KEEPING THE BEAT
How the UCLA School of Nursing is Advancing Cardiovascular Care
UCLA SCHOOL OF NURSING
ADMINISTRATION

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WHEN I ASSUMED THE ROLE AS ACTING AND NOW INTERIM DEAN, I WAS COMMITTED TO CREATING A WARM AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT TO EMBRACE THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF EVERYONE WHO IS TOUCHED BY THE SCHOOL: FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENTS, DONORS, ALUMNI.

So it is no coincidence that this issue of the UCLA School of Nursing magazine is dedicated to the heart, both the amazing cardiovascular research that our faculty are conducting as well as the caring about the hearts and minds of our students, faculty and staff.

Nelson Mandela once said “A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination” and here at the School we are embracing both. Creating a healthy, positive environment for faculty, staff and students is at the heart of our school. UC President Janet Napolitano made the commitment to cultivating a positive work environment as a cornerstone of her leadership and has directed each UC campus to do the same. UCLA, in turn, created the position of Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and appointed an Equity Advisor – ours is Deborah Koniak-Griffin, Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Additionally, I appointed an Assistant Director for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, our staff member Rhonda Flenoy Younger, which was announced in our Spring 2016 magazine. We are one of the few schools on campus to have included staff leadership. We have and will continue to host activities to enhance our climate including provocative films, moderated discussions and cultural celebrations. Last month we celebrated the rich diversity of the many Asian cultures with a Harvest Festival. We also are collaborating with the UCLA Health “Counting on U” campaign which is fostering a healthy, caring, respectful practice and learning environment for healthcare professional students and staff at UCLA.
Another way we are ensuring a positive environment and a healthy heart and mind is by embracing the goals and activities of the Healthy Campus Initiative (HCI) which is committed to making UCLA the healthiest campus in America. HCI consists of four “pods” Breathe Well (which led the implementation of UCLA’s smoke and tobacco-free policy), Eat Well, Move Well and Mind Well. Last year we took a mindful break and enjoyed the beautiful music of guest musicians from the Herb Albert School of Music, who serenaded us in the lobby. This Fall we began the first faculty and staff meeting with an accordion concert! One of our faculty, Barbara Demman, a trained facilitator, is offering morning mindful meditation sessions to students, staff and faculty to combat stress every Friday for 30 minutes.

Finally, I want to offer heartfelt thanks to our alumni and donors who continue to show gratitude and care for the School by their generous donations.

“I AM PROUD TO BE PART OF A SCHOOL THAT HAS SO MUCH HEART.”
Welcome to Rosamar Torres, PhD, MSN, R.N. Texas born and bred, Torres received her PhD from the University of Texas at Austin and completed her post-doctoral training at UCSF School of Nursing. While working in Pediatric and Neonatal Intensive Care Units in Austin, Torres noticed many of her Latino patients’ mothers received little or no prenatal care. She started studying why there was a lack of prenatal care among late adolescent Latinas and found that these women were encountering a lot of access barriers and that many of the women experienced depression and fatigue during pregnancy. Ultimately, this became the subject of her dissertation.

Torres decided she wanted to join the UCLA School of Nursing because of its “reputation in research.” In her new study efforts, she will be looking at inflammatory cytokines, through saliva and blood tests, to determine their impact on pre- and post-partum depression. She will also be looking at ways to improve antenatal depression symptoms in adolescents.

Meet Our New Adjunct Faculty

ANITA BRALOCK, PHD, RN, CNM
Associate Adjunct Professor

MICHELLE BUCKMAN, PHD, RN
Assistant Adjunct Professor

EMMA CUENCA, DNP, RN, CCRN, CSC, CNS
Assistant Adjunct Professor

JOHN LAZAR, PHD, FNP-BC, RN
Assistant Adjunct Professor
CONGRATULATIONS

FACULTY

PROFESSOR JO-ANN EASTWOOD
was inducted as a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing at the Annual Meeting in October.

LECTURER DEBORAH RICE
was selected as West Region Nurse.com GEM finalist for Excellence in Clinical Nursing

INTERIM DEAN LINDA SARNA
was elected to serve as the first National Board Chair for the National Clinician’s Scholars Program.

DOCTORAL STUDENTS

SHARON COBB, JUDY MCKELVY
Dissertation Year Fellowships

SHAREE ANZALDO, CECILIA BASILIO, GERARDO FLORES and PAULA BENSON
Jonas Center Nursing Leaders

EUNJOO AN and ADRIENNE MARTINEZ-HOLLINGSWORTH
Graduate Research Mentorship Fellowships

SHAREE ANZALDO
2016 Society of Pediatric Nurses Corrine Barnes Research Grant

SANDRA DEWAR
Robert Wood Johnson Scholar

KRISTINA ROMERO
Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellowship

ADRIENNE MARTINEZ-HOLLINGSWORTH
Schweitzer Award
SCHOOL AWARDED HRSA GRANT
The UCLA School of Nursing has been awarded a $2.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health Resources and Administration (HRSA) to support minority and disadvantaged students in both the masters entry clinical nurse program and the advanced practice nursing program. The grant will be awarded over a four-year period. In the 2016-17 academic year, up to 50 students in the master’s programs will receive $13,000. Funding will cover about half of the tuition. Students will be encouraged to work in medically underserved communities. “Los Angeles is a culturally diverse area,” said interim dean Sarna. “We have nearly 90 clinical partners who are located in medically unserved communities. This grant will provide our students with unique opportunities to deliver quality and culturally competent care.” The School is one of only two nursing schools in California to receive this grant.

SARNA LEADS AACN SMOKEFREE CAMPUS EFFORTS
A resolution, introduced by Dr. Linda Sarna, along with three other Deans – Dr. Janie Health, University of Kentucky College of Nursing, Dr. Anna McDaniel, University of Florida College of Nursing and Dr. Jeanette Andrews, University of South Carolina College of Nursing – calling for all nursing schools to be smoke-free and to encourage nursing educators to promote tobacco-free policies and their universities and colleges was endorsed by the nursing school deans at the American Association of Colleges of Nursing business meeting in March.
SIX YEARS AGO, THE SCHOOL OF NURSING ENTERED INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE HONG KONG SANITORIUM AND HOSPITAL (HKSH), one of the most prestigious and internationally accredited private hospitals in Hong Kong, to continue to enhance evidence-based practices and promote mentorship of nurses in conducting clinical research. The grant came from Walton Li, MD, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Medical Superintendent of the Hospital who is a very strong advocate and supporter of the value of nursing care. Over five years, the UCLA School of Nursing held workshops in Hong Kong related to many clinical topics, including administration and management, patient satisfaction, simulation and physical assessment skills, heart failure, and wound care.

Dr. Adey Nyamathi has worked tirelessly to coordinate the effort and content for each of the 20 workshops that have been held to date. She relied on experts from UCLA School of Nursing, Ronald Reagan and Santa Monica UCLA Health, Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles and Cedars Sinai, as well as experts from outside California, to create stellar interactive and educational programs that have received high marks from the HKSH nurses. That work led to a five-year renewal of the contract in 2015.

Now, the School and HKSH have entered into a new 3-year contract that will be focused on bringing nurses from Hong Kong to Los Angeles for observation and workshops. Twelve nurses will come for two weeks per year to shadow nurses at Ronald Reagan UCLA, Santa Monica UCLA, Mattel Children’s and other hospitals.

“The collegiality between the nursing faculty at the UCLA School of Nursing and the nursing administration and staff at Hong Kong Sanatorium have been exceptional and long lasting,” said Nyamathi. “We look forward to many more years of collaboration.”
In 1988, Dr. Anita Bralock was a master’s student and one of three African-American students in the nursing program. Deciding they wanted to “give each other encouragement and lift each other up,” said Dr. Bralock, they formed the African-American Nurses Association. The small group started by celebrating milestones such as completing their thesis and commencement. But their ultimate goal was to create an organization that would continue on after they had graduated. To do that, the group needed to be recognized as an official organization, which required developing a mission, creating a board with officers and having a faculty advisor.

Rhonda Flenoy-Younger, now Director of Recruitment and Admissions, became the coordinator for the group in 1992. That year, the group’s focus expanded to include a formal mentorship program. Every September, when the students would start school, alumni would offer support and guidance while upper classmates would select first and second year students to mentor.

“One of the great benefits of this organization is that the relationships continue long after they graduate,” said Flenoy-Younger who has seen new students join every year and continue to be involved long after commencement.

Dr. Bralock agrees. “One year I was paired with Carol White and we’ve been friends ever since. We’ve been there for every milestone – weddings, births, graduations – and supported each other in our careers.”

In 2003, the group changed its name to PANSAA – Pan African Nursing Student and Alumni Association – acknowledging that not all students of African descent are African-American.
Approaching its 30th year, PANSAA stands as a great example of the success and endurance of a student organization that has made a difference for so many.

The organization meets four times a year - including a holiday celebration with a gift exchange and a year - end celebration for graduation. While the original end-of-the-year celebration was a dinner for just the members and their families, it has now expanded to be a “rites of passage” ceremony with parents, family and friends invited and has included entertainment by African drummers, praise dancers and singers.

PANSAA assists in recruiting and retaining students of color here. Membership is not limited to black students - and over the past few years, participation has included Latino and Asian students.

PANSAA also welcomes students of color from other schools who are looking for that same support and encouragement.

The members also have a strong sense of community and have taken on several projects over the years. Currently they are working with “A New Way of Life,” a transitional home for women who were formerly incarcerated and are now on parole. The home is in Watts and most of the residents are minority women.

PANSAA has also encouraged individuals who might be interested in enrolling in the School, or those who have been accepted to attend the meetings. They too have benefited from mentorship, networking and guidance of alumni.

Sage Sims, a third-year BS student, finds great value in PANSAA. Sim’s journey to becoming a nursing student was inspired by a family friend, who, ironically, was a member of PANSAA. When Sims started looking at colleges, the friend brought her to a PANSAA meeting.

“I like the fact that these members know the experiences we go through as African-Americans and can provide great advice and support.”

“ONE OF THE GREAT BENEFITS OF THIS ORGANIZATION IS THAT THE RELATIONSHIPS CONTINUE LONG AFTER THEY GRADUATE. SO MANY OF THE GRADUATES REACH OUT TO TELL OF JOB OPENINGS AND ATTEND FUNDRAISERS.”
HER NURSING CAREER BEGAN WITH A KISS
Brenda Garay had a long journey through the healthcare system. At the age of six, she was diagnosed with chronic otitis media – an infection from inflammation in the middle ear which causes hearing loss in children. This condition required annual ear surgeries for 11 years and continuous speech pathology therapy session – in two languages – for nine years.

Raised by her father, a single parent who only spoke Spanish, Brenda was also challenged by a division in culture and language, as Brenda had to translate for him when they spoke to the nurses and doctors. This kept her father from consenting on some of her treatment and from an early age she became much more responsible for her own health than one should expect from a child.

Despite her health challenges, Brenda excelled in school and never missed a day. Her father had instilled in her the importance of education and taught her that it is the only way out of the cycle of poverty. She graduated at the top of her grammar school class. After excelling through grammar school her father decided to enroll her in magnet school for junior and senior high school and ultimately was given a college scholarship for her academic achievements.

As the first person in her family to attend college, she thought her only options were to “be a doctor, a lawyer or a teacher.” Because of her healthcare experiences, she got involved in Chicanos/Latinos for Community Medicine (CCM), a healthcare organization at UCLA. As part of the CCM, she volunteered to teach high school students about healthcare-related topics and volunteered at health fairs in Tecate, Mexico and within the greater Los Angeles area.

Finishing her first year in school, Brenda was beginning to realize that she had a true passion for caring and wanted to be more focused on a holistic view of caring for patients. Through a volunteer program at Santa Monica Hospital, she saw firsthand the roles that different healthcare providers played. She reflected on that moment that nurse gave her the Hershey’s kiss and decided to change direction.

“Even though I couldn’t eat the Kiss at that moment, it was her sentiment towards me and making me feel comfortable that really helped because you are a nervous wreck every time you go into the operating room,” added Brenda.

IT WAS A MEMORY OF THAT MOMENT – HER FINAL SURGERY AND THE NURSE HANDED HER A CHOCOLATE KISS. BRENDA RECALLS THAT MOMENT WITH A BIG SMILE BECAUSE THAT MEMORY IS WHAT SHAPED BRENDA’S DESIRE TO BECOME A NURSE.
In order to focus on her nursing goal, she decided to switch to a Spanish major. She finished her required classes within a year and then focused on the courses required for nursing school. At first her father was disappointed that his daughter wasn’t going to be a doctor but now he’s very proud, she said, “because he could see my heart. That I want to spend more time with my patients to focus on their holistic healing.”

Brenda is now in her second year in the Master’s Entry Clinical Nurse program. Her teacher’s and clinical liaison’s have noticed and commented on her great rapport with patients. Long term, Brenda wants to focus on international health. Last summer she went with FIMRC – the Foundation for International Medical Relief of Children to India and she’s currently working on getting a global health certificate. She’s also planning to go to Cuba this winter with the School of Nursing.

Brenda thinks that it was her experiences that will ultimately make her a great nurse. “Because of my experiences, I have an ability to make stressful situations a little easier for patients. I’m able to empathize with patients because I’ve been down the road before, I know how it feels to be on the other side of the hospital bed.”

“She’s in nursing for the right reason – the compassion. She has an excellent bedside manner and the patients love her.”

Silvia Mieure, Lecturer, Prelicensure Programs

(left) In Pasam, India; (right) with one of the clinic physician’s.
Volunteers from the Tecate Health Fair.

Promoting Donations of Tissues and Organs.

“I WANT TO SPEND MORE TIME TO FOCUS ON THEIR HOLISTIC HEALING.”
KEEPING THE BEAT
For each researcher, there was a defining moment that started them on their research path. Maybe it was a specific patient or being at the right place at the right time. For some, the path has been fairly straight, while others have had twists and turns. But all of their journeys are changing lives of patients and moving science and nursing practice forward.

The difference these researchers are making shows why the UCLA School of Nursing is a leader in cardiovascular health.

From the Moment of Birth – Identifying and addressing the effects of congenital heart disease

Congenital heart disease is the No. 1 birth defect in the nation. Forty years ago, most children with congenital heart disease did not survive into adulthood. But with the advent of new surgical procedures, postoperative management and follow-up care, these children are surviving. As a result, issues related to their health have unfolded, leading to two researchers – Mary Canobbio and Nancy Pike – to look for answers to improving health outcomes and quality of life.

Shortly after Mary Canobbio earned her master’s in nursing from UCLA, she was offered a chance to participate in the development of a new program managing patients born with congenital heart disease (CHD), but now as adults would need continued, life-long care. At the time there were no CHD programs that transitioned patients from pediatrics to adult-centered care. Thus, the UCLA adult congenital heart disease (ACHD) program became the first of its kind in the U.S. Today there are more adults with CHD than children, but the number of centers available to care for them remains limited.

As the program’s Clinical Specialist, Mary found that many of the women had menstrual problems and those with complex heart problems were told they couldn’t get pregnant. But nobody had the answer as to why. “I kept saying – we need to find the answer and finally one physician said, ‘Mary you should do a study.’ So I did the first menstrual study on women with congenital heart disease. And that was the beginning.”

The advent of a new heart procedure in the late 1980s – Fontan – offered new hope for one population who had been told they could never get...
pregnant. “Now the question became not could they get pregnant, but should they get pregnant?” And once again Mary was on a mission. Ultimately she worked on two studies with the Mayo Clinic in the 1990s to find if women’s menstrual cycles returned to normal and if so, could they safely get pregnant. She has kept a multi-centered registry since that time and has recorded 100 pregnancies and 72 live births. “While it may not seem like a lot, it is the most reported in the literature.”

Canobbio followed women in the registry and hopes to publish her study focused on the long-term effects of pregnancy in these patients with complex CHD. Cannobio’s work has not gone unnoticed by heart experts. Nearly 20 years after she started working with adults born with CHD, the AHA published a best practices statement on the transition of care and will soon be publishing a Scientific Statement on the reproductive issues and Mary’s studies are key.

Nancy Pike had worked for more than two decades as a nurse practitioner in pediatric cardiac surgery. Children born with only one pumping chamber in their heart – known as single ventricle congenital heart disease...
– often need to have two or three surgeries before they are three, which researchers believed could affect cognitive development. Pike was also hearing anecdotally from parents that, as the children grew, many of them were having difficulties remembering things, struggling more often in school and had to work twice as hard to get good grades compared to their siblings who were not born with heart problems.

Pike found that there had been little research specifically linking memory loss and brain structure injury in this population. Her pilot study looking at memory identified approximately 60% of teenagers with CHD had mild memory deficits and demonstrated worse verbal verses visual memory compared to healthy controls. From that study, she decided to do her own research and, with a grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Pike set about studying memory and brain structure injury in adolescents with single ventricle heart disease. Her study has found structural injury in areas of the brain that support memory and cognitive function. The key now is to find out why this occurs and whether we can help them – is this injury permanent? In a new, pilot study, she is collecting data to see if these adolescents might be thiamine deficient “which is often seen in adult heart failure patients because of chronic diuretic use.”

Along the way, Nancy’s research was adopted by students at Flintridge Sacred Heart Academy as a community service project. After she had tested a student at the school who had single ventricle heart disease, she needed healthy controls. The student’s classmates quickly stepped up to participate and the project ended up as a two-page feature story in the school newspaper.

Pike is just completing the research on this first grant and has now received a second NIH grant to look at cerebral artery integrity and the link to brain injury and cognition in CHD. The exact cause of brain injury in some patients with CHD is unknown. Compromised integrity of the cerebral arteries may contribute to reduced cerebral blood flow and cause brain injury of neural tissue. In the long run, she hopes that her research will translate to the bedside in how clinicians care for these children both before and after cardiac surgery to reduce the risk of brain injury.

Pike shows a research participant the results of an MRI.
Her ground-breaking studies have shown that heart failure patients have significant brain damage in areas that dramatically impact cognition, emotion, and breathing.

Mary Woo

Addressing the #1 Cause of Death

Who can be affected by cardiovascular disease? Everyone. It is the leading cause of death for both men and women and it can affect people of all ages, races and ethnicities. Researchers at the school are looking at various aspects of cardiovascular health – from identifying risk factors and prevention, to correlation between heart failure and brain function and outcomes of heart transplantation. All of this work is aimed at getting patients on a better health path.

Mary Woo is passionate about her research. She will tell you that “despite all the advances in treatment that have emerged in the last 10 to 15 years, the high rates of mortality and morbidity in heart failure haven’t changed. And that situation isn’t going to improve until clinical practice starts to address the compounding factors that are contributing to that morbidity and mortality—namely, the considerable amount of brain damage we’re seeing in these patients.”

Woo worked as a staff nurse in cardiac critical care for 13 years. “As a night shift nurse, I could tell who was going to die by listening to the way patients were breathing while they slept – that it was an indication that something was wrong.” This led her to examine heart rate variability as an independent predictor of sudden cardiac death risk in advanced heart failure patients. As a result of this research, Dr. Woo developed one of the first heart rate variability assessment techniques to be an independent predictor of sudden death risk in advanced heart failure patients.

She then expanded her research to examine predictors of sudden death risk as well as the influences of sleep on brain structure in heart failure. She was the first investigator to report that the specific sites of gray matter loss in heart failure patients are impacted by the amount of sleep disordered breathing as well as
believed that the transplanted heart was “de-innervated” or had lost the nerve stimulation which affected the heart rate. “We wondered over the long term if the innervation returned and found that people who were a year out from their heart transplant had some heart rate return,” said Doering. This became the first study that showed that the nerves in these patients grew to send heart rate signals to their brains.

Unlike her colleagues who were focused on studying various aspects of heart failure, Doering continued to have an interest in following patients after heart surgery. In a patient satisfaction study, she received revealing responses to the question: “What would you like your doctors and nurses to know?” With Dr. Anthony McGuire, a master’s student at the time, she published a paper, “Recovering from cardiac surgery: What patients want you to know,” in the American Journal of Critical Care in 2002 that was one of the most highly read papers in nursing literature for years.

With guidance from former Dean Marie Cowan, Doering began studying depression – first in heart

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Lynn Doering was a master’s student in nursing and working as a cardio-thoracic ICU nurse when she had an innovative idea. Could we get the same readings if patients with catheters were positioned on their side as on their back (which was the standard at the time)? She published the results of her study, which wet her whistle for nursing research and led her to pursue her PhD. Her doctoral dissertation was on heart transplant patients. At the time, it was

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gender. Her groundbreaking studies have shown that heart failure patients have significant brain damage in areas that dramatically impact cognition, emotion, and breathing. By developing interventions that minimize or reverse the brain damage in heart failure, Dr. Woo aims to improve health outcomes for heart failure patients and “hopefully someday save lives.”

Since 1997, Woo has been continuously funded for her research by the NIH. In addition to numerous presentations and publications, she was recognized as a “Pillar of Cardiovascular Nursing Research” by the American Heart Association Council on Cardiovascular Nursing.

Wireless ECG monitoring equipment used by heart transplantation patients.
surgery patients and now in all cardiovascular patients. She has studied the use of nurse-delivered cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) – a present-focused, problem-solving form of psychotherapy – to reduce depressive symptoms and immune-mediated postoperative inflammation after cardiac surgery. Currently she is piloting the use of quantitative electroencephalograms (QEEG) to provide early prediction of response to CBT in cardiovascular patients with depressive symptoms, so that depression treatment can be personalized. She has also come full circle in her research trajectory by returning to the heart transplant population. She is completing a study to test wireless ECG monitoring as a means to predict early organ rejection after heart transplant.

One in three women in the United States is living with cardiovascular disease, including nearly half of all African American women. During her master’s program, Jo-Ann Eastwood saw that firsthand in her clinical practice as a critical care nurse.

“After many years of seeing women come in to our emergency department who were 55 and had already had a heart attack, I knew something had to shift. It was obvious that awareness and prevention of heart disease was not on their radar, although the risk factors were present. Many survived but lived with a less than optimum quality of life due to the damage that had been done to their hearts. That’s what drew me to this population:

Where could I do the most good?” said Eastwood.

She also came to realize that there was a lot of racial disparity – that black women have a higher risk of heart attack and stroke – and at

IN FACT, MANY OF THEM FELT THAT THEY WERE “PROTECTED” FROM HEART DISEASE BY TAKING MEDICATIONS FOR DIABETES. RISK PERCEPTIONS CAN INFLUENCE HEALTH BEHAVIORS.

Sarah Choi
THE ADVANTAGES OF NURSING RESEARCH IN CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

Each researcher believes that their nursing background provided (and continues to provide) great value in approaching their research and looking for answers. Woo said “I bring a more practical, clinical aspect to research - most all of my ideas for research come from my experience in being a nurse.” Pike agreed “my research is grounded in clinical practice.”

“Nurses are best positioned to help patients begin and sustain desired lifestyle changes to improve their health,” said Choi. “Often, nurses are the initial contact for health/health care problems, which gives them opportunity to discuss and encourage health-related lifestyle behaviors.”

THE RESULTS THAT MAKE IT ALL WORTHWHILE

“We are raising awareness and educating nurses on the front line to help the women who are at risk,” said Eastwood. She was thrilled to see that it wasn’t just the women in her studies who were making lifestyle changes. Husbands and daughters, seeing the positive results in their wives and mothers, started making changes in their lives.

For Canobbio it’s all about the moms. “These women really want to have children, so for them we are making a change for good. And ensuring that the babies are healthy.”

Pike gets cards and thank you notes from parents with updates about the children she cared for during those early life surgeries. “Here they are, all grown and graduating from high school and the parents are just so grateful.”

readings to the researchers. All the data was collected and reviewed by the researchers, who in turn could coach the women if the researchers saw an unusual response.

Early results showed that the women had significant improvements in blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Even more exciting for Eastwood was that the women didn’t just improve their own cardiovascular health, but the health effects extended into the family, which for Eastwood was her biggest reward. Eastwood’s study garnered a lot of external media coverage, including a front page story in the California section of the LA Times.

Sarah Choi is one of the newest faculty members at the School and her program of research focuses on cardiovascular risk reduction among people with type 2 diabetes. As a Family Nurse Practitioner, she treated many patients with type 2 diabetes - one of the major risk factors for cardiovascular disease. Approximately two-thirds of people with Type 2 diabetes die of heart attack or stroke, not just from the high level of blood glucose. She wanted her diabetic patients to realize that they were at higher risk of developing heart disease than their peers without diabetes and that they needed to make serious lifestyle behavior changes to control other risk factors such as high blood pressure and cholesterol.

Choi’s first study looked at whether patients make a connection between diabetes and heart disease. “If these patients didn't see the link, then they are unlikely to make lifestyle changes that they need.” She found that diabetic patients had a very low perception of their heart disease risk. In fact, many of them felt they were “protected” from heart disease by taking medications for diabetes. “Risk perceptions can influence health behaviors,” said Choi. “Considering numerous study findings indicating that reducing dietary and lifestyle risk factors could prevent most cases of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes, helping diabetic patients understand their risk for heart disease can be the first step in desired behavior changes.”
The CNS is an advanced practice nurse with a Master's degree who is behind the scenes, who is making a difference in patient outcomes and who knows what can be achieved when the entire healthcare team works synergistically.

Clinical Nurse Specialists play a unique role in the delivery of high-quality nursing care and have a major impact on the three spheres of influence, the patient/family, the healthcare team and the organization. They are experts in evidence-based practice in a range of specialty areas. At the school, we have been offering the Clinical Nurse Specialist option since the mid-1960s, one of the first schools in the country to do so. We currently offer the clinical nurse specialist option for our Adult/Gerontology-Acute and Pediatric specialties (standalone CNS or dual CNS/NP options).

The CNS portrays many roles: teacher, mentor, consultant, researcher, management and manager. They greatly influence outcomes by providing expert consultation to the entire healthcare team and by implementing improvements in health care delivery systems.

Currently there are approximately 67,000 clinical nurse specialists across the country. In 2015, CNN Money declared the CNS as one of the Top 10 careers offering big
growth, great pay and most of all satisfying work. Clinical Nurse Specialists are board certified as an advanced practice nurse both in their population and in their area of specialization (i.e. Adult/Gero Critical Care or Pediatric-Oncology).

Three alumni of the UCLA School of Nursing Master’s Program are considered influential leaders in the CNS role: Robin Watson, Linda Gorman and Flerida Imperial-Perez. Because their work environment is different, each of their experiences have also been different. The one thing they all agree on: it is the ideal job.

“It’s a great role as you are autonomous and want to change practice” Robin Watson

When Watson became a CNS, it was still an emerging role and was still being defined. Her career was spent at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center where her specialty was in pediatrics. Over the years, Watson led several major projects that improved safety and patient outcomes. One of her most impactful projects was changing pain management for children at the hospital. A medication program to improve the safety of continuous infusion medications was adopted in hospitals throughout the county and

she received a patient safety award from LA County for this evidence-based work. Many of her projects, which started in the hospital and went countywide throughout the Department of Health Services in LA County focused on staff development and competency programs because “she liked to inspire excellence in others.” Watson also shared her talents internationally, bringing teams to teach resuscitation and nursing skills to many critical care units in Romania and Viet Nam to name a few.

“The CNS brings people and processes together and makes them happen. You don’t always know when they’re there, but you know when they are not there,” said Watson.

What makes a CNS so unique? “Being able to wear all the hats – you are a role model, educator, researcher.” Linda Gorman

Gorman was selected as “CNS of the Year” in 2009 from the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists. She retired as a CNS five years ago. She was one of the long-time members of the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center palliative care team and one of the essential backbones who has helped develop the team over the years. She worked tirelessly to educate nurses, social workers, case managers and physicians on concepts of palliative care.

One of her projects looked at the units where patients died in the hospital and with that data helped develop information for nurses to care for the imminently dying patient including symptom management. Another project resulted in a policy to provide nurses with the support they needed to overcome concerns about adjusting pain medication at end of life — “when the goals change from prolonging life to maximum comfort, you need to give nurses the resources and support they need.” She was co-author/editor for several books, including two award-winning text books: Psychosocial Nursing Care Along the Cancer Continuum and Psychosocial Nursing for General Patient Care.

“The job isn’t always easy. You’ve got to be flexible and you have to be a change agent,” added Gorman. “I think every hospital should have at least one CNS.”

“I am a CNS because I want to make a difference” Flerida Perez.

In an environment where the CNS role implementation and actualization are often unequivocal and difficult to describe, a superb role model is imperative. Fortunately for Perez, when she worked as a staff nurse in the Cardiothoracic ICU (CTICU) at UCLA Medical Center (currently the UCLA Ronald Reagan), she was captivated by the dedication and commitment of the CNSs in the hospital which drove her to pursue
graduate studies to become a CNS. Soon after her graduation from the CNS program, she was offered the CNS position within her own unit. Perez felt very fortunate that her first job as a CNS was working with perhaps the best CNSs in the nation. “I could not ask for a better opportunity to be mentored by one of the best!” She learned the most invaluable lesson that “servant leadership, along with the three spheres of influence (patient, staff, and the organization) guide the success of a CNS role and practice.” Perez, developed her clinical expertise in the area of adult and pediatric cardiac critical care. In 2000, driven by her desire to focus on the pediatric cardiac population, she took a position at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles. In collaboration with the Unit Medical Director, she implemented an interdisciplinary process improvement (PI) Committee that resulted in numerous PI projects leading to the implementation of EBP standards of care, publications, and more importantly, improvement of patient outcomes. Perez is the recipient of the 2015 American Association of Colleges of Nursing Circle of Excellence Award – a testament to her commitment to excellence in patient care.

“You have to be able to build and maintain relationships when things get difficult,” said Watson. “I found that physicians really valued the role because they appreciate the systems thinking perspective.” Learning that collaboration is key and starts in the classroom. Jessica Maganda, a 2nd year APN/CNS student just completed her first project as part of the Theoretical Foundations class. She observed “you have to have good relationships with the nurses because they are not only going to be implementing the project, but need to feel comfortable coming to you with suggestions or concerns.”

The CNS is playing a crucial role in healthcare care, bringing their value, expertise and skills to ensure the use of best practices and evidence-based care to achieve the best possible patient outcomes.

To learn more about our clinical nurse specialist programs, visit our website at nursing.ucla.edu.

A recent story in USA Today focused on how Mattel Children’s Hospital changed its policies to promote patient sleep. Quoted in the story was Theresa Kirkpatrick a clinical nurse specialist in the pediatric intensive care unit who led the effort and a graduate of the CNS program at UCLA.
JUDITH (JUDY) BENSON ’60 AND ROGER BENSON ’58 HAVE DONATED TO UCLA FOR 33 CONSECUTIVE YEARS.

In 2004, the Bensons made a heartfelt donation, establishing the Benson Family Fellowship Fund in the School of Nursing, as well as a fellowship in the Anderson School of Management, to honor their time together at UCLA where they met and fell in love. Their goal in establishing a fellowship in nursing was to provide financial assistance to graduate students so they may pursue their dreams of becoming nurses, just as Judy did. Judy recently made an additional generous gift to the Fund in memory of her late husband Roger, who passed away earlier this year. Due to the generosity of the Bensons, sixteen exceptional scholars received Benson Family Fellowships for the 2015-16 academic year, and countless other students have received financial assistance since the inception of the Fund.

Panicha Kittipha (P.K), one of the 2015-16 recipients of the Benson Family Fellowship Fund, graduated this past June with a Master of Science in Nursing with a focus in Adult-Gerontology Acute Care. Born in Thailand, P.K. immigrated to the U.S. at a very young age. Although her parents were not college educated, they were hard workers and valued education, always encouraging their daughter to attend college. Initially, P.K. had planned to attend medical school, and obtained her undergraduate degree in cellular-molecular biology. However, after taking the MCAT and applying to medical schools, she decided to forgo the med school route and, instead, worked the next two years as an EMT, teaching at a lab, and working for a recreation center in her community.

P.K.'s parents encouraged her to return to the medical field and asked her to consider nursing. Being a spiritual person, P.K. prayed and let
DONNA F. VER STEEG, RN, PHD, FAAN, an emeriti faculty member from the School of Nursing passed away in August. Donna was a valuable member of our faculty and of the nursing profession. She made a profound difference on nursing education at UCLA and the state of California. Dr. Ver Steeg joined the faculty in 1973. During more than two decades of teaching, she also served as assistant dean of student affairs, section chair of primary ambulatory care and associate dean for academic affairs (under Dean Mary Reres). She served on four UC statewide committees on professional licensure and curricula, nursing and nursing education, and undergraduate and remedial education. She received a leadership award for her nine years of service on the California Area Health Education Center System Statewide Program Advisory Committee. She was president-elect and president of the California Nurses Association from 1979 to 1981. In 1992, she received the Jean Sullivan Award from Region Six of the California Nurses Association for her “significant contributions in pioneering the expansion of the nursing role, enhancing professional image at the state and national level and contributing to the literature regarding nursing issues and practice. After her retirement, Ver Steeg continued to advocate for nursing issues and was the faculty advisor for the History Committee that was formed in 1986 and played a key role in the History of the UCLA School of Nursing, published in 1999 to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the School.

In Memoriam

School of Nursing Alumni

Suzanne K. Bourbeau, BS ’59
Agnes M. Jameson, BS ’51
Carol M. Maus, BS ’61
Grace H. Nixon, BS ’60
Vickie V. Reis, MN ’62
Phyllis A. Roberson, MN ’77
Elsie S. Sweeney, MN ’80
Romana Urueta, MS ’64
Donna Ver Steeg, MA ’69, PhD ’73

Once again, we thank the Bensons for their continued generosity and support for the School of Nursing.

her faith guide her into nursing. She did research and applied to a faith-based, accelerated program at Loma Linda. P.K. obtained her RN license and continued working at Loma Linda as a bedside nurse in the ICU until starting graduate school at UCLA. During her time at UCLA School of Nursing, she served as the Advanced Practice Nurse President for the Graduate Student Nursing Association (GSNA) and also submitted a publication geared towards nursing education. Today, she works full time as an acute care nurse practitioner and will start a part-time faculty position at Loma Linda in the fall.

Throughout graduate school, P.K. took care of her father who had been battling cancer since 2011. This scholarship allowed her to work less hours and spend more time with her father. P.K. says, “Thank you for helping students like myself make our dreams and goals a living reality. It truly could not be made possible without your contribution. It has empowered me and allowed me to succeed during graduate school knowing that I am financially stable to accomplish my goals.”

Once again, we thank the Bensons for their continued generosity and support for the School of Nursing.
We are pleased to announce the addition of Jonathan Adrias to the School of Nursing as the new Director of Alumni Relations and Associate Director of Development. Jonathan will be responsible for implementing a new alumni engagement program, engaging donors and alumni, meeting fundraising goals for the School of Nursing Annual Fund and supporting overall fundraising efforts of the School.

Jonathan joins us from California State University Northridge where he most recently served as the Student and Young Alumni Engagement Coordinator in the Office of Alumni Relations.

WHAT IS YOUR PROUDEST PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT?
Starting this job! I’ve learned a lot about developing relationships with alumni in my previous roles, and so I’m excited to bring some good energy to this team. Especially with a place as prestigious as UCLA, I am incredibly humbled to have this opportunity.

WHAT DO YOU DO TO DECOMPRESS OR DESTRESS?
Yoga! Whether it’s Vinyasa, Hatha, Power, and even Hot Yoga or Bikram—I love it all. If you ever need a yoga buddy, I’m your guy!

IF YOU COULD BE ONE ANIMAL, WHAT WOULD YOU BE?
Most likely a Golden Retriever. I had one growing up, and they are just so friendly, happy, and goofy. I think it describes me perfectly.

WHO IS SOMEONE YOU ADMIRE AND RESPECT?
Absolutely my parents. They raised me with unconditional love and support. As immigrants from the Philippines, they have sacrificed so much for me and my siblings. I hope to be able to give them as much as they’ve given me one day.

WHAT’S ONE THING YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH IN YOUR FIRST 90 DAYS?
Develop a road map to get our alumni more engaged with the School of Nursing. Whether that be digital, physical, telekinetic... whatever it takes. We have a solid population of fantastic Nursing alumni that have left this campus, and my goal is to develop a plan to bring as many hearts and minds back.
The answer for me is simple...to pay it forward or give back. I received both of my graduate degrees (Master's (1993) and PhD (2007)) from UCLA and personally benefited from multiple merit-based and teaching-assistant scholarships that partially or fully covered my tuition. I couldn't be more grateful for the financial assistance when I needed it the most and the priceless faculty mentorship during my 6 years total as a student at UCLA.

I continue to pay it forward in many ways by utilizing the valuable education I received to care for children with congenital heart disease [CHD] and their families as a pediatric nurse practitioner, teach the next generation of UCLA students in both the undergraduate and advance practice nursing programs, research clinical questions to improve outcomes for children with CHD, and provide yearly monetary donations to the school.

Because of what I received, it was an easy decision for my husband and me to make a planned gift to the School of Nursing when preparing our living wills. I have thoroughly enjoyed my career as a nurse practitioner / nurse scientist and the enormous satisfaction I receive in helping others through my clinical practice and research efforts. I wanted to help fulfill the dreams of other nurses to pursue advance practice education through financial-aid / scholarship. By giving a planned gift to the School of Nursing, I will continue to pay it forward to the next generation of advance practice nurses and future nurse scientists / leaders.

Including the UCLA School of Nursing in estate plans, as Nancy Pike, Linda Gorman and others have, allows donors to build a meaningful and lasting legacy. At the same time, it offers donors the flexibility to choose the giving option that is best suited to their personal and financial circumstances. Gift Planning opportunities include making a bequest through a will or living trust, establishing charitable gift annuities or charitable trusts, and/or using a variety of assets such as real estate, life insurance, or retirement accounts. Some options result in estate tax savings while others provide both fixed income for life and significant income tax advantages.

For more information, please contact Joe Ward, Director of Gift Planning at jward@support.ucla.edu (310) 794-8823 or (800) 737-UCLA (8252).
The UCLA School of Nursing is grateful to all of our alumni, friends, students, faculty, staff, foundation and corporate partners for your contributions. Due to space limitations, this honor roll recognizes our generous donors who have made contributions of $500 or more during the 2015-16 fiscal year. The full honor roll may be found on the School’s website at: www.nursing.ucla.edu/alumni-and-support/give/donor-honor-roll-2016/

Whether your gift is $50 or $500,000, your generosity enables us to continue to build upon our excellent record of transforming nursing practice and advancing science by enabling students and faculty to reach new levels of success.
EARNING TWO DEGREES FROM THE UCLA SCHOOL OF NURSING (MSN 96’ AND PHD 06’) HAS PROVIDED ME AN ABUNDANCE OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WHICH I AM ETERNALLY GRATEFUL!!
The School of Nursing provides students with a top-tier education, thus it’s vital for Alumni to continue supporting deserving nursing students along their academic trajectory. By giving back, we can impact generations of Registered Nurses and ultimately change the lives of families and communities.
— Tonia Amos Jones MSN ’96, PhD ’06

Benjamin Rozwood ’91 (p)
Phyllis ’59, MS ’63 and William* Sussman ’55 (p)
Sheila MN ’79 and Gerald Wroblewski (p)
Anonymous

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Katherine MN ’80 and William Anderson
Nancy MN ’75, PHD ’87 and Don* Anderson
Lucy Jo Atkinson MS ’66
Jane ’70 and Harry Bruckel ’65
Enid Busser (p)
Michele Curtis-Lavin MN ’90 and Norman Lavin
Grace Ellen Dean PhD ’02

Robin C. F. Lee
Margo MSN ’05 and Garo Minissian
Yoko ’56 and T. Peter* Mori
Debra Kay Moser MN ’88, PhD ’92
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Ann Dechairo-Marino PhD ’00 and William Marino
Pamela Diggle and William Friedman
Kathleen MN ’74 and John Dracup
Gloria and Stanley Fishfader
Judith MN ‘87 and Jonathan
Groesbeck
Dana ’79, MS ’86 and Thomas Grogan
Grogan Living Trust
Susan ’61 and Robert Horning ’59
Deborah Koniak-Griffin and Arthur
Griffin
Barbara ’57 and Roderich Lamm
Jan Louise Lee MN ’80
Nancy Keenan Lewis ’66
Ada and George Lindsey
Ann ‘74 and Raymond Lowe ’77
Kim and Miguel Manrique (p)
Robert Felix Maxwell IV ’03, MSN ’12
Mika and William Meierding ’95
Karen ’82 and Joel Nelson (p)
Melanie Olsrud MSN ’98 and
Mark* Turner
M. Carol MN ’95 and William Parente (p)
Carol and Charles Pavlish
Huibrie PhD ’09 and Jacobus Pieters
Isabell MSN ’99, PhD ’04 and
Laurence Purdy
Susan MSN ’99 and Rick Renteria
Laurie Elizabeth Reyen ’78, MN ’83
Judith MN ’84 and James Roach Jr. (p)
Marsha ’73, MN ’79 and
Alan Roberson ’71
Mary Ann Shinnick MN ’92, PhD ’10
and Harry Wurmsdobler
Suzanne MN ’85 and Paul* Ward
Susan Setsue Yamada ’66
Patrice and Stephen* Zamenhof
Anonymous
* Deceased
(p) Parent

It is important to us that we
acknowledge you properly. However,
errors and omissions do occur. To
inform us regarding any inaccuracies,
please contact Sarah Low at
310-206-7813 or slow@sonnet.ucla.edu.

MY EXPERIENCE IN GRADUATE SCHOOL AT UCLA
SET ME ON A PATH I DON’T THINK I WOULD HAVE
FOUND IF I HADN’T COME TO SCHOOL HERE.

I have had a rewarding and meaningful career and I give
a lot of credit to UCLA and the faculty that inspired me.
I feel strongly that supporting the school financially is
a way to thank those that helped me and then pass it
on to new students. Financial support includes leaving
the school of nursing in my husband’s and my estate
planning.
— Linda Gorman MN ’77

If you would like more information about ways to support the
UCLA School of Nursing, please contact our Office of Development
& Alumni Relations at 310-206-7813 or annual.giving@sonnet.ucla.edu.
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