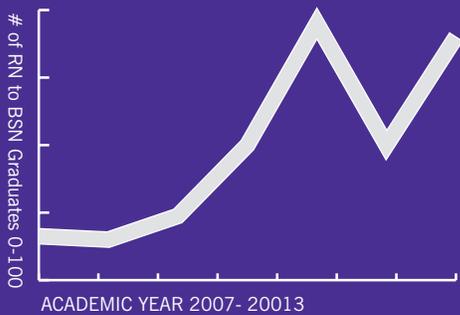


RN to BSN Program Enrollment Continues to Increase

The WCU RN to BSN program was established in 1973. In 2003, the program began using distance-learning technology. The program has increased enrollment during the past years and currently has approximately 200 students with an additional 600 students completing requirements towards application eligibility. The following table features WCU RN to BSN program enrollment from 2007 – 2013.



Donna Mooney, WCU School of Nursing '73

TRAILBLAZER: Donna Mooney Talks Diversity at the WCU School of Nursing

-By Judy Neubrandner

From our rich history, we hope to create a brighter future. Donna Mooney, a 1973 graduate of Western Carolina University's nursing program, is a living, breathing part of that rich history. Donna was not only a member of the first graduating class, but also the first black nursing student in the program. She was the first of many students from diverse backgrounds; we strive to continue adding many more. With our recent HRSA Workforce Diversity grant, we are taking deliberate and meaningful steps to increase the diversity within our nursing program.

Donna came to WCU in 1969 as a pre-med major, but after two years, she changed her major to nursing. Donna made friends quickly at WCU, and among those friends she was just another college student. Beyond those friends, however, Donna experienced a lot of prejudice. Although in Sylva and Waynesville there was an effort by the university to have all students accepted, when Donna and her white friends went to restaurants in the Greenville/Spartanburg area, they were all turned away. When she went with a group of friends to Six Flags for a day of fun, they were turned away from a hotel, because it did not allow black people. On another occasion, Donna and three other black students were coming back to WCU from Salisbury and had made it as far as Asheville when they were caught in a snowstorm. They sought shelter for the night, but were turned away from two

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-Judy Neubrandner, EdD, FNP-BC, CNE,
Professor and Director of the School of Nursing
jneubrandner@wcu.edu

MESSAGE from the DIRECTOR

The WCU School of Nursing recently celebrated the fortieth anniversary of our first nursing class's graduation in 1973. As I spent time with the class members, I learned about our rich and strong heritage. This class had a true pioneer spirit when its members came to WCU in the late '60s to pursue nursing. They started in a new program and were a part of the first BSN program west of Charlotte, NC. Some came to WCU for nursing; others came for boyfriends and stayed for the nursing program. Whatever their reason for being at WCU, they quickly formed a bond with each other that lasts today.

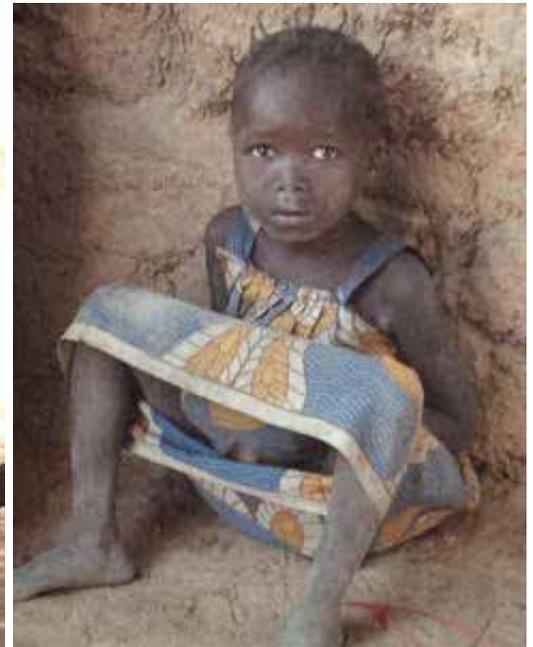
One of the members of that first nursing class was Donna Mooney. Donna was the only black student in the class and one of only 112 at the whole university. Although her color was not an issue with her fellow nursing students (she remains best friends with one of her classmates), it was, unfortunately, an issue in Western North Carolina. In an alumni focus article, she shares the challenges she faced as a black student in Western North Carolina in the late '60s and early '70s.

From the class of 1973 I have found strong supporters for the School of Nursing. Their excitement for what is happening in the School of Nursing is infectious. Under their leadership, we are forming an Advancement Council made up of nursing, student, community and civic leaders interested in supporting and advancing WCU nursing. These leaders are coming together to strategize on ways to grow the financial base of the School of Nursing and to create long-term sustainability that will take the school to a higher level scholastically and support the school into the future. We are also reestablishing the SON alumni association. This organization will allow the alumni to be involved with the SON in meaningful ways. wcu.edu/academics/departments-schools-colleges/HHS/hhs-schools-depts/nursing/nursing-alumni.asp

I hope as you read about all the new things happening within the SON, you will be proud of where we have come from and excited about our future. I know I am.

Faculty Spotlight

Mason McDowell Takes Opportunity to Meet Unmet Needs in Chad, Africa -By Mason McDowell



Choosing a path that focuses on serving the needs of others is not a foreign concept to nurses. We inherently feel satisfaction by making a meaningful and personal contribution to another person's health and well-being. Nurses who elect to become educators feel an additional calling to nurture the next generation of caregivers. I am humbled to be among the many who care enough to serve as a clinician and as an educator.

I have been an RN for almost 20 years and an assistant professor at Western Carolina University for over six years. I can say with conviction that I never knew I would end up where I am today. In 2008, the WCU nurse anesthesia program expanded and a few individuals took a chance and hired me. Moving to a full-time academic role was a big challenge but my colleagues supported and mentored me into a confident and well-equipped educator and administrator. As it turns out, I have become uniquely qualified to quit the job that I love and make a move in an atypical direction.

A service learning trip in 2013 with Brad Strother, one of my graduate students, changed my life in an immeasurable way. I went on a medical mission trip for three

weeks to Chad, and grew certain that I would answer the call to serve as a full-time missionary. This was not on my short list of next steps in my career progression. In fact, many friends and family thought it was a waste of my talents to give up everything and move my family to Africa. I can say to each of you that any talents you or I have cultivated are in desperate shortage in many developing countries.

I will be moving with my amazingly supportive wife and two daughters to a town in central Africa to run an anesthesia department and train surgeons and nurses to administer anesthesia safely. This anesthesia training program is ambitious and could expand to many sub-Saharan countries among mission hospitals. The potential for church outreach and public health programs are limitless there. Following two trips to Chad, I recognize multiple issues that need ongoing and urgent attention: severe malnutrition, malaria and other tropical diseases, TB, and the highest maternal mortality rate in the world. It is apparent to me that as a caregiver, we shouldn't turn a blind eye after seeing so many unmet needs. I have chosen not to "unsee" the things I have seen. There is real need, and I am in a position to help.

So what do I say to my friends, family, and colleagues? Follow your conscience and your convictions and find a way to get involved. Don't get so comfortable that you no longer see discomfort. I think Mother Teresa said it best:

"Find the sick, the suffering, and the lonely right there where you are — in your own homes and in your own families, in your workplaces and in your schools. Everywhere, wherever you go, you find people who



are unwanted, unloved, uncared for, just rejected by society—completely forgotten, completely left alone."

I encourage each of you to seek a place you can make a difference. Take a chance and care.

Mason McDowell, *DNAP, CRNA*, is an assistant professor in the WCU School of Nursing. To follow the McDowells on their journey, go to whyweshouldgo.blogspot.com, or email mcdowellcrna@gmail.com.

NOTES

NN-CAT Program Pairs Students from Diverse Backgrounds with Nursing Mentors



Jennifer Walkingstick (left), with her mother and grandmother, registers for the Spring 2014 mentoring program reception. "The mentoring program has given me guidance when it comes to selecting my classes," Jennifer said. "It has also lifted a financial burden by providing a monthly stipend that allows me to ensure that I have the gas to get to my classes."

The Nursing Network-Careers and Technology (NN-CAT) Mentoring program was established in 2013 by the School of Nursing at WCU, whose faculty were concerned about the shortage of a diversity of nursing students and nurses in Western North Carolina.

The program's purpose is to provide individualized nursing mentors to guide minority and rural students to successfully enter nursing school. Students are selected from those enrolled in the WCU pre-nursing track or the RIBN program at Southwestern Community College.

The NN-CAT program provides a nursing mentor to the student, as well as a scholarship and stipend for tuition and monthly living expenses. Additionally, tutoring will be provided for entrance examinations for the nursing programs (SAT/TEAS). All scholarships are made possible through the generosity of the

nursing division of the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) in an effort to expand the number of qualified, trained minority and rural nursing professionals for practice in Western North Carolina.

Jessica Mills, a first-year pre-nursing student at WCU, said the program has helped prepare her for the Test of Essential Academic Skills and Critical Reading tests, as well as ensuring she will be able to apply to the School of Nursing and graduate on time. "I have enjoyed the support system that I have for questions and concerns," she said.

Kathryn Peters, who is also a first-year pre-nursing student, said the program has been very helpful to her. "It is keeping me on track with everything I need to accomplish to pursue my career as a nurse," she said.

Mentors in the NN-CAT program say they have benefitted from the program as well. "There is nothing more satisfying than

helping someone achieve goals," said mentor Rebecca Manning. "Working with NN-CAT has been a wonderful experience so far. My mentee and I have established a solid relationship on both professional and personal levels, and it's exciting to watch her go through this journey of becoming a nursing student and then, hopefully, a nurse."

All WCU pre-nursing and Regionally Increasing Baccalaureate Nursing (RIBN) students at Southwestern Community College will be able to apply for acceptance into the program each year.

The nursing mentoring program is offered to both minority students as well as rural students who were raised in Cherokee, Graham, Swain, Jackson Counties and the Cherokee Qualla Indian Boundary.

The program will provide nursing mentors from both the community as well as the School of Nursing. Mentors will be university-prepared nurses who are trained to provide comprehensive individualized mentoring to minority students and rural students from Western North Carolina.



Dr. Judy Neubrander, director of the WCU School of Nursing (left), presents Kamra Harper with her Mentee Award at the spring 2014 mentoring program reception. "Being a part of this program and having a mentor to talk to, I have been able to dig a little deeper in trusting myself and believing in my abilities," Kamra said.

WCU, First RIBN Program Cohort are Paving the Way for the Future of BSN Education



First RIBN Cohort Graduates with BSN in May 2014

Western Carolina University School of Nursing is leading the way in rethinking BSN education. The first class of RIBN students graduated from the WCU School of Nursing in May 2014 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. The inaugural class of RIBN includes Brett Gustafson, Amanda Back, Ashley Sitton, Holly House, Jessica Sams and Kayla Edwards. Brett is currently employed at the Charles George VA Medical Center on a medical-surgical unit. Amanda is employed by Pardee Hospital in Hendersonville. She works on the progressive care unit and is investigating the use of bedside reporting using the SBAR and AIDET methods with fellow RIBN student Kayla Edwards. Kayla is also employed at Pardee Hospital on the medical-surgical/oncology unit. Holly and Jessica are both employed at Park Ridge Health in Fletcher on the medical-surgical/telemetry unit. They are working on a project related to the newly implemented telemetry monitoring. Ashley is employed at the Charles George VA Medical Center on the 3rd floor medical unit. She is investigating the use of subcutaneous infusion devices for pain and is currently doing some clinical activities for her practicum with palliative care.

WCU is celebrating the accomplishments of this first RIBN cohort. These BSN-prepared students will be ready for advancement in the workplace as well for furthering their education as nurse practitioner, nurse anesthetist, nurse researcher, nurse educator

or nurse midwife. WCU is preparing for the growth of this program as 43 students (53 in fall 2015) enter this unique, streamlined pathway to a baccalaureate education each year.

In response to the Institute of Medicine report in 2011, which charged the nation with increasing the level of baccalaureate-prepared nurses in the workforce to 80% by year 2020, the RIBN program was started. Recognizing the long-standing collegial relationship between WCU and Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, WCU and AB-Tech were chosen to partner in this innovative, financially sound, streamlined approach to baccalaureate education. This pioneering program was funded in part by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Northwest Health Foundation, Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence, UNC General Administration and The Duke Endowment.

The RIBN program was adapted from the Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education (OCNE) model with the key foundation that students are dually accepted and enrolled into the community college and partnering university from the beginning. This initiative started with one collaborative in Western North Carolina and has now spread across the state, with 34 schools involved in a RIBN collaborative. Western Carolina University started its collaboration with AB-Tech in the fall of 2010, added Blue Ridge Community College and Southwestern

Community College in the fall of 2013, and now Isothermal Community College will join the collaborative in the fall of 2015.

As RIBN students are dually enrolled at the community college and WCU, they are baccalaureate students from day one. While completing the associate degree coursework at the community college, the student is concurrently taking online liberal studies courses at WCU. An associate degree is awarded after the first three years, and after successful completion of NCLEX, the student completes the fourth and final year of the RIBN curriculum at WCU full-time while beginning employment in a health care setting on a part-time basis.

RIBN students enter their senior year in their baccalaureate program in a unique position of being new graduate RNs and full-time students. The fourth year curriculum for the RIBN program was carefully chosen to include education in gerontology, community health, research/evidence-based practice and leadership. Three courses specifically created for the RIBN student were based on the Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice (AACN, 2008). Two courses were created that promote in-depth study and discussion of the nine essentials outlines in this document. In addition to didactic seminars of the nine essentials, the curriculum includes a practicum course where students engage in clinical activities that provide application of the nine essentials studies. The clinical practicum activities occur in the student's place of employment, but not during employment hours. Examples of practicum activities include the students spending time with nurse managers to learn about staffing, problem solving and management functions; research office to learn about internal review board (IRB), research activities and quality improvement projects as well as time with various committees (ethics, nurse leadership, etc.) to learn about how policies and procedures are updated to reflect evidence based practice. By requiring these academic assignments to be completed at the place of employment, the student/new hire then becomes a greater asset to the facility, with not only the knowledge of what should be done in the workplace, but also how the process of change and improvement is done in that specific facility.

-by Mary Knowlton, director, Regionally Increasing Baccalaureate Nursing program

The shortage of nursing faculty in NC

Schools of nursing and nursing programs in North Carolina are straining to produce nurses to alleviate the nursing shortage, but are impaired in this effort by a severe shortage of nursing faculty. In 2012 in NC, 7,351 students were enrolled in baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs, and 2,986 students graduated from baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs. However, 2,305 qualified applicants were turned away from these programs, due primarily to the faculty shortage and a lack of clinical training sites. The problem is equally severe for community college nursing programs in NC. These statistics reflect national trends. U.S. nursing schools turned away 79,659 qualified applications to baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs in 2012.

The WCU School of Nursing's Nurse Educator MS in Nursing program provides expert clinicians the education needed to fill these faculty positions so critical to easing the nursing shortage. The Nurse Educator two-year program is fully online, and students complete clinical specialty, educational theory and nurse educator practicum courses. Practicum courses are completed in locations close to the student's home or work. The program is affordable, and students who agree to work as nursing faculty qualify for substantial financial assistance through the North Carolina Forgivable Educational Loan program. For more information, please contact Ramona Whichello, director of MS(N) Nursing Leadership Program, at rwhichello@wcu.edu.

-By Linda Comer, executive associate director for the WCU School of Nursing

Young 'Professor' Uses Science Project to Demonstrate Parkinson's Symptoms



Fifth-grader Caleb Handy (center) poses with students from the December 2015 Traditional BSN cohort.

We'd like to introduce Caleb Handy, our latest 'visiting professor' for the Traditional BSN students! Caleb visited the students in neurology lab on March 4 to demonstrate his fifth-grade science project, which mimicked the primary symptoms of Parkinson's disease. With the help of student volunteers, Caleb utilized a homemade box with ropes, cables, wrist restraints and an ingenious crank system to demonstrate the adverse effects of Parkinson's-pathologic tremor, stooped posture and impaired balance.

Guest speakers such as Caleb are invaluable to any teaching experience. Often a speaker is able to convey a compelling message or drive home a specific lesson that resonates with students. When the WCU faculty members are able to combine didactic experiences with supporting the younger generation and encouraging their ingenuity and growth, it is a win-win for everyone. The faculty at the SON would like to thank Caleb and his father, Darryl Handy, for taking the time to share the project.

-By Susan Hester, assistant professor for the Traditional BSN program



Caleb Handy (left) demonstrates his science project, which mimics the primary symptoms of Parkinson's disease with WCU BSN student Davyn Griswold.

MS(N) Nursing Administration Program Changes Name to Nursing Leadership

Western Carolina University's MS(N) Nursing Administration Program is getting a new name. The name will be changing to Nursing Leadership in an effort to better reflect the focus of the program. In the Institute of Medicine's 2010 report on The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health emphasis was placed on advancing the education of nurses and preparing nurses to lead at all levels in complex health care environments.

The program has always been designed for potential students who seek to learn more

about leadership and administration of health care systems. Students come from a variety of backgrounds such as inpatient and outpatient facilities, private practice, academia, regulatory agencies and public corporations.

The Nursing Leadership track is delivered online. Practicums can be completed close to your home. Courses are designed to help leaders grow in areas such as communication, financial management, strategic planning, human resource management, ethical decision-making,

quality initiatives, cultural competence and organizational theory. The program admits students in the fall and spring semesters each year. **For more information**, please contact Ramona Whichello, director of MS(N) Nursing Leadership Program at rwhichello@email.wcu.edu.

-By Ramona Whichello, director, Nurse Administrator program

WCU School of Nursing Enrolls First DNP Program Students With UNC Charlotte

The WCU School of Nursing enrolled the first cohort of students into the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program in fall of 2013. The DNP is a 42 credit hour, 5-semester course of study (average 9 hours per semester) in Advanced Clinical Nursing Leadership. The DNP degree will prepare graduates to analyze systems of care and provide transformational leadership that will improve patient safety, quality of care, and implement evidence-based culturally competent care practices. The purpose of this post-master 42-credit program is to produce graduates who will practice nursing at the highest level of their specialty. The program is a collaborative venture with the School of Nursing at UNC Charlotte and allows both schools to share faculty resources to provide the new degree. The learning methodology will include face-to-face and mediating technology between the faculty and students that may be asynchronous or real time with geographic separation. This program will require visits to each campus and include online coursework.

Upon completion of the DNP program, graduates will:

- Analyze and integrate evidence from nursing science with evidence from other relevant scientific disciplines to form a scientific foundation for advanced practice in nursing.

- Apply clinical scholarship, scientific evidence, and analytical methods to improve health care outcomes.
- Develop and evaluate systems to enhance safety and quality of health care.
- Advocate and participate in collaborative interdisciplinary efforts to improve health outcomes at the practice/organization, community, state and national levels.
- Engage in culturally competent and ethically sound advanced nursing practice.
- Demonstrate leadership in the improvement of patient outcomes and transformation of health care delivery.
- Manage directly the complex problems of clients/populations and systems to facilitate access and navigation of the health care system to improve health outcomes.

The program is affordable, and students who agree to work as nursing faculty qualify for substantial financial assistance through the North Carolina Forgivable Educational Loan program. The program is now accepting applications for the second cohort to start in the fall of 2014. For more information please contact Dr. Sarah Mannle, director of DNP program, at semannle@wcu.edu.

-By Linda Comer, executive associate director for the WCU School of Nursing

WCU ABSN Program's Four-Semester Format is Back by Popular Demand

The Western Carolina University School of Nursing Accelerated BSN (ABSN) program is changing to a new, more student-friendly format starting in fall 2014. The new format affords students the possibility of working part-time while attending nursing school. Students start the program in August 2014 and will graduate in December 2015, taking 14 to 17 credit hours per semester. This popular and competitive program option will continue to be offered at the beautiful Biltmore Park campus with clinical rotations in the surrounding communities.

The ABSN program is a fast track for students with a bachelor degree in another field who are ready for a career change to nursing. This new format not only allows for a better balance between school, work and life; it also affords greater financial aid opportunities due to the alignment with standard academic year admission cycles.

Dr. Shirley, the director of student services at the School of Nursing, offers monthly advising sessions for interested students. For more information about the ABSN program, visit absn.wcu.edu or email Dr. Shirley at jshirley@wcu.edu.

-by Mary Knowlton, director, Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing program

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS



Misty Barrier Eller, WCU Class of 2003, front center, poses with Ugandan children during her medical mission trip in 2010. Misty saw 650 children in eight days.

WCU Nurses are out and about doing great and wonderful things. Here are a few examples:

Misty Barrier Eller RN, MSN, ANP-C, WCU Class of 2003, has been busy since she began her nursing career in the Surgical Intensive Care Unit at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center. She obtained her MSN in 2007, and since then has worked as an Adult Nurse Practitioner on Vascular Surgery and inpatient cardiology, teaching at both UNC Charlotte and Queens University nursing programs as an associate professor. Currently, she works with Carolinas Health Care at Carolinas Medical Center main in Charlotte in the CVRU, which is an NP-run post-op cardiac surgery unit. Her work includes complete, independent care of cardiac surgery patients from immediately post op until patient is transferred to a cardiac floor bed. This is an acute care position dealing with emergency procedures, bedside open heart surgery, ECMO, LVADs, heart transplants, NC's first total artificial heart, and all other open heart procedures. In her spare time, she also volunteers locally and internationally. In March of 2010, she went to Uganda, on a medical mission trip as the senior medical provider, seeing 650 children in eight days.

Misty also has participated in extensive research including co-investigator on a domestic violence assessment tool that is widely used in many states now (2006, featured in the *Nursing Research Journal*) co-investigator on acute renal failure in the Cardiac Surgery Patient in the American Thoracic Society (2010) and co-investigator

for a publication on The Magic Six Hours (2011, this was also in ATS and encompassed the successes of early extubation for post-op cardiac surgery patients.) "I would like to first say how proud I am to be a graduate of WCU nursing," said Misty. "It was one of the single best decisions of my life and I grew so much as a person during my time there."

Jonathan Byington, RN, BSN, ABSN Class of 2011, has been involved in important policy and service changes for the behavior health unit where he is currently employed, the Fort Harrison VAMC in Helen, Mont. He recently received a significant promotion to a Nurse 2 Step 3 within the VA hospital system. "The policy change I am most proud of is protecting veteran privacy by not allowing cell phones on the unit," Jonathan said. "Some veterans were taking pictures of others and without their permission posting the pictures on Facebook a clear violation of privacy. Veterans are still allowed unlimited phone calls on the unit phone and can retrieve phone numbers from their cell phones while being 1:1 with staff in the visitor room. Protecting the right to privacy of mental health patients is what motivated me to make this change."

Robin Luiz, RN, MSN Ed, has worn many nursing hats since graduating from the traditional BSN program at WCU in 1992. She has served as a health care agency director, a night supervisor at a local health facility, and then turned her

passion for nursing to teaching in 2000. She is currently a faculty member at A-B Tech. "My professional philosophy is to lead by example, and I have made lifelong learning my goal," Robin said. "This dedication has yielded developments to increase culturally competent health care and education founded on evidence-based practice."

Meg Galloway, RN, BSN, WCU Class of 2009, began her career at Haywood Community Hospital, then in 2010 moved to Mission Hospital. She obtained her CEN certification and has been teaching the CEN review course for two years. She is a member of the Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve and Control team, which helped to plan a sepsis screening tool for the Emergency Department. She will attend the Emergency Nurses Association for their leadership conference in October 2014 and hopes to present a poster on "Sepsis Screening-Improving Survival of Septic Patients through Early Identification." She is currently interim educator for the Emergency Department.

Harrison Shull, RN, BSN, CCRN, SRNA, ABSN Class of 2011, started off in the CCU at Raleigh General Hospital in Beckley, West Va., where he worked for 20 months. He is now back in the fold at WCU, working hard towards his master's in nurse anesthesia.

Sherry D Peel, MHA, BSN, RN-AC, WCU BSN Class of 1985, has been employed full time in nursing for the majority of her time since graduation. She and her family settled in Hillsborough in 2005, where she found her niche in ambulatory nursing as a nurse manager for a large Duke Internal Medicine and Primary Care Pediatric clinic. She became involved in AACN and obtained her certification in 2007 and now helps support others to do the same. She is currently the health center administrator for two practices within the Private Diagnostic Clinic, which is part of Duke Health System, and completed her MHA master's degree in December 2012. "I can't say how much WCU meant to me during my time there," said Sherry. "The diverse clinical settings and experiences had me well prepared to enter the real world of nursing."

Sheila Prynkiewicz RN to BSN, Class of December 2013 "After two years of being a clinical nurse supervisor for the Pediatric ER at Levine's Children's Hospital in Charlotte, I recently accepted the nursing unit

supervisor position at Mission Children's Hospital. I am dedicated to the department of pediatrics and act as the supervisor for general Peds, Peds Heme/Onc, and Peds ICU. I will coach and foster 15-20 employees. I recently completed the pediatric APHON course to become chemotherapy certified in order to better meet the needs of the staff. I continue to sit on the WCU Graduate Curriculum Committee and am an active member with Sigma Theta Tau. I am also an active member with the national leadership society, Sigma Alpha Pi. I recently joined their fundraiser committee. I am hopeful to take my CPEN (certified pediatric ER nurse) exam in the next few months and apply to graduate school (at WCU, of course)."

Bevin Strickland, RN to BSN, Class of December 2013 "Since graduating in December from the amazing RN to BSN program at WCU, my career and path of learning has continued to move onward and upward. I am currently a staff nurse in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem. Working for a large teaching hospital has been invaluable for my growth as a new nurse. We receive patients from all over North Carolina, Virginia and South Carolina and I care for patients suffering from cardiac, respiratory, trauma and surgery-related illnesses. I am taking advantage of the educational opportunities offered by my employer, having recently become certified in Pediatric Advanced Life Support, and will take part in preparatory classes this summer for the Critical Care Registered Nurse certification exam. My education at WCU has truly supported my knowledge base and my understanding of the importance of effective leadership, research and evidence-based practice in nursing. My ultimate goal is to become a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist and I am currently preparing for the GRE exam. My time away from WCU will hopefully not be long, as it is my hope to be accepted into their graduate degree program. I know that obtaining my master's at WCU will be a continuation of the personal, supportive and enriching education that I have already experienced there. Being a 40-something-year-old student, I feel so much more aware and appreciative of the role that educators play not only in succeeding, but in really enjoying and being excited about the learning process."

Continued from Cover

TRAILBLAZER: Donna Mooney Talks Diversity at the WCU School of Nursing

-By Judy Neubrandner

hotels. "At the third hotel – a local Mom-and-Pop operation – the manager looked at us and asked where we were trying to go," Donna said. "When we told him we were students at Western, he let us stay. He said he had a son there and hoped if he was stuck somewhere, someone would take him in." Once she was in nursing school, her options for clinical experiences were also limited. She was not allowed to go to certain hospitals and she was kept from going to the Cherokee reservation for her own safety.

Donna recalls that when her best friend and fellow student got married, Donna was one of the bridesmaids in the wedding. At the wedding reception held at a country club, Donna and her husband were refused entry. It was 1975 in Charlottesville, Va. She recalls that the bride's father-in-law intervened, threatening to move the rehearsal dinner down the street to McDonalds if Donna and her husband were not allowed to attend. They were then allowed to attend.

At the time Donna was at WCU, the school had a Black Students United for Liberation (BSUL) organization. Donna was not a member of the BSUL, nor was she a member of the white community – she had her own niche. Today, Donna says that the nursing faculty and students were very protective of her. The Nursing Department was her safe haven at a time when safe havens were hard to find. Donna said, "We never really saw color – we did things that were probably not acceptable – we did not think about the color." Donna chose not to get involved in the civil rights movement. She recalls how after she had been at WCU a couple of years, she received a phone

call from the Psychology Department asking to meet with her. She met with a psychologist who interviewed her. He asked questions about how she could be a "normal" person on campus and matriculate through while being a black person. She remembers calling home to tell her mom about the interview and marveling that they would interview her because she was thriving as a black student on campus. It was a hard time to be a black person, yet Donna was enjoying her college experience.

Donna did enjoy college life in spite of the prejudices she experienced. She recalls parties where they made a drink that was nicknamed the 'Purple Jesus.' Students would have parties where they mixed moonshine and grape juice. "The drink was purple, and in the morning you were calling for Jesus," recalled Donna with a big smile. She also remembers the nursing students placing notices in the student union requesting volunteers for the nursing students to practice their skills. She laughs as she said the football team always volunteered for the physical assessment skills lab.

Donna reflects fondly on her time at WCU and is proud to be a Catamount. She is excited to learn that the School of Nursing recently received a HRSA grant to increase the diversity within the school. Donna believes WCU gave her a great start on a wonderful career in nursing. For the past 27 years she has worked at the North Carolina Board of Nursing in Discipline and Regulation. She recognizes there are still barriers to individuals of diverse groups, but sees a bright future for the WCU School of Nursing and applauds our efforts to increase diversity.

NEW FACULTY MEMBERS ARE INSPIRED



Katrina Coggins, MSN, RN, CEN
Assistant Professor, Nursing
MSN, MBA, University of Phoenix
BSN, Western Carolina University

"I am inspired by Jeremiah 29:11, which says, 'For I know the plans I have for you, Declares the Lord...' Once we trust and allow His guidance we find ourselves in awesome places we would have never imagined like WCU

School of Nursing where we can interact with and be inspired by the most amazing group of staff, educators and students."



Cheryl Conway, MSN, RN-BC, NE-BC
Assistant Professor, Nursing
MSN, Western Carolina University
BSN, UNC-Chapel Hill

"I am inspired by education. It seems the more I learn, the more I want to learn! Also, I am inspired when running; my best ideas come when I'm outside enjoying the mountain trails."



Gail Elliott, MS(N), RN
Assistant Professor, Nursing
MSN, Western Carolina University
BSN, Western Carolina University

"I am inspired by the amazing plethora of nurses and health care professionals that work tirelessly to save lives, improve health outcomes, educate others and reduce health disparities. Go, NURSING!"



Tavie Flanagan, PhD, RN, WHNP-BC
Assistant Professor, Nursing
PhD, UNC-Chapel Hill
FNP, UNC-Chapel Hill
MSN, UNC-Chapel Hill
BSN, York College of Pennsylvania

"I am inspired by the success of my students."



Susan Hester, MS(N), RN, CPN
Assistant Professor, Nursing
MSN, Western Carolina University
BSN, Western Carolina University
ADN, Southwestern Community College
BS-Public Relations, University of Florida

"I am inspired by travel. As Mark Twain eloquently put it, "Travel is fatal to prejudice,

bigotry and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one's lifetime."



Kae Livsey, PhD, RN, MPH
Associate Professor, Nursing
PhD, George Mason University
MPH, Emory University
BSN, UNC – Chapel Hill

"I am inspired by the caring attitudes of my colleagues and am thrilled to have the chance to be here at WCU."



Summer Huntley-Dale, MSN, RN
Assistant Professor, Nursing
MSN, Gardner-Webb University
BSN, Gardner-Webb University

"I am inspired by 2 Timothy 4:7: 'I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith.' This Scripture reminds me to be strong and faithful, inspiring me to keep pushing forward, whatever the path may be."



Carol MacKusick, PhD, MSN, RN, CNN
Assistant Professor, Nursing
PhD, Georgia State University
MSN, Georgia College
BSN, Clayton State University

"I am inspired by my students."



Tamera Pearson, PhD, ACNP-BC, RNP-BC
Associate Professor, Director, FNP program
PhD, University of South Carolina
MSN, Vanderbilt University
BSN, Southern University of SDA

"I am inspired by people and beauty, both of which are part of my everyday experiences at WCU. The students, staff, faculty and administrators all bring a unique contribution to this learning environment. And the beauty

of the North Carolina mountains surrounding us is inspiring to me in ways I can't really describe. If you want to feel inspired, I think all you have to do is look outside."



David Wells, MSN, RN
Assistant Professor, Nursing
MSN, Gardner-Webb University
BSN, University of Colorado

"I am inspired by the pursuit of knowledge for knowledge's sake, the pursuit of evidence for the enhancement of science, the pursuit of nature for the betterment of humanity and the pursuit of the arts to enlighten the soul."

FACULTY ACCOLADES



Mark A. Kossick, DNSc, CRNA, APN, professor of nursing, graduate anesthesia simulation education coordinator:

- Was appointed to serve as a member of Western Carolina University's Institutional Review Board.
- Presented at a national meeting on September 8, 2014 in Las Vegas, Nev. His 8-hour presentation, "Comprehensive EKG Seminar: Diagnostic skills for myocardial ischemia, infarction, arrhythmia interpretation, and current treatment strategies," was attended by anesthesiologists, surgeons, nurse anesthetists and physician assistants specializing in anesthesia.
- Serving as thesis chair for graduate students Jenna Poziombke and Paula Grey, directed the Nurse Anesthesia Program's inaugural thesis and first clinical research. The title of the thesis was "An Evaluation of Sedation Levels Using Bispectral Index (BIS) and Correlated Adverse Events in Patients Undergoing Colonoscopies."
- Presented three lectures on Jan. 24, 2014 as a visiting professor to graduate nurse anesthesia students at East Carolina University. Kossick's lectures were "Essentials of EKG Interpretation for the Anesthesia Provider," "Critical Assessment and Interventions for Invasive Hemodynamic Data" and "Anesthesia Concepts for Patients with Valvular Heart Disease."

- While serving as chair for a scholarly research project, had published as a contributing author a review article titled "Intravenous Acetaminophen and Intravenous Ketorolac for Management of Pediatric Surgical Pain: A Literature Review." This peer-reviewed article appeared in the February 2014 issue of the AANA Journal. First and second authors were WCU alumni and certified registered nurse anesthetists Kit Baley, Kara Michalov, followed by Dr. Kossick, and Dr. Mason McDowell.



Shawn Collins, DNP, PhD, CRNA, had the following Peer-Reviewed Professional Publications:

- 2014 Collins, S., Faut-Callahan, M.A call for change: Clinical evaluation of nurse anesthesia students. AANA Journal, 82(1), 65-72.
- 2013 Collins, S. Emotional intelligence as a non-cognitive factor in student registered nurse anesthetists. AANA Journal, 81(6), 465-472. Impact Factor: .719
- 2013 Collins, S., Hewer, I. The impact of the Bologna Process on nursing higher education in Europe: A review. International Journal of Nursing Studies. doi: 10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2013.07.005

Had the following Peer-Reviewed Presentations:

- 2014 Collins, S. (February 2014) A Paradigm Shift: Defining, Assessing, and Using Emotional Intelligence. AANA Assembly of School Faculty. San Diego, Calif.
- 2013 Collins, S. (2013 September) Emotional Intelligence in Professional Life. 6th Annual Doctors of Nursing Practice Conference. Phoenix, Ariz.



Carol Isaac MacKusick, PhD, MSN, RN, CNN, had the following recent publication:

- MacKusick, C. (2013). Tracheostomy Care: Guidelines and Skills for Registered Nurses. Mosby's Clinical Skills Manual.

Has the following recent and upcoming presentations:

- Sigma Theta Tau, Epsilon Pi Chapter, 2/2014: Horizontal Hostility in Nursing: Implications for Nurse Educators and Leaders
- Poster Presentation, Whitson Hester Annual Research Day (regional Sigma Theta Tau research day), Cookeville, Tenn., "Weekly Human Patient Simulation to Improve Clinical Reasoning Skills in Senior Level Nursing Students," April 2014

Has had the following student-sponsored research work:

- Lowman, C. Chronic myelogenous leukemia: Evidenced based practice for Registered Nurses. Faculty sponsor for undergraduate research fair. August 2013 – April 2014.
- Hardee, A. Horizontal hostility and administration responsibilities: A review of literature. MSN (nursing administration) research project. Chair of committee, May 2013-May 2014.

FACULTY ACCOLADES CONTINUED



Kae Livsey, RN, MPH, PhD has been accepted to present a podium presentation at the International Nursing Association of Clinical Simulation Learning Centers Annual Conference in Orlando, Fla., in June 2014. The title of the presentation is “Using a Community Partnership to Promote Use of Standardized Patients in Simulation.”



Sharon Metcalfe, PhD, RN, has had the following presentation:

- Metcalfe, S. Invited presentation, Emergence Technologies: Promoting global citizenship and leadership through developing an international module through the use of technology. The International Conference on Nursing and Emergency Medicine. Las Vegas, Nev. December 2-4, 2013.

Has had the following recent publications:

- Metcalfe, S. E. (2014). The impact of leadership development: A shared nursing educational service-learning partnership. In L. Caputi (Ed.), *Building the future of nursing* (pp. 75-84). Baltimore, Md.: National League for Nursing. (Refereed)
- Metcalfe, S. E. (2014). Leadership development. Book chapter accepted for *The Encyclopedia of Nursing Education*, Springer Publications, on November 11, 2013 (Refereed)
- Metcalfe, S. E., & Sexton, E. H. (2014). An academic-community partnership to address the flu vaccination rates of the homeless. Article accepted for *Public Health Nursing Journal* on June 13, 2013. (Refereed)
- Metcalfe, S. E. (2013). Emergence Technologies: Promoting global citizenship and leadership through developing an international module through the use of technology. *Journal of Nursing & Care*, 2(3), 152. (Refereed)

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For future newsletters, we would like to add alumni updates in a “Class Notes” section. Please send your news to Jessica Shirley EdD, the School of Nursing student services director, at jshirley@wcu.edu. | Visit us on Facebook at facebook.com/WCUNursing

