

News of the UMass Worcester Graduate School of Nursing

## Message from the Dean

Over the past year, partnerships and technology remained at the forefront of nursing at the statewide level as well as at the UMass Worcester Graduate School of Nursing (GSN). As a leader in advanced nursing education in the Commonwealth, the GSN is an important participant in the Board of Higher Education/Massachusetts Organization of Nursing Executives "Nurse of the Future" project, a statewide effort to build the framework for the future of nursing education and practice in the state. Nursing academic and practice leaders are currently drafting consensus competencies for nurses, a seamless progression through all levels of nursing education and a recommendation for a statewide model for the transition of a new nurse into the practice setting.

On the technology front, leaders from across UMMS are partnering to set the agenda for the use of simulation and experiential learning from an interdisciplinary perspective. The GSN supports a skills training lab at the South Street Campus that provides basic skills development for our graduate entry pathway students and supports advanced health assessment training for all master's students. The GSN also integrates the tools of the UMMS Simulation Lab on the University Campus into the curriculum across the advanced practice subspecialties. Currently, the GSN partners with the Medical School to provide IV training for the medical students, and we are examining opportunities for interdisciplinary learning with the expanding use of simulation technology and space.

The GSN is also expanding the integration of other technology forms into its programs. A recently funded Alfred P. Sloan Foundation project will increase access to expert consultation enabling

improvements in the design, implementation and evaluation of courses currently offered in hybrid or blended course format. Using WebCT as the learning management system, courses will begin to incorporate technology such as Horizon-Wimba, an online classroom and collaboration tool; Apreso, a tool for presenting online, on-demand lectures; and podcasting, to increase student access to faculty, peers and academic content.

This issue of *Focus on the GSN* highlights a number of students and faculty whose accomplishments reflect new learning approaches to geriatric care, international efforts at improving the lives of underserved populations, and the individual accomplishments of student and alumni nurse leaders. They truly represent the concepts put forward by John F. Kennedy—"Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other." I am proud to serve as dean to such an innovative team. ■



Paulette Seymour, PhD, RN

**"As a leader** in advanced nursing education in the Commonwealth, the GSN is an important participant in the Board of Higher Education/Massachusetts Organization of Nursing Executives 'Nurse of the Future' project."

## alumni message



Greetings to our friends and fellow alumni. During the past year we have had the pleasure of working with Paulette Seymour, PhD, RN, in her new role as Dean of the Graduate School of Nursing. A GSN alumna herself, Paulette is a tireless advocate for the nursing profession, the patients we care for and the nurses we prepare to be our future workforce and educators. We welcome Paulette and look forward to many successful years working together to achieve our mutual goals.

We're also looking forward to the annual Alumni Breakfast and Award Ceremony on Friday, June 1, 2007, in the Lazare Research Building at UMass Worcester. At the breakfast, we'll be celebrating another first for the Graduate

School of Nursing: the graduation in June of the intrepid members of the inaugural class of students in the Graduate Entry Pathway program. Please mark your calendar and watch the mail for your invitation.

We're currently accepting nominations for the GSN Alumni Award, which is presented annually at the Alumni Breakfast and Award Ceremony. This award was established to honor an exceptional GSN graduate who improves the standard of care for the population he or she works with, opens access to services, and exhibits a talent for educating patients and the public, as both a leader and a mentor. Please send written nominations explaining why you believe your nominee exemplifies these qualities by mail to Jill, care of the GSN, or by global e-mail to Jill or Sue.

As always, we expect this year's event to be a wonderful opportunity for you and your classmates to welcome new alumni, enjoy catching up over breakfast, celebrate recent achievements and recognize our award recipients. If you and your classmates have an anniversary reunion planned for that morning, please let us know so that we can ensure that you're seated together.

Please also visit us at [www.umassmed.edu/gsn](http://www.umassmed.edu/gsn) for news and information about current events related to the GSN. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you on June 1!

Jill Susan

## Student Profile

### Sean Collins

MS '94  
Post-master's Certificate '96  
PhD candidate, 2007

My incredible journey in nursing started when I cared for my first patient. I was 18 years old and just two months out of high school when I enrolled in my diploma nursing program. My first patient was an elderly man in the terminal stages of prostate cancer. In just days, I learned a great deal about compassion, dignity and the importance of nursing care. This powerful experience laid the foundation for my interest in enhancing nursing clinical practice through academics and real-world experiences.

After receiving my bachelor's degree at UMass Amherst, I entered graduate study at UMass Worcester in 1991. I earned my master's as a clinical nurse specialist and then my post-master's certificate as a nurse practitioner.

I tested my newfound skills when I deployed as a member of the Air National Guard in support of combat operations during the Kosovo crisis, where I served as nurse practitioner and medical team leader. After a four-month tour that included routine sick call visits as well as significant musculoskeletal injuries, I was eager to get back to school, thinking my life had settled down enough to allow me to tackle a huge academic challenge—pursuing a PhD. My first day of class for the collaborative UMass Amherst/UMass Worcester doctoral program was a beautiful fall day that I will remember forever. It was September 11, 2001.

Putting my academic plans aside, I completed several deployments of my Air National Guard unit, including one to Iraq in 2004. While there, I worked in the emergency room of the Air Force Hospital, side by side with health care providers



from around the world, delivering emergency care to local people, contractors and members of all branches of the Armed Services. Before Iraq, I served as chief of deployment medicine for the 104th Fighter Wing and was part of the first team in the country to provide the smallpox vaccine.

During periods away from the GSN, I plugged away at coursework so as not to fall behind, even completing an independent study while overseas. Just when I

thought I could settle in to finish my studies, my unit was deployed to Louisiana to help with post-Hurricane Katrina support. In addition to working in an emergency room and a primary care clinic, I had the opportunity to serve as the medical team leader on a public health mission investigating a possible health-related outbreak on the Mississippi border.

All of these experiences have been important professionally and educationally, but working toward my PhD is vital to me. When I applied to the doctoral program, my essay described my goal to enhance nursing practice as a nurse researcher and contribute to the profession of nursing. This is still my goal, and I'm moving ever closer with the support of faculty, family and friends. I feel privileged to have been recognized by the faculty at the 2006 Alumni Breakfast and Award Ceremony with the Lillian Goodman Doctoral Student Award; it was truly a highlight of my academic career and a one-of-a-kind experience to add to all the others.

## Reflections on the Second National HIV Conference in Armenia

By Carol Jaffarian, MSN, and Carol Bova, PhD, RN, ANP

Twenty-one hours of travel could not dampen the excitement of our reunion with our colleagues and friends in Armenia. The HIV Education and Prevention Project, a collaborative effort between the Armenian Relief Society, Inc. and the University of Massachusetts, funded by a grant from the World AIDS Foundation, had officially ended the year before, but thanks to the generosity of the Sigma Theta Tau Nursing Honor Society, Iota Phi Chapter at Large, we were back in Armenia to hold the Second National HIV Conference, in collaboration with the country's National Center for AIDS Prevention and the Armenian Relief Society, Inc.

The First National HIV Conference, held at the conclusion of our project, was attended by Armenia's health minister, numerous government officials, health care providers from throughout the country and members of 16 nongovernment organizations working with HIV infection in Armenia. It received considerable television and newspaper attention and helped spread the word about HIV education, prevention and

treatment efforts in Armenia.

As hoped, the majority of participants returned for the Second National Conference to update colleagues about their efforts, successes and challenges. Participants included the staff of the Armenian Relief Society Mother-Child Clinic and Birthing Center, the site of most of our project's educational efforts in Armenia. This year's conference also benefited from the participation of

students from Yerevan State University. Their concern for protecting themselves and others was evident, and their presence resulted in the liveliest discussions of the conference.

Vital updates included the availability of antiretroviral therapy, HIV antibody testing and care outside of the capital city, thanks to funding from the Global AIDS Fund. But just as important was the opportunity for government officials, health care

providers, students and members of nongovernment organizations to have a forum to share their efforts.

We send our sincere thanks to the members of the Sigma Theta Tau Nursing Honor Society, Iota Phi Chapter at Large, for funding this conference; to the staff of the National Center for AIDS Prevention, for coordinating the conference; and to the faculty of the GSN for their continuing support of our work in Armenia. ■

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### Recent grants and publications

#### Grants

**Janet Fraser Hale, PhD, APRN, BC**  
Health Resources and Services Administration:  
*Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship*; funding pending

**Carol A. Bova, PhD, RN, ANP**  
National Institutes of Health R01: *Hepatitis-C Treatment Decisions*; funding pending

National Institutes of Health R01: *HIV Prevention in Armenia*; funding pending

**Elaine Barber Parker, PhD, RN, CNE**  
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation: *Development of Blended Learning Programs*; funded January 2007, \$26,020

Nurse Faculty Loan Program; funded April 2006, \$144,654

**Paulette Seymour, PhD, RN**  
UMass Memorial Medical Center Risk Management:  
*Pilot to Track Nurse Practitioner Competency*; funded June 2006, \$7,000

**Susan Sullivan-Bolyai, PhD, DNSc, RN CNS**  
Meyers Primary Care Institute: *Simkid: Teaching Parents T1D*; funded May 2006, \$15,000

**Kathleen H. Miller, EdD, RN, ANP**  
Health Resources and Services Administration:  
*Comprehensive Geriatric Education*; funded May 2006, \$512,599

**Jill M. Terrien, MS, RN, ANP**  
Worcester Community Foundation Grant: *Fairlawn Scholars Program*; funded July 2006, \$10,000

#### Publications

**Carol Bova, PhD, RN, ANP**  
*Advance for Nurse Practitioners*, October 2006  
"Women with HIV Infection: An Overview of Today's Clinical Issues"

*Research in Nursing & Health*, 29(5): 477-488, October 2006  
"The Health Care Relationship (HCR) Trust Scale: Development and Psychometric Evaluation"

*continued on page 4*

## Making the most of interdisciplinary opportunities

Faculty and students at the Graduate School of Nursing, like the School of Medicine and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, are taking advantage of the numerous interdisciplinary opportunities that exist at UMass Worcester's integrated academic health sciences center.

In the late 1990s, GSN students were involved in learning with medical students in several of the Community Health Clerkship groups. Since 2002, the variety of opportunities for interdisciplinary learning has increased each year. Currently, a number of School of Medicine optional enrichment electives boast joint participation by medical and nursing faculty and students, including "Understanding and Improving the U.S. Health Care System," "The Bigger Picture: Health Issues Facing the Community of Worcester" and "Rural Health Scholars Program." The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship, which is available to students from all three schools, and the International Health Medicine Scholarships became interdisciplinary this year. And for the first time, a GSN student will join a group of medical students and physicians volunteering over spring break at a health clinic in the Dominican Republic. Since 2003, GSN students in their final graduate semester have joined medical students in each of the following three intensive, weeklong mini-selectives:

"Urgent Medical Problems," "Emergency Medicine" and "Laboratory Medicine for the Clinician."

With the addition of the Graduate Entry Pathway in 2005, the first-year medical student community health clerkships saw enrollment by nursing students. In fact, one of the newly formed interdisciplinary groups, "Optimizing Perinatal Outcomes through Women's Health Services," earned the GSN Community Service Award at the Annual Educational Awards Ceremony in April 2006.

With the opening of the UMMS Simulation Center in the fall of 2006, the most recent interdisciplinary initiative is "Medical Skills Training," offered to third- and fourth-year medical students by the GSN as part of a community service learning practicum in the course "Societal Forces Impacting Professional and Advanced Practice Nursing." The current training is "Best Practices for IV Insertion." Future plans call for this module to be incorporated as an early component of the 12-week surgical clerkship for third-year medical students. The GSN is also working to



The most recent interdisciplinary initiative is "Medical Skills Training," offered to third- and fourth-year medical students by the GSN as part of a community service learning practicum. The current module is "Best Practices for IV Insertion." Here, students practice their technique in the simulation lab.

accommodate third- and fourth-year medical students interested in mastering this skill. While this module is new, the concept of registered nurse graduate students teaching skills to medical students has been an established project for many years as the nursing and medical students work together each fall to plan and deliver flu clinics for the area's medically underserved. In preparation for the flu clinics, the nursing students educate the medical students on best practices for administering injections.

**Nursing and medical** students work together each fall to plan and deliver flu clinics for the area's medically underserved.

Faculty have been instrumental in bringing these interdisciplinary learning opportunities to UMass Worcester as it continues its reputation of partnership and support in interdisciplinary learning, a model recommended by the PEW Health Professions Commission and numerous reports of the Institute of Medicine. ■

## alumni profile



**Diana Bergin, MS, ANP, ACNP**

Adult Ambulatory Community Nurse Practitioner Track, 1989

Current position: Nurse Practitioner, Pre-Admission Testing, Marlborough Hospital

Soon after graduating from the diploma program at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in 1968, Diana Bergin experienced opportunities to advocate for patient education. She immediately knew that she wanted to make educational advocacy an important part of her practice. She also realized that in order to fulfill her professional goals, she would need to further her own education. She went on to earn a BSN at Worcester State College and an MS from the GSN.

Over the course of her 37-year career, Diana has helped develop an industrial hypertension screening program, taught stress management and nutrition classes, and provided diabetes education to patients and colleagues. She was instrumental in building UMass Memorial Health Care Employee Health Services into a three-cam-

pus program that not only provides screening and evaluation services, but also sets policy and solidifies protocols.

Along the way, Diana was invited to join the GSN faculty as an affiliate faculty preceptor when GSN

**Diana is inspired by patient contact, working with dynamic providers and participating in a continuum of learning opportunities.**

Dean Emeritus Lillian Goodman, EdD, recognized not only her clinical skills but also her ability to connect with students. Preceptors balance the demands of working in clinical practice while they facilitate the growth of student practice through seminars, clinical placements and class presentations—a challenging set of tasks. Diana's eagerness to continue the strong tradition of encouraging future exceptional care

providers led to students' success and her participation on the GSN Academic Standards Committee.

In her practice, Diana provides avenues of access to health care for patients who struggle through an often confusing health care system,

in many cases without insurance. In her current position at Marlborough Hospital, Diana is an advocate and facilitator for day surgery patients during their hospital stay, especially in the transition from pre-operative to post operative care. She collaborates with a team of surgical day nurses and physicians to ensure continuity for patients as they navigate the maze of tests while trying to absorb sometimes overwhelming amounts of

medical information.

Creativity has always been an important part of Diana's life, both personal and professional. An artist, Diana has donated proceeds of her watercolors to raise funds for battered women and children, making a personal avocation part of her vocation. In her teaching, creativity has led her to develop unique tools for nursing students, including a glove that reveals the bones of the hand and wrist for a class about upper extremity injuries. Diana has also been an active alumna of the GSN, contributing regularly to the annual breakfast and using what she calls her "crystal ball" to predict the futures of graduates.

As evidenced by her career choices, Diana is inspired by patient contact, working with dynamic providers and participating in a continuum of learning opportunities.

## Meeting the challenges of geriatric health care

The growing number of elderly needing care now and in the near future makes the demand for geriatric health care providers a pressing concern. Under the direction of Associate Professor Kathleen Miller, EdD, RN, faculty and students in the Graduate School of Nursing are working toward solutions for meeting the health care needs of this expanding population. Already, many graduates of the Dual Track Gerontological Nurse Practitioner Specialties are providing care for elders in long-term care facilities and hospitals in Worcester and throughout Massachusetts, and the GSN has recently been re-funded by the Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration to increase the number of geriatric advanced practice nurses.

Several current GSN students are

the recipients of Creating Careers in Geriatric Advanced Practice Nursing scholarships awarded through a partnership of the John A. Hartford Foundation and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. These Hartford scholars—Joyce Landers, Tammy Glynn and Romelia Salazar—are involved in outreach activities aimed at sparking the interest of high school students in careers in nursing and other disciplines. Additionally, these GSN students are taking part in community outreach activities and speaking at professional and interdisciplinary organizations about geriatric health.

The GSN has established a partnership with several area hospitals and long-term care facilities called Comprehensive Geriatric Education and Mentoring Across Settings. The project includes a series of education



Students and faculty of the GSN are working toward solutions for meeting the health care needs of the expanding senior population.

modules for staff caring for older adults, a Geriatric Fellow Program targeted toward nursing faculty and administrators, as well as a Geriatric Internship Program for students in the Graduate Entry Pathway. Coordinated by Laurie Herndon, MS, GNP, Comprehensive Geriatric Education

and Mentoring Across Settings is focused on increasing the number of men and women interested in geriatric nursing while also enhancing the knowledge of the participants and quality of care provided to elders in these settings. ■

### Publications

*continued from page 2*

*Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes*, 42(3): 314-321, July 2006  
 “Home Visits to Improve Adherence to Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy: A Randomized Controlled Trial”

**Elaine Barber Parker, PhD, RN, CNE**  
*Nurse Educator*, 31(6): 270-274, November/December 2006  
 “Strategies to Manage the Time Demands of Online Teaching”

**Lynne Schilling, RN, PhD**  
*Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, 21(6): 412-424, December 2006  
 “Changing Patterns of Self-Management in Youth with Type 1 Diabetes”

**Susan Sullivan-Bolyai, PhD, DNSc, RN, CNS**  
*American Journal of Maternal Child Nursing*, 31(1): 24-31, January/February 2006: “Fathers’ Reflections on Parenting Young Children with Type 1 Diabetes”

**Rosemary Theroux, PhD, RNC**  
*Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners*, 18: 429-435, 2006  
 “Graduate Students’ Experiences with Standardized Patients as Adjuncts for Teaching Pelvic Examinations”

*AWHONN Lifelines*, 10(3): 244-249, 2006  
 “How to Bring Evidence into Your Practice”

### Graduate Student Nursing Organization

The purpose of the Graduate Student Nursing Organization (GSNO) is to foster communication, coordination and continuity among graduate students and the administration and faculty of the University of Massachusetts Worcester, the Graduate School of Nursing and the University community. Membership includes all full-time and part-time students enrolled in the GSN. Monthly meetings are conducted by elected GSNO officers with open GSNO meetings held quarterly.

#### Class Officers

2007  
*President:* Wyatt Biel  
*Secretary:* Anh To  
*Treasurer:* Vicki Lepine  
*Traditional Class Representative:* Sabrina Couture  
*Graduate Entry Pathway Representative:* Denise L’Esperance

2008:  
*President-Elect:* Katie Sullivan  
*Secretary-Elect:* Jaime Cesnickas  
*Treasurer:* Steve DeGurski  
*Traditional Class Representative:* Tammy Glynn  
*Graduate Entry Pathway Representative:* Rosemary Kirousis

2009  
*Graduate Entry Pathway Representative:* Shawna Steadman

## save the date

For information on these events, contact Jill Terrien at 508-856-6622.

April '07

**3** Doctoral Round Table, 5:30–8 p.m.

**24** Nursing Excellence Conference, 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

May '07

**6–12** *National Nurses Week—celebrate!*

June '07

**1** Annual Alumni Breakfast and Award Ceremony

**3** Commencement, Mechanics Hall, Worcester

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