

heartbeat

Spring 2019

University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies



EDUCATION FOR LIFE

Transforming health care through community partnerships

TAKE A SEAT!

AND LEAVE YOUR MARK

The new Simulation Hospital at the School of Nursing and Health Studies has opened, and there's a seat waiting for you in the state-of-the-art auditorium.



The TAKE A SEAT campaign offers a unique opportunity to play a vital role in shaping the future of health care. A gift of \$250 or \$500 will allow you to name a seat in the auditorium – in honor of your time at the SONHS, your accomplishments or as tribute to a family member.

Seats are limited, TAKE A SEAT, while they last.

To make a gift online, visit www.miami.edu/SONHS-TakeASeat or call the Division of Development & Alumni Relations at (305) 284-9773.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
SCHOOL of NURSING
& HEALTH STUDIES



CONTENTS

Spring 2019

Features

12



Powerful Partnerships in Patient Care

D.N.P. students help transform health care in the community.

18



SONHS@70: A Family Celebration in Photos

A look at the familiar faces and fun times from a party to remember.

20



Rhodes to Discovery

Prestigious scholarship propels recent SONHS grad on her quest to create a healthier nation for all.

22



Getting ICU Survivors Mobile with Music

Faculty-led study aims to determine healing impact of novel music-guided exercise intervention.

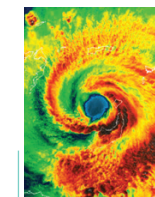
26



Preparing for the Loss of a Loved One

A conversation with oncology nurse-researcher Kristin Levoy, Ph.D. '19.

28



Are We Ready?

Simulation Hospital Symposium explores disaster preparedness and response strategies.

Departments

2

Leadership

3

Dean's Message

4

Vital Signs

Top-Tier Grad Programs | SONHS By the Numbers | New Anatomy Lab Expands Learning Options | Cheers for PEERS | Rising Rank in Research Funding | Guatemala Mission Gives Global Perspective | Hugoton Foundation Funds New Tech | Health Talks in Havana | Crash Course | SONHS Launches Lecture Series

29

Faculty Highlights

31

Faculty Profile
Susana Barroso, Ph.D. '16

32

Class Notes
A Pair of Iron Arrows, Updates from SONHS grads, and In Memoriam

35

Alumni Profile
Rick García, B.S.N. '95

36

Student Profile
Heather Sanchez, B.S.N. '18

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS

Marina Alvarez

SONHS Executive Director

Rosa M. Lamazares-Romero

SONHS Assistant Director, Communications + Marketing

Robin Shear

Senior Editor

WRITERS

Carlos Harrison

Ginny Pickles

Maggie Van Dyke

Jessica Weiss

Heartbeat is published twice a year by the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS). *Heartbeat* is distributed to alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of SONHS. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. Postmaster and others, please send change of address notification to *Heartbeat*, School of Nursing and Health Studies, P.O. Box 248153, Coral Gables, Florida, 33124; telephone (305) 284-3666. Contributions of articles and artwork are welcome, but *Heartbeat* accepts no responsibility for unsolicited items.

The comments and opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the University of Miami or the staff of *Heartbeat*. Copyright © 2019, University of Miami. An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

Administration

Cindy L. Munro, Ph.D.
Dean and Professor

John M. Clochesy, Ph.D.
Vice Dean and Professor

Charles A. Downs, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Research, and Associate Professor

Jeffrey Groom, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Simulation Programs and Professor of Clinical

Martin M. Zdanowicz, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Health Studies and Professor of Clinical

Mary Mckay, D.N.P.
Associate Dean for Nursing Undergraduate Programs and Associate Professor of Clinical

Johis Ortega, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Hemispheric and Global Initiatives and Associate Professor of Clinical

Mary Hooshmand, Ph.D.
Associate Dean, D.N.P. Programs, Interim Associate Dean for Master's Programs and Assistant Professor of Clinical

Sean Kilpatrick, M.S.Ed.
Assistant Dean of Student/Post-graduate Support Services

Marina Alvarez, M.S.
Executive Director

Zuny Fernandez, B.S.
Director, Budget

Advancement

Paul A. Metcalf, Ph.D.
Director of Development

2018-2019
Visiting Committee

*Jayne Sylvester Malfitano, Chair

Lisette M. Exposito, B.S.N.

Pamela J. Garrison, R.N.

**Thelma Anderson Gibson, B.S.N.

Jacqueline Gonzalez, D.N.P.

Kim Greene, L.C.S.W.

Michael Joseph, M.B.A.

Maria Lamas, M.B.A.

Javier Lopez, M.D.

Arthur R. Miller, M.B.A.

Oscar Morales, M.D.

Kevin E. O'Brien, M.D.

M. Christine Schwartz, M.S.N.

Clemencia Silk, M.S.

Elizabeth Smith, D.N.P.

Joan K. Stout, R.N.

*Alex F. Vicencio, CFA®, CFP®, CIMA®

David Zambrana, Ph.D.

**Denotes Board of Trustees*

***Denotes Emeriti Member, Board of Trustees*

Faculty

Patricia Amado, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Debbie Anglade, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Susana Barroso-Fernandez, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical and Director, Simulation-Hospital Special Projects

Patricia Larrieu Briones, D.N.P.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Rosina Cianelli, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Director, M.S.N. - D.N.P. Program

Nichole Crenshaw, D.N.P.
Assistant Professor of Clinical and Director, Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Program

Giovanna De Oliveira, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Joseph De Santis, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Director, Ph.D. Program

Diego Deleon, M.D.
Senior Lecturer

Ruth Everett-Thomas, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Ashley Falcon, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Cynthia Foronda, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Clinical

Karina Gattamorta, Ph.D.
Research Associate Professor

Nicole A. Gonzaga Gomez, D.N.P.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Juan E. Gonzalez, Ph.D.
Professor of Clinical and Director, Nurse Anesthesia Program

Juan M. Gonzalez, D.N.P.
Assistant Professor of Clinical and Director, Family Nurse Practitioner Program

Shayne Hauglum, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

LaToya J. Lewis-Pierre, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Zhan Liang, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor

Yui Matsuda, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor

Brian McCabe, Ph.D.
Research Associate Professor

Adrian Mesa, D.N.P.
Lecturer

Victoria Behar Mitrani, Ph.D.
Professor

Greta Mitzova-Vladinov, D.N.P.
Assistant Professor of Clinical and Associate Director, Nurse Anesthesia Program

Anne E. Norris, Ph.D.
Professor

Brenda Owusu, D.N.P.
Assistant Professor of Clinical and Director Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Program

Linda M. Parker, D.Sc.
Research Assistant Professor

Andrew Porter, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Susan Prather, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Carmen Rosa Presti, D.N.P.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Regine Reeves-Placide, M.S.N.
Lecturer

Deborah J. Riquelme, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Deborah Salani, D.N.P.
Associate Professor of Clinical and Director, Undergraduate Nursing Accelerated Program

Jill Sanko, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor

Kenya Snowden, D.N.P.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Beatriz Valdes, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Denise C. Vidot, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor

Natalia Villegas Rodriguez, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Clinical

Goldie Wasman, M.S.N.
Lecturer

Carole Wilkinson, D.N.P.
Assistant Professor of Clinical

Linda L. Wunder, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Clinical

Erick Zarabozo, D.N.P.
Lecturer

Mission Statement

*At the School of
Nursing and Health Studies,
we transform lives
and health care through
education, research,
innovation, and service
across the hemisphere.*

Novel
Optimistic
World-changing

Welcome to
our spring
issue of
Heartbeat.

As we graduate another group of amazing students, we pay tribute to the robust cycle of learning that takes place every day, in so many ways, throughout our school.

Education for Life is one of three pillars we've identified as key to the school's Strategic Plan for 2019-2025, along with Mission-Driven Research and Hemispheric Leadership. By promoting Education for Life, the School of Nursing and Health Studies will continue to be a leader in shaping health care education nationally, providing lifelong learning opportunities for nurses and other health care providers through continuing education and stackable credentials. We will address ongoing advances in the health professions as well as the changing needs of patients and other populations.

In our field, especially, education is composed of powerful partnerships that span communities. The stories that follow explore how these partnerships propel a positive progression toward learning and leadership, resulting in critical impacts for patients and the public at large. By prioritizing Education for Life, we prioritize their health and well-being.

This issue of *Heartbeat* highlights SONHS students, alumni, and faculty who are engaging in this process in meaningful ways. People like Kristiana Yao, who at 22 is a Rhodes Scholarship recipient working to unravel the puzzle of public health policy. D.N.P. graduates Marecia Bell, Jessica Saint Clair, and Michelle Arrojo are among those implementing



ROBERT KLEMM

sustainable solutions for patient care improvement with our community hospital partners. Ph.D. graduate Kristin Levoy's research will help people with cancer and their caregivers face the ultimate reality. And Dr. Zhan Liang, an assistant professor, is reaching across disciplines to aid recovery among ICU survivors.

I also invite you to view the vivid photo spread from our 70th anniversary celebration. From our incredible parade contingent to the 10-foot-tall LED-illuminated performers, it was definitely an affair to remember! Seeing the entire spectrum of the SONHS community gathered during Alumni and Homecoming Weekend made me immensely proud and humbled to lead this great school to even greater heights, bolstered by diversity and inclusion, a culture of belonging, and a cutting-edge program of excellence in education.

I'm excited by the caliber of people who continue to enter health care professions and the growing emphasis on prevention. UM SONHS has exceptional programs and our outcomes

demonstrate that. We are routinely the premier Florida nursing school in NIH funding, and *U.S. News & World Report* just ranked our master's and D.N.P. programs in its Top 30. We are developing initiatives and collaborations to help learners at all levels reach their next phase of achievement and foster a seamless path toward advanced degrees. At SONHS, we know that the continuum of learning is inextricably linked to the continuum of care.

Esteemed alumnus Dr. Rick Garcia, who is profiled in these pages, captured the essence of Education for Life beautifully during his inspiring Alumnus of Distinction Award speech: "Never stop learning," he said. "And as you continue to climb, remember to reach back and pull up those who are coming behind you. For as you stand on the shoulders of those who came ahead of you and pulled you up, tomorrow, those you pull up will stand on your shoulders."

Cindy L. Munro
Ph.D., R.N., A.N.P.-B.C., F.A.A.N.,
F.A.A.N.P., F.A.A.A.S.
Dean and Professor



Top-Tier Grad Programs

M.S.N. and D.N.P. make major strides in new national rankings

U.S. News & World Report's Best Graduate Schools 2020 is out, and for the first time ever the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS) is in the well-known guide's Top 30—for not just one, but two of its degree programs.

Both the Master of Science in Nursing (M.S.N.) and Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) programs ranked No. 28, based on program excellence and on the quality of the school's faculty, research, and students, according to *U.S. News & World Report*.

"We are thrilled to again be recognized in such a positive light by *U.S. News & World Report*, and be in such good company with our respected peers throughout the nation," said SONHS Dean and Professor Cindy L. Munro. "Our jump in the rankings signals a growing awareness of and respect for the exciting work our faculty and

students are doing to transform lives and health care through education, research, innovation, and service across the hemisphere."

The school's M.S.N. program, which offers students a wide range of advanced educational and clinical experience as advanced practice nurses, is now Florida's top program, according to *U.S. News*. At No. 28 nationally, it is up 4 spots from last year, 10 spots from 2018, and a staggering 33 places from its No. 61 ranking for 2015. First-time pass rates for SONHS students taking nurse practitioner certification exams are regularly well above the national average.

The D.N.P. program also skyrocketed to No. 28, rising 14 spots above its ranking for 2019 and 18 places over its 2018 ranking. The school launched its first D.N.P. program in 2009, adding

a B.S.N.-D.N.P. Nurse Anesthesia Track program—Florida's first—in 2014. Graduates of these D.N.P. programs are prepared to create innovation for nursing practice and health care.

U.S. News surveyed 584 accredited nursing schools with master's or doctoral programs.

"We are very proud of this achievement, but we also know that these exceptional rankings are no substitute for getting to know us first-hand," added Munro. "We hope being highlighted at this elite level in a widely read and closely watched guide like *U.S. News & World Report* will serve first and foremost to encourage future nurse leaders to take a closer look at the novel, optimistic, world-changing opportunities and education offered at SONHS."

New Anatomy Lab Expands Learning Options

All students enrolled in the increasingly popular Health Science bachelor's degree program at the School of Nursing and Health Studies are required to take Human Anatomy and the Lab.



During the Spring 2019 semester, students signed up for the course were surprised when they walked into the school's brand-new and much bigger human anatomy and physiology laboratory. With twice the square footage of the original, the modern and inviting space is more conducive to team activities and hands-on group interaction that will benefit students, notes Diego Deleon, a senior lecturer and M.D. who teaches human anatomy, physiology, and other health science courses.

"The additional room and new resources allow me to innovate. I am developing and implementing new activities that were difficult to set up in the previous space," he explains. "The lab now accommodates larger interactive equipment designed to enhance the learning process."

The updated space also makes room for more students per semester to take the class.

Over 280 SONHS undergraduate students are currently pursuing the Health Science degree, which includes concentrations in pre-medicine, pre-occupational therapy, pre-physical therapy, pre-pharmacy, management/health policy, and general health sciences.

SONHS BY THE NUMBERS



For NIH funding to Florida nursing schools FY2018



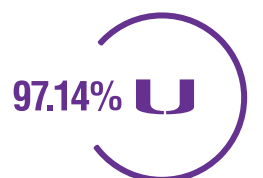
Nationwide rank for NIH funding to nursing schools FY2018



Number of students (including 10 from Chile) inducted into the prestigious STTI Honor Society of Nursing in Fall 2018 by SONHS chapter, Beta Tau



In the rankings for both SONHS' master's and D.N.P. degree programs in *U.S. News & World Report's* new guide to the best nursing grad schools



Overall first-time pass rate for 175 SONHS students who took NCLEX-RN in 2018, well above the state average of 90.8% and national average of 91.57%

Cheers for PEERS



In its first year, the PEERS Program celebrates success in engaging students and alumni to be ambassadors of the SONHS experience.

As a travel nurse from the Washington, D.C., area, Karen Elias thought Miami would be just one stop along the exciting itinerary of her career. She never expected to stay very long, much less fall in love with the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies and be accepted into its Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Program. But that's exactly what happened. "Here I am almost three years later," she laughs.

An ambassador in the school's one-year-old PEERS Program, Elias appreciates the chance to use her experiences to help prospective and new members of the SONHS community find their own success. "I can let them know I didn't have the most traditional route to get where I am, but I remember being in those shoes, and it's totally possible."

Elias, who is Hispanic and a first-generation college student, says "being an ambassador for SONHS is a way for me to be able to use my voice and my experiences to mentor people." She relays a "really great experience" she had leading a tour one day when a family on the tour approached her. "It was a Hispanic family," she adds. "They were concerned because no one in [the family] had ever gone to college before.... I was able to share my story. I said, 'Actually, I am the first person in my family that went to college.' I understand it could be a little scary to jump into that role, but I gave them my experiences, and the end of that conversation was rewarding because I felt I helped put them at ease...."

The Office of Student Services began developing the blueprint for the PEERS Program in 2015 with the goal of fostering a community fully committed to student support, inclusion, and educational excellence. The program officially kicked off in Spring 2018. "We thought about creating an ambassador-type program to get students more engaged with us in different ways," explains Sean Kilpatrick, assistant

dean for Student/Post-Graduate Support Services. "We think of the holistic student experience—from prospect, inquiry, and applicant, to enrolled student, graduate, and alumni—and back to student. We're going through and beyond graduation, hitting the whole life cycle of the SONHS learning community."

PEERS, the umbrella term coined to encompass the program, is an acronym for Prepare, Educate, Emulate, Recruit, and Sustain. "In the preparing phase, we help students through the application process and orientation," says Elias. "During the education phase, we can be a source of opportunities for students, let them know what resources are available to them if they need guidance in any way. Emulate means I help represent the school itself through my presence; as far as recruiting, I keep the line of communication open with any student or prospective student who may have questions." From there, she notes, the "sustain" part comes naturally, because "building these relationships helps prospective and current students know they'll always be supported, even as alumni."

And that's important to Elias, who is set to graduate this August. "The thing I love about UM is the people are so friendly and open to helping each other. It's a very family-oriented vibe," she says. "There was a time I was struggling, and my classmates reached out, offering to study with me. ... That's one of the things I always emphasize to prospective students because when you're looking at schools, a big part of what you need to know is the atmosphere you're going to be in on a day-to-day basis."

Kilpatrick looks for professionalism, engagement, and innovation in potential ambassadors. "The ambassador is truly that, an ambassador for the school. They're able to connect with prospective and current students," he says. "We want their personality to shine through," adds Isabella

Figueroa, the school's recruiter and supervisor for the PEERS ambassadors.

Instantly recognizable in royal purple polo shirts, ambassadors can often be seen leading tours, contributing during information sessions, and assisting at various school events. They even host social media chats. When ambassadors graduate, they are honored for their important role with a special stole to wear at commencement. They are also invited to become Alumni Ambassadors, and represent SONHS in their workplace and the community at large. A year after graduating from the school's Accelerated B.S.N. program, Alumni Ambassador Maria del Risco, B.S.N. '17, helped welcome a new class of Accelerated students with sage advice during Orientation, saying, "My two cents: have an agenda. Break down the entire syllabus. ... You can contact me too. I'm happy to help."

Dean Cindy L. Munro hosts a brunch for the ambassadors each fall and spring. "The students in the PEERS Program do such a wonderful service for this school, she says. "They really project to potential students what a successful student is at SONHS."

Elias says her own experience has been so rewarding that she would like to go on to earn her Doctor of Nursing Practice degree at the school and continue serving as an ambassador. "Being part of the PEERS Program has truly helped me outside of my studies. It's a creative outlet, and it keeps me grounded," she says. "It reminds me of my own triumphs over what I had to overcome in my life, and it helps me remember my end goal, which is to always give back to my community."

To learn more about the PEERS Program, call the Office of Student Services at 305-284-4325 or email sonhs@miami.edu.

Rising Rank in Research Funding

SONHS Nationally Ranked

#23

2018 NIH FUNDING to
Schools of Nursing

#1 in Florida

The School of Nursing and Health Studies is again Florida's top recipient for National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding to nursing schools.

That's according to rankings released in February by Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research, which compiled its list based on FY2018 reporting. Nationally, SONHS came in at No. 23, a three-spot rise over its FY2017 ranking. As part of its strategic plan for 2019-2025, the SONHS aims to be a top 20 NIH-funded school.

"Translational science is at the core of our school's mission," says Dean Cindy Munro. "NIH grants and other funding allow us to pursue research programs that advance nursing knowledge,

engage and educate the clinical and scientific workforce of tomorrow, improve patient safety and care, impact health policy, and evolve our curriculum to address the future of the profession."

Over the last decade, SONHS has emerged as a foremost recipient of grant awards from the NIH. The school's research expertise encompasses vulnerable populations, global health, family caregiving, disaster preparedness, and patient safety and outcomes. Some of the world's leading health care researchers are advancing valuable science, with opportunities for students at all levels to participate under their guidance. Faculty scientists place special emphasis on outcomes among critically and chronically ill patients, on ethnic and sexual minorities, and on Caribbean and Latin American populations across the hemisphere.

Efforts funded by NIH institutes include an interdisciplinary, collaborative center

that enables investigators to study intervention approaches to address substance abuse, psychological trauma, and HIV/AIDS among highly vulnerable Latino communities in Miami; an innovative, faculty-created intervention that uses gaming technology to reduce teen pregnancy among Latinas; and the randomized clinical trial of a novel intervention designed to reduce delirium among mechanically ventilated patients in intensive care.

"One of the most important ways the School of Nursing and Health Studies serves its students, faculty, partners, and the greater hemispheric community is through its commitment to Mission-Driven Research," says Associate Dean for Research and Associate Professor Charles A. Downs. "The school's NIH portfolio has an impact in hospitals, communities, laboratories, classrooms, boardrooms, and at the intersection of research, practice, and policy."

Give and you shall receive

Create a Charitable Gift Annuity at the School of Nursing and Health Studies

Through a Charitable Gift Annuity, you and/or a loved one will receive income for life, a tax deduction, and other benefits while increasing scholarship opportunities, expanding academic programs, and funding innovative research for years to come. The University of Miami's Office of Estate and Gift Planning can help you balance your philanthropic goals with your financial needs and tax-planning strategies – ensuring a plan for your future, the School's future, and our collective futures. New Gift Annuity rates (as of July 1, 2018) allow you to get even more benefit from your gift!

To learn more about making a planned gift, please visit our website at miami.edu/plannedgiving or contact:

Paul Metcalf, SONHS Development Director
(305) 284-1785 | pmetcalf@miami.edu

Kyle Paige, Executive Director, Office of Estate and Gift Planning
(305) 284-2266 | kpaige@miami.edu

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
SCHOOL of NURSING
& HEALTH STUDIES



Vital Signs

Guatemala Mission Gives Global Perspective



Students at the School of Nursing and Health Studies regularly benefit from experiential learning opportunities across the globe. One of those students, Viviana Castillo, D.N.P. '18, helped SONHS kick off a new clinical partnership in the mountains of Guatemala recently. Castillo accompanied Nicole Gonzaga, assistant professor of clinical for the nurse anesthetist program, on a week-long medical mission led by the Healing Hands Foundation, which provides critical surgeries and dental care free of charge in underserved regions of the world. Their 2018 mission took place at Hospital Corpus Christi Patzún Chimaltenango, operated by nuns in Guatemala's central highlands region. Though Castillo hasn't been able to take part in a service mission in her native Nicaragua since leaving at age 10, being in Guatemala felt familiar to her. "The geography, people, food, and culture," she recalls, "it felt like I was helping at home, and that was really rewarding." Healing Hands board members were so pleased with the outcome that they've asked Gonzaga to select two more SONHS students to join this year's mission. "Viviana came

to work and to learn," says Gonzaga. "She was flexible with every aspect of the mission. "Though Castillo had served on half a dozen medical missions in Haiti before going to Guatemala, she says being able to participate as a student registered nurse anesthetist (SRNA) under Gonzaga's supervision enabled her to gain significant experience on 30 pediatric surgical procedures. She adds that the Healing Hands team provided top-notch care on every case, including birth defects, circumcisions, hysterectomies, and hernias. In all, they performed some 85 life-changing surgeries and 130 dental procedures during their four-day residency at Hospital Corpus Christi, she says. Despite having completed clinical rotations at 10 medical sites in South Florida, including Miami's VA Hospital, Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital, and Ryder Trauma Center, Castillo quickly learned that the pace for a mission like this was much faster than she was used to in the States. "While I was bringing the patient out, someone else was cleaning and setting up for the next case, so I'd come back with the next kid ready to go," she recounts. When



there weren't enough stretchers, Castillo improvised, gently carrying her young patients into the operating room. "You have to be able to adapt quickly to whatever may come up," she says. "It was just a great learning experience." Castillo, who graduated from the school's B.S.N.-D.N.P. Nurse Anesthesia Track program in December, works as a CRNA in South Florida.

Health Talks in Havana

Hundreds of delegates from over 20 nations converged in Havana, Cuba, this past November to take part in the weeklong XVI Pan American Nursing Research Colloquium. Representing the School of Nursing and Health Studies were Cindy L. Munro, dean and professor (pictured third from left), and Johis Ortega, associate dean for Hemispheric and Global Initiatives and associate professor of clinical.

The central theme of the biennial scientific event, "Contribution of Nursing in Primary Health Care to Universal Health," honored the 40th anniversary of the Declaration of Alma-Ata, which in 1978 defined primary care as an essential strategy of achieving health for all. Ortega, director of the school's Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) Collaborating Centre for Nursing Human Resources Development and Patient Safety, presented "Implementing the National Incident Management System as a Framework for Travel Medicine in Haiti," a discussion on evidence-based protocols he and his team have enacted during their biannual clinical service trips in Thomonde, Haiti. While in Havana, they also visited a local hospital, and attended meetings of the Pan American Network of Nursing and Midwifery Collaborating Centers (PANMCC) and RIENSEP (International Network of Nursing and Patient Safety Experts). An impact report Ortega gave at the RIENSEP gathering highlighted the more than 13,000 care providers to date who have completed the school's PAHO/WHO Patient Safety Course, which is offered for free online in Spanish, English, and Portuguese.

MORE AT pahowho.sonhs.miami.edu



Hugoton Foundation Funds New Technology

\$100,000 supports purchase of advanced simulation equipment

A generous grant from the Hugoton Foundation is funding the purchase of advanced equipment for the International Academy for Clinical Simulation and Research at the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS). The \$100,000 contribution in honor of Joan M. Stout will keep SONHS at the forefront of innovating clinical education for a new age of visual, neuro-cognitive learners.

The Hugoton Foundation, a long-time philanthropic partner of SONHS, is led by Joan K. Stout, president and managing director, who says it is critical to "support nurses before you need one."

"We are honored for this opportunity to partner with Joan Stout and the Hugoton Foundation, and we remain extremely grateful for their continued investment in the School of Nursing and Health Studies and our state-of-the-art Simulation Hospital," says Cindy L. Munro, dean and professor. "Their generosity effectively broadens learning opportunities, allowing our students to acquire vital knowledge and practical skills for competent health care delivery in a technologically superior simulated clinical setting."

The technology further paves the way for SONHS to continue integrating virtual reality, augmented reality, medical imaging, and a number of other styles of visual-learning media.

"This new generation of nursing students has grown up on video systems and technology, so their primary mode of learning has shifted from text-based to visual-based learning," explains Jeffrey Groom, professor of clinical and



A high-fidelity eye and ear simulator enhances students' ability to perform interactive physical exams in an simulated learning environment.

associate dean for Simulation Programs at the International Academy for Clinical Simulation and Research. "These funds are invaluable in supporting in-demand instructional devices to optimize our educational outcomes across the school's undergraduate and graduate courses."

MORE AT simhospital.sonhs.miami.edu

Crash Course

Nurse practitioner students develop rapid response-focused training for staff nurses at Ryder Trauma Center.

As the head of a trauma unit's rapid response team for over a year, Stephen Courson, B.S.H.S. '10, B.S.N. '12, was the one who came running if a patient was in crisis, fighting for life after a car crash or gunshot wound. That real-world experience came in handy when Courson and his peers in the Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Program were asked to give an in-service training at Miami's Ryder Trauma Center during their fall semester clinical rotation.

Adult gerontology acute care nurse practitioner students are usually required to do some kind of case review presentation at the end of their clinical rotation, but this past September, the program's director, Nichole Crenshaw, and Al Hernandez, director of Ryder Trauma Center, saw an opportunity to try something new that would empower her students and his staff to learn from each other.

Part of Ryder's third floor had just been designated an intermediate care unit (IMCU). This meant some of the floor's nurses were still getting up to speed with a new patient population that could require a higher level of acuity in care than some had worked with. "We tasked the students with presenting an

in-service training that offered solutions for the nurses assigned to this newly designated floor," says Crenshaw, assistant professor of clinical.

The students met with the floor nurses and nurse managers to discuss their educational needs and expectations. "We discussed what needs and areas the nurses were interested in learning about, and what areas they saw as opportunities for growth," recounts Courson. "Rapid response was one of the areas they specifically highlighted for receiving more training in, so we wanted to dive deeper because it's a very important area. When you call a rapid response team or are in a code situation, it's very chaotic. If you have an understanding of what's going on before you are in that situation, it's going to help you."

The student nurse practitioners followed up by speaking with the floor's clinical educator, as well as charge nurses, the unit manager, and other nurse practitioners. They consulted the hospital's pharmacist. They did research and drew from their own experience. The end result was a one-day in-service training conducted at the end of their rotation that offered important resources for a

number of nurses on Ryder's newly established IMCU.

"Our main focus was addressing with them when to call a rapid response team and what to do if your patient deteriorates," says Courson. "We also discussed what to do in the moments after calling a rapid response, before the team arrives. We made posters of all the meds in the code cart and what the indications are for using each of those medications."

They talked to nurses from the day and night shifts in groups, going over a detailed diagram of the crash cart, providing handouts, and answering questions.

"The nursing staff was very open to getting as much education and opportunity to learn as possible," says Courson, who worked as a trauma nurse for several years before returning to school. "I think my takeaway was that it's important to reinvest in the nursing staff and take time to answer questions so they feel comfortable coming to us as nurse practitioners. It was empowering as a student nurse practitioner to be able to morph into that leader/mentor/educator that the nurse practitioner really should be."

"We tasked the students with presenting an in-service training that offered solutions for the nurses assigned to this newly designated floor."



SONHS Lecture Series Launches



Guest speakers share their discoveries, interventions, and ongoing efforts to improve local, national, and global health outcomes.

From developing brains of preterm infants to genomic risk factors in the Dogon people of Mali, the SONHS Lecture Series is off to a fascinating start. Presented by Charles Downs, associate dean for Research, the series debuted November 11 with an "Intellectual Property Symposium." Attorneys Patricia Abril, vice dean for Graduate Education at Miami Business School, and Bin Yan, director of Technology Transfer for the University of Miami, explained the law and business of how copyrights, trademarks, patents, and trade secrets play out in the world of academic research, scientific exploration, and scholarship. "The idea of patentable subject matter is constantly changing and expanding as technology evolves," said Abril.

Next up, Jacquelyn Taylor, New York University's inaugural Vernice D. Ferguson Professor in Health Equity at Rory Meyers College of Nursing, addressed "Hypertension Genomics in Black Families: A Tale of Three Studies, and Counting..." In her November 16 lecture, Taylor, recipient of the 2017 Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers, detailed how she conducted a series of increasingly complex multigenerational

studies in the United States and among the Dogon people of Mali, West Africa, to identify genomic underpinnings and social factors that trigger hypertension. Noting that African-American women have the highest incidence and prevalence of hypertension and obesity of any other ethnicity or gender in the U.S., Taylor said her work will enable health care professionals "to look at how we can prevent the younger generation from developing hypertension like their parents and grandparents."

On March 7, Rita Pickler, Ohio State University's FloAnn Sours Easton Endowed Professor of Child and Adolescent Health, presented her lecture titled "Privilege and Responsibility in Conducting a Program of Research." During the lecture, Pickler, who is also director of Ph.D. and Master's in Nursing Science programs at OSU, pointed out that of the 15 million preterm infants born worldwide every year, 1 million die while many more face significant challenges. When she started her career as a NICU nurse in the 1970s, she recalled, care for premature babies was essentially done through trial and error. She went on to

describe the many significant findings from her 35-year, well-funded program of research on preterm infant care, particularly in the areas of feeding and, more recently, neurodevelopment. This groundbreaking work has helped establish evidence-based protocols used in hospitals today. "It's about a clinical, theoretical, empirical, and human journey," she said. "It's about better outcomes."



POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS IN PATIENT CARE

Doctor of Nursing Practice students help transform health care in the community by collaborating with area hospital leaders to implement their scholarly projects.

By Jessica Weiss

While filling out paperwork during a regular doctor's visit last May, Michelle Arrojo, D.N.P. '18, was asked if she wanted to be screened for mental health. And it dawned on her: "I realized we don't ask these questions of kids," she says. "We wait until they're in crisis."

As an advanced practice registered nurse, Arrojo had seen self-harm and suicide attempt patients end up in the pediatric emergency department (ED). But now she wondered if a trip to the hospital for a non-psychiatric illness could be an opportunity to identify undiagnosed psychiatric disorders. She envisioned a quick screening during intake (like those that ask patients if they smoke or drink) to capture important information from adolescents before they exit the system.

That *aha* moment in a doctor's waiting room inspired Arrojo's Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) scholarly project, the evidence-based scholarly project required of all D.N.P. candidates at the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS). Arrojo found that across the United States, fewer than half of the youth who meet the criteria for mental health disorders receive treatment. According to the Florida Department of Children and Families, an estimated 300 children and teens ages 10 to 17 in Florida committed suicide in 2017.

Leadership at Homestead Hospital, Arrojo's practice site, was responsive to her ideas, which ultimately led to a new model for screening teens for depression. "She looked into the tools available and extensively reviewed the literature to develop a program with the goal that early detection will bring early referral and better outcomes," says

Francisco A. Medina, chief of pediatrics and medical director of pediatric emergency at Homestead Hospital. "Her interest in this issue opened all of our clinicians' eyes."

For her project at Homestead Hospital, Arrojo used a well-known depression screening instrument called Patient Health Questionnaire. Of 16 youth ages 12 to 17 seen in the ED who were screened as part of Arrojo's project, three had a positive score for depression risk. One of the three fell into the "severely at risk" category, reporting that he found it extremely difficult to get through daily life. When Arrojo approached his parents, they had no idea. "It was eye opening for me to realize there are kids out there like this, flying under the radar," says Arrojo, "not talking about how they're feeling to their parents or to anybody."

Her project included referrals to appropriate mental health care as well as coordinated communication with parents of at-risk youth. Arrojo also educated the department's physicians, nurses, and staff about the screening tools. She is now working on sustaining the project long-term. "We expect that the hospital and the Baptist Health Care of South Florida system will use her work for present and future community services," says Medina.

TRANSFORMING HEALTH CARE

Arrojo's "Depression Screening and Referral Project" was one of 43 scholarly projects SONHS students implemented last year at health facilities in South Florida, Tampa, and even North Carolina in a range of private and public health settings, from VA hospitals to LGBTQ wellness centers to pediatric facilities. At UHealth University of Miami Hospital and Clinics, for example, three students established new protocols to enhance recovery after gynecological, colorectal, and bariatric surgeries under the auspices of the chief nurse executive, Elizabeth Smith, M.S.N. '09, D.N.P. '12, an alumna and long-time champion of the program. Elsewhere students addressed everything from central line-associated bloodstream infections to opioid-induced post-partum itching, which interfered with mother-newborn bonding.

"The scholarly project is the culmination of it all: coursework pulled together and applied to practice issues, translating evidence into practice. It's about improving the patient experience and transforming health care," explains Arrojo's project advisor Mary Hooshmand, Ph.D. '10, who is the associate dean for D.N.P. programs and an assistant professor of clinical. "You can see that the scholarly project changes them from a nurse who might have been involved in a committee to a nurse who can be proactive, who can lead, develop, and implement an evidence-based practice proposal that's viable."

By bringing these scholarly projects into the community, D.N.P. students serve as "health care workforce multipliers," researching literature, developing the proposal with faculty advisors, and seeking input and approval from institutional leaders at area hospitals. They often work long hours to immerse themselves in the project environment before collecting and disseminating their results through a poster, publication-ready manuscript, and final presentation before graduating.

The results add up to "far more than just a paper or a poster," says David Zambrana, D.N.P. '09, Ph.D. '17, senior vice president and chief executive officer of Jackson Memorial Hospital, who has seen dozens of D.N.P. scholarly projects completed by SONHS students over the past few years. "The hospital can actually implement the projects to improve care and safety."

Zambrana, a graduate of the school's inaugural D.N.P. class in 2009, says these students have been essential to helping spearhead a variety of clinical and care delivery improvement projects at Jackson. SONHS is an "indispensable partner in care delivery and research," he adds. "Whether infection prevention, professional practice, employee or patient satisfaction, or policy—I could not think of a better win-win."

Underscoring his point, Zambrana highlights two efforts from the Class of 2018—Yesenia Capin's "JMH Quiet Healing Pilot Project," which led to an organizational policy prohibiting overhead paging on certain floors after 9 p.m., and Jason Borrego's "Preoperative Identification of Patients with Undiagnosed Obstructive Sleep Apnea" project, which proposed that all anesthesia providers use an evidence-based scoring tool to assess patients at risk for sleep apnea. "Both projects were pilots that resulted in the organization really seeing the value and exploring scaling to the entire system," he says.



Michelle Arrojo

RM LAMAZARES-ROMERO

SEEING THE NEED



Marecia Bell

Marecia Bell, D.N.P. '18, implemented her scholarly project at the Department of Veterans Affairs, where she's worked since 1991 in several nursing roles—from ambulatory care to spinal cord injury/polytrauma to home-based primary care. As a nursing supervisor in the Hospital Flow Center and staff RN in the emergency department, she was often on duty late at night, when staff is generally reduced. During these times, she identified that many high-risk patients were seeking primary care services that normally led to hospital admissions, while patients who came to the ED during normal business hours were likely to be seen by a doctor and discharged home. Not only did patients experience longer waits after hours; the nursing staff were overwhelmed with patient care and utilization rates were increased. "I started asking veterans and their family members the reason for seeking care in the emergency room and not at their VA primary care provider's office during their office hours," Bell reports.

The most frequent responses were that they could not get a timely appointment

or that their family member had to work during their doctor's office hours and this was the only time they could come in to be seen. Bell decided to focus her scholarly project on increasing primary care access and decreasing ED visits after hours.

William Messina, D.N.P. '13, the chief nurse of ambulatory care at the James A. Haley Tampa VA, suggested that she do so by expanding telehealth, or care provided via telephone and virtual technology. In 2013, Messina had focused his own SONHS D.N.P. project at the Tampa VA on telehealth, which he describes as a "lifeline between the patient and nursing staff." Since then, telehealth has been increasingly integrated into the hospital's continuum of care.

Bell devised her "Tampa VA Telehealth Care Connections" project to address existing patients with congestive heart failure (CHF) who had recently interacted with the system, such as through an emergency department visit and/or inpatient hospitalization and were at higher risk of readmission. She used a predictive modeling tool called the Ambulatory Care Sensitive

Conditions web application to identify high-risk patients and then coordinate their care via telehealth. Over a three-month period, from 4 to 8 p.m., she reviewed charts and followed up with recently discharged heart patients, identifying concerns over the phone and, in many cases, preventing emergency visits and hospital admissions.

The results were extraordinary: From September to November 2018, avoidable ED visits for that group decreased by 50 percent. Bell's D.N.P. quality improvement project encouraged VA executive leadership to pre-approve two RN telehealth care coordinator positions to sustain the Tampa VA Telehealth Care Connections Project.

Bell's is among a number of projects SONHS D.N.P. students have completed at the Tampa VA since 2010. "We want the students to do academic projects that are value added," says Messina, "not just to get the degree, but to grow and leave their footprint in the organization."

BECOMING NURSE LEADERS

Associate Dean Hooshmand says that is precisely the goal of the D.N.P. programs—to develop scholarly nurse leaders whose on-site contributions will ripple out through the system and help transform the future of health care exponentially. And, she notes, it's working. "These are projects the community partners need and want," says Hooshmand. "They are relevant, sustainable, and of great value to the community."

In addition to alumni Zambrana and Messina, countless other program grads have gone on to top roles in the industry. "The students get access to leadership in a different way than they would where they work," says Carol Biggs, chief nursing officer for Jackson Memorial Hospital. "They really have an opportunity to express themselves differently. They really get a chance to bloom."

That was certainly the case for Jessica Saint Clair, M.S.N. '17, D.N.P. '18. An obstetric nurse at Jackson Women's

Hospital for the past two years, Saint Clair was committed to tackling the high rate of medically unnecessary primary cesarean sections when she entered the D.N.P. program in 2017. "It was always on my mind as a labor nurse," she says.

Unnecessary C-sections are a growing epidemic in the United States, and Florida's numbers are worse than average. The median rate for Florida hospitals in 2017 was 29.4 percent, one of the highest C-section rates in the nation, according to the Florida Perinatal Quality Collaborative (FPQC), a statewide endeavor to advance perinatal health care quality and patient safety for mothers and infants. In Miami-Dade County, the rate in 2017 was a staggering 48.2 percent.

While looking for a viable D.N.P. capstone, Saint Clair came upon FPQC's "Promoting Primary Vaginal Deliveries Initiative," known as PROVIDE. One of its goals, she found, is to work with

hospitals across the state to decrease the primary C-section rate of first-time, low-risk mothers.

In collaboration with the labor and delivery unit at Jackson Women's Hospital, she created the "Labor Progressive Environment (LPE)" scholarly project as part of the ongoing FPQC initiative. Over an eight-week period, Saint Clair sought to promote vaginal delivery and reduce the primary cesarean birth rate through evidence-based techniques. She created a natural birthing environment for patients, focusing on the role of labor nurses. She trained nurses in the department on tools and techniques to promote vaginal delivery, such as using peanut balls and birthing balls during labor to increase the mother's comfort, promote fetal descent, and shorten the length of labor. She encouraged the use of movement, music therapy, and aromatherapy, as well.

"It was important for me to have the trust of the nurses, for them to feel they could come to me and tell me their concerns."

"I wanted to empower nurses to realize they play a huge role in trying to promote the chances of a patient having a successful vaginal delivery," explains Saint Clair. "It was important for me to have the trust of the nurses, for them to feel they could come to me and tell me their concerns."

Because of Saint Clair's project, 26 labor and delivery nurses increased their knowledge of continuous labor support, 8 nurse champions received additional training by attending a labor support skills workshop provided by the FPQC, and 16 patients and family members gained knowledge about labor comfort and coping measures through a presentation Saint Clair gave to expectant parents enrolled in the hospital's maternity course.

"Being an advocate for my patients... definitely opened my eyes as far as the role of the nurse."

The success of the project led to Saint Clair accepting a position as a high-risk perinatal nurse-practitioner coordinator, working with complex obstetric patients to manage their care. She also received a grant from Beta Tau, the school's chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI), to continue and promote the project, and this November, she will present her work at STTI's Biennial Conference in Washington, D.C., along with her D.N.P. faculty advisor, Kenya Snowden, M.S.N. '10, D.N.P. '11.

Snowden, an assistant professor of clinical, says Saint Clair is "a stellar example of what the D.N.P. represents. Our D.N.P. program has a leadership focus, and we prepare our graduates to go out and do exactly what she has done."

While other D.N.P. programs have similar requirements for clinical practice and scholarly projects, notes Snowden, the SONHS curriculum stands out by offering courses in leadership that make sure students are well-primed and prepared to connect clinical experience with system-wide problem solving by the time they begin developing their D.N.P. scholarly projects in their final semesters.

Indeed, says Saint Clair, the experience challenged her to "be far more than just a clinician."

"Being an advocate for my patients, taking the initiative when it comes to opportunities for improving the quality of care, being able to coordinate quality improvement projects with different stakeholders," she continues, "definitely opened my eyes as far as the role of the nurse."

A DECADE OF LEADING D.N.P. EDUCATION

Transformative program launched 10 years ago at SONHS continues evolving to meet changing health system needs.

The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), the leading accrediting agency for nursing degree programs in the United States, began accrediting D.N.P. programs across the country in 2008 as a way to prepare expert practitioners who can also serve as clinical faculty and leaders. The School of Nursing and Health Studies launched its first D.N.P. offering in January 2009, a CCNE-accredited, executive-style M.S.-D.N.P. degree. In 2014, the school added a B.S.N.-D.N.P. Nurse Anesthesia Track program, the first doctoral anesthesia degree in Florida. In 2019, the B.S.N.-D.N.P. program received stellar marks and a maximum 10-year accreditation renewal from the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs.

From the beginning, SONHS has differentiated its programs by adding a leadership concentration to the stringent clinical and scholarly project components and minimum 560 clinical hours required by accrediting bodies. This intensive focus on leadership is designed to foster an organizational perspective, with course offerings in health care finance, health policy, nursing leadership, and systems management, among others. Faculty mentorship is highly regarded. The program also emphasizes the process of health care reform and health disparities.

"There is so much change, volatility, and uncertainty in health care. In the D.N.P. programs, we're looking at influencing factors such as quality of care, access to care, cost of care, and, of course, patient experience," explains Mary Hooshmand, associate dean for D.N.P. programs and interim associate dean for master's programs. "We need to be able to address all of these challenges."

Increasingly, she says, she receives calls like one recently from Jacqueline Gonzalez, M.S.N. '87, D.N.P. '13, senior vice president and chief nursing officer at Nicklaus Children's Hospital, who wanted a SONHS student to help establish the hospital's narcotic stewardship project. In fact, SONHS D.N.P. students are involved in some 100 efforts in any given year, says Hooshmand, whether helping enact existing practice improvement projects with clinical partners or leading their own projects before graduation, like the 48 new scholarly projects on tap for 2019.

The positive results can be seen in the programs' many alumni successfully leading health care agencies locally, nationally, and internationally, making their mark by transforming health systems and improving patient outcomes and experiences. To keep meeting the evolving needs in nurse leadership, the school is developing new D.N.P. tracks while making sure its existing offerings are up to date.



Jessica Saint Clair, left, and her D.N.P. faculty advisor, Kenya Snowden



SONHS @ 70

A Family Celebration in Photos

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENNY ABREU

The School of Nursing and Health Studies honored the school's 70th anniversary with a huge party over UM Alumni Weekend and Homecoming 2018 that drew over 100 members of the SONHS family. "We have a wonderful group of volunteers who lead our SONHS Alumni Association," said Dean Cindy L. Munro. "This annual tradition is emblematic of their dedication to the University of Miami, to our school, and to our mission of nursing and health studies education, which is producing tremendously talented professionals for the future of health care."

Rhodes *to Discovery*

Prestigious scholarship propels recent SONHS grad on her quest to create a healthier nation for all.

By Ginny Pickles and Robin Shear

Come November, Kristiana Yao, B.S.P.H. '18, B.B.A. '18, will be settling in at Oxford University in England, preparing to earn a Master of Science degree in comparative social policy as a Rhodes Scholar.



PHOTOS COURTESY KRISTIANA YAO

She joins an elite group from all over the world selected for their intellect, character, leadership, and commitment to service. Immersed in their chosen fields of study, they will work toward a singular goal: to make a positive impact on the world. It's a goal Yao began working toward long before becoming a Rhodes Scholar.

The simplicity of her mission—to improve health through public service—belies the complexities involved in carrying it out, but the 22-year-old clearly has a keen sense of the social, economic, and political forces at play.

"Health care is a unique market," she says by phone from the Office of the Governor of Illinois, where she's been helping advance health, human services, and public safety policy as a James H. Dunn, Jr. Memorial Fellow since last year. "It's both a human right by global standards and a consumer good, and often we're somewhat shortsighted about the investments we make to improve health."

"That's why I believe in a 'health in all policies' approach," Yao continues, "and that's why I'm always extremely persistent about talking about health policy no matter where I go. Everybody, whether they're in government or public health, has the capacity to improve the health of their community."

Yao was in elementary school when she learned that even private citizens

can have a positive impact. A letter she wrote to the mayor of her hometown, Naperville, Illinois, was read before city council, where the 10-year-old, an asthma sufferer herself, campaigned for smoke-free public spaces, despite pushback from local bar owners. Eventually, the state enacted a smoking ban, validating for her the link between public policy and public health.

Yao's parents, both engineers, always emphasized health education and hard work, she says. Her grandparents, Chinese immigrants, taught Yao that "everybody should be able to participate in democracy, that we all have the capacity to make change in our communities."

Expecting to make that change as a nurse, Yao worked as a certified nursing assistant/ caregiver while in high school. Seeing all the preventable conditions the nursing home patients manifested sharpened her focus on the many factors outside of the medical system that impact health, from where we live to who we socialize with. It also convinced her that studying public health would allow her to make a bigger impact on a larger population.

A National Merit Scholar, she earned the prestigious Stamps Scholarship and Foote Fellowship to attend the University of Miami, setting her sights on not one, but two degrees—a Bachelor of Science in Public Health from the School of Nursing and Health Studies and a Bachelor of Business Administration. First, though, she had to convince UM to authorize this unprecedented course of study, ultimately making her case to UM's then-President (and now Congresswoman) Donna Shalala.

"I was just a freshman," recalls Yao, "and I was trying to explain that it was really valuable for public health leaders to understand good management processes to be able to run large organizations that are focused around improving people's health and to understand how to realign incentives for private sector actors to keep people healthy. President Shalala just gave me this look and said, 'Yes, of course that makes sense.' Of course [the former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services] understood very well the value of being able to find those win-win solutions that work for both business and public interest."



Yao earned both degrees, summa cum laude, in 2018. "From the very first day Kristiana set foot in the classroom, she was already well informed," recalls Andrew Porter, one of Yao's mentors and an assistant professor of clinical in the Public Health program. "Her vision is to make the world a better place for everyone by ensuring that people have better access to health and health care. It's just at her core. It's that singular ethic she's had as long as I've known her."

Yao's résumé also reflects her commitment to improving health through public service. As a Truman Scholar, she researched ways to devise better health care delivery systems. A position as a health policy analyst for the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance, plus internships at county health departments in Illinois and Florida, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the White House, provided critical insights into how policies are developed, enacted, and implemented.

Alongside these opportunities, Yao gained practical community experience at Jackson Health System and IDEA Exchange, a syringe exchange program run by physician Hansel Tookes. "Being able to see how health policies work on the ground and affect individuals was extraordinarily impactful," she says. "It improved my learning while letting me play a small part in giving back."

Yao's public health capstone was titled *The Syringe Exchange as a Gateway to Recovery*. "I was humbled by the

opportunity to serve people struggling with substance use disorders and inspired by their resilience," she says. "Nobody wakes up intending to develop a substance use disorder. Ultimately, it's a disease like any other—it can be treated and managed, but we have to provide adequate supportive services."

Porter says Yao has "all the qualities needed to be an effective Secretary of Health, a congressperson, or someone writing effective legislation at the very highest level in the United States, making sure everyone has access to health." He marvels at her skillful harm reduction efforts as a student, like launching a rehydration campaign that encouraged more water consumption at tailgate events, rather than trying to get fellow students to curtail drinking. "She was able to use this elegant strategy to decrease the negative impacts of alcohol by supplying water to vulnerable, at-risk populations," he says.

Yao credits the accessibility and passion for teaching of people like Porter and Associate Dean Mary Hooshmand, Ph.D. '10, with helping her put her various experiences at government agencies into perspective.

"My professors were phenomenal," she says. "I could call to discuss policy or current events, or just chat and catch up. Feeling like I had this whole community in my corner was really empowering."

Yao was one of 32 U.S. Rhodes Scholars named in 2018. She is only UM's third Rhodes Scholar ever. Quoting the Rhodes motto—to fight the world's fight—she says, "Understanding how to keep people healthy and enable them to live their best lives—that's something I take seriously, and it will definitely be a motivator as I continue my work in health policy."

Still, she knows not every endeavor will be a win, despite the passion and hard work of those who support it. "But that doesn't mean you shouldn't try to fight for what you believe in, even against long odds, because by standing up for what you think is right and in the public interest, you're engaging more people in the process," she continues. "You're getting educated yourself, alongside others, as to how to make the system better. You're showing leaders that people care about specific issues and that they, the leaders, will be held accountable for their actions."

Getting ICU Survivors Mobile with Music

Study aims to determine healing impact of novel music-guided exercise intervention.

By Maggie Van Dyke

A critical care nurse, Zhan Liang knew her intensive care unit (ICU) patient had a rough, uncertain road to recovery ahead of him. As he was being discharged home, bedridden and on a mechanical ventilator, Liang was saddened by how severely weak and disabled many patients are after enduring a critical care experience.

"A lot of patients who survive the ICU can take years to recover," says Liang, an assistant professor at SONHS. "I thought, 'There must be an alternative way to help these patients get better.'"

Liang understood the challenges that nurses face in helping ICU survivors regain strength and mobility, as well as their ability to breathe on their own. One is the significant muscle atrophy, or wasting, that many ICU patients suffer after being confined to bed for days or weeks. Liang points to a 2013 study in *JAMA* ("Acute skeletal muscle wasting in critical illness") that found 30 percent of muscle loss occurs in the first 10 days of an ICU stay. Various factors can speed up muscle atrophy, including being on a ventilator and the use of sedation drugs.

As nurses know, early mobility is key to preventing and treating muscle atrophy. However, mobilizing ICU survivors, especially those on ventilators, is a complex endeavor, Liang says.

"It requires a resource-intensive clinician team, including nurses, physicians, physical therapists, and respiratory therapists. Most of the time, these health care providers are very busy, so patients do not get enough attention and their muscle loss worsens."

This staffing issue becomes more problematic when ICU patients are transferred to non-critical care units.

The nurse-to-patient ratio can be one-to-eight or one-to-nine on these units," says Liang. "Nurses are already very busy giving meds and taking care of other things, so patients may lie in bed without doing anything."

Because of these challenges, Liang recognized that any new solution for reversing muscle wasting has to be easy to implement but stimulating enough to motivate very weak and often depressed or anxious patients to move and strengthen their muscles. It also has to be low-cost given current pressures on hospitals to rein in health care expenses.

After considering all these requirements, Liang thought of an inexpensive intervention that inspires countless people to exercise: music. In February, she and her team launched a pilot study at University of Miami Hospital to determine whether ICU survivors can begin to reverse muscle loss by listening to specially designed music playlists while performing simple exercises.

One of Liang's co-investigators is Tanira Ferreira, a pulmonologist and an intensivist who is the chief medical officer for University of Miami Hospital.

Also committed to the effort is Cindy L. Munro, dean and professor of the School of Nursing and Health Studies. "I have worked closely with Dr. Liang for over three years on NIH-funded projects with critically ill patients and am very proud

to continue collaborating with her as a senior mentor on this pilot project," says Munro, who has led intervention research aimed at improving safety and outcomes for long-term ICU patients for over two decades.

"'Music-Enhanced Physical Exercise for ICU Survivors' offers a novel approach to better understanding a significant but understudied issue for this vulnerable population."

"A lot of patients who survive the ICU can take years to recover. I thought, 'There must be an alternative way to help these patients get better.'"

"'Music-Enhanced Physical Exercise for ICU Survivors' offers a novel approach to better understanding a significant but understudied issue for this vulnerable population."



From left, SONHS Dean Cindy L. Munro, SONHS Assistant Professor Zhan Liang, and Frost School of Music Assistant Professor of Professional Practice Kimberly Sena Moore.



Healing with Music

Liang has already seen that music can benefit very sick ICU patients based on the research she conducted for her Ph.D. dissertation. While at the University of Pittsburgh, she worked with music therapists who created playlists designed to help ventilated patients manage their anxiety and learn to breathe on their own again.

When 23 subjects listened to these playlists during daily ventilator weaning trials, their heart rates and respiratory rates significantly decreased, compared to days they did not listen to music. The patients' reported levels of anxiety and shortness of breath also improved on music days. Most important, the patients were able to stay off the ventilator for longer periods when listening to music.

Music engages every major region of the brain... [and] is a powerful tool for neuroplasticity and rehabilitation. explains co-investigator Sharon M. Graham, one of the music therapists collaborating with Liang. "When a patient is faced with a seemingly insurmountable goal of walking again after significant injury, hearing one's favorite song can revive strong memories and feelings of love and happiness, releasing

neurotransmitters like oxytocin into the body, which can elevate mood and decrease perception of pain."

In addition to psychological benefits, music can help people learn and remember exercise routines. "Music can address motor goals specifically by providing a steady beat and temporal structure that actually primes the body for movement," says Graham who is also founder and director, Tampa Bay Institute for Music Therapy.

The playlists being used in Liang's study on music and exercise do not include popular workout songs. The ICU survivors are not exercising to Rolling Stones, Kanye West, or Taylor Swift. Rather, the playlists feature instrumental music with regular, metronomic beats specially designed to guide ICU survivors through a 15-20-minute exercise routine.

With Liang's guidance, Graham and music therapists from the Frost School of Music (Kimberly Sena Moore, assistant professor, and Hilary Yip, master's student) wrote the musical pieces, which use rhythmic cues to remind patients when to, for example, lift their arm or put their arm down.

The playlist was individualized for each patient in the study, taking into account the patient's choice of instrumental music (i.e., piano, guitar, or wind instrument) and the pace with which the patient can perform the exercises.

"Music can address motor goals specifically by providing a steady beat and temporal structure that actually primes the body for movement."

Empowering Patients and Families

No prior research specifically looks at whether music-enhanced physical therapy can help ICU survivors regain muscle loss, Liang says. However, related research found that exercising to music improved physical function in patients with Parkinson's disease, stroke, and other neurological diseases.

A recent nursing research award from the American Thoracic Society (ATS) Foundation funded Liang's study on ICU survivors. "This highly competitive award from the ATS is a testament to the wonderful and impactful work Dr. Liang and her team are doing," says Charles A. Downs, associate professor and associate dean for research at the SONHS.

The ATS award made it possible for Liang and her team to purchase needed technology and resources for the research, including music software to create playlists, MP3 players for patients to listen to the music, and translation capabilities to help the research team communicate with Spanish-speaking patients.

Liang stresses that the initial study at the hospital is a small-scale pilot to determine the feasibility of the intervention as well as the potential of music-guided exercise to positively impact patient outcomes. The goal was to enroll 20 adult ICU survivors who have transferred from the ICU to a non-critical care unit at the hospital. All the patients were weak at the time of enrollment, having survived ICU stays of five days or more. However, they vary in age, disease history, and use of mechanical ventilation.

All 20 subjects receive the same exercise routine, which can be performed in bed or sitting in a chair. Five exercises target the shoulders, elbows, wrists, knees, and feet. The patients are encouraged to perform the exercise routine on their own at least twice daily for five days. Only 10 of the

patients receive MP3 players loaded with individualized playlists and are taught to coordinate their exercises to the music.

How often and how long each patient exercises determines the feasibility of the intervention. The investigators establish the effectiveness by comparing assessments of hand and foot strength, as well as patients' emotional health at baseline, during, and at the end of the study.

Liang believes the results will show that music-guided exercise helps improve muscle strength and mood in ICU survivors, compared to typical care. If so, she hopes to take the findings from the pilot study and conduct a randomized control study involving a larger population of ICU survivors. "The ultimate goal is to improve the health outcomes for this very vulnerable patient population," Liang says. "In the future, this low-cost intervention could be applied in multiple ways, whether for nursing home patients or as an app that can be used for home care patients."

One of the aspects of the intervention that Liang is excited about is the potential for engaging ICU survivors, as well as their family and caregivers, in helping the patients regain their muscle strength and functional abilities. "Caregivers can be more involved in the care of their loved ones by encouraging them to listen to the playlist and do their exercises."

"In the future, this low-cost intervention could be applied in multiple ways, whether for nursing home patients or as an app that can be used for home care patients."



Preparing for the Loss of a Loved One

A conversation with oncology nurse-researcher Kristin Levoy, Ph.D. '19



Last year an estimated 609,640 people died from cancer in the United States. As a registered nurse dedicated to the field of oncology, Kristin Levoy, Ph.D. '19, witnessed first-hand the grief caregivers experience following the loss of a loved one to cancer. She wondered how nurses could ease this transition to bereavement.

After over a decade of oncology nursing practice, Levoy, a former lecturer for the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies, was inspired to pursue her Ph.D. in nursing at SONHS in 2016. She was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Future of Nursing Scholars Program, which advances nurse scientists and researchers through scholarships, mentoring, and leadership development activities.

This past October, Levoy received the American Cancer Society's Doctoral Degree Scholarship in Cancer Nursing to support her research. "What made me feel so good about being awarded this grant was that the review process not only included experts in the field, but also cancer survivors and caregivers of cancer patients. This was a testament to the relevance of my work to the field and to the patient experience."

In March, Levoy defended her dissertation, titled *Unpacking the Meaning and Impact of the Components of End-of-life Preparation among Cancer*

Patients. The dissertation includes a conceptual analysis of end-of-life decision-making, a systematic review of advance care planning interventions, and a secondary data analysis evaluating the impact of different forms of advance care planning engagement on the quality of care received at the end of life and the quality of the patient's death.

Heartbeat: Why did you go into the Ph.D. program?

Kristin Levoy: I realized that nursing research would be a profound channel through which I could impact the care of patients and their caregivers, beyond what I was capable of in clinical practice. In clinical practice, you see problems at the bedside and want to do something about it, so I'm hopeful that some of my research will translate into practice improvements and contribute to health policy development.

What led to your research focus?

Having primarily worked with women affected by cervical, endometrial, and ovarian cancer in my career, I often experienced spouses coming to me after the loss of their wife, reflecting back and saying they felt ill-prepared for their wife's death, the circumstances around it, and the kind of decision-making that needed to happen.

Despite what we as health providers thought were our efforts to warn them in advance, they felt blindsided. I wanted to know how we could better prepare patients themselves and their caregivers for the end of life. I wanted to understand how we prepare patients across the illness trajectory, not just when death is imminent, and how that preparation later affects the bereavement process.

Can you talk about your dissertation?

In my dissertation, I look at how patients are engaging in advance care planning and how that ultimately impacts the quality of their death. Advance care planning is one factor that can prepare patients and their caregivers for the end of life. This process involves documenting a living will, designating a health care surrogate (sometimes called a health proxy), and participating in end-of-life discussions.

What we find is that cancer patients aren't necessarily engaged in all three of those components of advance care planning, so my dissertation teases out the impact of those who are fully engaged in advance care planning, those who are partially engaged, and those who are not engaged at all. Some of my preliminary findings show that those who are fully engaged in the

process of advance care planning experience a better quality of death than those who are partially or not engaged in advance care planning. This is important when researchers think about designing interventions to increase advance care planning engagement or when health care providers approach patients about advance care planning in clinical practice. These findings demonstrate that we need to not only target those patients who are not engaged in advance care planning, but also those patients who are only partially engaged.

Doing so has the potential to improve the quality of the patient's death as well as the quality of the caregiver's bereavement. I should note that there are a lot of other informal things we do at the bedside to prepare patients and their caregivers for end of life that I'm not capturing in this research, but for the sake of feasibility, I have used advance care planning engagement as proxy for preparation in this study.

What changes do you hope your dissertation can lead to?

I hope my dissertation can inform the way we prepare patients for the ultimate reality, from the time they are first diagnosed with a chronic, serious, or terminal illness. I hope my research

leads to improved health care delivery at the bedside by guiding physicians, case managers, social workers, and nurses on enhanced ways to communicate and prepare patients and their caregivers for the end of life. Some of the work I'm doing may also help inform health policy development, like how we think about reimbursing providers for advance care planning.

What led you into nursing in the first place?

When I was in middle school, I did a report on Florence Nightingale, and it was her story that really inspired me to go to nursing school. I just thought she was amazing. I was impressed with the impact she made on the soldiers in the Crimean War. She was doing research before nursing research was a thing, trying to understand ways we could improve sanitation while caring for injured soldiers.

How has your work changed you?

My students often say, "Wow, you're a cancer nurse. Isn't that depressing?" And I always answer, "Absolutely not." Working with patients and families as they bravely face and cope with such a serious illness has been inspiring. There are wonderful success stories as well as losses. It is these losses that I

always have in the back of my mind. They fuel my research and help me develop more informed research questions. Doing this work really makes me not sweat the small stuff. I had my own advance care plan at a very young age, when most people aren't thinking about those things. When you're working with people who are faced with death on a daily basis, it gives you an appreciation for life, for your health, and just the day-to-day moments, so I'm grateful to my patients and their families for teaching me this important perspective on life.



Are We Ready?

Symposium explores disaster preparedness and response strategies on the Simulation Hospital's first anniversary.

During the Second Annual Simulation Hospital Symposium, themed "Preparing & Responding to Disasters," the SONHS community heard from U.S. personnel instrumental in using science and simulation to save lives in the face of devastation. SONHS Vice Dean John Clochesy moderated the first panel, "Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control," which featured Sujan Reddy, medical director for the Centers for Disease Control's Prevention Epicenters Program, and Captain Amy Valderrama, a nurse epidemiologist for the CDC's Consultation and Training Team. Reddy and Valderrama discussed the latest training and research strategies the CDC is implementing to address gaps in infection control and prevention.

In the second panel, "Emergency Response: Global & Local," Commander Maleeka Glover, director of the CDC Medical Investigations Team,

discussed her role in the CDC's response to the 2014 Ebola virus outbreak in West Africa. She shared lessons learned from that and other CDC operations. For example, she said, as a result of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the CDC uses a vulnerability index to identify the needs of a community's most physically and economically at risk residents in the event of a major incident. Matthew Shpiner, director of Emergency Management at the University of Miami, was also on the panel and discussed the U's use of simulation training to develop and test disaster preparedness and response strategies for real-life incidents, from hurricanes to vector-borne outbreaks like Zika.

The inaugural symposium was held soon after the five-story Simulation Hospital was completed in 2017, underscoring the school's commitment to improving preparation

for and response to natural and manmade disasters across the nation and hemisphere.

Disaster preparedness is one of five key areas of research outlined in the school's strategic plan.

From mosquitoes and mudslides to tornadoes and terrorists, disaster and disease hit the world's vulnerable regions and populations hardest. South Florida, in particular, with its insects, hurricanes, and international visitors represents a nexus of opportunity for natural disasters and infectious disease. The annual Simulation Hospital Symposium will continue to address these issues.

"One year ago we opened this hospital with a symposium that was focused on disaster preparedness," said Dean Cindy L. Munro. "It is our hope to continue to do annual symposia based on a theme."



Simulation Hospital Symposium features experts from UM, SONHS, and the CDC.

Faculty Highlights

Linda L. Wunder

Associate Professor of Clinical



Linda L. Wunder joined the School of Nursing and Health Studies in February, teaching Doctor of Nursing Practice, anesthesia, and simulation courses. A certified registered nurse anesthetist (C.R.N.A.), she began her academic career in 2004 at Florida International University as an adjunct clinical professor, becoming a clinical assistant professor in 2008 and clinical associate professor in 2015. From 2017 to 2018, she chaired FIU's Department of Nurse Anesthetist Practice. She has more than 20 years' clinical experience in hospitals in the Pittsburgh and South Florida area, including as chief C.R.N.A. at Memorial Hospital West in Broward County.

She is interested in how instructing non-technical skills like teamwork, task management, situational awareness, and decision-making prepare and improve nurse anesthesia students to enhance patient safety. Her research also addresses pain management using a multimodal approach, and understanding underlying conditions for acute and chronic pain with the investigation of neuropathways. Other research interests include anesthesia outside the operating room, safety measures, and effective delivery in endoscopy, interventional radiology, and cardiac cauterization laboratory.

Wunder has a Ph.D. in nursing from Barry University, an M.S.N. from Gannon University Hamot School of Anesthesia, and a B.S.N. from California University of Pennsylvania. A recipient of the Florida Association of Nurse Anesthetists (FANA) Fellowship and American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) Doctorate Fellow Award, she is an AANA Foundation advocate for FANA. She also belongs to AANA, STTI, the Florida Academy of Science, the Society for Simulation in Healthcare, and the Florida Healthcare Simulation Alliance-South Region.



Visiting Professorship Awarded to Ortega

Johis Ortega, B.S.N. '02, M.S.N. '06, Ph.D. '10, has been named visiting professor at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. Ortega, associate professor of clinical and associate dean for Hemispheric and Global Initiatives at SONHS, has built a strong relationship with the school's colleagues, providing consultant work for the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse program, leading annual observerships at SONHS, and taking SONHS students to Chile. "This is a wonderful recognition of Dr. Ortega's ongoing work in hemispheric initiatives for the SONHS," says Dean Cindy L. Munro. Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile was founded in 1888, and its nursing school opened in 1950. For over 15 years, SONHS has promoted bi-directional exchanges with the institution, which is a founding member of the Hemispheric University Consortium convened at UM last April.

Faculty Highlights



Gattamorta Receives Pilot Grant Award

Karina Gattamorta, research associate professor, has received a Pilot Grant Award from the Center for Latino Research Opportunities (CLaRO). She will serve as principal investigator for “Feasibility and Acceptability of the Family Acceptance Project among Hispanic Families.”

During the 2019 CLaRO Retreat in February, she discussed the history of the Family Acceptance Project—established in 2002 to help diverse families decrease rejection and prevent related health risks for their LGBT children and promote family acceptance and positive outcomes—and the work she is now beginning to lead with support from the award. She is one of five inaugural early-career researchers recently supported by seed funding from CLaRO to build research programs to advance health equity for vulnerable Latino groups and advance the science of health disparities.

CLaRO is an affiliated research center of the University of Miami and Florida International University funded by the NIH’s National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities. The cooperative agreement with NIH funds CLaRO to research intervention approaches to address substance abuse, psychological trauma and HIV/AIDS among highly vulnerable Latino communities in Miami, including sexual and gender minorities, farmworkers, immigrants and economically disadvantaged and underserved groups.



NIH Grant for Elías

Maya Elías, a postdoctoral associate with a Ph.D. in nursing science, has received federal funding from the National Institutes of Health’s National Institute of Nursing Research for her grant proposal, “Sleep Quality and Cognitive Function in Hospitalized Older Adult Survivors of Critical Illness.” The two-year grant, totaling over \$130,000, will allow Elías to build on her preliminary dissertation research, which was the first to describe post-intensive care unit (ICU) sleep quality among older adult inpatients and to explore the relationship between sleep and motor function upon transition of care out of the ICU.

Earlier this year, Elías presented her dissertation results on post-ICU cognitive dysfunction at the Society of Critical Care Medicine’s 48th Critical Care Congress in San Diego. Nearly 25 percent of all ICU survivors experience post-ICU cognitive impairment comparable to that of mild Alzheimer’s disease. About a third suffer from cognitive impairment equivalent to moderate traumatic brain injury, states Elías’s current project summary.

This newly funded NINR research will focus on older adult ICU survivors who required mechanical ventilation for survival. “Critically ill older adults (ages 65 and older) have the highest incidence of mechanical ventilation and are at most risk for post-ICU cognitive impairment,” explains Elías. “Mechanically ventilated ICU patients experience worse sleep than those who are not ventilated.”

Her study aims to determine the quality of sleep among this population of elderly ICU survivors and “the effect size of the longitudinal relationship between sleep deficiency and post-ICU cognitive impairment,” she says. “Additional related data (biological variables including age, sex, race/ethnicity, and clinical history such as obstructive sleep apnea) will be collected to explore risk factors for sleep deficiency and post-ICU cognitive impairment.”

The results could help direct the development of future geriatric nursing interventions to best target and prevent post-ICU cognitive impairment in hospitalized elders. Cindy L. Munro, SONHS dean and professor, is Elías’s faculty sponsor and a member of her interdisciplinary mentorship team.

Faculty Profile

Simulation Expertise Leads to Real Success



As the A.A. Milne quote in her email signature advises, “You can’t stay in your corner of the Forest waiting for others to come to you. You have to go to them sometimes.” Susana Barroso, Ph.D. ‘16, has done just that, becoming something of a simulation ambassador to the world during her past decade-plus at the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS).

Whether addressing alumni in Latin America, schoolchildren in Miami, or fellow academics in the nation’s capital, as she did in April, her expertise in simulation-based nursing and health science education shines through. Among her responsibilities is overseeing implementation and evaluation of simulation-based courses. From basic lifesaving to advanced ultrasound, the goal is the same: bridge critical gaps from theory to practice to make things better for students, providers, and ultimately patients. “By the time they graduate, our students have cared for a core group of simulated patients exhibiting a full continuum of health care conditions and challenges,” says the assistant professor of clinical in

nursing and director of Simulation Hospital Special Projects.

Most recently, Barroso was among a select group of University of Miami faculty invited to present at the 2019 ACCelerate: ACC Smithsonian Creativity and Innovation Festival in Washington, D.C., where she demonstrated the life-saving value of using premature and infant simulators in higher-ed nursing programs to help increase nursing workforce capacity and reduce infant mortality. “If you don’t realize your patient is in respiratory distress in a simulation scenario, that’s OK because we’re going to go back and talk about areas for improvement,” she says. “If you don’t realize your patient is in respiratory distress in the hospital, they could die.”

When not on the road with high-fidelity simulators in tow, Barroso can be found teaching patient assessment techniques, devising full-scale disaster preparedness and response exercises (a focus of her dissertation research), and introducing hundreds of visitors annually to the school’s state-of-the-art Simulation Hospital, which she played a key role in bringing to vibrant life in September

2017. “The Simulation Hospital gives us the ability to be that global destination center where you can come to receive education,” says Barroso, who studied simulation centers around the world and collaborated with architects and stakeholders as a core member of the task force formed to create the landmark, five-story facility.

Every detail of the 41,000-square-foot monument to patient safety—from lighting type and restroom placement to elevators that could accommodate stretchers—was meticulously executed to mimic real-world patient and hospital staff flow while being versatile enough to adapt to a complex, fast-evolving industry. “We based our priorities on the needs of our students for simulation practice—from basic-level skills to advanced practice competencies—as well as the needs of our local and global communities for lifelong learning and for the development of hemispheric workforce and patient safety initiatives,” explains Barroso, who comes from a family of nurses.

Her mom was a nursing assistant, and her father was “surrounded by a gaggle of sisters—all nurses, except one,” she says. Even her maternal grandmother was an unofficial midwife in Cuba. “She would get on a horse and go deliver the babies, and got paid in chickens,” Barroso recounts. “I think I was 7 the first time I said I was going to be a nurse and take care of sick kids.” She devoted many years to caring for the most vulnerable in the pediatric intensive care unit before combining three of her passions in 2006: the U, nursing, and simulation. “I didn’t really want to leave the bedside,” she admits. “But nursing had been very, very good to me, and it was time to give back. This was a way to pass the lamp to the next generation and instill some of that passion in future nurses. To me, it’s not a profession. I’ve always said, ‘When I die, bury me with my stethoscope. I’m not done yet.’”

A PAIR OF IRON ARROWS

Two SONHS students tapped into Iron Arrow during Homecoming and Alumni Weekend 2018



Iron Arrows
Brittney Ellis, left,
and Kyra Freeman

On Thursday, November 1, standout seniors Brittney Ellis (nursing) and Kyra Freeman (public health) received the surprise of their college careers. The School of Nursing and Health Studies students were whisked away from their busy academic routine to take part in the time-honored tradition of the University of Miami's Iron Arrow Honor Society.

Ellis, a Hurricanes Track and Field athlete, was waiting for her morning epidemiology class to start at the SONHS when two people sporting colorful patchwork jackets took her by the arms and led her away for several hours. "It's a crazy story," she recounts, smiling. "I didn't even have time to grab my backpack and cell phone."

A star sprinter from Illinois, Ellis was honored last year at the Celebration of Women's Athletics presented by Adidas. Eligible to compete for one more season at UM, she plans to pursue a master's degree in health informatics through the SONHS after graduation.

"I am so proud of Brittney and all she has accomplished in her short time at Miami," says Coach Amy Deem, director of UM Track and Field/Cross Country and an Iron Arrow member since 2009. "Her love of this University and her drive for success are an inspiration to many."

In Freeman's case, she was preparing for a Multicultural Student Affairs budget meeting when she heard drums approaching. Someone's going to get tapped into Iron Arrow, the co-president of UM's United Black Students organization remembers thinking. But as the sound grew louder and louder, the reality dawned on her and the tears began to flow. "I was like, 'Oh wait, they're coming for me,'" she recalls. The "budget meeting" had been a cover story. "Everyone had been keeping this a secret from me for some time, and I was thoroughly impressed because I usually figure things out pretty quickly!"

Freeman, who was crowned Miss University of Miami in 2016,

belonged to Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, worked as a Resident Assistant at University Village, and, last summer, was a Morehouse College Public Health Leader Fellowship Intern at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in her hometown of Atlanta. She also served as a PEERS Ambassador at the SONHS through a new program launched by Sean Kilpatrick, assistant dean for Student/Post-graduate Support Services.

"Kyra stood out from the moment she set foot on campus. Her engaging aura, affinity for involvement, intellectual disposition, and sincere interest in the School of Nursing and Health Studies are refreshing," says Kilpatrick. "She is truly deserving of Iron Arrow as she embodies the complete student. I'm so proud of her and her accomplishments."

Founded in 1926, Iron Arrow is the highest honor attained at the U.

1960s

Rona (Reichman) Fagan, B.S.N. '68, a faculty associate in orthopedics at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, celebrated her 50th class reunion and the SONHS 70th anniversary during UM Alumni Weekend and Homecoming 2018.

1970s

Veda L. Andrus, B.S.N. '73, co-authored an article highlighting how The Integrative Healing Arts Academy impacted the healing environment in a community hospital in New Jersey: Shanahan, M., Andrus, V., Leichman, A.M. & Karas-Irwin, B. (2018). *Mapping an Innovative Future: Pioneering the Healing Organization. Nursing Management*, 49(8), 24-31.

Ann M. Thrailkill, C.N.P. '76, still loves working as a nurse practitioner for the VA in California, "and still appreciates the program at U of Miami that gave me this training," she writes.

Arlynn Segal Owens, B.S.N. '77, M.S.P.H. '86, is recently retired but keeping busy with various activities. She attended the 70th Anniversary and 2018 Alumnus of Distinction events at SONHS with her husband John Owens (also a double alumnus of UM) and her brother. "We want to thank you very much for a great program," she writes. "We all enjoyed it. The new technology at the Simulation Hospital is absolutely amazing. I am quite jealous that we didn't have it when I went to nursing school."

Ngan Nguyen, B.S.N. '78, flew in from California to celebrate the school's 70th anniversary party and attend UM Alumni Weekend and Homecoming 2018.

1980s

Lori S. Farmer, B.S.N. '84, of Gulf Breeze, Florida, has been appointed the

first genetic nurse consultant, clinical trials specialist, for the national Leukemia & Lymphoma Society organization. An advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP) with 34 years of clinical genetics experience, she is credentialed by the American Nurses Credentialing Center as a board certified advanced genetics nurse (AGN-BC). She previously worked as an assistant professor of nursing at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

Karen Henry, B.S.N. '84, M.S.N. '04, who works at Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, Kendall/Lennar Hematology/Oncology, was named UHealth Advanced Practitioner of the Year 2018. She was nominated by co-workers in her unit.

1990s

Yesenia D. Villalta, B.S.N. '99, M.S.N. '03, D.N.P. '13, was named administrator/health officer for the Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County in January. She has been with the department since 2005 in various capacities and roles. From 2014 until her recent appointment, she served as nursing director.

Keith Buehner, B.S.N. '90, a nurse educator with a specialty in oncology nursing, retired after over 33 years with Jackson Health System. The former SONHS Alumni Association president still moonlights as a member of the Miami Heat's Golden Oldies dance team.

2000s

Isabelo Sicsic Jr., B.S.N. '05, who works at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, inpatient, was named the UHealth RN of the Year 2018 during UHealth's National Nurses Week Breakfast and Awards Ceremony. He was nominated by co-workers in his unit.

Durrell Handwerger, B.S.N. '09, is a holistic family nurse practitioner at South Florida Integrative Health Center in Miami Beach. He also is chapter leader of the Miami Chapter of the Holistic Nursing Organization.

2010s

Scarleth R. Garcia, M.S.N. '10, a graduate of the Family Nurse Practitioner program, shares that she married Steven Artau on January 25 in Winter Park, Florida, among their beloved family and friends.

Madeline Fernandez, A.B. '12, B.S.N. '13, Ph.D. '18, successfully defended her dissertation, "Salient Factors Among Hispanic Parents for Vaccinating Children Against HPV." The qualitative descriptive study identified salient factors for Hispanic parents considering the human papillomavirus vaccine (HPV) for their children and determined important components and strategies for implementing HPV-prevention interventions for this population. Nine factors that positively influenced Hispanic parents' decision about obtaining the HPV for their children and nine factors negatively influencing the same decision were identified as a result of the analysis, which was based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). The findings provided several strategies for developing and evaluating future HPV-prevention interventions based on participants' preferences, the most popular being health care provider-facilitated information sessions (or *charlas*) held in the community after work hours, information presentations at high school freshmen orientations, and short informational videos played at health clinic waiting/examination rooms.

Cecilia (Gunilla) Barren, M.S.N. '17, a graduate of the Adult Acute Care Nurse Practitioner program, writes, "I was fortunate enough to attend the mission trip to Haiti and the Dominican Republic while pursuing my graduate degree. I am now working at Good Samaritan Medical Center in the ICU as an intensivist. I am grateful to all of my professors, mentors, and other people I met along my educational journey." For her wedding, set to take place in May 2019 in the Dominican Republic, she asked guests to donate to the biannual Haiti mission trip Dr. Ortega leads with SONHS students. She adds: "I look forward to giving back to something that is still close to my heart. I am forever changed from the experience and always thinking of a way to give back to the Haitian community." For more information, visit <http://miami.edu/BarrenBresnanWedding>.

Alexis Busch, B.S.N. '17, moved to Central Florida to work at UF Health Shands in Gainesville after graduating in May 2017.

Elisabeth Finholm, B.S.N. '17, is currently working in the vascular/thoracic transplant ICU at Advent Health Orlando (formerly Florida Hospital).

Anna Desmarais, B.S.N. '18, who graduated last May with the B.S.N. Excellence in Academic & Clinical Performance Award, was hired for a position in the emergency room at Aventura Hospital.

Sophie Koenigsfeldt, B.S.N. '18, has accepted a position in the new emergency department at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach.

Nancy Odor, B.S.N. '18, is working as a registered nurse in a pediatric intensive care unit.

Carla C. Prophete, B.S.N. '18, was accepted into the M.S.N. Program at UM SONHS and looks forward to starting her new degree program.

In Memoriam



Karen S. Muth,
B.S.N. '85

*Family endows fund in memory
of devoted recovery nurse and
Hurricanes fan.*

For more than three decades, Karen S. Muth, B.S.N. '85, worked as a post-anesthesia nurse at Sarasota Memorial Hospital. In addition to her love of travel and her Jack Russell dogs, she was a proud supporter of the School of Nursing and Health Studies and a lifelong Hurricanes fan who always made time to attend University of Miami football games throughout the years. In fact, though fighting pancreatic cancer, she came to the SONHS Suite for the game against UNC on September 27,

2018, and felt very happy with how the team played that night. Unfortunately, it would be her last Hurricanes game. On October 21, Karen Muth died at her home in Sarasota. She was 61. Her family has established the Karen S. Muth Memorial Nursing Leaders Endowed Program Fund at SONHS as a lasting tribute to her legacy of devotion to the U and to the field of nursing.

To support future nurse leaders in her name, call 305-284-1785 or email pmetcalf@miami.edu.

Alumnus of Distinction 2018

Devotion to nursing discipline takes Rick García to the top of his field.

Rick García, B.S.N. '95, sees nursing as a team sport, and he certainly made it look like one during the School of Nursing and Health Studies 2018 Alumnus of Distinction Award Ceremony. The November 1 celebration in his honor at the Simulation Hospital Auditorium drew family, early teachers, esteemed mentors, long-time collaborators, and new friends, like Marecia Bell, D.N.P. '18.

"Dr. García's professionalism and nursing service to others has been appropriately identified as being of the highest possible professional standards," said Bell, who introduced him at the event.

As director of nursing education for the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), García facilitates discussions at the national level on how to innovate nursing education and education policy. He is also principal investigator on the AACN's All of Us Research Program grant to increase diversity in NIH-led precision medicine studies.

Rather than highlight his distinguished clinical, academic, administrative, and managerial achievements from Florida to Washington, D.C., García expressed gratitude and shared hard-won wisdom from his 25-year career. "I am passionate about the nursing discipline," he said. "I am fortunate to call you my colleagues and peers."

The Miami-born son of Cuban immigrants, García embraced nursing early, thanks to strong guidance from his beloved health teacher at Miami Senior High, Roberta Meyer. After graduating from Miami Dade College and SONHS, he earned his master's in integrated health systems management from Georgetown University, followed by a Ph.D. in nursing research, with a minor in nursing education, from Barry University. From 2014 to 2016, he completed postdoctoral research at New York



From left, Beverly Fray, Rick García, Marecia Bell, and Dean Munro

University at the rank of assistant professor/faculty fellow. His research interests include intersectionality, cultural competence, regulation, and health policy.

"Never stop learning," he advised. "And as you continue to climb, remember to reach back and pull up those coming behind you. For as you stand on the shoulders of those who pulled you up, tomorrow, those you pull up will stand on your shoulders."

A recognized mentor, García was named Florida State Association of Occupational Health Nurses 2016 Nurse of the Year, is a fellow of the American Association of Occupational Health Nurses, and is a HOSA Future Health Professionals Hall of Fame inductee.

"Rick García is a motivator and an inspirational person," said the evening's emcee, Beverly Fray, B.S.N. '02, M.S.N. '06, president-elect of the SONHS Alumni Association.

His extensive clinical expertise includes neonatal ICU, pediatric pulmonary, post-anesthesia recovery, neurosurgery, and high-risk obstetrics. He was a leader in developing the maternal-child case

management program at Georgetown University Medical Center and pediatric and adolescent case management program at the President's Flagship Hospital at National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland.

He served as the Florida Board of Nursing's executive director, was manager of clinical operations for the neurosurgery service at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and has taught nursing research and practice at NYU, Florida State University, and George Mason University, among others.

"You may look at me and think, wow he's so accomplished," said García. "But the important thing is, it doesn't just happen. It doesn't come easily. Don't let that stop you. What we do in light of adversity is how we grow and improve ourselves. All that's worth earning requires effort, sweat, tears, questioning, unease, and at times, even a little blood," he continued. "So if you think for a minute you have the intellectual capacity and capital, but you can never be here as a distinguished alumnus, I've got news for you, you can do it. You can definitely do it."

Student Profile

Florida Blue Grant Propels Stellar Student into Ph.D. Pipeline

From the intricacies of cardiac care to the impact of social support on disease management, questions excite Ph.D. student Heather Sanchez, B.S.N. '18, particularly when they point to ways of improving nursing practice and patient care. That natural curiosity drove her to participate in a health disparities research program for minority nursing students as an undergraduate at the School of Nursing and Health Studies (SONHS).

One of the studies Sanchez worked on during the 10-week summer program funded by the Florida Blue Foundation focused on minority women age 50 and older living with HIV (MOWLH). She helped survey a sample of 133 MOWLH about the social support they felt they would receive from their families and communities if they revealed their HIV status. While most thought their families would support them, 52 percent didn't think they'd receive community support, 49 percent thought people would avoid them because of their disease, and 57 percent thought community members would be afraid of being infected.

Rosina Cianelli, associate professor and director of the M.S.N.-D.N.P. program, was the study's principal investigator and one of Sanchez's faculty mentors that summer. "Heather was professional and charismatic in interviewing the HIV study participants, and they were delighted with her," says Cianelli. "She was proactive, too. If something needed to be done, Heather was the first to do it, and the result was perfect."



Sanchez's first foray into nursing research solidified her desire to become a nurse scientist. A clinical rotation in Jackson Memorial Hospital's Cardiac Critical Care Unit led her to choose cardiac care as her subspecialty. She loved the challenge that patients facing complex, urgent health problems presented. Not surprising for a student whose work faculty routinely describe as "outstanding" and "meticulous." Directly after graduation, Sanchez entered the Ph.D. in Nursing program at the SONHS—in part to keep answering questions the study raised in her mind as to whether community education about HIV might increase social support for people with the disease.

"It's so important to make sure people, especially those with chronic conditions, have someone in their lives to turn to when they need help," says Sanchez. "We do a great job of treating people physically, treating the disease, but there's this whole other element to us as human beings. People with chronic conditions have times of remission and times of exacerbation; they need someone there to help or guide them." Professor Victoria Mitrani met Sanchez in her Quantitative Methods class last year and soon saw her "tremendous promise as a nurse researcher."

"Heather has a strong grasp of concepts," she says. "Like a good researcher, she pays careful attention to detail and proactively thinks through the next steps for answering questions."

Sanchez works as a research assistant with Mitrani for the Center for Latino Research Opportunities. Mitrani is also collaborating with her on a proposal for a National Research Service Fellowship from the National Institute of Nursing Research and says Sanchez has what it takes to be successful for this highly competitive award.

Meanwhile, Sanchez remains drawn to questions about women's health and social support inspired by the ones raised in the HIV study. "I think that happens with studies," she says. "You answer or partially answer one question, and that ends up opening up a whole bunch of other questions you get excited to pursue."

Her advice to fellow students? "Don't be afraid to go outside of the box and look at the different ways you can apply nursing," she says. "My SONHS instructors have always emphasized the importance of taking advantage of every opportunity we are given, to be as curious as we can, ask many questions and absorb as much as we can."



Fall 2018 Awards Ceremony

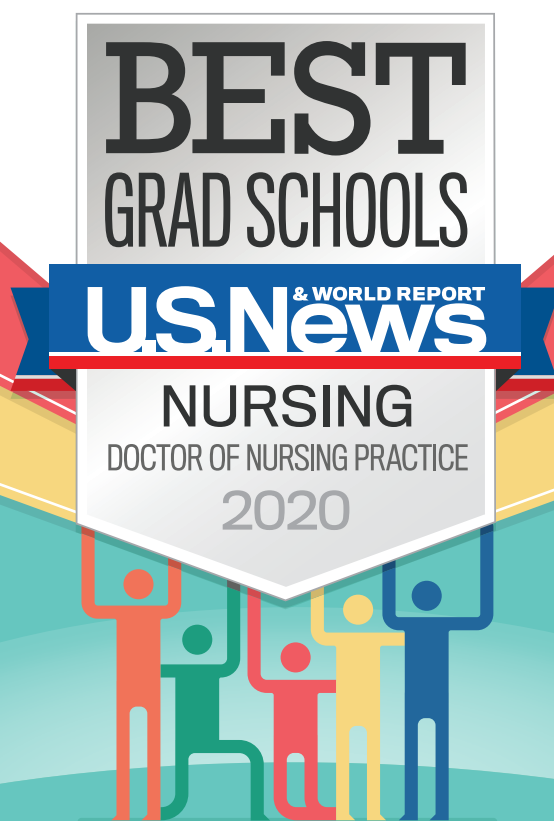
Over 170 students closed out 2018 with newly minted degrees in nursing, health informatics, public health, and health science from the School of Nursing and Health Studies. The day before commencement, on December 12, SONHS held its Annual Fall Awards Ceremony. Each student received a pin to represent the transition from health care student to professional. SONHS applauds these graduates' accomplishments and warmly thanks faculty for their dedication to educating new generations of leaders. Individual awards were for D.N.P. Excellence in Academic and Clinical Performance (Michelle Arrojo), B.S.N.-D.N.P. Nurse Anesthesia Track Excellence in Academic and Clinical Performance (Kenneth Wiley), B.S.N. Excellence in Academic and Clinical Performance (Molly McIntyre), B.S.N. Excellence in Leadership Award (Sarah Schell), and B.S.N. Alumni Award (Alexandra Pappas).

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW INNERARITY





Join a **Cadre of Transformative Health Care
Leaders Educated at the U!**



See why our **D.N.P. program** is ranked **#28 in the country**. Across the nation, outstanding nurse leaders who perfected their craft in our D.N.P. program are revolutionizing health care in myriad areas. Stay in your advanced practice nursing position while pursuing your doctorate in our leading-edge, executive-style D.N.P. program.

Enrollment Now Open!

