

focus

Volume 3 • Number 1 • March 2003



On the Graduate School of Nursing

"...where research, practice and service are the keystones of education."

Message from the Dean

Great people are the mark of a great school! For the past 17 years, the GSN has produced graduate nurses in a collaborative research and service-driven environment where innovative education and practice models improve health and quality of care. The GSN is privileged to have a core group of faculty, students, alumni and friends who value nursing and continue to build upon the school's standing by developing great leaders. Building on the GSN's tradition of excellence, this edition of *Focus on the GSN* features the latest achievements of just a few of the faculty, students and alumni who set the benchmarks that distinguish our school in the Commonwealth and beyond.

Among our faculty

Carol Bova, PhD, RN, ANP, coordinator of the Adult Ambulatory NP program, holds a joint appointment as an assistant professor in the GSN and the Department of Medicine. As detailed below, she has been awarded a National Institute of Nursing Research grant for her study of *HIV-infected Patients' Experiences with Hepatitis C Treatment*.

Through a partnership with Commonwealth Medicine, UMass Medical School and the Massachusetts Department of Correction (DOC), the GSN has embarked on a major initiative to help provide clinical services for the state prison system. Led by Janet Frasier Hale, PhD, RN, FNP, a professor and director of Interdisciplinary and Community partnerships, UMass Correctional Health Nursing will focus on workforce development, health pro-



Dean Doreen Harper, PhD, CS, ANP, FAAN

motion and prevention, and educational programs that improve nursing practice.

Among our students

Melinda Darrigo, a second-year Acute Care Nurse Practitioner student, received the Excellence in Nursing Practice Award from the Massachusetts Nursing Association and was also awarded the Massachusetts Nurses Foundation Master's Degree Scholarship for 2002. Additionally, as featured on the next page, six of our students were named Fairlawn Nursing Scholars for 2002-2003. Congratulations to these outstanding students for this special recognition.

Among our alumni

Paulette Seymour Route, PhD '01, RN, also featured in this edition, graduated from the doctoral program in 2001. Dr. Seymour Route currently serves as the chief nursing officer at UMass Memorial Health Care and as the associate dean for practice and assistant professor in the GSN. Her work

with the GSN has led to the establishment of the UMass Center for Nursing Excellence, a partnership between the GSN and UMass Memorial that links academics and research with clinical practice to improve patient care.

GSN alumni activities have grown because of the collective efforts of dedicated alumni co-leaders Jill Terrien and Diana Bergin. They deserve special acknowledgement for their continuous advocacy for the GSN as co-chairs of the Alumni Association. Diana and Jill have set out to enhance the school's relationship with alumni, working tirelessly to provide opportunities to maintain and expand relationships with our graduates and students. I encourage you to get in touch with Jill and Diana via the GSN Web site at umassmed.edu/gsn/alumni-friends to get involved. This will help us with a new column called *Class Notes*, highlighting your latest professional and personal news.

Lastly, we are all deeply aware of today's extraordinary need for nursing leadership. As the world is immersed in impending conflict, the inextricable linkage to the health and welfare of our global society is apparent. Our profession historically responds to these challenges through its core values focusing on quality patient care. World events call for extraordinary nurses.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the leaders among our GSN community who have been called to military and civil action during the past months. Please join me in wishing these GSN leaders well and keep them

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Alumni Message

On Jan. 7, a group of alumni joined us in the new GSN conference room for dinner and a working meeting. The group enthusiastically accomplished more than we expected! What we thought would be a difficult task of reworking the Alumni Association By-Laws turned out to be a stimulating discussion with suggestions that complement the vision of the GSN.

For your review, the group drafted the following mission statement:

The University of Massachusetts Worcester Graduate School of Nursing Alumni Association supports its membership by providing a forum for the professional and social development of bonds among its membership to foster the promotion of research, practice and service on a collegial level.

That is impressive, but it is a work in progress and we appreciate any feedback and comments.

We will be sending you the by-laws at a later date and intend to have the membership vote on both the by-laws and a roster of officers at the Alumni Breakfast. We invite you to submit your name for one of the positions. We don't overwork officers or members and all of our meetings include food, laughter and a great deal of discussion.

In this age of increased anxiety, we need to keep in touch with one another. As we continuously work to update the mailing lists, please e-mail us with changes in name or address and with your interests and what you are accomplishing at work. We'd love to know what the members of the class of 1993 and 1998 are doing for their tenth and fifth year reunions!

Take care and stay safe.

Jill Diana

Research investigates hepatitis C treatment in HIV-positive patients

By Carol Bova, PhD, RN, ANP

Chronic hepatitis C infection (HCV) affects an estimated 40,000 HIV-positive patients in the United States. Without treatment, increasing numbers of HIV-positive patients will either die from end-stage liver disease or from HIV-related complications because of the difficulty using antiretroviral agents with their hepatotoxicity. To support efforts to supplement the little information that is known about the use of these treatments in HIV-infected patients, I recently received funding from the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) to

study HIV-infected patients' experiences with hepatitis C treatment.

Currently, treating HCV infection involves using a combination of pegylated interferon alpha and ribavirin, both of which are medications associated with significant toxicities. My study will include interviews of 40 patients co-infected with HCV and HIV, at three specific time points — before treatment, 8-12 weeks into treatment and at treatment completion. Subjects who choose not to be treated will also be interviewed.

Consequently, a matrix will be used to integrate the qualitative, demographic

and clinical cofactor data (e.g., HCV treatment adherence, HIV RNA, HCV RNA, HCV genotype, liver pathology, HIV illness stage and co-treatment with antiretroviral agents). Because of the number of patients facing the complications of dual HCV/HIV infection, this study is an essential step towards developing the foundation for clinical trials that test HCV treatment interventions among HIV-infected patients. Results of this study will also be valuable to clinicians, educators, researchers and those who develop treatment guidelines for HCV/HIV co-infected patients. ●

GSN Fairlawn Scholars Announced

By Kristal Imperio, MS, RN, CS, ANP, GNP, Program Director and Outreach Coordinator, Worcester Nursing Pipeline Consortium

The Worcester Nursing Pipeline Consortium (WNPC) and the GSN are pleased to announce the 2002-2003 Fairlawn Scholars. Funded through a generous grant from the Fairlawn Foundation, these scholarship recipients have demonstrated a commitment to improving the health of residents in Worcester and Central Massachusetts through employment, clinical practice and community service.

- Sylvia Davis, a first-year ANP student with a subspecialty in correctional health, currently works at Spectrum Health Care. She has consistently demonstrated a commitment to the field of nursing and to the recruitment of minorities into nursing careers. (She also developed the WNPC logo while a student at Anna Maria College!)

- Kimone Powell is a first-year ANP/GNP student and also works on a busy telemetry unit at the UMass Memorial Medical Center – University Campus. Dedicated to the recruitment of nurses into the profession, she plans to teach nursing at the undergraduate level in Central Massachusetts.

- Gretchen Michaelson, a second-year ANP student, works as a trauma/intensive care nurse at the UMass Memorial Medical Center – University Campus. In response to the growing nursing and nursing faculty shortage, Gretchen plans to teach nursing in the Worcester area in addition to working as a nurse practitioner after graduating.

- Karen A. Uttaro, a second-year ANP student, works as a critical care nurse at the UMass Memorial Medical Center – University Campus. Her research focuses on strategies for the recruitment and retention of nurses. Upon graduation in Spring 2003, she plans to become a nursing faculty member at a Worcester area college.



2002-2003 Fairlawn Scholars (from left to right): Sylvia Davis, Karen Uttaro, Kimone Powell, Katherine O'Dell and Gretchen Michaelson with Dean Harper

- Katharine O'Dell, a first-year PhD student, practices as a midwife and OB/GYN NP at the UMass Memorial Medical Center – University Campus. Katharine also volunteers at the Worcester Youth Center and Girls, Inc. Upon graduation she plans to continue her clinical practice and research in women's health.

These scholars will act as outreach ambassadors in the recruitment of new nurses and the educational advancement of practicing nurses at all levels.

The 2001-2002 Fairlawn scholars performed over 300 hours of outreach last year, promoting careers in nursing and educational advancement opportunities available within Worcester and Central Massachusetts. ●

Additional information regarding the Fairlawn nurse scholarship program, the Worcester Nursing Pipeline Consortium and the Nursing Summer Enrichment Program for high school students is available at www.umassmed.edu/wnpc.

Dean's message

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in your thoughts and prayers over the coming days.

These are only some of the people that are making the GSN a great school.

Their contributions continue to develop the GSN tradition — preparing nursing leaders for excellence in research, service and education that improves quality of life for those we serve. ●

Alumni Feature

Paulette Seymour Route, PhD, RN



The Center for Nursing Excellence

By Paulette Seymour Route, PhD '01, RN, UMass Memorial Chief Nursing Officer

The Center for Nursing Excellence began as an idea over a year ago. Since then, the center's organizers have worked with GSN Dean Doreen Harper PhD, CS, ANP, FAAN, to move it from concept — with the approval of UMMS Chancellor Aaron Lazare and UMass Memorial President and CEO John O'Brien — to a virtual department ready for operation.

The center merges the nursing, clinical and leadership expertise of the UMass Memorial Medical Center with the academic and research expertise of the GSN. The goals of the center are three-fold. First, the center will provide nursing professional development and educational opportunities for staff and students. Second, it will serve as a resource center to develop fundable

patient-focused research projects, finally the center will assist with developing professional standards of practice through the Nursing Governance process. In addition to its primary goals, the center will contribute to the development and review of the scope of practice for nurse practitioners.

Through the process of nursing professional development and research-based clinical practice, the Center for Nursing Excellence will contribute to the patient care mission of the clinical system. It is a true joint venture whose common goals are driven by the combined mission of an academic health science center and an academic medical center. Working collaboratively, the center's most important anticipated contribution is a direct and positive impact on patient care. ●

Save the Date

For information on Sigma Theta Tau listings, contact Nancy Kowal at 508-856-1004 or kowaln@ummbc.org; for all other inquiries, contact Elizabeth Flodin at 508-856-5801.

March 2003

- 15 PhD application deadline for Fall 2003
- 19 Open House/Information Session for Prospective Students 5: 30 – 7 p.m.

April 2003

- 1 Application deadline for Post Master's Candidates
- 17 PhD registration for Fall 2003
- 17 Sigma Theta Tau Iota Phi Chapter-at-Large Induction 7 p.m., Anna Maria College Auditorium
- 29 Excellence in Nursing Conference

May 2003

- 1 Application deadline for Master's Program
- 5-11 National Nurses Week
- 6 Dean's Clinical Scholars Colloquium
- 21 Sigma Theta Tau Iota Phi Meeting for Leadership Excellence 6 p.m., Beechwood Hotel, Worcester
- 30 13th Annual Alumni Breakfast

June 2003

- 1 Commencement

August 2003

Publication of the next *Focus on the GSN* newsletter

focus

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