct hiring, and student and hourly hiring. She most recently served as the department human resources analyst at the VCUHS Treatment Center for Children.

Meredith Sittman is a senior administrative assistant for both the Langston Center for Quality, Safety and Innovation and the Office of Business and Finance. Prior to VCU, Sittman worked as a freelance editor/copy editor for Macmillan Children’s Publishing Group in New York City. She holds a bachelor’s degree in English literature from Simmons College in Boston, Mass., as well as a master’s degree in children’s literature. She is currently working on a post-graduate certificate in paralegal studies at the University of Richmond.
Community health nursing students presented their posters to faculty and colleagues in December 2014 to showcase service learning projects developed and implemented at various community agencies throughout the Richmond area. The projects displayed diverse topics, including healthy eating, medication safety, and teen hygiene. The students are joined by Kimberly Davis (far right) RN (M.S. ‘11/N), clinical instructor.