Greetings from the Interim Dean

Greetings Nursing Alumni and Friends of the Nursing Program.

In this edition of the newsletter you will read some of the amazing stories from the 2009-2010 academic year, stories about our alumni, donors, students, faculty, and staff. These stories portray how excellence is lived, and how nursing is showcased at the university, in the community, and throughout the country.

Our students and faculty take great pride in the quality of all the nursing education programs, BSN to DNP, and the many new exciting programs and learning opportunities that have been enhanced or launched this year. We greatly appreciate all the support from our alumni and university to be able to serve even more students. These initiatives all occur because of the exceptional foundation created by our nursing past and this foundation provides for our exciting future.

We also would like to extend our gratitude to the many health care agencies and individuals at those agencies for the wide array of rich clinical opportunities they have provided for our students.

And finally, a special thanks to Dr. Debra Jansen for her ongoing work in creating these newsletters.

We hope that you will be able to attend the Nursing Alumni Walk in October, and that you realize that our alumni are always welcome to stop in for a visit or e-mail us at nursing@uwec.edu. We hope to see or hear from you soon.

Mary Zwygart-Stauffacher, PhD, RN, FAAN
Interim Dean and Professor

Upcoming Events—Mark Your Calendars

- Nursing Alumni Homecoming Walk, October 2, 2010.
- Accreditation site visit by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), April 18-20, 2011.
- Please contact the Alumni Office for nominations for outstanding alumnus or to update your information (www.uwec.edu/alumni; alumni@uwec.edu; 715-836-3266).
- Please continue to contact the Alumni Office (see above) and the College of Nursing and Health Sciences (715-836-5287; nursing@uwec.edu) if you have an upcoming reunion or news to share.
- For information or questions related to this newsletter, please contact Dr. Debra Jansen (Jansenda@uwec.edu).
Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program Starting this Summer!

Our faculty are excited to welcome our first cohort of DNP students. This pioneering group of 16 students is being admitted to our post-master’s DNP option and will start classes on June 14, 2010. On May 8, 2009 (during Nurses Week), the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents voted to approve establishing a doctor of nursing practice degree program at UW-Eau Claire. This is the first doctoral program at UW-Eau Claire. A DNP program also was approved for UW-Oshkosh, making our campuses the first of any of the UW System’s 11 comprehensive universities to grant doctoral degrees. Way to go, Nursing!!!

The DNP is a clinical doctorate designed to prepare nurses to assume leadership roles in the areas of advanced clinical practice (nurse practitioner or clinical nurse specialist) or nursing administration. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) has determined that the DNP will be the graduate degree for advanced practice nurses, including clinical nurse specialists, nurse practitioners, and nurse administrators, effective in 2015.

During the initial years of our DNP program, the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 academic years, the DNP will be offered as a post-master’s option only. It is anticipated that beginning in the 2012-2013 academic year, both MSN-to-DNP and BSN-to-DNP options will be available. For post-master’s students, the DNP program includes 28 credits of nursing courses offered over three terms (summer, fall, and spring) for full-time study and two years for part-time study. These courses are offered via a combination of online technologies and in-class immersion days. Students in the post-master’s program currently have a master’s degree in nursing, in the areas of advanced clinical practice (nurse practitioner or clinical nurse specialist) or nursing administration.

For now, we will continue to offer our Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) options in the areas of advanced clinical practice (nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist), nursing administration, and nursing education. In keeping with AACN’s requirements, however, we will stop admitting advanced clinical practice and nursing administration students to the MSN program after 2011. Beginning in 2012, prospective students interested in those areas will need to apply to the BSN-to-DNP program. Prospective students still will be able to apply to the MSN program for the education role preparation, as we greatly value this option.

Remembering Ms. Berniece Wagner

Ms. Berniece (“Bea”) Wagner, a founding faculty member of our School of Nursing, passed away on Wednesday August 12, 2009, at the age of 85. Ms. Wagner was instrumental to the establishment of our nursing programs. She and Dean Marguerite Coffman were the original full-time faculty for the School of Nursing, when the first class was admitted in 1965. She also designed the School of Nursing pin that is still being used today.

Ms. Wagner served as chair of the Department of Medical-Surgical Nursing, and later became Assistant and then Associate Dean for Student Affairs for the School of Nursing, before retiring in 1988.

Ms. Wagner was a strong, outspoken advocate for the nursing profession, nursing education, and for the School of Nursing, and supported the establishment of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Her legacy will further live on through the many students who will benefit from the Berniece Wagner Nursing Scholarship that she endowed. Ms. Wagner’s passing is a great loss to all of us.
Highlights from the 2009 Nursing Alumni Walk

Our 9th annual Nursing Alumni Walk on October 17th was a brisk success. The morning may have been chilly, but at least it didn’t snow (unlike earlier in the week when we were surprised by a couple of inches of the white stuff). Approximately 60 people attended the event, including groups from the class of 1969 (40th year reunion) and the class of 1989 (20th year reunion). We also were treated to greetings from Chancellor Brian Levin-Stankevich and Provost and Vice Chancellor Patricia Kleine.

Thanks and appreciation are extended to all those who came and to the many students who helped set up for the walk and made the day run smoothly. The numerous individuals and organizations who donated door prizes also deserve recognition, including Carmike Theaters, Community Health Partnership, Eau Claire Student Nurses Association, Green Bay Packers, Lee’s Uniform Center, Luther Midelfort Hospital, Menards, Milwaukee Brewers, Minnesota Wild, Oak Leaf Surgical Hospital, Sacred Heart Hospital, Saint Joseph’s Hospital-Chippewa Falls and Home Health, University Dining Services, UW-Eau Claire Alumni Association, UW-Eau Claire College of Nursing and Health Sciences, UW-Eau Claire Foundation, Xcel Energy, and Interim Dean Dr. Mary Zwygart-Stauffacher.

Mark your calendars for the next homecoming walk on Saturday October 2, 2010. See you there!

Walkers in front of Hibbard Hall, making their way across campus (photo by R. Lieske).

New Nursing Scholarship

A particularly notable highlight of the morning Nursing Alumni Walk activities was the presentation of a gift by Ms. Marsha (Zuehlke) Steffen. Ms. Steffen is a member of the class of 1969. To recognize and honor the education that she received from the UW-Eau Claire School of Nursing from 1965-1969 and in celebration of her 40th year in nursing, Ms. Steffen (and her husband) endowed a scholarship to benefit nursing students in need. We are quite appreciative of this generous donation to assist our students, particularly during this difficult economic time. The first Marsha M. (Zuehlke) Steffen, 1969 School of Nursing Scholarship will be given at our College of Nursing and Health Sciences Awards Banquet scheduled for May 5th.

Ms. Marsha Steffen, class of 1969, at the Alumni Walk.
Accelerated Program Up and Running and Gathering Speed

Once again, our accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program is quite active. A group of 16 students began classes in June 2009 and anticipates graduating this May. Another cohort of 18 students was recently admitted and will start classes in June. Demand for the accelerated program has been growing as evidenced by the large pool of applicants from which these 18 students were selected. The accelerated program is a “fast track” way for students with baccalaureate degrees in areas other than nursing to receive a BSN in a shortened length of time. The accelerated curriculum consists of 58-60 nursing credits that are completed over a 12 month period (this compares with the 60 nursing credits that are taken over a three year period for our traditional program). We initially piloted the accelerated program in 2006-2007, with the first class of 8 students graduating in May 2007.

A typical day for these students is quite long, as they work to complete both classroom and clinical experiences. Students will often spend six hours a day in the classroom and on clinical days will frequently work six to eight hours in the clinical setting. These students have had many exciting and worthwhile clinical experiences, including engaging in acute care opportunities at Luther Hospital or Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire. They also have traveled to Saint Joseph’s Hospital in Marshfield or to Children’s Hospital in Minneapolis for acute care pediatric experiences. Clinical hours in our skills laboratory have involved heavy use of manikin-based simulations. During the course of this academic year, the students took part in community health experiences at Barron County Public Health Department, Rusk County Public Health Department, or at the Ho-Chunk Nation Community Health Department. They completed a windshield survey/community assessment related to their particular site and worked on projects specific to the community’s needs, e.g., infant and child car seat safety education, prenatal education, vision and hearing screening, and immunization clinics. The students are learning more about case management through clinical opportunities with Community Health Partnership in Eau Claire and in Chippewa Falls and some are teaching middle school children in area schools about fat and sugar consumption.

Students in the accelerated program are expected to pay higher tuition fees as a means of recovering some of the costs associated with this program. To be admitted to the accelerated program, students must have completed all of the science and statistics requirements required of our traditional undergraduate students. The program is intensive due to the compressed time period and does not enable students to engage in outside employment. Donors may wish to consider designating funds for scholarships for these students.
Clinical Cultural Immersion Experience on the Rosebud Indian Reservation

The UW-Eau Claire “Transforming Our Future” Centennial Plan, the University’s strategic plan, includes as one of its priorities and action projects for 2009-2010 the goal to “increase accessible and affordable global and intercultural immersion experiences for all students”. Our College of Nursing and Health Sciences has been ahead of the game and has embraced cultural immersion experiences for a number of years. One of our well-established and popular immersion experiences at the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota has been an important part of our undergraduate nursing program since 2004. The reservation is in Todd County, the fifth poorest county in the U.S. Ms. Bonnie Solem, a nursing clinical instructor, was our first instructor to take nursing students to the reservation to work with Lakota Sioux patients and families in hospital and community settings. Dr. Janice Berry, Professor, recently started taking senior nursing students from the Marshall Site for one of their family health clinical courses. The faculty and instructors have been successful at attaining limited differential tuition funds from the university to cover some of the travel expenses. They also have been able to reduce expenses by staying at houses or a lodge provided by the Rosebud Indian Health Service Hospital.

Ms. Barbara Davis, a nursing clinical instructor, has been taking second semester junior students to the reservation since 2005. Ms. Davis will typically supervise a group of 8-10 nursing students for the 10 day immersion experience. While at the reservation, the students participate in acute care experiences throughout the 35-bed Rosebud Indian Health Service Hospital, along with taking part in public health opportunities with the Public Health Department. To date, these experiences have occurred in January (immediately prior to the start of the spring semester) and in August (immediately prior to the start of the fall semester). On a typical day at the reservation, the students and Ms. Davis would engage in the clinical activities from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and then return to their housing to prepare an evening meal, to be followed by post-conference. At the conclusion of their immersion experience, they would prepare a dinner and invite the various nursing supervisors and nurse educators to their housing; the students would then present their care plans to those nurses. Besides developing strong relationships and trust (as well as friendships) with the nursing administrators and staff and physicians in the hospital and public health agency, Ms. Davis acknowledged that “the community looks forward to us coming back every time; they are excited that our students care for them and provide the TLC, the fact that we are listening, respecting, and caring for them.” Students have commented how their lives were changed forever following this experience.

While at the reservation, the students also would have some time to participate in various Native American cultural experiences. These have included visiting museums and attending sweat lodge ceremonies and powwows.

Traveling to and from South Dakota has become a bit of an adventure for the students and Ms. Davis. They will typically drive, caravanning with two university vans for the 11-12 hour journey. For the January 2010 trip to South Dakota, the group had to spend two extra days in a hotel in Sioux Falls, as they were snowed in by a blizzard that closed the highways. They used that time to review case studies and to prepare for the cultural immersion experience. As if a snow blizzard wasn’t enough excitement, once they were able to depart Sioux Falls, they encountered flocks of pheasants. One of the flying pheasants struck one of the vans where it remained wedged, frozen into the grill. Thankfully, a couple of brave students were later able to pry it loose.

Our nursing faculty and instructors have been engaging in numerous other cultural immersion experiences including working with undergraduate and graduate nursing students at the Lac du Flambeau Indian Reservation; the Ho Chunk Nation near Black River Falls; in Anchorage, Alaska with the “sour dough”; Eskimo, Athubecan, and Aleut Alaskans; at Camp Chi, an overnight camp on Lake Blass near Wisconsin Dells, affiliated with the Jewish Community Centers of Chicago; in Weslaco, Texas, near the border of Mexico for perinatal and community experiences; and in Washington, D.C., caring for the homeless. These opportunities generally have been supported in part through differential tuition funds. More funding is needed to continue to offer these or similar cultural immersion experiences for more of our undergraduate and graduate students.
Growth in our Undergraduate and Graduate Nursing Programs

The above chart illustrates the increase in the numbers of graduates from our BSN and MSN programs. The escalating enrollments in our Collaborative Nursing Program (the statewide BSN@Home Program for nurses with associate degrees), the expansion of our Marshfield Site, and the offering of our accelerated program for second degree students are enabling us to graduate more BSN students. Additionally we are seeing an increase in MSN applicants. *Anticipated graduates.

The chart below illustrates the growing numbers of students enrolled in our BSN (includes pre-nursing students) and MSN programs.
Kudos to Ms. Karen Maddox

Ms. Karen Maddox, Associate Professor of Nursing and Interim Chair of the Department of Public Health Professions, received the Mary Adelaide Nutting Academic Linkages Award. The award presentation occurred at the 12th Annual Public Health Nursing Conference in Stevens Point on August 18, 2009. Ms. Maddox was acknowledged as a valuable asset to public health because of her dedication to serving as a catalyst for linking academia with public health nursing practice. The award was sponsored by the Wisconsin Public Health Association’s newly formed Public Health Section and is meant to honor a public health nurse, supervisor, local or tribal health department manager, or faculty person, who demonstrates the advancement of public health nursing programs. Congratulations, Karen!!

Ms. Karen Maddox and Ms. Debbie Odden (award presenter), Assistant Director of the Chippewa County Department of Public Health.

2009 AJN Book of the Year Award—Dr. Mary Zwygart-Stauffacher

Congratulations are in order for our Interim Dean, Dr. Mary Zwygart-Stauffacher, whose co-authored book, How to Find the Best Eldercare: A 20-Minute Guide to Assisted Living, In-Home Care, Nursing Homes, & Senior Housing in Your Community, received a prestigious 2009 Book of the Year Award in the Consumer Health Category by the American Journal of Nursing (AJN). The book, written with Dr. Marilyn Rantz, a professor of nursing at the University of Missouri-Columbia, provides practical information for the public for understanding and choosing among all of the common eldercare options. It is based on the extensive research they conducted measuring quality in nursing homes along with their substantial nursing practice and administrative experience. Dr. Zwygart-Stauffacher and Dr. Rantz hope the book will make it easier for consumers to find quality care and also assist directors and staff of nursing homes and assisted living settings in improving the quality of their facilities. The book is available from Fairview Press. Dr. Zwygart-Stauffacher and Dr. Rantz previously won the award for their 2001 book, The New Nursing Homes.
The UW-Eau Claire College of Nursing and Health Sciences faculty have a long tradition of active involvement and leadership in the Wisconsin Nurses Association (WNA), the professional nursing organization for nurses in the state. Currently, we even have a vice president in our midst! Ms. Gail Hanson Brenner, one of our clinical instructors, has been elected to the position of Vice President of WNA and is a Center for American Nurses delegate. She also is a district president. Dr. Cheryl Brandt, Associate Professor of Nursing, was elected to the Research Council and Dr. Rita Kisting Sparks, Professor Emerita, was elected to the Nominating Committee. Dr. Janice Berry and Ms. Catherine Berry are serving as American Nurses Association delegates, with Ms. Brenner and Dr. Sparks as alternate delegates.

The strong leadership of our faculty is mirrored in the leadership activities of our students. Three undergraduate nursing students were elected to the board of the Wisconsin Student Nurses Association (WSNA) at the WSNA annual convention held February 7th in Wisconsin Dells. Ms. Maggie Wolf, a senior, was elected President of WSNA and is the former WSNA STAT Editor. As President, one of her goals is to strengthen the bond between WSNA and WNA. Sarah Johnson, a senior, is the new Executive Vice President. She will help with planning next year’s convention and the WNA/WSNA annual meeting and conference in October. Stephanie Dworak is the new Western Regional Director and is a sophomore just beginning the nursing courses at our Marshfield Site. While at the WSNA annual convention, Ms. Linda Duffy, Clinical Assistant Professor at our Marshfield Site, received the Leader of Leaders Award, an advisor award for which she was nominated by the Marshfield Site Eau Claire Student Nurses Association Board. Congratulations, everyone!
Is She Really Retired?

Dr. Lois Taft, professor emeritus, officially retired in May 2009 after teaching with us for 13 years and after serving as Department Chair for a few of those years. It’s hard to refer to her as being “retired”, however, because she has two part-time jobs. She is an instructor in the Nursing Management and Leadership course in the BSN@Home program and will be teaching in our graduate program this summer. She also is a nursing research consultant at Memorial Hospital in Springfield, Illinois. In this position, she works with staff nurses to promote research into practice. Current projects include an evaluation of a bedside scientist education program for nurses, an examination of why staff nurses continue in practice after retirement age, and an exploratory study of moral distress experienced by nurses. Additionally, Dr. Taft takes pleasure in being close to her family including her 18-month-old grandson. She also is looking forward to another grandchild in July. We hope she keeps doing what she enjoys!

UW-Eau Claire President Award

Our College of Nursing and Health Sciences is quite proud to have one of our alumna, Dr. Barbara Lee, be a recipient of a University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire President’s Award. This award recognizes outstanding professional and personal achievement and service to the university. Dr. Lee is the Director of the National Farm Medicine Center, a research center of the Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation in Marshfield. Under her leadership, it continues to be one of most successful agricultural health and safety research centers in the United States. Dr. Lee also directs the National Children’s Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety, which received funding from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, thereby enabling the center to both research and translate that research into enhancing the health and safety of children and adolescents growing up in rural and agricultural environments. Additionally, she is an administrative director of the Agricultural Safety and Health Council of America. Dr. Lee received her Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree from UW-Eau Claire in 1985 and her PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, School of Nursing in 1995. Congratulations, Dr. Lee. We thank you for your many contributions to the wellbeing of the families in our communities.
Selected Nursing Faculty and Instructional Academic Staff Publications and Presentations


Selected Nursing Faculty and Instructional Academic Staff Publications & Presentations (cont.)


Sperstad, R. (2009, March). *Facilitating students’ cultural competence through contextual learning*. Presentation at UW-Eau Claire Faculty/Academic Staff Forum, Eau Claire, WI.


Nursing education is continually changing as health care technologies advance and as we work to prepare nurse leaders to meet the demands of a more globally aware and diverse society. We are continually working to update our teaching methodologies and skills laboratory equipment to be current with the realities of modern nursing practice and to prepare for the future. We also are taking steps to ensure opportunities for cultural immersion experiences for all of our students. At the same time, our College is growing as we admit students into our undergraduate accelerated program for second degree students and our Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program. Additional resources are needed to manage these areas of growth and change.

Your gift to any of the following will help enhance student learning experiences and provide valuable faculty resources.

**Multicultural Clinical Experiences:** Support the university’s strategic plan to expand experiential, multicultural, and interdisciplinary learning by providing funds to enable nursing experiences with diverse populations in Alaska, at Indian reservations in South Dakota, at a birthing clinic in Texas, and more locally in Wisconsin.

**Accelerated BSN Program Scholarships:** Establish an accelerated BSN program scholarship. These nontraditional students engage in a rigorous year-long program that does not enable them to work during the course of their studies.

**Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program Scholarships:** Establish a DNP program scholarship. These graduate students are enhancing their clinical leadership skills as nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, and nurse administrators to promote quality health outcomes for individuals and communities.

**Nursing Faculty Doctoral Education Scholarships:** Support our ability to “grow our own” doctorally prepared faculty. Funding is needed for clinical instructors to pursue DNP’s and PhD’s.

**Skills Laboratory Simulation and Replacement Equipment:** Provide needed simulation equipment (e.g., computerized manikins, control room monitors and cameras) as well as replacements of skills laboratory equipment as materials become outdated or nonfunctional.

**Electronic Health Record System:** Purchase an electronic health record system, complete with simulated patients. Such a system would enable students to practice charting patient cares and assessments, review patient histories and laboratory reports, document medication administration, and engage in quality improvement activities.

To designate a gift, see [www.uwec.edu/fndn/giving.htm](http://www.uwec.edu/fndn/giving.htm) or call 1-877-625-2473.