Remembering Our Dean, Marie

JULY 20, 1938 - FEBRUARY 22, 2008
A MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM DEAN

On April 23, the UCLA School of Nursing, together with the general campus and the larger community, joined in a celebration of the legacy that Marie Cowan, dean of the School of Nursing from 1997 to 2008, so magnificently left behind. This legacy will be felt for decades to come, and for me personally, as associate dean for academic affairs throughout Marie’s deanship, memories of her exquisite mentorship and shared experiences will last a lifetime. For faculty, staff and students, the loss of a dedicated, passionate and visionary leader is tangible, and Marie will be remembered for revitalizing the UCLA School of Nursing in ways too numerous to count. Several of her many achievements include more than doubling the number of high-caliber faculty; increasing the number and diversity of the school’s student population; infusing a biological expertise and emphasis among our faculty; spearheading the reinstatement of the generic baccalaureate nursing program; and initiating the development and implementation of a brand new Masters Entry Clinical Nurse (MECN) program, which prepares non-nursing students with previous baccalaureate preparation to become generalist bedside nurses with specialized education in health systems and health care management. Both the advanced practice and Ph.D programs also flourished during Dean Cowan’s term, with increased enrollments and significant, systematic and methodologically rigorous research.

The most fitting way to honor Marie Cowan’s legacy is for the faculty, staff and students to intensify the excellence that has made the UCLA School of Nursing one of the leading schools in the nation. This includes continuing to attract gifted faculty of the highest caliber; continuing to recruit first-rate students to our programs; proceeding with the cultivation and stewardship of our treasured alumni and donor friends; reaching out and focusing more clearly on global research and training; and continuing to excel in what is one of our highest priorities, culturally sensitive community-based nursing care for populations that suffer with health disparities. Needless to say, ongoing development and financial aid are the keystones for furthering our excellence among the faculty and our students.

As the school begins to adjust and move forward, the momentum is indeed palpable. New areas of focus are being considered that will further Marie’s dreams. These include expanding our Centers of Excellence in the School of Nursing, promoting and enhancing the diversity of our student, faculty and staff populations, searching for enhanced inter-professional training prospects, and increasing partnership opportunities with our neighboring medical centers to provide clinical experiences for our students. As we make these strides, a new dean, Dr. Courtney Lyder from the University of Virginia, will arrive at the school in August.

Finally, while Marie’s goal of stepping down to become a member of the school’s faculty after one year of sabbatical was not actualized, the faculty, staff and students continue to forge ahead with the knowledge that she will always reside with us in the School of Nursing. Her presence will forever lead us forward to reach the heights only she could have predicted. This issue is dedicated to the reality of the dreams that Marie Cowan held within her heart, and how those realities touched us all.

Adey Nyamathi
Adey Nyamathi, A.N.P., Ph.D., F.A.A.N.
Audrienne H. Moseley Endowed Chair in Community Health Research
REMEmBERING OUR DEAN, MARIE

Dr. Gene D. Block • Dr. Deborah Konia-Giffin • Ann Ivey • Terry L. Breaz • Dr. Lynn Woods • Dr. Suzette Cardin • Sabrina Marof-Speng • Darlene Tyler • Dr. Donna McNiece-Smith • Syd Whalley • Dr. Jo-Ann Eastwood • Dr. Abdelsomem A. Aldi • Dr. Cathy Ward • Dr. Martin Shapiro • Sarah Miller • Shelli Shepherd • Dr. Donna Vecluce • Tamra Larson • Dr. Felicia Schanche-Hodge • Dr. Sally Malisky • Robin Lee • Kay Baker • Judy Benson •

14 FIRST MECN GRADUATES READY TO MAKE THEIR MARK

Masters Entry Clinical Nurse Program Brings Talented Individuals from Other Disciplines into the Profession

18 DEVELOPMENT

UCLA School of Nursing is published by the UCLA School of Nursing for the alumni, faculty, students, staff and friends of the school.

For information about academic programs and student affairs, call (310) 825-7457, or e-mail: sson.dean.toc.sprng08@sonnet.ucla.edu

Dean’s Office: (310) 825-9627

Copyright 2008 by The Regents of the University of California. Permission to reprint any portion of UCLA School of Nursing must be obtained from this editor. Contact Editor, UCLA School of Nursing, Box 957200, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1702.

WWW.NURSING.UCLA.EDU
**Remembering**

**MARIE J. COWAN**  
**JULY 20, 1938 - FEBRUARY 22, 2008**

Marie J. Cowan accepted the position of dean of the UCLA School of Nursing in 1997. Over her 11-year term, her extraordinary commitment to academic and research excellence propelled the school to its current place as one of the top nursing schools in the nation. Among her many achievements, Cowan led the effort to restore the school’s undergraduate nursing program and collaborated with faculty in designing an entry-level master’s program for graduates from other disciplines.

Born Marie Jeanette Johnson on July 20, 1938, in Albuquerque, N.M., she met her future husband, Samuel J. Cowan, in Munich, Germany, while both were in their first year of college in a University of Maryland exchange program. When he later pursued his engineering studies at UC Berkeley, she obtained her nursing diploma in San Francisco. The couple wed in 1961, on the day after her graduation from Mary’s Help Nursing School. They were married for more than 46 years.

Cowan started her academic career in 1972 as an assistant professor at Seattle University’s nursing school. In 1979, she joined the nursing and medical schools at the University of Washington. She attained a rare triple appointment in the departments of nursing, pathology, and cardiology, and advanced from assistant professor to full professor in all three fields.

On a national scale, Cowan set the agenda for nursing research by serving on the first National Institutes of Health peer-review group for her profession. As chair of the cardiovascular nursing council of the American Heart Association, she also helped alter bylaws to enable nurses to apply for research funding and serve on peer-review and grant award committees. Cowan herself had been funded by the NIH since 1977 for her research on cardiovascular science. She published more than 110 articles in peer-reviewed journals and won dozens of professional awards.

In November 2007, the American Academy of Nursing applauded Cowan’s career-long commitment to nursing research and presented her with its “Living Legend” award.

Marie Cowan passed away on February 22, 2008. She is survived by her husband, Samuel J. Cowan; a son, S. Joseph Cowan; two daughters, Kathryn Harris and Michelle Schaffiner; a sister, Dee Herrman; two brothers, Jim Johnson and Jerry Johnson; and five grandchildren.
our Dean, Marie

To the outside world, Marie Cowan was known for her extraordinary leadership in guiding the UCLA School of Nursing through a period of unprecedented growth and success in academics and research. But to those in personal contact with her throughout her deanship, she was much more. On the following pages, faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends share their accounts of how Cowan affected their lives.

DR. GENE D. BLOCK
UCLA Chancellor

Marie leaves a rich legacy through which her vision, innovation, leadership and commitment to public health will live on. We mourn UCLA’s loss of a beloved teacher, mentor, leader, colleague and friend.

DR. DEBORAH KONIAK-GRiffin
Audrienne H. Mosley Endowed Chair in Women’s Health Research
Director, Center for Vulnerable Populations Research

Marie was always interested in supporting my dreams. Approximately 10 years ago, when we were at a meeting together in Washington, D.C., she asked me what I wanted to do next in my career. I said I’d like to develop a center that would focus on vulnerable populations research, serve as a resource for faculty and connect with the community. As principal investigator, I led the school’s effort to prepare a federal grant application to the National Institute of Nursing Research for support of a Center of Nursing Excellence. Our hard work paid off and we were funded.

She was always available to brainstorm about grants and review proposals, including one rainy Sunday night when I went to her house and we worked together on an application. That reaches a different level of deanship. For research, she gave 150 percent to faculty in terms of her creative mind, her willingness to read and really dissect proposals, and her sharing of helpful critiques. Unlike many deans, she continued to offer herself and her expertise as a researcher, as well as her extensive experience from being an associate dean for research.

We traveled together to professional meetings, and she was very generous in connecting me with leaders across the country. She wanted me to share in her world. She also loved to have fun – she really enjoyed life. She loved to celebrate faculty achievements.
ANN IVEY, B.S. ‘57, M.S. ‘64

In looking at my dean, I saw that she was full of the knowledge, ability, and skills that it took to influence policy makers, and it showed in what she was able to do for the school. It was a personality that clicked with alumni, and she mentored us while showing the grace and style that influenced people of power.

She joined with us as we held our class reunions. She gave speeches that reminded us that this school is very important in our lives. In my life it made all the difference. I had a fabulous career – chief of community health services for the County of San Bernardino when I retired in 1998 – as a result of my education from the UCLA School of Nursing.

On the personal side, I developed cancer, and I had known for years that Marie had it. She and I would talk, and she would say, “Ann, don’t let those dark corners ever take hold of you. You must treat cancer as a chronic illness. You can work with it and enjoy life and accomplish things.” She was a dear personal friend, and I will never forget her. Ann Ivey’s “Late Bloomers” class helped kick off an endowment campaign to honor Cowan.

TERRY L. BREAM, B.S.N. ‘67, M.N. ‘72

Ceremony wasn’t important to me at the age of 21. In 1967, commencement at UCLA was held only once a year...in June. The departments and schools graduated together in one large, impersonal, very-hot-day-on-the-bleachers ceremony, outside on the lawn where Drake Stadium stands today.

The nursing Class of 1967 still had one awful summer quarter to go. Why go through the pomp and circumstance when graduation wasn’t even official yet for us? We didn’t march in the ceremony – all 25 of us. No caps and gowns for the Class of 1967.

Ceremony wasn’t important to me at the age of 26. Graduation at UCLA was still held only once a year in June 1972. This time, it wasn’t an issue of being impersonal, with all the schools together in one big football stadium. Now it was an issue of one big physical dilemma – my due date!

I was pregnant with my second child, hoping to get through the written portion of my comps, the oral portion of my comps, and not delivering before I had done both. They would never fail an eight-and-a-half-month pregnant graduate student, would they?

So again, there was no cap and gown for this member of the UCLA graduate nursing program’s Class of 1972. Instead, a bundle of joy named Lauren was born a week before commencement.

Ceremony gained importance to me at the age of 53.

One day, I found myself sharing with Marie Cowan, dean of the UCLA School of Nursing, that despite my degrees from the school over which she now presided, and despite my associate faculty position for more than 10 years, I had never donned the blue and gold hood (Bruin colors, of course) lined with apricot velvet (the conferring color for nursing) and marched in a procession at university graduation. With that knowledge, Marie orchestrated a very special experience.

As is customary, only the dean of a school is allowed to confer the degrees on the graduates. But Marie remembered her own daughter’s graduation some years before at the University of Washington – where she was on the faculty.

So an exception was made, and Marie officially arranged the same special moment for me. On June 10, 1998, along with the dean, I handed my daughter, Lauren Bream Logan, M.S.N. ‘98, her Master’s Degree in Nursing – cap, gown, tears and all!

Bream, manager of nursing administration for the Southern California Permanente Medical Group, has been instrumental in providing annual grant funding for UCLA School of Nursing faculty research from Kaiser Permanente.
**DR. LYNN WOODS**  
Assistant Professor

I first met Marie as a doctoral student at the University of Washington in the fall of 1994. She was, as she said, our “home room teacher.” Marie challenged my thinking. Later we would have very lively discussions related to my research endeavors. My next interactions with Marie were as a junior faculty member at the UCLA School of Nursing. When I began my appointment at UCLA, I arrived with several bags of frozen roasted New Mexico peppers. I knew Marie liked these and made a mean green chili stew.

As a dean she was supportive and challenged me. She was indefatigable. Her energy put me to shame. She provided excellent critical feedback in grant writing, and at the same time a warmth when I asked Joe and her to dinner. She had a great heart, a razor-sharp mind, a need to have nursing embrace biobehavioral questions, and a love of nursing that was contagious.

**DR. SUZETTE CARDIN**  
Assistant Dean of Student Affairs

Students were one of Marie Cowan’s passions, and she had a unique way of connecting with them. She would always make time in her busy schedule to attend student-related meetings. The dean’s most identifying characteristic with the students was her initiation of each student group to the UCLA ritual of the 8-clap. She taught the incoming students how to do it, and then at commencement ceremonies each year she led all of the graduates in the 8-clap again. The students loved to see the dean doing this activity – her excitement, spontaneity, and love of UCLA always came through in this very simple ritual of what it means to be a UCLA Bruin.

Another passion was the yearly “fireside chats” she would have with each group of students. This was a top priority for the dean every winter quarter. It was a time that she set aside to meet with the students, the associate dean for academic affairs and the assistant dean of student affairs. Students felt safe expressing their thoughts, both positive and negative. The dean always followed up on the student concerns. It was one of her favorite yearly activities, and she made sure that the students received lunch and that there was enough time for all of them to make their needs known.

**SABRINA MATOFF-STEPPE**

In May 2006, I visited the UCLA School of Nursing as part of a planned trip back west for a friend’s wedding. My visit included meeting several professors, staff, and recipients of a research award that had been set up by my father in the late 1980s in recognition of my late mother, a graduate of the school’s nurse practitioner program. I was treated to a special meeting with Dean Cowan and Director of Development Rene Dennis to share my gratitude and appreciation for their stewardship of these award funds to help graduate students achieve research goals.

Upon returning to my Maryland home, I decided to start the Dianne Matoff Scholarship Fund, a new gift to help School of Nursing undergraduate students with financial needs. Dean Cowan recognized this modest gift by matching my contribution dollar for dollar over the next five years. As a result, more undergraduate students can be helped with their academic nursing goals. This offer exemplifies to me her vision and commitment to the field and legacy of nursing. I am grateful for having had the chance to meet Dean Cowan and to be associated with the wonderful work she inspired.
Innovation

DR. DONNA McNEESE-SMITH
Professor Emerita

On the night I suddenly found out, after my husband’s stress test, that he was headed for an immediate coronary bypass, Marie saw me in the hallway as I was hurrying to notify family. She put her arms around me and told me how sorry she was and told me to just forget the grant I was submitting that week. I was shocked at her words, as I never heard her say that to anyone before or since that time. (Fortunately, I was able to complete the grant application on my laptop, while sitting in the Surgical ICU, and actually was NIH-funded for it.)

Another memory I have of Marie was her love of having fun! We had many parties, usually with students included, often at her home, and these were always a great time to let go of stress and just talk and laugh with our colleagues. Marie’s home was large, open, and overlooked the governor’s home, with an accompanying beautiful view. Spouses and significant others were welcome; she would always have great hors d’oeuvres and, of course, the “Two-Buck-Chuck” Chardonnay. My husband loved the fact that she was never too proud to entertain us with this famous and very inexpensive wine.

Whenever a faculty member would receive a special award, or even retire, we would have a fun party to celebrate. In October, Marie conducted my retirement party at the Faculty Center. As always, she was very “in charge” but ready to make it a memorable event for all. I will treasure this great party always. We also had many other fun-filled celebrations, and were able to share a variety of tributes to her, providing wonderful memories for all involved.
SYD WHALLEY, M.N. ’80, J.D.
Executive Director, Western Center on Law & Poverty

Marie and I met over lunch during her first year at UCLA; as dean, she was looking for alumni to strengthen the funding for academic programs and student financial aid. Her sharp intellect and deep passion for the profession were evident immediately, as were her excellent communication skills. However, what impressed me the most, at that first meeting and throughout her tenure, was her keen understanding of the need to expand her reach beyond the nursing school – into the wider university community, the city, the state Legislature, and Washington, D.C.

And reach she did! She eagerly allowed me to introduce her to elected officials and policy makers, including California congressional members, federal agency heads, and local and state community college board members. Her enthusiasm and ability to “think big” were not only infectious, but extraordinarily effective as she was able to convince others to give her the tools she needed to build a top-tier nursing school. Because of her willingness to go beyond the halls of her own school, she was able to accomplish far more than any dean had before.

DR. JO-ANN EASTWOOD
Assistant Professor

During my early years as a doctoral student in the School of Nursing, I held the position of project director on the Hospitalist/MD/NP project of which Marie Cowan was the principal investigator. The six co-investigators were all notable constituents of Marie’s with varying areas of expertise and personalities. Also included in this mix were two nurse practitioners, four data collectors, and one statistician. The goal was to enroll 1,250 in-hospital patients and to follow them at one month and four months with lengthy questionnaires.

Monthly meetings were held to track progress and nightly reports on recruitment were called in to Joe and Marie Cowan’s home on a special line set up by Joe. At one point I had interviewed for the opportunity to represent the school in Kitasato, Japan. Marie, along with Adey Nyanathi, called me on the phone and told me I had better update my passport as I was going to Japan! I was delighted, then I asked, “Is it OK that I am away from the project for two and a half weeks?” There was silence. Then I heard Marie say, in her best deadpan, “Oh my, I don’t know about this…” We did recruit the 1,250 patients and the project was a success.

Marie taught me the importance of having committed people working on a research project and how research has to play an important part in your life for it to be a success.

Eastwood is an alumna of the school (M.N. ’85, Ph.D. ’84).

DR. ABDELMONEM A. AFIFI
Professor and Dean Emeritus, UCLA School of Public Health

Once I announced that I was going to step down as dean of the School of Public Health, Marie was the first to say, “You can be a statistician again,” and asked me to be on a grant with her. I said yes, and it was a very productive and pleasant experience getting back into research under her excellent leadership.

I was the head of the search committee that hired Marie. When she first came, we talked a lot to help her understand the campus environment. One day she said, “Afifi, I have decided to appoint you as my mentor here at UCLA.” It was a humbling moment, and to be seen in that role by such a great person is something that I will always be proud of. She was an inspiration to me, and will continue to be as I draw on my memory of her.
DR. CATHY WARD
Director of Nursing, UCLA Medical Center

While I was working with Marie as a co-investigator on a large grant-funded study, she was completely unflappable when meeting obstacles. She never let roadblocks get in her way; she just went around them. She led the group with her graceful humor and always remained positive and encouraging. She took a hands-on approach to the details of the study, and at the same time mentored the project’s research associates on the bigger picture of funded research.

It was very obvious to our research team that Marie was a master of grant writing and acquiring grant funds for nursing research. She was passionate about the language and the methods, and had all the right contacts for nationally funded studies. Her track record with funded research, in addition to all of her admirable personal qualities, helped her propel the School of Nursing into the top 10 nursing schools in the country.

Ward is an alumna of the school (B.N.Sc. ’85).

DR. MARTIN SHAPIRO
Professor of Medicine and Public Health

I met Marie Cowan not too long after she moved to UCLA. She was larger than life, but she was not an imposing figure: She could put the most timid person at ease. When we met, Marie was trying to stimulate some research on outcomes of inpatient care. She and some colleagues wanted to collaborate across schools at UCLA to put together a strong research team. Once the group was assembled, we had sprawling discussions about potential ways to go with the research. Marie was a very busy individual, working to overcome setbacks in institutional support for the nursing school that had preceded her tenure as dean, but when she was in the room with us, pondering the problems of designing a study, she was totally there.

Her intellect was sharp and her focus was complete. She had a lovely way of framing problems and of working toward consensus. When the individual who was designated to lead the intervention study left to assume a leadership role at another institution, Marie took on the job as principal investigator of the project. She wrote the R-01 grant and got it funded. She was very much the leader throughout the study.

Even though she had serious health problems, they did not impede her efforts to execute the study very effectively. Her demeanor did not change, even when her hairline did as the treatments ensued. She always brought energy, intellect, wit and wisdom to the tasks at hand. She respected all members of her team and was entirely supportive of them.

Working with her was a joy. She was the model of an academician.

SARAH MILLER, M.S.N ’05
President, SON Alumni Association Board

Dean Marie Cowan chose me to reignite the School of Nursing Alumni Association with a team of five other individuals in 2007. Over the past year we have had an alumni brunch, a holiday gala celebrating her retirement, and of course have raised money for the Dean Marie Cowan Scholarship Fund. When the dean chose this team of individuals, we took it as our personal responsibility to carry out her vision: to once again have a strong alumni base to support the School of Nursing. As part of her legacy, we are continuing to strive to inflate membership, scholarship, and fellowship with current and former students.

The dean affected me personally by instilling a will to carry out every goal I have ever had, and if necessary to bring a team together to help with the process. I feel it is our responsibility to continue to build upon her vision and make sure we have the strongest alumni base possible.
SHELLI SHEPHERD  
MECNPA.D. Student Services Coordinator  

What I will remember most about Dean Cowan was her generosity and vision. She ensured the future of our new programs by choosing to fund them with hard money rather than grants. She was determined to see students in new programs like the Master’s Entry Clinical Nurse (MECN) program succeed and prosper while under our tutelage.

The MECN program is a rigorous two-year course that requires students to take 13 units in the summer in order to complete the classes and clinical requirements. Students in this program significantly cut back on their work hours or quit working altogether, and they do not have the luxury of working per diem as staff nurses. Dean Cowan found support for these hard-working and talented students for the past two summer experiences. It was a pleasure for me to see the students’ relief and gratitude. Her financial savvy and generosity made my job that much more enjoyable.

DR. DONNA VRDEVOE  
Professor Emerita  

Marie lived the role of a nurse, and in doing so had a significant impact on my understanding about coping. She was so willing to teach others about how to cope with illness, and when she faced this situation herself, we all benefited. I was particularly touched by her response to my questions about how she was doing. She usually gave a quick overview of her medical condition and then talked, with enthusiasm, about how she was coping with the process. Marie was an optimist. She hoped for and planned for the best. As each setback came, she used the nursing model of assessment-intervention-evaluation to overcome it.

I can recall when our School of Nursing heart failure group presented papers at the American Heart Association convention in New Orleans. Marie was in chemotherapy and had lost her hair. She had a stylish wig that made her look wonderful. After the convention meetings, Mary Woo planned a group trip for us to visit a swamp to see alligators and the like. We boarded a small, motorized open-air boat for a leisurely trip through the wilds of the swamps, and did see several alligators. However, there were two locations and the driver entered the open river to proceed from one to the other. As the boat rapidly accelerated, the wind caught all of us by surprise, particularly Marie, as her wig began to lift from her head. She laughed as she caught it and held it on with both hands. When we got back to dry land, she adjusted the hair with lots of laughs and funny comments. That was Marie. Nothing stopped her. She could not have felt in top form, but she did not complain. She stood in the lines at the airport, lifted her luggage, presented a speech, went to receptions and other events, and visited the exhibits, always with a smile and enjoyment.

I asked Marie how she was able to keep herself going throughout all of the therapy. She simply said, “By planning ahead.” She planned her medical therapy around her work schedule, ate light snacks to handle nausea, took brief naps, stretched and exercised daily. When something did not work, she altered it until it did. She even told stories of coaching other patients who were waiting for their chemotherapy about how to get through it well. She commented that she could not stop being a nurse.

I learned from her example that one could manage, “by planning ahead,” to get through practically any sort of stress or discomfort. I always harkened back to Marie’s plan to assess the situation ahead, plan an intervention, and see if it worked or needed improvement. This basic nursing model is a model for coping with life, and Marie used it as a living example of success.

Vredevoe recently retired after a long and distinguished career as a member of the school’s faculty, during which she also served as acting dean and as UCLA’s vice chancellor for academic affairs.
In addition to her efforts to create a research-intensive nursing school, Dean Marie Cowan was instrumental in bringing American Indians to UCLA, both as scholars and as students.

Through her efforts, the Center for American Indian/Indigenous Research and Education (CAIIRE) was brought to the School of Nursing – with initial federal funding to conduct studies in such areas as cancer symptom management (pain, depression, fatigue and loss of function), HPV vaccination, and diabetes education and fatalism among American Indians. Further, a minority supplement is “in the works” to provide opportunities for American Indian scholars.

It was not long before Dean Cowan began welcoming groups of American Indian students from the Navajo Nation in Arizona and from local Southern California reservations. As a result, the school saw an increase in recruitment and matriculation of American Indian students. Two American Indian doctoral students will continue their studies at the School of Nursing this fall, bringing much-needed nursing diversity to UCLA and to our communities. Other Native students are being recruited into the undergraduate and masters program.

The above efforts began when I was hired as professor and director of CAIIRE, a center dedicated to research and education among indigenous populations. Reaching out across campus, Dean Cowan helped to coordinate efforts to allow me to teach in American Indian Studies and to chair the American Indian Studies Inter-departmental Program.

Dean Cowan saw the potential for expanded research and for increasing diversity by supporting efforts for American Indian research and education. Her efforts were not lost.

**DR. FELICIA SCHANCHE HODGE**

Professor and Director, CAIIRE

In addition to her efforts to create a research-intensive nursing school, Dean Marie Cowan was instrumental in bringing American Indians to UCLA, both as scholars and as students.

Through her efforts, the Center for American Indian/Indigenous Research and Education (CAIIRE) was brought to the School of Nursing – with initial federal funding to conduct studies in such areas as cancer symptom management (pain, depression, fatigue and loss of function), HPV vaccination, and diabetes education and fatalism among American Indians. Further, a minority supplement is “in the works” to provide opportunities for American Indian scholars.

It was not long before Dean Cowan began welcoming groups of American Indian students from the Navajo Nation in Arizona and from local Southern California reservations. As a result, the school saw an increase in recruitment and matriculation of American Indian students. Two American Indian doctoral students will continue their studies at the School of Nursing this fall, bringing much-needed nursing diversity to UCLA and to our communities. Other Native students are being recruited into the undergraduate and masters program.

The above efforts began when I was hired as professor and director of CAIIRE, a center dedicated to research and education among indigenous populations. Reaching out across campus, Dean Cowan helped to coordinate efforts to allow me to teach in American Indian Studies and to chair the American Indian Studies Inter-departmental Program.

Dean Cowan saw the potential for expanded research and for increasing diversity by supporting efforts for American Indian research and education. Her efforts were not lost.

**DR. SALLY MALISKI**

Assistant Professor

Dean Cowan was an inspiring presence, professionally and personally. The insight she gave me into the research process will always be helpful as I strive to emulate Dean Cowan’s standards. I am grateful that the school has done such amazing things under her leadership, showcasing the place that nursing rightfully holds in the academic setting. In addition, Dean Cowan showed me much kindness and understanding during my husband’s illness and the personal challenges that have presented themselves. My life is so enriched by Marie Cowan’s presence in it.
ROBIN LEE  
President, Bonnie A.C. Lee Fang Foundation

I had the privilege of meeting Dean Cowan at our Fourth Annual Bonnie A.C. Lee Fang Foundation Scholarship Dinner/Fundraiser in September 2006. The first thought that came to my mind was what an impressive and kind person she was. Though she was very soft spoken, she carried herself with such grace, dignity and strength. After reading more about Dr. Cowan’s plans and her immense dedication to help UCLA School of Nursing students, I felt awed by her commitment and was inspired to continue our foundation’s work of providing scholarships to our future nurses. I am honored to know that the Bonnie A.C. Lee Fang Foundation will be a part of continuing Dr. Cowan’s legacy of inspiring and nurturing the success of our nurses.

The Bonnie A.C. Lee Fang Foundation scholarship fund supports UCLA School of Nursing undergraduate and graduate students.

KAY BAKER, M.N. ‘78
Associate Dean of Student Affairs, 1995-2006

It was my privilege to work with Marie for most of my time at the school. She arrived a few years after I had taken the associate dean job. From the start, Marie was fun to work with. She had strong ideas about what needed to be done, but after the decisions had been made, she’d be the first one in line for the party.

When Tere’ Valenzuela came to work in the student affairs office, she brought with her the tradition of the “Three Kings’ Day” cake. Inside the cake was a tiny infant, and whoever got the piece of cake with the infant was required to “dress” the baby and give the “Kings Day” party that year. Needless to say, we invited Marie over to share our cake and make sure that she got the piece with the baby in it! Marie was a good sport and loved to entertain, so she made a wonderful costume for the baby and had a great party at her home. She was always participatory in our events and we will miss her Bruin 8-clap at orientation and graduation!

JUDY BENSON, B.S. ‘60

I thought very highly of Marie. I respected her for her vision, her focus and tenacity in the great strides she made at our School of Nursing, but most of all I found her a truly kind and engaging human being who was so courageous in her struggle with cancer.

Roger and I had the opportunity to meet up with her on campus several years ago. As we chatted over lunch, Roger mentioned that he was thinking of having a full physical exam at UCLA. Marie took no time to get back to us about whom we should contact. What an extra outreach for someone so very busy!

Over the years I knew her, she always downplayed the diagnosis and physical limitations of her cancer and kept an upbeat persona. Both Roger and I enjoyed her genuine enthusiasm for our Bruin basketball team. What a gift she gave to my classmates when several years ago she made the trip to San Diego to join us in a class reunion. Her comfortable and casual style truly won everyone’s heart.
The graduation this spring of the UCLA School of Nursing’s first class of Masters Entry Clinical Nurse (MECN) students marks an important milestone – not just for the 52 men and women receiving their degrees, but also for the health care community in Southern California and beyond, which now begins to reap the benefits of a pipeline of bright and enthusiastic nurses, newly equipped with the tools to work at the bedside and ultimately move into positions of clinical leadership.

The MECN program, launched in the fall of 2006, is designed for non-nurses who hold a baccalaureate degree in another discipline. The accelerated pre-licensure program leading to a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree prepares these individuals to be nurse generalists who will work in acute care settings. In addition to imparting the clinical skills these students will need to be effective, the program prepares them for clinical nurse leadership positions by emphasizing concepts such as evidence-based practice and the ability to look beyond one-on-one patient interactions toward a systems approach to improving health care delivery.

“Administrators are very excited about these graduates and the value they will bring to their institutions,” says Dr. Adey Nyamathi, professor and interim dean at the school and the Audrienne H. Moseley Endowed Chair in Community Health Research. “They will have the ability to see patients in the context of the unit and the larger systems – an important perspective at a time when patients in the hospital setting are sicker and more complex than ever before. They can bring evidence-based knowledge into their practice, which is essential to ensure quality care and sound decision-making, and they have an understanding of the importance of cost-effective care. Because they are entry-level nurses, it will take time before our graduates have extensive clinical skills, but once they have gained that experience, all of these pieces will come together.”

First MECN Graduates Ready to Make Their Mark
Masters Entry Clinical Nurse Program Brings Talented Individuals from Other Disciplines into the Profession
Students in the first MECN class were drawn to the program from a wide variety of backgrounds, with a common passion for the nursing profession.

After earning her undergraduate degree in molecular biology, *Jana Mariana* worked in a breast cancer research lab at UCLA and then as a biomedical researcher in the private sector; in nursing she saw the chance for personal interactions that could have a more direct and immediate impact on people’s lives. *Carmen Chavez* got a degree in psychobiology and was working as a pregnancy-risk counselor for the state-funded California Teratogen Information Service, which counsels women who are pregnant or planning to become pregnant, as well as health care providers, on potential environmental risks to the fetus. “I had always wanted to be a health professional, but it took time before I realized all of the opportunities available in nursing,” Chavez says.

Other members of the first MECN class came from fields having little or nothing to do with health. *Tianne Larson*, with a bachelor’s degree in international relations and a master’s degree in environmental studies, was doing geographic information systems mapping for the city of Watsonville, Calif. She also taught biology and had worked part-time providing home health care for seniors. These experiences led her to decide that a career in nursing, in which she could use her knowledge of environmental factors to positively affect human health, would provide more fulfillment.

*Evan Jacobson* spent 10 years working in finance — as a stockbroker, a money manager, and an analyst for a financial newspaper; like Larson, he grew tired of sitting in front of a computer all day. “I kept leveraging experience from one job to get another one, but it was never anything I was passionate about,” Jacobson says. “Every day just blended into the next.” He decided to devote some of his spare time to volunteering in the emergency room at UCLA Medical Center, and was so attracted to the hospital environment that he began to look into a career change. When he saw an online ad with a male nurse declaring, “I definitely don’t sit behind a desk,” Jacobson was sold.

The collective educational backgrounds that included degrees in business, economics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, nutrition, and many others, combined with a wide variety of life and professional experiences, added a great deal to the classroom discussions. “It was valuable for me to hear perspectives from all these different walks of life,” says *Bob Bencangey*, whose bachelor’s degree was in U.S. history and who had been working as a member of the floor staff on an inpatient child and adolescent psychiatric unit at UCLA’s Neuropsychiatric Hospital before enrolling in the MECN program.

Bencangey admits that he entered the social justice class MECN students took in their first quarter with preconceived notions about problems in the health care system, but came to accept that there are other legitimate viewpoints and that common ground is needed to move forward. “If you think about it, your patients are going to come from every walk of life as well, so the more exposure you have to different perspectives, the more competent you will be in provid-
ing patient-centered care,” he says.

Dr. Suzette Cardin, assistant dean of student affairs, believes the highly competitive nature of the MECN application process contributed to a group of students who entered the program with strong critical thinking skills and a track record of academic success. “What really sets this group apart is their ability to challenge what they see in health care as opposed to just accepting it, and to ask important questions,” she says.

“These students are so thrilled to be joining the profession, and are extremely motivated and eager to learn everything they can to get their nursing practice off to a good start,” adds Dr. Linda Sarna, professor at the school, who teaches a course in screening and early diagnosis to the MECN students.

Members of the first MECN class immediately established a strong bond that they expect will continue well beyond graduation. “I feel like I gained 51 brothers and sisters,” says Fisayo Soetan-Bhebe, who received her undergraduate degree in biology and went to work as a research associate for a biopharmaceutical company before being drawn to nursing by the prospect of more human contact and the versatility that comes with being able to choose from so many different career paths. “All of the students help each other and support each other, and the faculty was amazing – they are leaders in their fields of expertise, and yet they always have time to offer themselves as resources for learning, both in the classroom and outside of it.”

For some of the students, the opportunity to become involved with faculty research was particularly appealing. Jacobson assisted Dr. Lynn Woods on a study of the effects of cortisol on elderly patients in assisted living facilities. Larson was one of two students who volunteered to work for Dr. Dottie Wiley on a study of pelvic pain, starting by handing out surveys to UCLA undergraduates attending the student health center and ending up participating in a poster presentation on the findings. “Dr. Wiley has been a great mentor for me, and it’s inspired me to look toward being involved in research in some way in my career,” says Larson.

Unlike master’s degree programs for licensed nurses, the vast majority of the MECN students arrived with no clinical experience. Dr. Lorraine Evangelista, assistant professor at the school, saw the students both at the beginning of their two-year stint – taking them into the skills lab to practice on manikins before they worked with live patients – and as they went through a clinical immersion program in their final quarter before graduation. “Most of them were shaking the first time they were in clinical,” she says, laughing. “Now they’re much better. Their intelligence helps them to compensate for their lack of experience at the bedside.”

The students’ first live clinical experience was with psychiatric patients – people hospitalized for conditions such as severe depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, substance abuse

ABOVE: FISAYO SOETAN-BHEBE (L) GOT HER UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE IN BIOLOGY AND WAS WORKING AT A BIOPHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY WHEN SHE ENROLLED IN THE MECN PROGRAM.

RIGHT: FORMER BIOMEDICAL RESEARCHER JANA MARIANA SAW IN NURSING THE CHANCE FOR A MORE IMMEDIATE IMPACT ON PEOPLE’S LIVES.
and eating disorders. Dr. Jan Mentes, who teaches the theory portion of the mental health course, was initially skeptical about the wisdom of having these be the first patients the MECN students encountered, but she came away convinced. “These students bring a great deal of maturity to what they are doing,” Mentes says.

To bring them quickly up to speed, MECN students log more than 800 hours of clinical experience with the UCLA School of Nursing’s hospital partners, including a clinical immersion their last quarter with three 12-hour shifts per week, one of them on a leadership project aiming to influence an aspect of health care delivery at their hospital. The sites cover the full gamut of potential experiences.

Even so, the MECN program makes no pretense that its graduates are anything but entry clinical nurses, despite the advanced degree. “We have to explain to people we’re going to be working for that even though we have our master’s, we are still clinical novices,” says Mariana. “We understand that although we have this advanced education, we will have limitations until we get more experience at the bedside.”

With that additional clinical know-how, MECN graduates will be prepared to assume leadership roles. The program’s curriculum was influenced by the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) role first proposed by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing following two widely publicized Institute of Medicine reports documenting shortcomings in health care quality. MECN graduates will be at the forefront of nurses eligible to take the new CNL certification exam.

Christina DiBernardo was among those who were drawn to the program in part by the CNL concept. After graduating with a degree in physiology, DiBernardo had begun to look into nursing programs when her father-in-law saw a news report on the new program opening at the UCLA School of Nursing. DiBernardo attended an open house and was hooked. “They were calling it a new breed of nurse – someone who looks at the big picture of patient care,” she says. By the end of the program, DiBernardo was pleased to find how easily she was able to engage in conversations with nurse managers about issues pertaining to evidence-based practice and quality improvement. “Everyone is really excited about our graduating class and very interested in talking with us about going to work for them,” she says.

That the MECN graduates are finding themselves marketable commodities comes as no surprise to Dr. Linda Searle Leach, who teaches two of the program’s health services courses, one in quality management and one in health care policy. “Hospital patients are much more complex today,” she says. “As a result, hospitals need more health care professionals who have advanced education, with the knowledge and skills to navigate through the complexities. Programs such as the MECN are helping to bring bright, successful students into nursing and prepare them for these changes.”
Membership in The Chironian Society continues to grow, and the school is grateful to its alumni for their commitment. The focus of The Chironian Society is to enhance the student experience and provide scholarships. The school will look to the society as the alumni fundraising arm, with annual renewal memberships that enable the school to forecast its ability to distribute scholarships each year.

Membership in The Chironian Society is available at the following annual levels:

- **Dean’s Honor Roll**: $1,000
- **Patron Member**: $500
- **Regular Member**: $200

Pledges are accepted for annual memberships (to be realized within the fiscal year).

As a member of The Chironian Society, you will receive an acknowledgement of your membership and invitations to UCLA School of Nursing events. You will also be invited to participate in various volunteering opportunities and, at the appropriate giving level, be listed in the UCLA School of Nursing Honor Roll.

You may contribute to the endowment honoring Dean Marie Cowan by writing your check to The UCLA Foundation and sending it to: UCLA School of Nursing, Development Office, P.O. BOX 951702, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1702. For any inquiries, contact Rene Dennis, Director of Development, at (310) 206-3662 or via email: rdennis@support.ucla.edu. You may also give to this fund online using the school’s website: www.nursing.ucla.edu.

### The Chironian Society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Level</th>
<th>Donations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dean’s Honor Roll</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron Member</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Member</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pledges (annual)</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Endowment Threshold**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Donations**

- **$16,690** (not associated with other categories)
- **$11,300** in memory of Dean Cowan

**Endowment Fund Progress**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GIFTS IN MEMORY OF DEAN COWAN</td>
<td>$52,709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MECN CLASS OF ’08 GIFT</td>
<td>$11,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FALL SOLICITATION LETTER</td>
<td>$41,499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALUMNI/HOLIDAY GALA</td>
<td>$26,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SON ALUMNI BRUNCH</td>
<td>$5,568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LATE BLOOMERS</td>
<td>$4,650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**

| $41,409 |

**Alumni/Holiday Gala**

- **$21,136** (gifts, auction, raffle)

**SON Alumni Brunch**

- **$918** (gifts & raffle)

**Late Bloomers**

- **$4,650** (gifts, auction, raffle)
B E Q U E S T g T O g T H E
S C H O O L g O F g N U R S I N G

In December, the school received a major gift of $2.5 million from the Donald T. Leahy Charitable Lead Trust Scholarship and Fellowship Fund. This endowment will provide scholarships for undergraduates and fellowships to graduate students in the School of Nursing in perpetuity—a much-needed gift for the school’s students that pleased Dean Marie Cowan.

SON ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The SON Alumni Association Executive Board has been engaged with alumni in re-establishing their connection to the UCLA School of Nursing. Currently, there are 98 paid members (79 annual members and 19 lifetime members). Recent activities included the fall ALUMNI BRUNCH held on campus in October, attended by more than 80 alumni, which provided an opportunity for alumni to reconnect with each other and to meet Dean Marie Cowan. Alumni board members were also key participants at the annual ALUMNI & FRIENDS HOLIDAY GALA, held at the Beverly Hills Country Club last December, which also celebrated Dean Cowan’s impending retirement. A total of 276 faculty, students, staff, alumni and friends attended the celebration.

SON Alumni Association memberships are $30 annually or $500 lifetime (payable over two years). For more information, please visit the school’s website at www.nursing.ucla.edu or email the board members at: uclanursingalumni@yahoo.com.

DINNER FOR 12 STRANGERS

UCLA SON Alumni Association Executive Board member Mady Stovall (above right) and her fiancé Zenon (above left) hosted a group of alumni in her home on February 23 as part of the campus-wide Dinner for 12 Strangers event. This was an opportunity to meet and greet fellow alumni from the SON and from other units on campus. Guests were treated to a Texas-style barbecue. It was a great experience that Stovall recommends to all alumni.

CLAARA ARNDT MEMORIAL LECTURE

Afaf Meleis, M.S. ’64, professor of nursing and sociology and the Margaret Bond Simon Dean of Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania, was the guest lecturer for the Clara Arndt Memorial Lecture series, presenting “Global Nursing Scholarship and Women’s Health” on March 12.

IN MEMORIAM

The “Late Bloomers” Class of ’57 was saddened by the loss of Elaine Scott, who passed away December 18. Sheila and Warren Newman expressed their friendship by starting an undergraduate scholarship fund in her name. Sheila was Elaine’s roommate at UCLA, majoring in education.

The school grieved the loss of Margaret H. Brown, the mother of one of its donors, Marianne Murphy, who passed away February 10. Marianne and her husband Michael Murphy established an endowed scholarship fund to assist undergraduate nursing students who are single parents with financial need. A retired nurse, Mrs. Brown was not able to pursue an undergraduate degree, and this scholarship was a pride to her.

The school and UCLA Medical Center also mourned the loss of Nancy Steeger Loar, B.S. ’76, who passed away April 5. A memorial service was held at UCLA’s NPI Auditorium April 28 to celebrate her life and contributions to UCLA Medical Center, where she worked in the inpatient liver transplant division.

The school was saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Anne Wueker, who passed away October 12, 2007 after a long illness. Wueker was a faculty member at the school who taught mental health and psychiatric content to graduate nursing students at both the advanced practice and doctoral levels. She was known internationally for her research in family therapy, and was one of the founders of the neuropsychiatric program for MSN students.

CLARA ARNDT MEMORIAL LECTURE

Afaf Meleis, M.S. ’64, professor of nursing and sociology and the Margaret Bond Simon Dean of Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania, was the guest lecturer for the Clara Arndt Memorial Lecture series, presenting “Global Nursing Scholarship and Women’s Health” on March 12.

IN MEMORIAM

The “Late Bloomers” Class of ’57 was saddened by the loss of Elaine Scott, who passed away December 18. Sheila and Warren Newman expressed their friendship by starting an undergraduate scholarship fund in her name. Sheila was Elaine’s roommate at UCLA, majoring in education.

The school grieved the loss of Margaret H. Brown, the mother of one of its donors, Marianne Murphy, who passed away February 10. Marianne and her husband Michael Murphy established an endowed scholarship fund to assist undergraduate nursing students who are single parents with financial need. A retired nurse, Mrs. Brown was not able to pursue an undergraduate degree, and this scholarship was a pride to her.

The school and UCLA Medical Center also mourned the loss of Nancy Steeger Loar, B.S. ’76, who passed away April 5. A memorial service was held at UCLA’s NPI Auditorium April 28 to celebrate her life and contributions to UCLA Medical Center, where she worked in the inpatient liver transplant division.

The school was saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Anne Wueker, who passed away October 12, 2007 after a long illness. Wueker was a faculty member at the school who taught mental health and psychiatric content to graduate nursing students at both the advanced practice and doctoral levels. She was known internationally for her research in family therapy, and was one of the founders of the neuropsychiatric program for MSN students.

UCLA NURSING 19
DID YOU KNOW?

- Named student scholarships and endowments can be established based on funding amounts. Endowed scholarships can be established for a minimum of $50,000. Endowed graduate fellowships can be established for a minimum of $100,000. The UCLA School of Nursing appreciates contributions in any amount.
- You can make a gift to the UCLA School of Nursing that will provide income for your lifetime as well as an immediate income tax charitable deduction.
- If you are 75 years of age, you can establish a charitable gift annuity that has a 7.1% payout rate that will continue for your lifetime. The older you are, the higher the payout rate.
- You can make a gift of your home, receive an immediate income tax charitable deduction and continue to live there for your lifetime.
- Bequests are a significant source of support for the School of Nursing.

**GIFT ANNUITY PAYMENT RATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>RATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please call for current benefits and rates for two persons.

For more information, please call Rene Dennis at (310) 206-3662 or visit www.giftplanning.ucla.edu