

# Make Someone's Life Better

## Anthony Bucki : Making a Difference

**Interprofessional Education**

**New Research Pathways**

**Grads Make Their Mark**

# You Can Make a Difference in Someone's Life

This issue of our magazine, Make Someone's Life Better, focuses on the many ways that our College of Health and Human Services faculty, students, and alumni are making a difference in the lives of others.

If you've ever wondered if there was anything you could do to make a positive and significant difference in the life of someone – there most definitely is.

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## A Message from Dean Elizabeth Cada

### *Making People's Lives Better*

This truly has been a year of transformation at GSU! President Elaine P. Maimon refers to this year as a Renaissance year.

Not only have we welcomed our first class of freshmen, opened our very first residence hall (Prairie Place) and played our first exhibition basketball game (the GSU Jaguars trounced Trinity International 129 to 50), but we have also moved four of our College's departments into much-needed, state-of-the-market laboratory, classroom, and lecture hall facilities.

This newly revamped, 80,000 square foot teaching environment — known as the Science, Health Sciences and Technology Wing — is opening exciting new doors for students' learning. For instance, Occupational Therapy students are now learning how to meet their clients' physical, psychological, and cognitive needs across the life span in their brand new Activities of Daily Living lab. In this lab, featuring a fully-furnished kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, and living room, students are learning how to promote their clients' wellness, as well as how to improve their function and live as independently as possible.

Communication Disorders, Nursing, and Physical Therapy students are also benefitting from the cutting-edge laboratories, classrooms, and lecture halls of the revamped E and F Wing. Nursing students are learning how to respond to their patients' signs and symptoms by working on lifelike simulation mannequins. Communication Disorders students are learning how to provide hearing screenings in their brand new audio studio. Doctoral Physical Therapy students are learning about the intricacies of the human brain in dynamic new lecture halls, fully equipped with state-of-the-art equipment.

But amidst all these revolutionary developments, one thing has remained the same: our College motto is still Make Someone's Life Better. Here in the College of Health and Human Services, students of all ages and walks of life are still learning how to make the crucial human connections — the types of connections that result in fuller, more productive lives, happier individuals, and healthier senior citizens.

You see, we believe there's just no substitute for compassion and caring. Our students learn the value of the human touch; they're not just highly skilled — they're highly compassionate. They pick up that passion from our faculty, who give more than 100 percent of their time, knowledge, and themselves in support of their students' success.



A recent graduate of the Master of Social Work program stopped by my office the other day to say how grateful he was for the "safe haven" that our College provided him as he moved through his course work.

"You prepared me well," he said, acknowledging the Social Work faculty. "I'm ready to go out into the world and try to make a difference. And if I can't do it alone, I'll build a collaboration or consensus among those around me."

Students like these inspire me. They truly want to make a difference. They give me hope for the future of our community and our nation. I hope they inspire you, as well.

Best regards,

Elizabeth A. Cada, Ed.D., OTR/L, FAOTA  
Dean, College of Health and Human Services  
Dean, Graduate Studies  
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P.S. As always, I welcome your comments, thoughts and suggestions regarding the College of Health and Human Services or this magazine.

## Congratulations for a Colleague

**By Rebecca K. Wojcik, PT, Ed.D., GCS  
Chair, Department of Physical Therapy**

Thank you and congratulations to Ann Vendrely, Ed.D., D.P.T., on her appointment as Associate Provost/Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs.

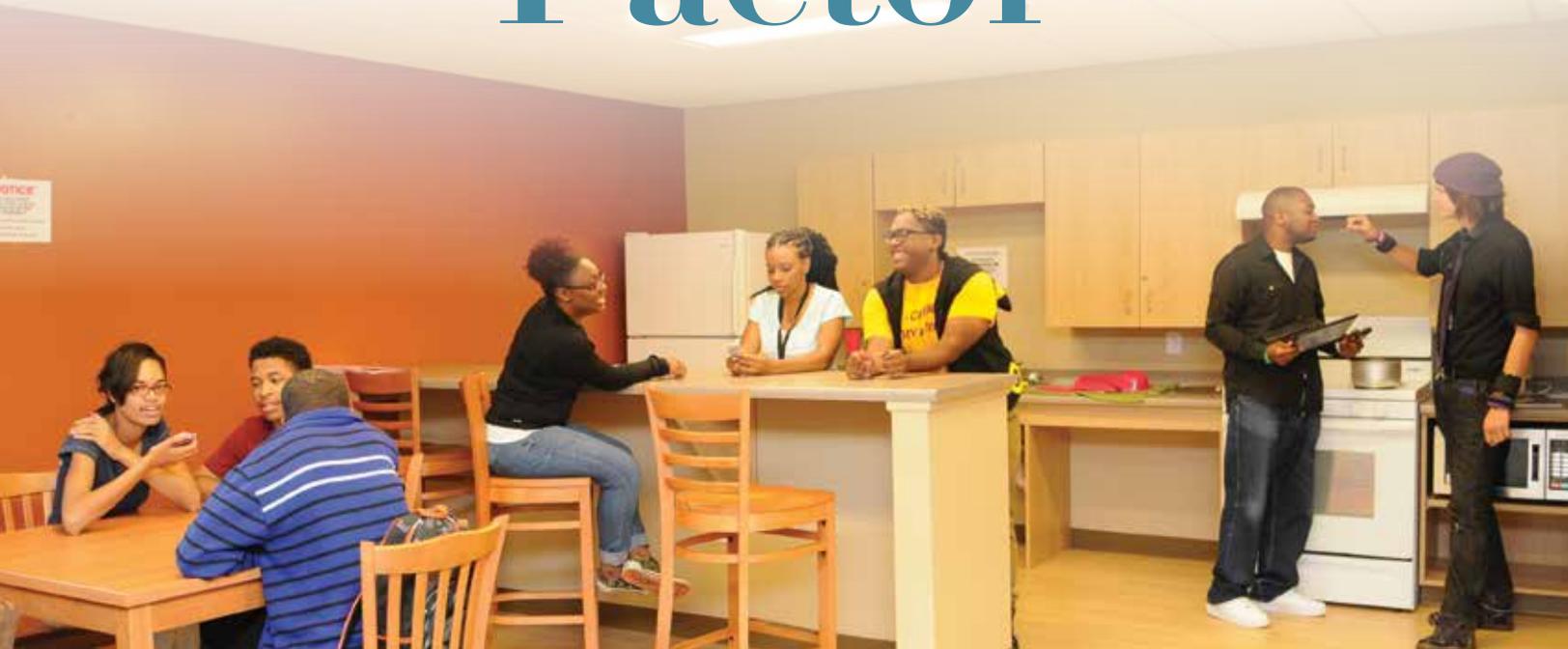
Dr. Vendrely has made many significant contributions to the Department of Physical Therapy since joining Governors State University in 1996. Beginning with the consultant role she played in 1995, her appointment as Physical Therapy Program Co-Director, Academic Coordinator of Physical Therapy, and University Professor of Physical Therapy, Ann has played a major role in the development and maturation of the professional programs in physical therapy at GSU.

In addition, she has provided expertise and support for the development of many other programs in the College of Health and Human Services (formerly College of Health Professions) and Governors State University. She has been a major contributor to the Trans4mation of GSU to a comprehensive four-year university. Throughout her tenure at GSU, Ann has maintained a high standard of excellence in all her research, service and teaching.

We wish her success in her new role and her service to the University!



# The FIRST-YEAR Factor



There's something different at GSU these days. For the first time in its 46-year history, the university has opened its doors to first-year students.

As GSU President Elaine P. Maimon describes it, the 2014-15 Academic Year has truly been a "renaissance." It even feels different on campus.

That's how Rupert Evans, DHA, MPA, FACHE, Chair of the Department of Health Administration in the College of Health and Human Services, describes the past year at GSU.

"There's a different feel, a different vibe," Evans noted. "It's interesting to see these young people around the campus."

## **Building Pipelines and Pathways**

In the midst of all this transformation across GSU, one important factor has remained steadfast: the College of Health and Human Services faculty continues to bring boundless enthusiasm, extensive research experience, expert knowledge, and true passion to their teaching of both graduate and undergraduate students.

Evans personally feels "excited about the fact that for the first time in the history of this university, we will really be able to start building internal pipelines of students who will be with us from the very, very beginning, with the bachelor's programs, and continuing on to our graduate programs and beyond," he said.

"Before this, we had our transfer students and Dual Degree students, plus all the different articulation agreements with the community colleges across the region," Evans said. "But now we can start to think about how do we grow our own? We can start by directing students early on to the types of preparatory programs and courses that will help them logically select health professions as a career path or objective. So when they're able to make a decision about what degree they want to pursue, they'll have more exposure and preparation related to that particular chosen profession. We will have created a more seamless pathway."

The need for highly-educated healthcare professionals is increasingly in demand and will only continue to grow, Evans noted.

"We need the best and the brightest. Our health system is not getting any less complicated, and the opportunities in the health professions are greater than they've ever been," Evans said. "Healthcare has been a growth industry and is projected to remain a growth industry through the year 2020 and beyond. We don't have enough doctors, physical therapists, occupational therapists, nurses. There's a shortage in every single health profession. Yet as the population is getting older; they're going to need more care."

### A Different Population

Darrin Aase, Ph.D., Assistant Professor in the Department of Addictions Studies and Behavioral Health, has experience working with freshmen at Loyola and DePaul universities. Aase is a clinical neuropsychologist with a background in clinical-community psychology.

Aase is excited about having first-year students at GSU. "I think it's great! Even though in our College we do predominantly graduate programming, I think it's been interesting to make those transitions in working with first-years," Aase said.

"What I like about working with first-year students is that they're often still making decisions about what they want to do; they're generally excited, curious, and interested in their options," Aase said.

Aase has developed a sophomore-level Introduction to Health Professions course, which he will be teaching in the spring.

"The idea is to introduce these first and second-year students to different health professions within our college," Aase said. "They might know they want to work in healthcare, but aren't aware of the different specialties within healthcare. What's fun for me is giving them accurate information so they can make a good decision. They may have certain ideas about the field — from what they've seen on TV — but we can give them the facts and help them understand the commitment level that's required."

Aase has also volunteered to serve on GSU's Student Conduct Committee, comprised of faculty, students, and staff. "It's been different, this being the first year with students living on campus (Prairie Place)," Aase said. "There are a lot of new issues to focus on that the Committee didn't have to be concerned about before. But we've been preparing for that." And the committee's purpose remains unchanged.

"Our job is to enforce the Student Code of Conduct, and to deal with any issues that come up with the students, whether they're living on campus or not," Aase said. "We meet every week to go over matters, including cases concerning academic or non-academic code of conduct violations."

From a developmental standpoint, younger students are at a different stage, Aase said. "They are a different population from our adult learners, just behaviorally speaking. Many of them don't have work experience, and they're still developing emotionally. They may run into problems involving wanting to experiment with drugs or alcohol, not getting along socially with others — all the things you'd expect at that age group."

### Prevention Programming in the Works

Aase hopes to be involved in the education and training aspects of any substance abuse prevention/wellness programming developed for GSU students. Leading these efforts, in collaboration with Student Life, is his colleague in the Department of Addictions Studies and Behavioral Health (ASBH), Alicia Battle, Ph. D., MS, MCHES.

A masters-certified health education specialist, Battle is an Assistant Professor in the Department of ASBH. When interviewing for her position at GSU, Battle was intrigued to learn that the university was transitioning to a four-year institution. The unique student population — which includes the never-been-to-college-before student, as well as the 50-year-old mother of two grown children — made the prospect of teaching and meeting the needs of freshmen students an interesting challenge for Battle, who joined the GSU faculty more than a year ago.

"This is very exciting for me. Like getting to build the model program from scratch," Battle said. "It's different from working in an older university that has intact ideas and traditions around things. We don't have that issue. So to really be able to pull from the best of what's going on and then to tailor it to fit our needs is an exciting opportunity."

Battle was recently selected (along with two other GSU faculty members) to serve as Faculty-in-Residence for 2015-16 in Prairie Place, the university's residence hall. Battle now lives in Prairie Place and works with the university housing staff to create a living-learning experience for Prairie Place residents. She and her fellow faculty-in-residence will provide opportunities for residential students to engage in activities and programs connected to the general education themes of civic engagement, global citizenship and sustainability, with an additional emphasis of living in art.

Battle brings an extensive background in creating programs specifically targeted to freshman students, as well as managing freshman residence halls and building prevention programs for large colleges and private institutions, from Middlebury College in Vermont to Tulane University in New Orleans. She also has served on the Higher Education Coalition for Alcohol and other Drugs for the State of Louisiana.

## Professorial Reflections on the First-Years

Just weeks into his first semester teaching freshmen at GSU, Mark Blagen, Ph.D., realized that he could toss his 22 years of college teaching experience “pretty much out the window” when it came to teaching first-year, first semester 18-year-olds.

Blagen is Assistant Professor of Addictions Studies and Behavioral Health at GSU. When the call went out for faculty interested in teaching first-year students, Blagen and a fellow Assistant Professor of Addictions Studies and Behavioral Health, Serena Wadhwa, Psy.D., LCPC, CADC, volunteered. The two professors co-taught an interdisciplinary humanities seminar on Global Citizenship for some of GSU’s very first freshmen.

“I had taught undergraduates for 10 years, so I didn’t think teaching freshmen would be much of a stretch,” Blagen said. “But there’s a world of difference between 18-year-olds in their first semester of college, and a 21-year-old. That brings a whole different dynamic to the table.”

Even though he had done extensive preparatory research regarding the needs of the millennial-era student, after his first class Blagen “knew I was going to have to radically change everything I thought I was going to do,” he said. Millennials require a lot of structure, small group work, and engagement.

Blagen’s counterpart, Professor Wadhwa, also found the transition to teaching first-year students “challenging. Though I am enjoying it because it gives me an opportunity to think, ‘How do I get through to an 18-year-old, vs. a student we have traditionally had?’ It’s very different from teaching graduate students; it’s challenging and exhausting, and energizing at the same time. And time-consuming. I’ll come up with ideas for class at 2 a.m.,” Wadhwa said.

### Critical Thinking — the Key

Figuring out the why – learning how to critically think – was a major focus of Blagen and Wadhwa’s freshmen seminar.

“What’s most important is critical thinking — something that everyone struggles with,” Blagen said. “There’s an existential Adlerian concept that states, ‘When the person knows the why, he’ll figure out the how.’”

“It’s important to spend a lot of time and effort on preparing students for college by helping them to really think deeply as to the meaning and value of college to them,” Blagen continued. “I truly believe answering that question, ‘Why am I going to be a college freshman?’ will solve a lot of questions. If we can get the students to understand the importance of critical thinking, that’s one of the greatest services we can ever do for them.”

### A Passion for Academic Work

Professor Blagen, like his counterparts in the College of Health and Human Services faculty, views academic work “as a calling that requires passion, dedication and seriousness,” his website bio states. “The most rewarding aspect of academic work is the opportunity to contribute to the intellectual and personal development of students . . . I work hard in helping students understand that it is who they are in conjunction with what they do that is the basis for facilitating change in themselves, their clients and in society. We are doing more than training students to be competent and ethical . . . we are also helping them to find their passion and purpose . . . I want each student who takes a course I teach to leave a better person for the experience.”

Reflecting on his experiences with the first-year seminar, Blagen recalls how he felt more than 20 years ago, after his very first semester of teaching.

“I told the person who hired me, ‘This is the hardest thing I’ve ever done, but it’s also the most satisfying thing I’ve ever done. I can’t imagine ever doing anything differently,’” Blagen said.

### Technology: The Key Difference

The question as to whether young people are facing greater challenges today than in years past is tricky.

“I don’t know that there are more stressors for young people today,” Battle said. “We’re not dealing with additional issues; I think we’re handling the same issues in a different way. It’s not that alcohol is all of a sudden a bigger problem. It’s that we’re talking about it more and differently than we have in the past.”

Aase agrees that the challenges facing this younger generation of students are not necessarily greater. “I think it’s a difficult age in

general,” he said. The major difference, he believes, is technology. Social media makes the biggest difference, “and this also makes a difference in how we need to approach these younger students educationally, in terms of how they process information.”

Battle agrees there is a need for a more innovative approach when it comes to wellness and prevention programming for younger students. “How do we educate students about nutrition in a world of fast food? Or about being safe and responsible with sexual behavior, alcohol, or marijuana? ‘Just say NO’ didn’t work,” Battle said. “The problem is there is so much bad information because of the Internet. So when we’re talking about developing wellness programs in 2015, it has to include the use of social media in some way.”

# A RISING TIDE:

## Interprofessional Education in the CHHS

Interprofessional Education (IPE) has long been a subject of great interest and research for Elizabeth Cada, Ed.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Dean of the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) and Dean of Graduate Studies at Governors State University.

The goal of IPE is to provide increased opportunities for integrated, collaborative learning experiences among the health and related professions in order to promote teamwork, foster respect and mutual understanding between the professions, encourage research, and ultimately advance health and wellness for individuals, communities, and populations.

Now in her fifth year as CHHS Dean and 42nd year as an occupational therapist, Cada is pleased to see a revitalized interest in IPE on the part of her department chairs and faculty across the College.

The Dean now offers IPE Learning Seed Grants for faculty members who want to either develop or substantially revise IPE courses or activities within a course, or further develop an existing IPE learning initiative.

### The Impetus Behind IPE

One impetus for the increased collaboration between the educational disciplines is the growing number of accrediting bodies that require — as part of their standards — programs to provide interprofessional experiences for students.

"It's not across all the disciplines yet, but it's a rising tide, just like evidence-based practice was," noted Catherine Balthazar, Ph.D., Chair of the Department of Communication Disorders, and also Interim Chair of the IPE Work Group in the College of Health and Human Services.



"It looks like most of the accrediting bodies will have some reference to it or requirement for it within the next two years," Balthazar said.

The nation's Affordable Care Act has also spurred a greater need for IPE, Balthazar noted, "because the government is looking for the money to be spent well and wisely to promote better patient outcomes. Research indicates that when you have the right people together at the right time making decisions, you don't have as many problems and don't spend as much money. You have people with fewer complications, people

who recover faster, and don't have to return to the hospital when their cases are holistically handled, rather than in a piecemeal fashion."

### CHHS Interprofessional Education Work Group

Serving on the IPE Work Group for CHHS are: Darrin Aase, Ph.D., Assistant Professor in the Department of Addictions Studies and Behavioral Health; Nancy Burley, MS, ABD, Director of Community Outreach, Program Development and Academic Support for CHHS; Melanie Ellexson, DHSc, MBA, OTR/L, FAOTA, Associate Professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy; Jennifer Groebner, Ed.D., MHA, BSN, RN, University Lecturer in the Department of Health Administration; Paul Keys, Professor Emeritus, Department of Social Work; Carolyn Rodgers, Ph.D., MPH, MHS, MCHES, University Lecturer, Department of Addictions Studies and Behavioral Health; Caren Schranz, DrOT, OTR/L, Assistant Professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy; Dale Schuit, PT, Ph.D., MS, Professor in the Department of Physical Therapy; and Maristela Zell, Ph.D., LCSW, Associate Professor in the Department of Social Work.

"The goal of the Work Group is to determine, as a college, if there are ways we can integrate more collaborative, experiential learning activities into our curriculum," said IPE Work Group member Darrin Aase, Ph.D.,

Assistant Professor in the Department of Addictions Studies and Behavioral Health. "The challenge is to try and integrate IPE into the current program curriculums with a minimal number of disruptions or changes that would increase the cost of education or present other kinds of logistical challenges."

The IPE Work Group is currently examining how and where IPE is happening in the College now, and how it can be accomplished in a more focused, cohesive and organized way. "Hopefully, in the long term, these types of activities will be more integrated into our day-to-day activities in the College. We'd like to have more opportunities where we have students in different disciplines learning together, as opposed to staying in their silos," Aase said.

### **Moving Beyond Fragmentation**

"Healthcare has been criticized as being fragmented, with no or little communication between multiple practitioners who are seeing the same patient," noted Dale Schuit, PT, Ph.D., MS, Professor in the Department of Physical Therapy, and an IPE Work Group member.

"By having students from more than one profession interact in a class, hopefully, this will foster a greater understanding of each profession by all students. This, in turn, may facilitate greater communication once the students assume their professional roles," Schuit said.

"I think we as professionals still have a ways to go to overcome some of the barriers we learned that prevented us from being more interdisciplinary," Balthazar said. These barriers include territorial attitudes toward one's profession and professional knowledge, competition, hierarchies, and protectionism.

"Engaging in interprofessional education is vital to the success of any health care organization," believes Jennifer Groebner, Ed.D., MHA, BSN, RN, University Lecturer in the Department of Health Administration, and an IPE Work Group member.

"Collaborating with other health care professionals within an organization will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided, thus improving the clinical outcomes for the patients served. From a health administration perspective, anytime productivity improves, it has a positive effect on an organization's revenue and its overall success."

## **Interprofessional Education in Action**

A total of 93 students from the Departments of Communication Disorders, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy in the College of Health and Human Services had the opportunity to experience Inter-professional Education in action when they participated in an interdisciplinary case study activity on June 12, 2015.

In this simulation exercise, students from the three different academic programs assessed volunteers from the community who experienced a stroke. Students conducted an evaluation from the perspective of their own discipline, while working in collaboration with students from different disciplines.

This exercise, "Building Readiness for Inter-professional Learning, Collaboration and Team Skills Using a Simulated Environment," is one of the top three proposals and one of only three grants that were funded by the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CAPCSD) under the CAPCSD Current and Alternative Educational Outcomes Grant Program.

The grant was prepared by CHHS faculty members Dr. Jessica Bonner, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, Associate Professor in the Department of

Communication Disorders. Assisting Bonner were Dr. Catherine Brady, Ed.D., OTR/L, Department Chair for the Department of Occupational Therapy; Dr. Roberta O'Shea, PT, DPT, Ph.D., Professor in the Department of Physical Therapy; Dr. Renee Theiss, Ph.D., Assistant Professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy; and Dr. Robin Washington, PT, Ph.D., CRC, Associate Professor in the Department of Physical Therapy.

Earlier in the year, Dr. Bonner provided lectures in Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy classes focusing on assessing an individual for communication disorders. Dr. Robin Washington, PT, Ph.D., CRC, Associate Professor of Physical Therapy and Dr. Catherine Brady, Ed.D., OTR/L, Department Chair for Occupational Therapy, returned the favor by lecturing in Bonner's Communication Disorders classes with the topic focusing on assessing an individual following a stroke from the physical therapist and occupational therapist perspective.

For the simulation exercise, the students were divided into groups comprised of at least one student from each of the three disciplines: Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Communications Disorders. The students were assigned to meet with an individual who has had

a stroke and perform an audiology, speech and language, physical therapy and occupational therapy assessment. Adding to the “real life” aspect of the simulation, the students met with these individuals in the apartments located at GSU’s on-campus residence, Prairie Place.

The “learning object” of the grant was to measure the students’ level of understanding of their own role within the inter-professional team, and their understanding of the other students’ roles so they could work together effectively as a team to develop a plan of care for the individual who has had a stroke. While they were not supposed to actually “treat” the patient on this simulated first-time home visit, they were encouraged to consider what interventions they might choose to employ.

The students also enjoyed working in teams. “We had an amazing team,” one student commented. “We communicated well with one another, shared a lot of ideas, and learned a lot from each other. It was a really awesome experience.”

Overall, another student commented, “I realized how well-prepared we were and what an excellent education we’re receiving here.”

After the simulation exercise is complete, Bonner explained, the grant team will be able to assess three different groups of students’ readiness level to work in collaborative teams: the first group will include those students who just attended lectures involving inter-professional



After the exercise concluded, the students met back to discuss their experience. Many of the students were highly appreciative of having the opportunity to interact with a “real” patient — someone who had actually experienced a stroke.

“To be able to use things we had just learned about and to do it with a real patient was nice,” one student said. In their comments, students noted that it’s one thing to read a textbook description of a “gait dysfunction,” a speech problem, or a “flaccid” arm as characteristics of an individual who has had a stroke. But it can’t compare to the experience of working with an actual stroke survivor.

One student found the simulation exercise to be “a real confidence-booster. Seeing an actual stroke survivor, a lot of your education comes to the forefront of your mind, and you think, okay, I can do this. It really gets us into the clinician mode.”

disciplines; the second group will include the students who were able to attend the lectures and participate in the simulation exercise; and the last group of students will include students who were not able to attend the lectures or the simulation exercise.

“I can see my students benefiting, even just from the inter-professional lectures already,” Bonner noted.

## Putting the Pieces Back Together: Creating an Integrative Learning Environment

Once again, GSU's Department of Addictions Studies and Behavioral Health (ASBH) finds itself at the forefront of another cutting edge initiative.

In 1983, GSU's Master of Health Science in Addiction Studies degree program, based in the University's College of Health and Human Services, was one of the first programs of its kind in the entire nation. Today, several ASBH faculty members and students are involved in a first-of-its-kind nine-month internship program — the Integrated Community and Behavioral Health Training Consortium — designed to teach students how to work and function in an integrative healthcare environment.

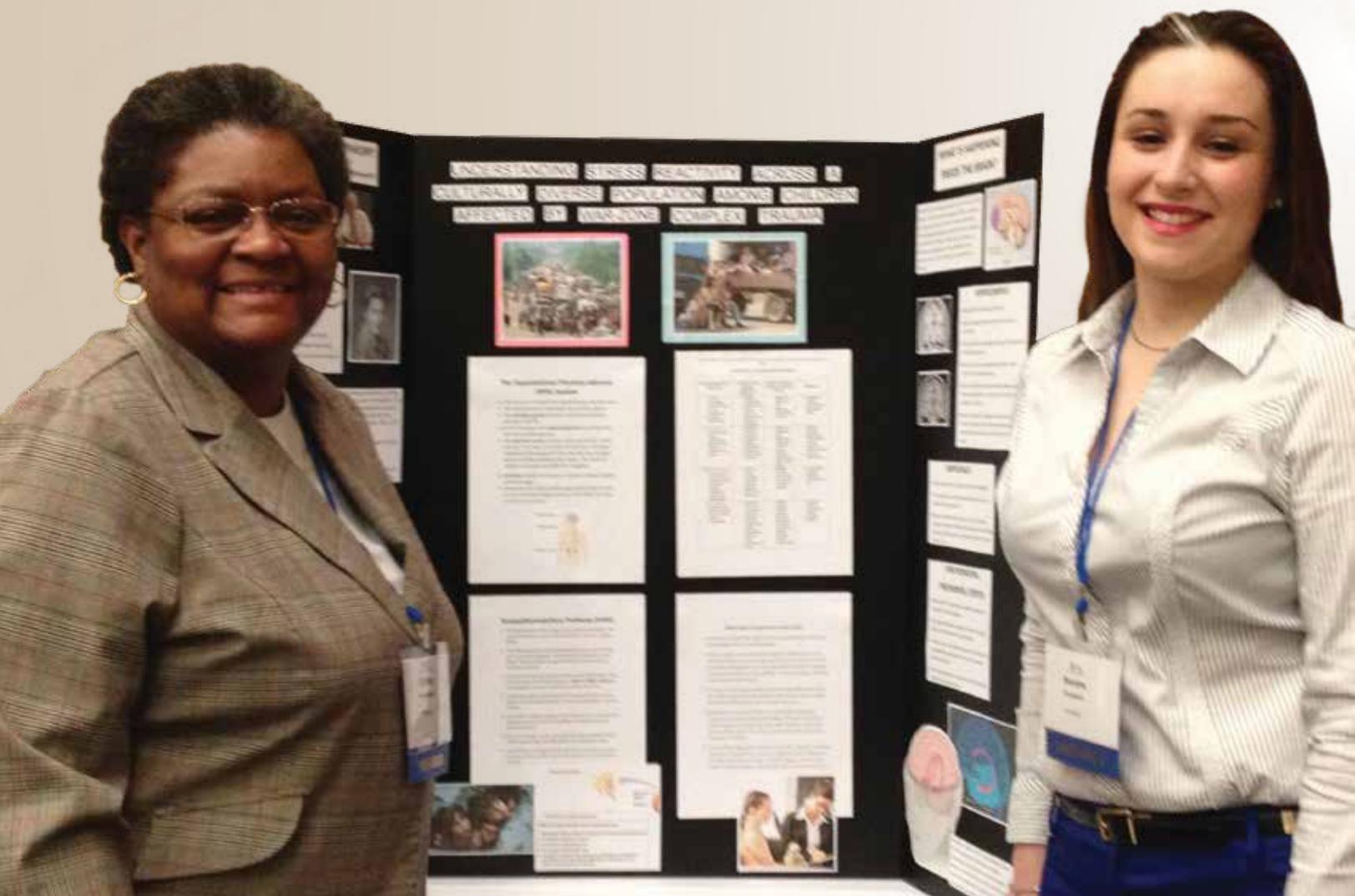
Working with GSU on this collaborative effort are the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities, Inc.), University of Illinois at Chicago's School of Public Health, and the Chicago School of Professional Psychology.

"This is truly a unique program," noted Cheryl Mejta, Ph.D., Chair of the Department of Addictions Studies and Behavioral Health at GSU. "We are one of the few and one of the earliest integrative programs available in the country. We were definitely at the table early on. Definitely unique."

### A National Impetus

Due to the Affordable Care Act, there is a growing impetus for a more team-integrated approach to a person's treatment and recovery from substance abuse issues. It's about medical and behavioral health care treatment professionals working together in integrated teams to offer the best, most holistic, and most appropriate treatment plan possible for the patient or client.

"Healthcare reform will advance the adoption of a person-centered, prevention-focused, integrated system of care," said Jeffrey A. Coady, Psy.D., CAPT, U.S. Public Health Service, Regional Administrator (Region V) for SAMHSA.



"It is critically important that behavioral health professionals are trained to operate in an integrated environment. This would include behavioral health integration with public health, primary care, and community-based organizations," Captain Coady said.

### **Taking Professionals Out of Their Silos**

Without a federal policy forcing a shift in the way medical and behavioral health practitioners treat their patients and clients, "I don't think people would come out of their silos (fields of expertise) otherwise," Mejta commented.

"The silo is so comfortable and familiar," agreed Serena Wadhwa, Psy.D., LCPC, CADC, Assistant Professor in GSU's Department of Addictions Studies and Behavioral Health. "That's what you know."

Viewing one's client as a whole human being makes for a more complex endeavor, Wadhwa explained. The clinician has to look at everything from not only a substance abuse perspective, but from a mental health perspective, as well as a medical, criminal justice, family, environmental or policy (insurance, regulations) perspective.

"It's really about getting people to truly consult and talk with each other," Mejta said. "Rather than just reporting, 'here's a 45-year-old male and I'm seeing him for this medical problem, but I think he has a substance abuse problem, too.' But then there's no continued consultation about how one is affecting the other. Unless you look at the complexities and see the person in his/her totality, you're not going to have a good outcome, and our goal is to have better patient outcomes."

### **Putting the Pieces Back Together**

Wadhwa agreed, noting "It's not about putting a person in a box. It's really looking at them as a puzzle, recognizing there are many pieces to them, and being able to address them and all the pieces —rather than saying we're going to pull you apart and send you to all these different places so you can get 'fixed,' and then put you back together."

"I think it's also about trying to understand another profession's language and terminology, too, and how to work with people in other professions or disciplines," Mejta said. "To understand that people look at these things from different perspectives, and begin to appreciate that. It's a value thing, really; it's about recognizing the important contributions that other people make."

The program was two years in the making, Mejta noted, including the development of a curriculum and outline, which she and Wadhwa developed into a nine-month internship program. She credits individuals at SAMHSA and Governors State ASBH faculty member Peter Palanca for lighting the fire that started the program in the first place. Palanca is Executive Vice President of Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities, Inc. (TASC).

Wadhwa shares a smile when she talks about how "envious" she is of the students who have the opportunity to participate in this integrative internship program. "A lot of what these students are getting is something I had to do independently; I never had an internship that was integrative like that. It was strictly substance abuse and mental health," she said.

The two GSU students who participated in the integrated internship — Sandra Knezevic and Shirley Washington — recently took second place (out of a field of 11 competitors) at the 2015 Illinois Counseling Association's 5th Annual Southern Conference. The students conducted a joint poster presentation on "Understanding Stress Reactivity Across a Culturally Diverse Population Among Children Affected by War Zone Complex Trauma."

### **A 'Top Quality' Program**

"Our main focus was to look at the effects of childhood trauma (primarily war zone-inflicted trauma) by focusing on attachment theory, stress-reactivity and brain chemistry. We then focused on treatment alternatives and ways in which counselors can be sensitive in working with this population," Knezevic said.

Both students graduated in May from GSU's MHS in Addictions Studies/Addictions Counseling Concentration.

"Ours is a top-quality program," Knezevic noted. "I have received a well-rounded education and feel that I'm well-equipped to work with this population in the near future."

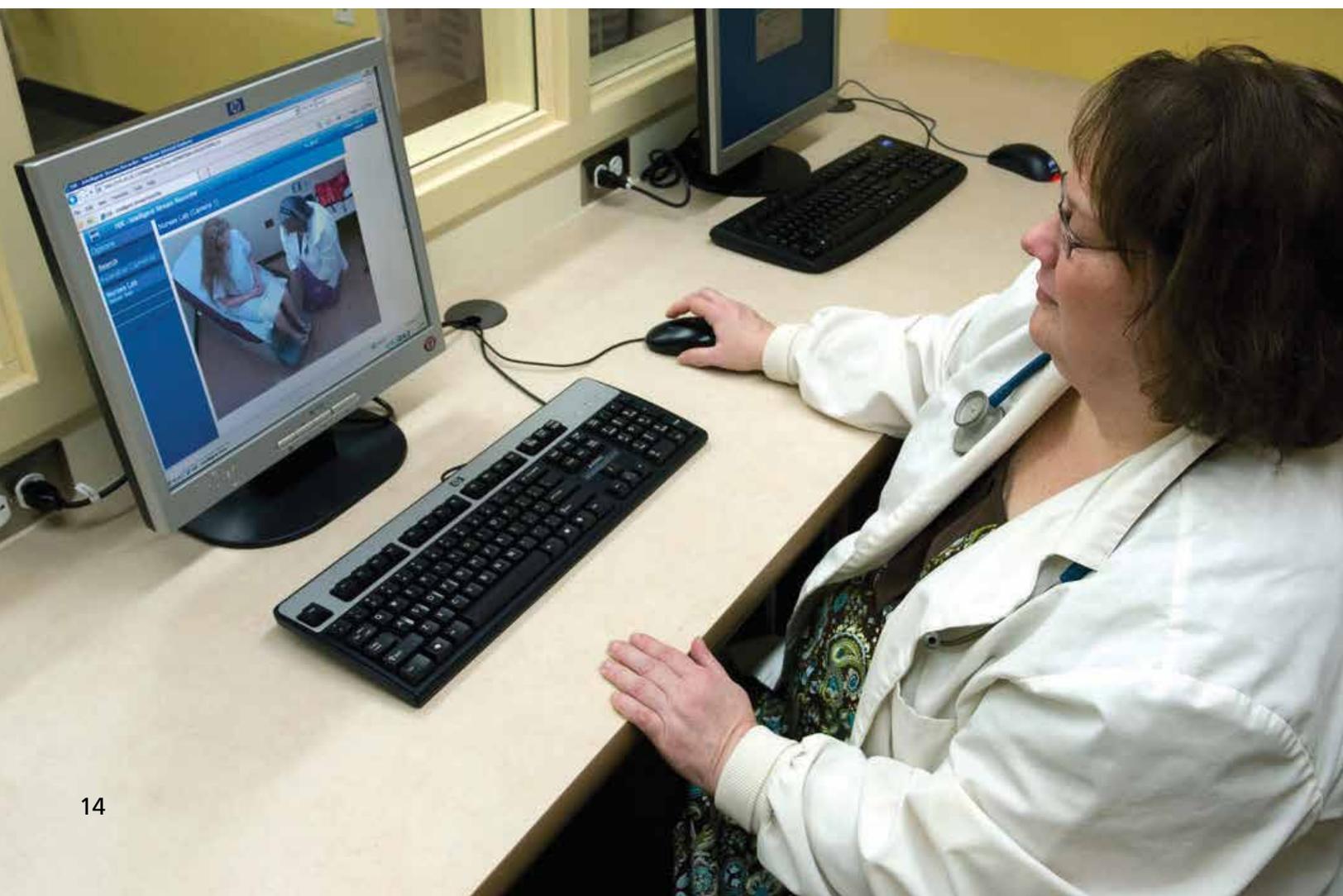
Washington would "definitely" recommend the MHS program in Addictions Counseling to other students, she said. "And it's a much-needed program, considering the issues we face in our society today. The program features a lot of real-world experience, with an emphasis on translating theory to practice," Washington said.

*Shirley Washington (left) and Sandra Knezevic (right), students in GSU's Master of Health Science in Addictions Studies/Addictions Counseling Concentration program, appear in front of their 2nd place award-winning poster presentation at the 2015 Illinois Counseling Association's 5th Annual Southern Conference, held March 20 in Collinsville.*

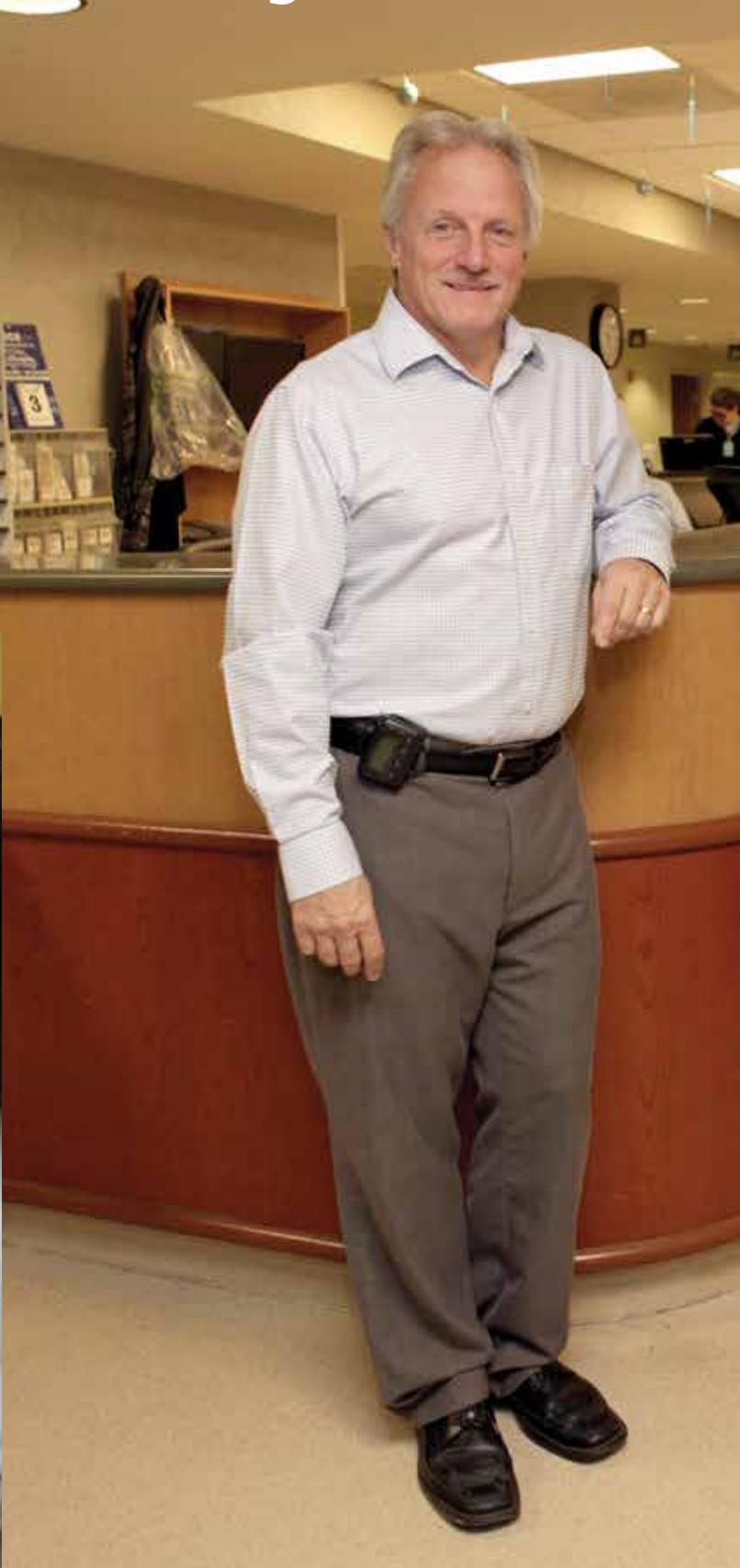
***“To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived, that is to have succeeded.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson***

While the seven departments within the College of Health and Human Services focus on different areas of academic study, each and every student across this college is united by their desire to make a difference in someone's life. The health care administrator, the occupational therapist, the physical therapist, the community health worker, the speech-language pathologist, the addictions counselor and the social worker — each of these professionals plays an important role in the physical, mental and/or emotional health and well-being of the people they serve.

Nurses, through the compassionate and skilled care they provide, serve as the backbone of the American healthcare system. Our Department of Nursing exemplifies the meaning of compassion as demonstrated through the following stories offering some examples of how our students and faculty touch lives, both here and around the world.



## Anthony Bucki: Making a Difference



For someone who never planned on studying nursing, and never thought it would be his “calling” in life, Anthony Bucki, DNP, MSN, RN, has certainly reached a tremendous level of achievement in the field.

Most recently, Bucki served as Manager of Emergency Services at Ingalls Memorial Hospital in Harvey before moving to his present position as Executive Director of Emergency Medicine at Metro South Medical Center in Blue Island. He’s also recently started teaching Nursing Theory for the Department of Nursing at GSU.

“I’ve been in Emergency Medicine for more than 30 years now. You learn something every day on the job, and there’s never a dull moment. It’s always something,” Bucki said.

The career path that Bucki has forged over the past 30 years is something, too; and just as impressive is his level of nursing education, which culminated in his receiving a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree from GSU in 2014.

### Never ‘Too Old’ or ‘Too Busy’

According to Bucki, you’re never “too old” or “too busy” to go back to school.

“You just have to set your priorities. When my daughter was at DePaul and I was getting my graduate Nursing degree, I spent my weekends at the library with her. We were studying together and writing papers together,” he recalled.

Bucki went back to school at age 54 for his Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree at GSU because “that’s what I wanted to do for me. Not because I needed it for my job or anything. It was something that I chose to do.”

Returning to school for a doctorate in nursing should be done for the right reasons, Bucki said, which include wanting “to better the practice of nursing, to make a difference, to be a part of change. A person’s own passion has to motivate them and drive them forward,” he said. “It shouldn’t be about making more money.”

For Bucki, the DNP program “was a long road (2.5 years), but it was really great. I’d recommend that program for anyone. I really enjoyed it.”

### A Long and Winding Path

More than 30 years ago, if you would have told Anthony Bucki that he would one day be managing emergency medical services for a 330-bed medical center, he would have looked at you funny. At the time, Bucki was working full-time as a cement finisher in the construction industry, and part-time at Ingalls Memorial Hospital in Harvey, delivering supplies. His fellow staff members at Ingalls began talking about the benefits of a nursing career, and asked him why he didn’t consider going into the field.

"I never gave it a thought," Bucki said. After further consideration, Bucki shadowed some nursing staff members and decided to give it a try. His first nursing degree was a diploma from Little Company of Mary Hospital School of Nursing in Evergreen Park. He then received his Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Lewis University in Romeoville in 1992.

His nursing career next led him to Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn, where he served for 16 years as Assistant Clinical Operations Manager, supervising the work of nearly 70 staff members in the Emergency Department. Bucki also served in the Emergency Department at Advocate South Suburban Hospital in Hazel Crest. He later went to the University of Chicago Hospital where he acted as Patient Care Manager and interim Director of the Emergency Department.

At that point in his career, Bucki was told he needed to earn a Master's degree. That's when he was led to GSU by his friend and former colleague Dr. Patricia Martin, who was the former chief executive officer at South Suburban Hospital and subsequently a professor of Nursing at GSU.

"Where better to get a degree in Nursing management than from someone who ran a hospital?" Bucki said. "It was a perfect match for me. I have a whole lot of respect for all the instructors at GSU; I learned a lot from all of them, especially Pat." (Dr. Martin is currently President of the BSN program at the Chamberlain College of Nursing, Tinley Park campus.)

Once he earned his Master of Science in Nursing degree from GSU (2010), Professor Martin encouraged Bucki to go on for his Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree.

"At that time my son was just finishing up his doctorate in physical therapy, and my daughter was in veterinary school. So I said, there's no way my two kids are going to be doctors and not me!" he joked.

### **Prepared for Anything**

For his DNP capstone project, Bucki developed a disaster-preparedness program for a community hospital.

"Disasters are a low-probability event, but they have a huge impact on an organization, should they occur," Bucki said. "It shuts down the Emergency Department, because you're so busy with disaster patients. So you have to have a good plan in place."

At the time of his DNP project, Bucki was serving as Manager of Emergency Services for Ingalls Memorial Hospital. He and the hospital's Director of Security had the opportunity to travel to Alabama for special emergency training sponsored by FEMA. Bucki and his co-worker were subsequently certified as national instructors for hazmat (hazardous materials) and triage set-up. Moreover, should the threat of an Ebola outbreak arise, Bucki is the highly trained health care professional you want in your corner.

Though constantly dealing with emergency situations, Bucki never seems to get upset about anything. "That's what people tell me," he said with a smile. "My response is, 'Unless someone is bleeding to death, it's really not an emergency.' If you get flustered and excited, it does nothing for the people around you, including the patient. You have to remain calm," he said.

### **Community Service**

Since 1985, in what little spare time he has, Bucki has presented free lectures at local high schools regarding the dangers of drunk driving. "I show the students pictures of patients I've treated in the ER, to demonstrate the consequences of drinking and driving," he said.

He's been recognized for his volunteer work by the Circuit Court of Cook County and the Illinois Teacher's Association. Bucki also won the Nursing Spectrum Nurse of the Year award for Community Service.

"But that's not what's important," Bucki said. "What matters is when a kid comes up to me after a presentation and asks, 'Is that what really happened?' And I say yes, and the kid replies, 'Well, I'm never going to drink and drive.'"

### **Making a Difference**

And after so many years in the nursing field, Bucki has found that he does enjoy helping others. "You help someone, they say thank you, and you know you made a difference in someone's life — that's huge," he said.

Bucki still recalls some of the trauma patients he saw while working in the Emergency Department at Advocate Christ Medical Center. He remembers one man who was shot and was saying that he was going to die.

"No, you're not," Bucki said to him. The man asked Bucki to just sit with him and hold his hand.

"Sure enough, he died shortly thereafter," Bucki said. "But he didn't die alone. As a nurse, I was there for him; and he knew he wasn't alone. That's the stuff that matters. It's not money that gives you satisfaction in life. It's helping other people and making the world a better place. Just like they always say when you're young and you don't believe it, but it is, as you get older.

"You have to make the world a better place, you have to work for that," Bucki said. "It's about making a difference."

# In a Typhoon's Wake...



It was a moment she still remembers, and still brings tears to her eyes.

Liberty Erfe, a student in GSU's Doctor of Nursing Practice program, was sitting on the floor of a makeshift "clinic," surrounded by a grandmother and her children, giving a tetanus shot to a young child.

Erfe was on a medical mission, stationed on the Island of Malapascua in the wake of the strongest typhoon (Yolanda) to have ever hit the Philippines, with winds recorded at 195 mph. More than 5,000 people were killed in Yolanda, with another 26,000-plus injured and nearly 2,000 still missing.

It was 98 degrees with stifling humidity. Sweat was rolling down Erfe's face. That's when the grandmother leaned over and used a towel to wipe the nurse's brow.

"That was such a big reward for me," Erfe recalled.

For Erfe, going on a medical mission to the Philippines for two weeks over Thanksgiving in 2013 was a chance for her to give back to the country where she was born and lived until 1995. Grateful for her own family's good fortune, Erfe was happy to be able to help. Employed as a nursing supervisor at Riverside Medical Center in Kankakee, Erfe was able to pack up and join the departing mission within hours of her last 12-hour shift at Riverside. Dr. Pat Martin, one of Erfe's Nursing professors from GSU at the time, assisted with a generous donation to her fundraising efforts.

The trip to the Philippines was sponsored by Hospitals for Humanity (HFH), a nonprofit organization committed to providing access to quality and affordable health care for people who are in dire need, especially those who live in developing and third-world countries.

Dr. Rodney Alford, an internal medicine specialist on staff at Riverside, is connected with HFH and asked Erfe if she was interested in helping. A fellow nurse from Riverside, Amy Aquino, joined her on the mission; they were two of only 15 health care personnel from across the U.S. and Canada chosen from a field of 200 applicants to make this medical mission. Together they worked in makeshift clinics pulled together from whatever was available — blue tarp for roofs, plywood for tables, bamboo sticks for IV poles. Theirs was among the very first relief groups to arrive in the typhoon's wake.

Over two weeks' time, Erfe gave almost 400 tetanus shots and provided wound care for hundreds of adults and children . . . and all with only one box of medical gloves at her disposal.

"I realized how much we have to be thankful for here in our country," Erfe said. "It's very clear to me now: the difference between a luxury and a necessity."

### **Making a Difference, One Person at a Time**

A year later, Erfe has completed her Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree from GSU. (She had previously earned her Master of Science in Nursing – Nursing Administration Concentration from GSU, as well.) And she has been promoted to Project ACE (Accountable Care Entity) Coordinator for the 325-bed Kankakee medical center.

"I think I made a difference in someone's life, from the bottom of my heart," Erfe said. "It was a matter of being there and experiencing the devastation and being a witness to care for them and give them hope. The devastation was overwhelming and you just have to try to make a difference one person at a time."

"It was a wonderful experience – hard work, but very rewarding," Erfe added.

"Liberty was a great student and is a fantastic leader. She certainly exemplifies the commitment of GSU's nursing students to giving back to the community – in this case the global community," noted Dr. Nancy MacMullen, Chair of the Department of Nursing at GSU.

Given the chance to return on another medical mission, Liberty would drop what she was doing again and return "in a heartbeat."

Have compassion, will travel.



*Dr. Nancy MacMullen, Chair of the Department of Nursing at GSU, and Dr. Liberty Erfe at the College's 2014 Recognition Banquet, where Dr. Erfe was named Outstanding Doctoral Student in Nursing.*



*(From left to right), Ervin Santos, son of Dr. Erfe; fiancée Roger Mailloux; Dr. Erfe; Elizabeth Valen, Dr. Erfe's sister; and brother-in-law Sadi Valen.*



*Dr. Liberty Erfe*

## An Officer and a Gentlewoman: Dr. Shirley Ann Spencer

Graduate and undergraduate GSU Nursing students are very, very lucky. They have 'an officer and a gentlewoman' among their Nursing faculty members. Assistant Professor of Nursing, Shirley Ann Spencer, Ph.D., RN, COL, holds the high rank of Brigade Chief Nurse in the United States Army, a position to which she was recently promoted. Spencer has been deployed several times overseas; she initially helped save lives in the midst of mortar attacks on the Army base where she worked. Later, as Deputy Commander of Nursing Services, she oversaw nursing services at the main hospital and clinics near the Iraq border. Armed with this background, Spencer brings a unique philosophical and global perspective to all her roles: leader, teacher, soldier, and nurse.

Last spring, Spencer received an award from the National Women Veterans United (NWWU). The NWWU hosted its 10th anniversary Conference and Luncheon, followed by an Awards Gala. Keynote speakers included Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner. The NWWU is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting women veterans, as well as those women currently enlisted in the Armed Forces, including the National Guard and Reserves.

### Giving Back: A Life in the Military

Growing up in Buffalo, N.Y., Spencer knew she wanted a job where she could travel. After spending several summers as a nursing assistant in a high school work study program, Spencer decided she definitely wanted to enter the medical field by the time she was a senior in high school.

Flash forward to 1990: Spencer had earned her BSN and was one year away from completing a MSN from St. Xavier University in Chicago and working at the University of Chicago Medical Center as an operating room (OR) nurse. Operation Desert Storm had begun, and there was a shortage of OR nurses. Military recruiters came right to the University of Chicago Medical Center. While she hadn't planned on entering the military, Spencer decided it was time for her "to give something back." Soon after, in October, 1990, Spencer was commissioned as an Officer in the U.S. Army.

Spencer was enrolled in a Ph.D. program at the University of Illinois and working a twelve hour shift in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit at the University of Chicago Medical Center in 2003 when she received a call to report for duty the next day. Initially, Spencer was sent to Kuwait, where she served as an operating room nurse and later relocated to Iraq due to the increased insurgency activities. She deployed for approximately 18 months.

"In Iraq, we were mortared 24/7. You were never safe. There were many challenges," Spencer recalled. "It was an experience I will never forget. You carried a weapon with you 24/7 and wore 'battle rattle' (helmet, flak jacket, and gas mask).

"The commitment you make when you serve is extremely high. With the military, there is no 40-hour work week. The mission always comes first," Spencer said.

Spencer's career trajectory in the U.S. Army has moved steadily upward – from first lieutenant to captain to major, then lieutenant colonel. Her most recent promotion to colonel was submitted for thorough vetting through both a national board and Congress. Spencer's credentials were approved by a second board before accepting her current assignment as brigade chief nurse.





It was a "rigorous and time-consuming process," Spencer recalled. Today she is one of very few Army officers who have had their service extended beyond the normal retirement age. "It's a real honor," she said. A spiritual person, Spencer gives credit to the guidance she has received from "the supreme being and those who supported me throughout my military career. I would never have reached this point in my career without that guidance and support."

### Lessons from the Field of Combat

Spencer's combined military, healthcare and academic pathway in life has made her a better leader, a better teacher, a better nurse, and she believes "a better person. I look at the world from a different perspective now; the world has grown smaller." Experiencing the different languages, cultures and perspectives of people from other parts of the world validate that her life's mission is to "help others and to treat others with the respect and dignity they deserve regardless of creed, ethnicity or socioeconomic status."

Working in the operating room at an Iraq military base, Spencer and her fellow medical team members discovered firsthand how difficult it can be "to treat everyone the same, no matter who they are. Sometimes we cared for both insurgents and soldiers at the same time. Many insurgents don't like Americans. But regardless, we try to provide the best possible care for all. It makes me proud to be an American and to serve on this medical team of individuals who are dedicated and share the same mission of providing superior care and doing whatever it takes to ensure our soldiers returned to their love ones in the best possible health," Spencer said.

When all is said and done, Spencer said, "There is no one country that's the best. Together, we are ALL the best. From a global perspective, we're all a team; we're all one. When one wins, we all win. When one person hurts, we all hurt. When one person fails, we all fail. Some cultures are more financially stable, but people are people, no matter who or where

they are. More and more it's a global society we're living in. And that's GOOD! I'm not sure, if I had not joined the military, that I would have discovered this."

Spencer's military experience has also impacted her role as a teacher. "The military trains to established standards. I believe that one should not strive to meet the standards, but should strive to exceed the standards. As a teacher, I try to bring out the best in my students; I try to encourage students to exceed expectations and strive for excellence."

Spencer added, "I love the diversity of the GSU students, the diversity of cultures and skill sets. For a team, you want a diverse group of people, with different ways of doing things. Students don't see things from the same viewpoint; their outlook is unique. This indicates how the world is evolving — looking outside the box for answers and understanding that it is acceptable to be unique. Together, we make up a whole."

### Salute to a Soldier

Upon Spencer's return, following her most recent, nearly year-long deployment in Kuwait and in honor of her promotion to colonel, she was treated to a standing ovation at the January, 2014 All College meeting of the College of Health and Human Services.

GSU President Elaine P. Maimon praised Spencer at the meeting, saying "Thank you for defending everything this nation stands for, all on our behalf. You personify what it means to be a nurse, a health professional, and the courage it takes to do so. Thank you for your service to this university and to your country."

Spencer remembers being "totally surprised and speechless" at the All College Meeting. "I was so honored, and it felt so good to know there are so many individuals who appreciate the military and the sacrifices the soldiers make to protect our country and assets and support peace. I'm very grateful for the flexibility I've been given to serve my country. To the GSU community, I would like to say thank you, thank you, and thank you."



# BATTLING FALLING RETENTION RATES

The dilemma of falling retention rates among first-year Nursing students at Prairie State Community College (PSC) has long been a major concern among Nursing faculty at this south suburban institution.

One PSC Nursing faculty member and GSU Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) graduate (and now Director of Nursing at PSC) is addressing this challenge in an innovative way.

As part of her DNP capstone project, Patrice Eberhardt was awarded a Nursing Improvement Grant (\$40,000) from the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). The grant — one of only three Improvement Grants awarded this year to Illinois institutions of higher learning — is designed to implement Supplemental Instruction with first-year Nursing students at PSC.

Eberhardt first learned of the theory behind Supplemental Instruction when she attended a seminar at the International Center for Supplemental Instruction, based at the University of Missouri in Kansas City.

"It hasn't been used much in Nursing," Eberhardt said. "It's designed for high risk, challenging classes — not high risk students. It targets material that is challenging. Students who volunteer for Supplemental Instruction (it's strictly voluntary) are not to be considered slow or remedial," she stressed.

"Supplemental Instruction is far more than just tutoring. It's designed to be a student-focused, collaborative learning process which will empower students to be proactive learners," Eberhardt said.

## Addressing Student Needs

Eberhardt says members of the Nursing student population at Prairie State face some tough challenges. "There are a lot of single parents, sole providers. They think they can manage everything on their own, but they have no support at home. It's tough," she explained.

Moreover, due to the large entering nursing class each fall at PSC, a lot of material is presented in lecture format, Eberhardt said. But, through Supplemental Instruction, the students will do more group work, examining case studies and creating concept maps. Plus, they will receive guidance from a graduate of PSC's Nursing program — someone who did well in class and who has the time to be a role model, a mentor, and a student leader for the first-year Nursing students.

"It's important to have someone who has been in the students' shoes. Someone who understands and knows the (nursing) program," Eberhardt pointed out.

The Prairie State College administration is extremely proud of Eberhardt's work involving Supplemental Instruction for the Nursing students.

"These are the kinds of initiatives we have to consider," noted Dr. Marie Hansel, Vice President, Academic Affairs at Prairie State College and a GSU Nursing graduate herself. She earned her BSN and DNP degrees at GSU. (See related story, page 22.)

"We are among the first nursing schools to implement that model. I'm extremely proud," she said. Dr. Hansel joined the Prairie State College Nursing faculty in 2005 after 28 years of nursing experience with St. James Hospital and Health Center in Chicago Heights. Assisting Eberhardt on the grant was her Capstone Committee Chair, Dr. Linda Samson of GSU's Nursing and Health Administration departments; Dr. Georgianna Thomas, Nursing Lecturer; and Dr. Nancy MacMullen, Chair of GSU's Department of Nursing.

Coming full circle, Dr. MacMullen was one of Eberhardt's first professors at Rush; Eberhardt earned her BSN in 1983, and later earned her MSN in Clinical Nurse Specialist in 1987 from Rush University.

# A Sure Thing: Betting on GSU's Nursing Program



Though not typically a betting woman, Dr. Marie Hansel would “put a GSU student up against anybody.”

The Vice President of Academic Affairs at Prairie State College, Dr. Hansel earned both her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and her Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degrees from GSU's College of Health and Human Services.

But it was when she was pursuing her master's degree in nursing at Purdue University Calumet in Hammond, IN, that Hansel first realized what an excellent BSN education she had received at GSU.

“There were only eight people in my Purdue class,” Hansel recalled. “I was the only one in the group who did not go to Purdue for my bachelor's (in Nursing). But I could out-write, out-present everyone in class, because we did so much of that at GSU. The nursing education

at GSU is high quality, it's current, and it's well-respected in the area. When I decided to get my doctorate, a lot of schools were starting to offer DNPs. But I was excited to see GSU offering the DNP. And once again, I will put a GSU student up against anybody.”

Moreover, six out of 10 Prairie State College nursing faculty have gone back to school for their Doctor of Nursing Practice degree, and five of them are at GSU right now, Hansel noted. Her own daughter will graduate this year from the Master's in Urban Education program at GSU.

“I would highly recommend GSU's DNP program,” Hansel said. Hansel was in the first class of GSU DNP graduates. “The program makes you more global in your thinking and gives you a whole different perspective. I still look upon the GSU Nursing faculty as a source of support; people to bounce ideas off of. There

are some great people there. We encourage all our students that, as long as there is a close, affordable, and accredited program (like GSU's DNP), you should take advantage of it. ”

## South Suburban Roots

Born and raised in the south suburbs, since 1978 Hansel has resided on a farm in Beecher with her husband and their (now grown) two children, where they grow chemical-free vegetables.

Hansel began her nursing career in 1981 at St. James Hospital and Health Centers in Chicago Heights, where she assumed a number of nursing positions, including clinical educator, research nurse, staff nurse, surgical floor team leader, and oncology clinical nurse specialist nurse navigator.

Twenty-eight years later, Hansel felt it was time to switch to education.

"In the last few years at the hospital, I was seeing that, although the nurses had the technical skills, the new grads were not aware of all the new equipment; they weren't aware of the Institute of Medicine, National Patient Safety Goals, and customer service. So the schools were doing a good job of teaching the nursing theory and nursing process — but I thought I'd better get back into education on the pre-licensure side. When I came to Prairie State, we really revised the curriculum to reflect and incorporate those things into the curriculum. This way the graduates would have an easier transition when they started working, and would not be overwhelmed by all the new developments and regulations."

Hansel joined Prairie State's Nursing faculty in 2005; in 2010, she assumed the role of interim Vice President of Academic Affairs. Earlier this year, Prairie State's administration removed the "interim" from her title.

As Vice President, Academic Affairs, Hansel is the chief academic officer of the college. She is responsible for providing executive leadership in the curriculum, instructional and educational services of the college, as well as promoting the professional development and growth of the faculty. She also provides leadership and administrative direction over academic matters within the college in the divisions of Liberal Arts, Business, Mathematics and Science, Health and Industrial Technology, Library and Instructional Services, and the Student Success Center.

### From HealthCare to Academia

Hansel has enjoyed all the transferable skills that came with her during her transition from healthcare to academics.

"Academics is where hospitals were about 15 or 20 years ago," Hansel said. "They're starting to look at performance-based funding; their state funding is being reduced. Before, a community college would have a very defined district. We didn't advertise; we sat there and waited

for the students to come. Now we're in a very competitive market; we're competing against four-year universities and for-profits, and people are looking at our outcomes. We will be going to performance-based funding for academics within the next couple of years. All the things that healthcare went through 15 or 20 years ago — we're going through now!"

### Facing Nursing Challenges

Promoting the importance of advanced nursing education is a major challenge facing nursing today, Hansel said. "We have to reinforce with our students in the Associate's program that this is not the end of your education," she said. "Public institutions have to work together to create seamless transfer experiences for nursing students at any level — so they can enter a BSN or Master's or Doctoral program and have classes transfer without too much trouble."

Advance practice nursing at a doctorally-prepared level, Hansel believes, has to be the cornerstone of a wellness model if the Affordable Care Act is to succeed.

Hansel is also concerned about the growing number of for-profit schools that have opened up in the area, some of which engage in predatory practices and charge exorbitant tuition rates. "Public institutions have to work together to regionalize some things and put these predatory institutions out of business," Hansel said.

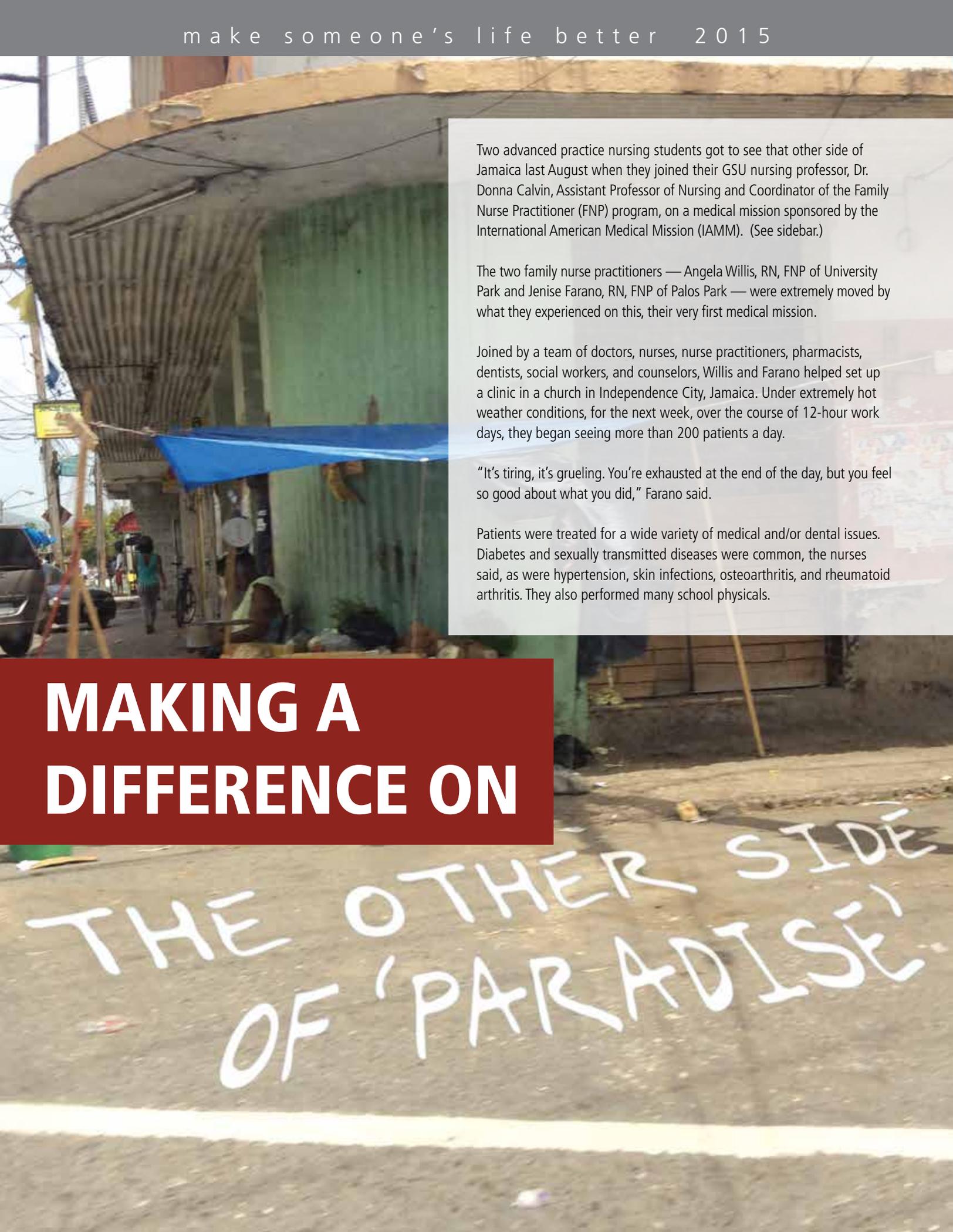
### A Regional Perspective

In Hansel's "ideal" world, she envisions a "regional" nursing program that would take advantage of GSU's new, state-of-the-art Nursing labs.

"The labs are so beautiful," Hansel said. "I would love to regionalize the labs with Prairie State and South Suburban College. We could pool our resources together, and the BSN, Master's, and DNP students at GSU could, as part of their coursework, be educators in the lab. I think it would be a great experience to introduce students in pre-licensure and associate degree programs to an upper division school. The natural pathway would be to come to GSU to finish their BSN. Quite a few of our students do that now already. Maybe we could provide a few courses where students could earn credit for their BSN while they work on their Associates."

It's not just the health students about whom Hansel is concerned. She noted that approximately 30 to 45 percent of all Prairie State students transfer on to a university; the rest graduate. She wonders, "Are we preparing them for the jobs that are out there? Manufacturing and health are the two hot areas for employment now. Are we meeting industry standards? What can we do to make our students' experience better here, so they stay and complete?"





Two advanced practice nursing students got to see that other side of Jamaica last August when they joined their GSU nursing professor, Dr. Donna Calvin, Assistant Professor of Nursing and Coordinator of the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) program, on a medical mission sponsored by the International American Medical Mission (IAMM). (See sidebar.)

The two family nurse practitioners — Angela Willis, RN, FNP of University Park and Jenise Farano, RN, FNP of Palos Park — were extremely moved by what they experienced on this, their very first medical mission.

Joined by a team of doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, dentists, social workers, and counselors, Willis and Farano helped set up a clinic in a church in Independence City, Jamaica. Under extremely hot weather conditions, for the next week, over the course of 12-hour work days, they began seeing more than 200 patients a day.

“It’s tiring, it’s grueling. You’re exhausted at the end of the day, but you feel so good about what you did,” Farano said.

Patients were treated for a wide variety of medical and/or dental issues. Diabetes and sexually transmitted diseases were common, the nurses said, as were hypertension, skin infections, osteoarthritis, and rheumatoid arthritis. They also performed many school physicals.

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE ON

THE OTHER SIDE  
OF 'PARADISE'

"Many people fail to take their medications as prescribed," Willis pointed out. "They try to make two months' worth of pills last for a year until the medical missionaries return. So they would end up living with an illness that would have been manageable otherwise; but due to poverty, many people just can't afford to fill the prescriptions."

"I had NO idea there was that much poverty," Farano interjected.

"There are areas in Jamaica where you can't imagine people are living," Willis affirmed. "I felt sadness for the level of poverty I saw, that they couldn't afford the most basic necessities."



*The family nurse practitioners worked in an area not far from Trench Town in Jamaica, home of reggae musician Bob Marley.*

It was also evident, Willis said, that many of the same healthcare providers came every year to that same mission site in Jamaica; the patients knew them and were thrilled to see them again after a whole year apart.

Both Willis and Farano want to return to Jamaica for another medical mission. They thank Professor Calvin for the experience. "We love her. She (Dr. Calvin) is a fantastic instructor! I hope GSU knows what they have," Farano said.

### **'Not My Day to Eat'**

What touched Willis the most was the tremendous gratitude shown to the medical crew for their service.

"People had such gratitude," Willis said. "We take so many things for granted here at home. I would be checking someone's blood glucose level and I'd ask them, 'Did you eat today?' They'd say, 'No, I didn't eat today. It's not my day to eat. The kids eat today. I'll eat tomorrow.' Or they'll say, 'No, I'll eat when I can.' Unlike here in America, there is no waste of food there; you can't be sure when your next meal is coming."

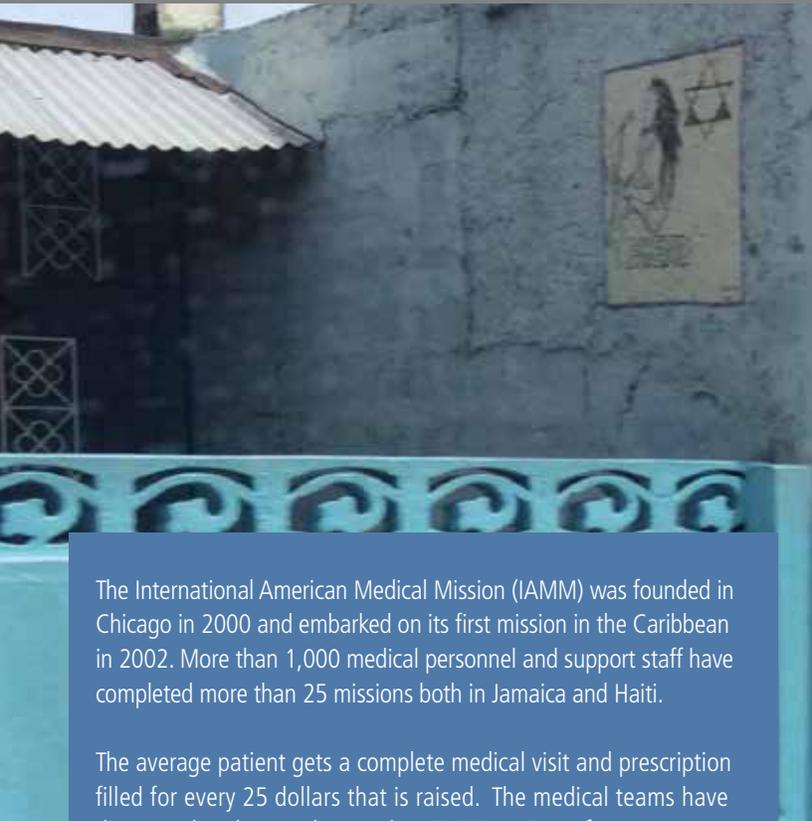
Farano was particularly struck by how the mission brought together so many different healthcare professionals from all over the country, "and you're all working together as one family. We felt so united. And it was so nice to be able to refer our patients to someone right there who could help — whether it was for depression or whatever — and know that they got help right away."

### **Making an Impact in Healthcare**

When they're not on a medical mission, Willis and Farano continue to demonstrate their compassion for humanity through their nursing careers. Willis is currently a nurse in the Adult Surgical Intensive Care Unit at Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn. She cares for patients who have had open heart surgery or received artificial hearts.

Farano, a recipient of a Walgreen's scholarship from GSU, provides education and nursing care through Johnson & Johnson for individuals with asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD) in underserved areas of Chicago. Like her classmate, Farano is extremely passionate about patient care.

"I go into these underserved areas, and it literally makes me sick to my stomach that people don't get the care they need — and it's always about money," Farano said. "My goal is to open up my own clinic and provide disease education and prevention. I see a lot of things that need to be fixed in our healthcare system. As a nurse practitioner, I know I could do more."



The International American Medical Mission (IAMM) was founded in Chicago in 2000 and embarked on its first mission in the Caribbean in 2002. More than 1,000 medical personnel and support staff have completed more than 25 missions both in Jamaica and Haiti.

The average patient gets a complete medical visit and prescription filled for every 25 dollars that is raised. The medical teams have diagnosed and treated more than 5,000 patients for numerous medical issues, ranging from general physicals to minor surgical procedures. In addition to those missions, local health fairs have been conducted throughout the United States.

Along with medical care, the mission of IAMM is to ignite hope in the hopeless and give help in many ways to those who are helpless. Chicago-based IAMM makes a difference in the health and well-being of "neighbors" in the United States and internationally.



*(Left to right) Jenise Farano, RN, FNP; Dr. Donna Calvin, Assistant Professor of Nursing and Coordinator of the Family Nurse Practitioner program; and Angela Willis, RN, FNP.*

Willis is in total agreement. "I see people having these surgeries to save their lives, and many of the disease processes that they have were preventable and avoidable. I want to teach people what they need to know to prevent long-term complications of illnesses, or to manage ones that can be managed better. That's what I feel I can do as an FNP. I want to be part of that team of people who impacts change. We can have a higher quality of life if we're just taught how to live better. That's what drives me.

"If someone — like a nurse practitioner — could teach a child how to use an inhaler properly in the doctor's office, we could prevent costly visits to the ER and hospitalization," Willis continued. "That's what family nurse practitioners are here for — to bridge that gap between the nursing profession and the medical profession. With more people having access to healthcare through the Affordable Care Act, there's an even greater need and more opportunity for nurses and nurse practitioners to educate people. We're in a unique position to be able to contribute largely."

### The 'Hidden Gem'

Both Willis and Farano worked hard in GSU's Family Nurse Practitioner Program, from which they graduated last December. But both say they loved the program.

"I'd recommend the program to anyone," Farano said. "GSU is a little hidden gem that nobody knows about."

"The faculty is very approachable. They give you all the tools, resources, and help you need," Willis said.

With their passion for serving humanity, Willis and Farano embody the mission of GSU's College of Health and Human Services: To make someone's life better.

"That's exactly what it's all about — making a difference in someone's life — and why we do what we do," Farano confirmed.

# Teen Sex & Healthy Choices Summit

The issue of underage drinking, tobacco, and other drug use/abuse putting South Cook County teens at greater risk of teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) was the topic of both discussion and action plans at a half-day Southland Call to Action Summit, hosted by the Department of Addictions Studies and Behavioral Health (ASBH) at GSU last November.

More than 120 individuals attended the Summit, including social workers, school psychologists, teachers, parents, clergy, law enforcement/juvenile services, health care professionals, education administrators, as well as municipal, county, and state public health professionals.

Professor Cheryl Mejta, Chair of the Department of ASBH at GSU, introduced and thanked the Strategic Planning Team partners, including: South Suburban Family Wellness Alliance; The Prevention Partnership, Inc.; Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities (TASC); Aunt Martha's Youth Service Center; Bremen Youth Services; Mental Health America of Illinois, and the Department of ASBH at GSU.

Serving as event moderator was Peter Palanca, MA, CADC, Executive Vice President of TASC and senior lecturer for the Department of ASBH at GSU.

## **A Labor of Love**

The summit was the first in a series of events designed to find a solution to some serious issues facing South Cook County teens. It was a "labor of love," Palanca noted, a long time in the planning. Palanca credits Al Orsello, President and Chief Executive Office of Prevention Partnership, Inc., for creating the concept of a south suburban alliance. The (then) Chicago Heights Mayor Anthony DeLuca (now Illinois State Representative DeLuca) was extremely helpful in the establishment of that process.

"Without Representative DeLuca we wouldn't have been able to kick this off," Palanca noted.

Since the November summit, the Strategic Planning Team has been hard at work on the development of a three-year tactical action plan for the Cook County Southland suburbs. "We're committed to be a part of the solution," Palanca said.

The adverse ramifications of teen pregnancy are far-reaching, explained Kimberly Fornero, Bureau Chief, Positive Youth Development for the Illinois Department of Human Services. For the teens themselves, pregnancies result in higher high school dropout rates, low educational attainment, a greater risk of poverty, and an increased



risk for participation in the child welfare system, Fornero stated. The long-term impact for the children of pregnant teens includes increased drop-out rates, increased health problems, lower school achievement, increased incarceration, and higher unemployment.

"This is not just an issue in the south suburbs," Fornero said. "It's a statewide issue. We need to educate youth and provide accurate information. We need open communication between coaches, teachers, parents, and youth organizations, and access to youth-friendly clinical services." According to the Illinois State Board of Education, both abstinence and contraception are encouraged for the prevention of pregnancy, noted Fornero.

"Sex and HIV education programs decrease sexual behavior, rather than promote sexual behavior," as some believe, she said. Eight out of 10 parents agree that schools should teach teens how to use condoms. "Parents want schools to address real-life issues," Fornero said.

### Social and Emotional Challenges

Joseph Day, Dr.PH, Assistant Professor in the Department of Addictions Studies and Behavioral Health and Director of GSU's Community Health Program, addressed the social and emotional challenges of teens growing up with "uninvolved" parents.

Day stressed that family, school, peers, and the environment all play crucial roles in helping determine who young people become, as well as their beliefs and values. "We don't spend enough time imparting beliefs and values with our kids," Day noted.

"Kids tend to want what they want when they want it. If we're not there to support them, they will make decisions that get them into trouble. Teens tend not to take the path of prevention. So we adults have to step in," Day said. "There are three million new cases of STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) identified in adolescents every year in the U.S. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015]. It's our problem, not only their problem."

Teens are not always developmentally competent to make healthy decisions, Day noted. "Adolescents are capable of rational decision-making. But in terms of brain development, are teens mini-adults? No. The brain of a teen is very different from an adult's, especially in terms of impulse control. Teens do riskier things. Their brains are changing and will continue to develop right through the mid-20s. We (parents

and educators) impact their brains with our support and supervision."

When it comes to alcohol use, teens drink for the same reasons as adults, Day said. "To get high, feel numb, feel good, forget about troubles, feel better, and ease stress and frustration. Teens drink to improve their mood, to receive social rewards, to reduce negative feelings, to avoid social rejection."

According to Day, parents' values and beliefs regarding alcohol affect their children. "We need parents to monitor, supervise, and listen. Kids don't need another friend; they need parents," he said.

### Youth Perspective

A panel of youth representatives from Bloom Township high schools — ranging in age from sophomores to seniors — offered their perspective at the Summit. Their greatest sources of information regarding sex education, they reported, were their peers, social media, and TV. Parents are often working night and day, the teens said. They didn't feel free to talk to their parents about sex. In contrast, social media is available 24 hours a day.

One African American youth noted that sex is "such a relevant thing in our culture — it should be relevant to our education, as well." The youth sees sex "pushed and encouraged" on TV all the time. "But the information we need to know to stay safe is not being televised or broadcast; there are no positive messages in the media, teaching us to be safe," he noted.

More than ever before, teens need positive leadership from adults to help navigate their environment, members of the youth panel said.

"All the churches, politicians, pastors, governors, and mayors need to come out to the streets and talk to us," one youth commented. "They say charity begins at home, but home is not helping us. We need you to come to our schools and have an intervention. We have wonderful leaders in the south suburbs, like (Chicago Heights) Mayor David Gonzalez. If we had more adults who came out and showed interest in us, then we'd be interested in what they have to tell us. Every kid has a message to be told. It's up to these adults to open their minds and even attempt to understand us." The impact of one caring adult, all the members of the youth panel agree, can make a tremendous impact.

"This is a new world," Palanca said, in closing. "As parents, we need to listen to our kids, give as much encouragement as possible. We need to help kids evaluate the messages they're receiving from the media. We also need more youth peer educators; we can't do it alone. It takes youth, professionals, parents, and community leaders to help healthy teens make healthy decisions."

## Conversations on Violence Against Women

GSU's College of Health and Human Services, Department of Social Work, Student Life, and Department of Criminal Justice, presented "Conversations on Violence Against Women: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on Intimate Partner Violence." Co-sponsoring student organizations included Phi Alpha Honor Society for Social Work (Omicron Beta Chapter) and The Student Coalition for Diversity & Social Justice.

The keynote address, "Arrested Justice: Responding to Violence Against Women as a Social Justice Issue," was presented by noted author-scholar-activist Dr. Beth E. Richie, Director of the Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy and Professor of African American Studies and Criminology, Law and Justice at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Dr. Richie's scholarly and activist work focuses on the experiences of African American battered women and sexual assault survivors, and emphasizes how race/ethnicity and social position affect women's experience of violence and incarceration. Her current book, *Arrested Justice: Black Women, Violence and America's Prison Nation* (NYU Press, 2012) chronicles the evolution of the contemporary anti-violence movement during a period of mass incarceration in the United States.

Serving as main coordinator of the event was Vickii Coffey, Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Work at GSU, who offered a presentation on "What is Intimate Partner Violence?"

Serving on the panel for discussion related to intervention and prevention were Dr. Larry Bennett, Ph.D., LCSW, of the Jane Addams College of Social Work and Dr. Mildred Williamson, Ph.D., MSW, Section Chief HIV/AIDS Bureau, Illinois Department of Public Health.

A panel discussion regarding direct services and legislative policy initiatives was held among the following: Diane Bedrosian, Executive Director of the South Suburban Family Shelter; Edward Vega, Executive Director of the Crisis Center for South Suburbia and Vickie Smith, CEO of the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence.



Dr. Beth E. Richie

# The Human Issue of Mass Incarceration

There was standing-room-only crowd in Engbretson Hall when noted writer, educator, social work clinician and social justice activist Dr. Kirk Anthony James, MSW, DSW of Columbia University's School of Social Work, New York, presented a two-hour symposium, "A Chance of a Lifetime: Reintegrative Justice and the Role of Higher Education."

Dr. James' visit was sponsored by GSU's Generating Hope Support Network, GSU Social Work Student Organization (SWSO), the College of Health and Human Services' Dean's Office, Social Work Department, Phi Alpha Social Work Honor Society and Student Life. The event was made possible through a GSU Intellectual Life Grant.

Generating Hope Support Network is designed to provide support, mentoring, networking, information, and resource linkage for the formerly incarcerated, their families, and friends. This was the second event sponsored by Generating Hope Support Network, whose main goal is to raise awareness of the collateral consequences of mass incarceration and to advocate for improving access to the admissions process at GSU and other institutions of higher learning.

Just prior to Dr. James' presentation, several GSU Social Work students — all members of Generating Hope — talked about what education has meant for them, as formerly incarcerated individuals. Answers were varied and poignant:

- "My past doesn't validate or determine my future."
- "Education helped me not be a nobody."
- "I went to the Lost and Found box and discovered myself."
- "Gave me a gateway to a life of purpose."
- "Allowed me to be a critical thinker."

"It takes a lot of courage for these students to speak about their experience," Dr. James commented. "It's scary to talk about. A lot of schools aren't talking about this. Less than five percent of schools of social work have classes on this subject."

Addressing the crowded hall, Dr. James spoke passionately about the phenomena of mass incarceration. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, the United States has 25 percent of the world's prison population. Women are the fastest-growing prison population. One in every 15 African American men is in prison; one in every 106 white men is in prison. White men with a criminal conviction have a better chance of getting a job than an African American man without a record.

"It's not a black issue. It's not a white issue. It's a human issue," Dr. James said. "Doing human work is so hard; each day it demands we be our best. Someone is suffering; people are in prison unjustly. It's not about me; it's about the issue — what I believe to be the most inhuman issue in America. Education has been shown to reduce imprisonment, but we don't spend the money that's needed."

Looking out at the filled Engbretson Hall, Dr. James said, "I've never been so happy to be anywhere. I'm so honored to be in this room. There's so much love here. But what you do when you leave this room is most important. You've come together at the most important time to do this work: human work."



Pictured, left to right, are Phyllis West, Ph.D., MPH, MSW, Senior University Lecturer, Social Work; Dr. Kirk Anthony James of Columbia University, New York; Dean Aurelio Valente, Vice President of Student Affairs at GSU; and Lorri Glass, Ph.D., LCSW, ACSW, Associate Professor of Social Work at GSU and Bachelor of Social Work Program Coordinator. Individuals interested in learning more about the Generating Hope Support Network are invited to contact Dr. Lorri Glass at [lglass@govst.edu](mailto:lglass@govst.edu)

## Divya Sood Named Distinguished Alumna

Divya Sood, OTD, OTR/L, Assistant Professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy at GSU, returned to her native India to receive the prestigious Distinguished Alumnus Award from the School of Allied Health Sciences at Manipal University, Manipal, India.

Located on the west coast of South India, Manipal University, one of the top-rated universities in India, bestows just one award a year — but not every year — to a worthy candidate. Sood was only the second occupational therapist to receive an award in the 15 years that the school has been in existence.

The entire experience, Sood recalled, was deeply moving, with her husband, daughter and other family members in attendance for the awards ceremony.

"It was such an emotional moment," Sood recalled. "For my family it was a very emotional experience as well."

Joining Sood on her trip to India was fellow occupational therapist Elizabeth Cada, Ed.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Dean of the College of Health and Human Services and Dean of Graduate Studies at Governors State University.

Dean Cada delivered the keynote address at Manipal University's College of Allied Health Sciences' Annual Awards Day and also did a presentation on the "Diffusion of Innovation." Sood and Cada presented a workshop for students and faculty at Manipal on using a Collaborative Coaching Model in occupational therapy for children with sensory processing dysfunctions.



Dr. Divya Sood

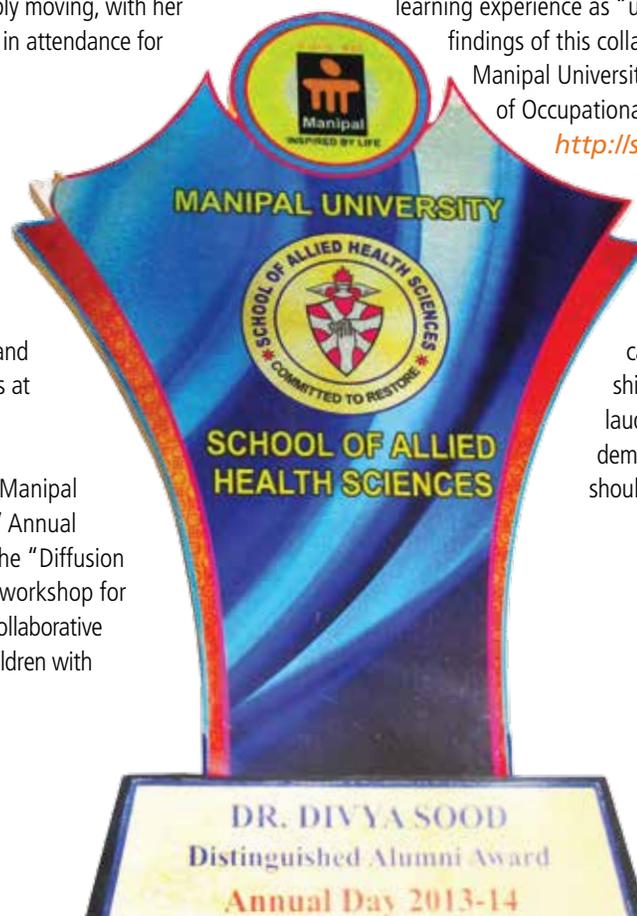
"It was exciting to meet the entire faculty; we had a rich discussion with the faculty about their perspectives regarding the OT profession," Sood said.

Five years ago, Sood also established a project entitled International Collaborative Project on Cultural Awareness (ICPCA) as part of a pediatric interventions course in occupational therapy she was teaching at GSU. Five students and three faculty members from Manipal University, plus 28 students from GSU, participated in the project, which helped to enhance the

students' capacity to develop family-centered interventions for the pediatric population. The OT students described the collaborative learning experience as "unique" and "eye-opening." The findings of this collaborative project between GSU and Manipal University were published in the Open Journal of Occupational Therapy in 2014

<http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/ojot/vol2/iss3/7/>.

The Dean of the School of Allied Health Sciences at Manipal University — Dr. B. Rajashekhar, Ph.D. — calls Sood's efforts in forging relationships between the two universities "most laudatory and commendable. You have demonstrated what an alumnus can and should do for the Alma Mater."



## Communication Disorders Graduate Named ASHA Fellow

A 1981 graduate of the Master of Health Science in Communication Disorders program, offered through the College of Health and Human Services at Governors State University, was recently elected a Fellow of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

Regina Goings of Las Vegas, NV, was formally recognized with a presentation at the ASHA awards ceremony last November, at the ASHA Convention in Orlando, Florida.

"I'm delighted to know that a GSU alumna received such well-deserved professional recognition," noted Jay Lubinsky, Ph.D., CCC-A/SLP, ASHA Fellow, Professor Emeritus and former Chairperson of the Department of Communication Disorders at GSU. "Regina exemplifies the seriousness of CDIS's students and, as GSU alumni, their ongoing excellence as speech-language pathologists." Dr. Lubinsky was Goings' nominating sponsor.

Since 2008, Goings has served as Director of Speech-Language Therapy and Audiology Services for the Clark County (Nevada) school district — the fifth largest school district in the country.

Being named an ASHA Fellow is quite an honor, Lubinsky pointed out. "ASHA has more than 173,000 members; this year only 39 people received Fellowship. The nomination and selection processes are quite rigorous. Members selected as Fellows must display evidence of sustained excellence in three categories; in Goings' case, they are clinical service, administration, and service to professional organizations other than ASHA."

According to Elise Davis-McFarland, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, Chair of the ASHA Committee on Honors, "Fellowship is one of the highest forms of recognition given by ASHA of an individual's accomplishments, and is public declaration of your outstanding professional achievements."

Recalling her years in the CDIS program at GSU, Goings noted, "The quality of education, by far, was excellent. The professors were knowledgeable, passionate about their areas of expertise, and accessible to and supportive of the students," she said. "We had a strong knowledge base which made us well prepared for the ASHA exam; many of us were able to pass it on the first attempt."

### Perseverance Pays

Upon first enrolling, Goings remembers feeling "somewhat overwhelmed. I was not a stellar undergraduate student, but I knew that this was the profession where I would do well." She persevered, remaining focused and committed.



*Regina Goings*

Goings credits Professor Emeritus Lubinsky with making Audiology "less intimidating. He set high standards for his students, yet he provided support when we needed it. After more than 30 years of practice, I still rely on the knowledge that I obtained under his tutelage," Goings said.

Following graduation from GSU, Goings career path began in the Chicago Public Schools system, where she worked with children with severe-to-profound intellectual disabilities and autism. But that path moved westward once her husband was transferred to Las Vegas.

As the Director of Speech-Language Therapy and Audiology Services for Nevada's Clark County School District, "it is imperative that I remain knowledgeable of current trends and developments," Goings said, "especially as technology continues to drive the profession. Dr. Lubinsky provided that foundation and helped to ease the intimidation."

In addition to her responsibilities to the school district, Goings serves as a member of ASHA's School Finance Committee. She is also the Southern Nevada representative for the Coalition to Address Critical Labor Shortages in Special Education, which is an ad hoc committee of the Nevada Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSHA). As a member of the Nevada Medicaid Committee, Goings is responsible for reviewing and providing recommendations that support Medicaid billing for related services in Nevada schools.

"We in the College of Health and Human Services are justly proud of Ms. Goings' accomplishments. She sets an excellent example and serves as a role model for all our students," said Elizabeth Cada, Ed.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Dean of the College of Health and Human Services, and Dean of Graduate Studies.



## CHHS Neuroscientist Shares Passion for Learning with Students

As a little girl growing up north of Detroit, Dr. Renee Theiss wanted to become astronaut Sally Ride someday.

Perpetually fascinated with science and technology, Theiss remembers hearing about the hole in the ozone layer at the age of 5 or 6; she began to worry about animal extinction as a result. At age 7, when other girls her age were asking for toys, she was asking for solar panel kits.

Today, while she may not be exploring the universe from a NASA space vehicle, Theiss is exploring the human brain's universe — and taking her students along with her on a grand journey of education and discovery. A research scientist with a Ph.D. in neuroscience from Northwestern University, Theiss teaches graduate-level Human Gross Anatomy and Neuroscience to students just beginning their rigorous Physical Therapy or Occupational Therapy studies in the College of Health and Human Services at GSU.

Looking not much older than some of her students, Theiss exudes passion and enthusiasm for her students and her subject matter. She recalls seeing a human brain for the first time as a graduate student in neuroanatomy. Her reaction? "I thought it was really cool. I was really, really excited." In fact, any topic involving the brain, the muscles and the science of movement captures her interest.

And she is just as passionate about the Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy students she teaches.

"The students in my courses are very driven, dedicated and eager to learn," Theiss said. "At the same time, they are compassionate and truly care about their classmates and the clients they will be serving. They bring diverse experiences that enrich their understanding and curiosity about the subject matter. I enjoy that there are a lot of second career and nontraditional students. It brings something different to the classroom dynamics."

Theiss enjoys the balance of science and teaching. Teaching offers more "immediate" rewards: seeing grades improve, helping someone understand a concept. In science, there's more failure. "Sometimes you have to try a lot of things before you move onto the next thing. It's the emotional component of teaching that I like; it gives me hope," Theiss said.

Through teaching, “we’re able to learn about ourselves and others — how we are put together and how we are able to think and interact with our environment. There is still so much we don’t know about the nervous system and how it interacts with the body,” Theiss said. “Curiosity, exploration, creativity and discovery drive my passion and fascination with the content that I teach.”

### **The Development of a Scientist**

As a pre-med undergraduate at Ithaca College in New York, Theiss studied exercise science, which covered the A to Z of the human body, how the body moves, the psychology of sport and exercise, therapeutic recreation, in addition to anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, biomechanics, exercise physiology, sports psychology, motivational psychology — anything about the body and its performance. Studying exercise science satisfied Theiss’ curiosity about human movement that developed through her experiences as an athlete, playing soccer, running cross-country, and rowing crew.

When she first went to grad school, Theiss was interested in learning and memory research; she was particularly intrigued with studying what causes people to be visual, auditory or kinesthetic learners. At the time, the science was at a small, cellular level; she did that for a while, but wanted to look at bigger things.

“I was interested in the application of what I was doing. What are we going to use this for? Knowledge is cool, but can we help someone with this info?” Theiss said.

So she headed to her subspecialty — motor control — specifically, biophysics (electricity from chemicals) as it pertains to spinal cord injuries and neuromuscular diseases like Multiple Sclerosis or ALS. An ardent math-lover (Theiss took math “for fun” and wound up getting a minor in it), she fit in beautifully with her student counterparts.

“A lot of people in that field are engineers,” Theiss said, “It’s really cool because there’s a lot of mathematical basis for what they do, and a lot of mathematical modeling. So when I got in there, I felt like I was home.”

### **A Love of Education**

Growing up with two younger brothers (both of whom excel at science and math, like her), Theiss recalls the value her parents placed on education. While she does not come from what she describes as a “well-privileged background,” Theiss says her parents were deeply invested in her education and wanted her to follow whatever creative outlet she wanted.

“I’m very grateful for that,” Theiss said. “My mom very much believed girls were capable of studying science as much as boys and should not be pigeon-holed.” Theiss’ mother, a school teacher, was the only person in her immediate family to attend a four-year college right after high school. Neither of Theiss’ grandmothers attended high school; for Theiss to receive a Ph.D. is “slightly unfathomable for them,” she said with a smile.

Theiss is also grateful to her mother for encouraging her and her brothers to study music. “My mom had an understanding of how much success in music can contribute to success in other ways. The discipline of listening, being observant, being able to create something — that contributes to so many things.” Theiss, herself, studied the piano starting at age 7, the French horn starting at 9, and later added other brass instruments for her school’s marching band. In high school, she was even part of a marimba trio. “I’d learn to play every instrument if I had the time,” she explained, “I like the variety of sounds and techniques. The variety in the possibilities of what can be created and expressed with different instruments.” Most recently, she started playing guitar and bass.

When she is not in the classroom, or meeting with students, Theiss is producing manuscripts, working on her research, or writing grants in an effort to obtain the ever-elusive research funding. Among many other ventures, Theiss is working on a project for stroke survivors involving Conductive Education with GSU Physical Therapy Professor Dr. Roberta O’Shea, PT, Ph.D.

And at the end of the day, Theiss picks up her one-year-old daughter from GSU’s Family Development Center (FDC), which offers quality educational programs for children and their parents. The tyke absolutely adores the FDC and cries when she has to leave earlier than her usual time. According to Theiss, the FDC offers a solid research-based curriculum and multi-age infant/toddler classrooms, which enhance her daughter’s social-emotional development, problem-solving skills, and motivation for independence, as well as fulfilling her seemingly never-ending need for cognitive stimulation and physical activity. The teachers there are well-educated and most have college degrees in child development, she stated. And Theiss herself loves the FDC “because they’re really pushing the kids who are there to be college-bound,” she said. “Otherwise, they may not know that’s an option, or something that they should strive for. When it comes to kids, it’s all about exposure, and opening up their possibilities.”

Possibilities. . . Like math, science, or even becoming an astronaut one day.

# Life After Stroke

## Research Study Opening New Pathways



*Maureen Michalski, MPT, DPT (far right) of the Center for Independence Through Conductive Education, works with research study participants on symmetrical arm positioning, alignment, bilateral grasp and strengthening. Study participants include (left to right) Dan Nicholson, Vince Evans, Ted Waltmire and Diane Deacy.*

It appears that stroke survivors are creating new pathways in their brains — and their lives — thanks to an intensive 10-week research study program conducted by faculty from GSU's College of Health and Human Services, in collaboration with The Center for Independence through Conductive Education in Countryside.

The research study resulted from complementary grants written by Roberta O'Shea, PT, DPT, Ph.D., a Professor in the Department of Physical Therapy in GSU's College of Health and Human Services and Renee Theiss, Ph.D., Assistant Professor in the Departments of Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy.

Dr. O'Shea's grant funded a 10-week Conductive Education (CE) intervention provided by Gabriella Molnar, CET, and Maureen Michalski, MPT, DPT of The Center for Independence through Conductive Education in Countryside. Dr. Theiss' grant funded imaging the brains of the CE participants before and after the 10-week program. The imaging was done at Northwestern Medicine with the help of Todd Parrish, Ph.D., Department of Radiology.

### **Making New Inroads Through Conductive Education**

In the past, Conductive Education (see sidebar) had been used primarily to promote independence for children with motor impairments.

For this study, in contrast, four adult stroke survivors participated in an intensive 10-week course of conductive education exercises. Though further study among a larger group is required, preliminary studies have shown that improvements in movement function following the CE training were accompanied by a change in the stroke survivors' MRI scans, indicating the possible creation of new neural circuitry or perhaps the enhancement and strengthening of existing circuitry, or the activation of latent circuitry, Dr. Theiss said.

"Nothing like this had been done before in the U.S., to the best of my knowledge," O'Shea said. "I thought if we could apply this intervention (conductive education), people could become more capable... Our study shows that hand function improved, independence improved and neural pathways have improved, which is phenomenal."

"They say the brain never stops learning," noted Diane Deacy of Willowbrook, one of the study participants. Deacy had a stroke three and one-half years ago.

"It's most important to realize that Conductive Education is totally different from traditional physical therapy," Deacy said. "In traditional therapy we focus on just the affected part of the body. But in CE we use both sides of the body, and we try to involve the affected side more. I told Robbie that I wish I had the CE earlier."

One of the greatest benefits of CE training, Deacy said, is the group environment in which it is performed. All four study participants worked as peers together, rather than one-on-one with a therapist.

"You watch and learn from your peers to see how they work with their affected side," Deacy said. "We're all at different stages in our stroke recovery, and we give each other encouragement. It's most rewarding to see our progress as a group. We continue to exercise one day a week together."

### **'Definite Improvement Across the Board'**

Fellow CE study participant Vince Evans of Bellwood couldn't agree more with Deacy. "Working in a group, we were able to push each other and encourage each other," Evans said. "It helped me understand my limitations, but gave me confidence that I can do more than what I thought."

Evans had a stroke in November, 2013, at the age of 48, resulting in right side paralysis. He's made great gains since then, first through traditional rehabilitation (occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech therapy) at places like Marianjoy and Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago.

Conductive Education's use of repetitive movements accompanied by spoken narration has been of great benefit, he believes. Evans also credits the "awesome" instruction and support from Molnar and Michalski at the Center for Independence through Conductive Education.

"They were a perfect fit for this program," Evans said. "They knew how to work with each and every one of us; they pushed us in the right way, building on our strengths. I see definite improvement across the board."

### **'It's a process. I'm not giving up.'**

"Pretty amazing," is how Ted Waltmire describes what he has experienced since his involvement in the 10-week CE study. As Waltmire describes it, his brain has been given permission to try new things.

Waltmire's stroke, at the age of 55, took him quite by surprise. Now 61, he's experienced an increased range of movement which he attributes to the Conductive Education exercises he's performed: things like cracking peanuts with his weak hand, or running an obstacle course with stairs and inclines. Today he's able to stand and walk barefoot to the bathroom at night without having to put on shoes for balance; he can also grasp and hold a book or tear open a bag of chips with his weak hand.

"I've tried things that I wouldn't do a year ago. One benefit is in working with three other stroke survivors, you see where you are in relationship to others," Waltmire said. "It was helpful to me to see how far I had come in six years. When you live with the reminders of a stroke every day, you don't see the little things. I thought, five years in I'd have all my abilities back. It's a process. I'm not giving up."

Far from it. Waltmire is working on playing the piano again one day (with the help of an engineered device to support his left hand), and he has taken improv and writing classes at Second City. His musical about life after a stroke, "The Mighty Ted – The Unexpected Journey," has already hit the Chicago stage. Waltmire is currently working on producing an even bigger show.

The future of Conductive Education programming for stroke patients looks just as bright. Dr. O'Shea and Dr. Theiss at GSU are working on a second grant that, if funded, would allow them to study a larger sample size. Hopefully, the American Heart Association will endorse Conductive Education in the future, especially as further research documents its benefits to stroke survivors. Dr. Michalski at The Center for Independence plans to adopt the conductive education program as a full-time program for clients with stroke. She is speaking to a number of stroke support groups and physicians to help spread the word about Conductive Education.

## What is Conductive Education?

Often described as rehabilitation through learning, Conductive Education was created by Dr. Andras Peto in Budapest, Hungary, in 1948. Conductive Education is a unique, intensive method of special education designed to promote active learning and maximized functional independence for children (and now, adults) who are attempting to overcome a motor disability from any of the following conditions: stroke, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, traumatic brain injury, cerebral vascular accidents, etc.

One of the key elements of Conductive Education is the group setting. Working together provides a powerful incentive for participants, while allowing for individualization and adjustment to personal needs. The group also benefits from peer-directed learning (e.g., watching how peers get up from a stool to use their walker). Conductive Education focuses on the whole person, recognizing physical, social, intellectual and emotional aspects of learning.

## NEWS BITES

### Assistant Professors Awarded Research Grants

Two assistant professors in the College of Health and Human Services have been awarded substantial grants to further their research. DeLawnia Comer-HaGans was awarded a grant of \$100,000, and Zo Ramamonjirivelo received \$83,451.

Comer-HaGans' grant was received through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), the nation's leading philanthropy on health and health care. She was named among a select group of Junior Investigators to receive one of the 24-month grants from the RWJF's New Connections program. The grant will allow Comer-HaGans to investigate the health of individuals with disabilities and diabetes.

New Connections is a national program designed to introduce new scholars to RWJF and expand the diversity of perspectives that inform the Foundation's programming. New Connections seeks early-to mid-career scholars who are historically underrepresented ethnic or racial minorities, first-generation college graduates, or individuals from low-income communities.

"We are so excited to welcome DeLawnia Comer-HaGans into the ninth cohort of New Connections grantees. The program connects first-time grantees to the Foundation, and the new perspectives they bring are essential to solving the critical, complex issues affecting our nation's health," said Catherine Malone, DBA, MBA, and Program Officer at RWJF.

"This cohort joins the larger New Connections network of more than 1,200 scholars — a network that provides opportunities for scholarly support and collaboration for academics from underrepresented groups," says Malone.

"I am truly grateful to New Connections for providing me with this fantastic opportunity! I appreciate being connected to such a diverse network of health disparities researchers. Additionally, I am pleased to conduct research in the area of chronic illness and disabilities," said Dr. Comer-HaGans.

Zo Ramamonjirivelo's award is an Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ R03) 12-month grant that will be used for her project: The Impact of Public Hospitals' Privatization on Nurse Staffing.

Ramamonjirivelo said the grant money will go a long way in helping her research and was grateful for the backing of both her colleagues in the College of Health and Human Services and Jennifer Morehead Farmer, Director of GSU's Office of Sponsored Programs and Research. "Jennifer Morehead has been very helpful during the grants submission process, which is highly complicated, but Jennifer knows what she is doing. I want to thank Dean Elizabeth Cada and Dr. Rupert Evans in their strong support of junior faculty in research and grant application."

She is equally grateful to her research project collaborators from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. "I really appreciate the help, support, and valuable collaborations of Dr. Robert Weech-Maldonado, Co-Investigator and my mentor, and Dr. Larry Hearld, Consortium Principal Investigator. I am looking forward to collaborating with them in this research endeavor. And I praise and thank God from the bottom of my heart for giving this grant to me and my co-investigators."



Dr. Zoe Ramamonjirivelo



Dr. DeLawnia Comer-HaGans

### Addictions Studies Counseling Student Awarded Fellowship

Jimia D. Stokes, a student in the Addictions Counseling Concentration track of GSU's Master of Health Science in Addictions Studies program, has been selected to receive an \$11,000 fellowship from the NBCC Foundation, a nonprofit affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC).



Jimia D. Stokes

Jimia is receiving the NBCC Minority Fellowship Program-Addictions Counselors (MFP-AC) award and she will receive funding and training to support her education and facilitate her addictions counseling service to underserved, minority, and transition-age youth. Upon graduation from GSU, Jimia plans to work with underserved youth between the ages of 18 and 25. This fellowship will help her to provide counseling services to individuals who have transitioned out of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and those who are involved in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

The fellowship is made possible by a grant awarded to NBCC by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The goal of the program is to reduce health disparities and improve behavioral health care outcomes for racially and ethnically diverse populations by increasing the available number of culturally competent behavioral health professionals.

### GSU's Health Administration Department Named Among Top 50 Most Innovative University Healthcare Administration Departments

Hats off to the College of Health and Human Services' Department of Health Administration for being named among the top 50 Most Innovative University Healthcare Administration Departments, as reported by the website, [www.topmastersinhealthcare.com](http://www.topmastersinhealthcare.com).

Serving as Chair and Program Director for the Department is Assistant Professor Dr. Rupert M. Evans, Sr., DHA, MPA, FACHE.

Among the Department's attributes that led to this honor include:

- A Master of Health Administration (MHA) program accredited by the Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME). CAHME's rigorous review establishes the highest standard of excellence among MHA programs;
- A high student employment rate following graduation. Ninety-one percent of GSU's MHA graduates are employed within three months of graduation;
- Faculty members highly engaged in research in their field;
- A variety of educational programs, in addition to the MHA, such as a fully AUPHA-certified Bachelor of Health Administration (BHA) program and several certificate programs;
- A well-established student association (Student Healthcare Management Association—SHCMA), providing mentoring and professional development opportunities;
- An active honor society (Upsilon Phi Delta Honor Society);
- A diverse student population, traditionally underserved by the higher education community.
- GSU's Health Administration programs also feature the lowest tuition in Illinois.

"It's wonderful for the academic excellence and talent of our Health Administration Department to be recognized," noted Elizabeth A. Cada, Ed.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Dean of the College of Health and Human Services and Dean of Graduate Studies at GSU. "The faculty works very hard to ensure that our students have everything they need to become leaders in this ever-changing health care environment."

### 2015 Run4Rehab Raises Funds for Worthy Cause

Rain, high humidity and gloomy skies failed to prevent approximately 30 runners and walkers from participating in this year's 5th Annual 2015 Run4Rehab 5k run/2-mile walk/roll, sponsored by GSU's Physical Therapy Student Association (PTSA) on the GSU campus.

The event served as an awareness- and fund-raiser for the Brain Injury Association of Illinois (BIA of IL). Each Run4Rehab participant was given a photo and information about a BIA of IL member prior to the start of the run/walk.

Thomas Nye, a third-year Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) student, served as main organizer for this year's event and was assisted by fellow DPT students, including Kristie Burns, Melissa Naegele and Kate Lueders. Joyce Sligar, Senior University Lecturer and Co-Director of Clinical Education, serves as faculty sponsor for the PTSA.

The Brain Injury Association of Illinois is a not-for-profit, statewide membership organization comprised of people with brain injuries, their family members, friends and professionals. BIA of IL is part of a network of brain injury associations across the United States, and is a subsidiary of the National Brain Injury Association, Inc., which was founded in 1980. Dedicated to providing information, advocacy and support, the BIA of IL is the only organization in Illinois serving individuals with traumatic brain injury, their family members and professionals who treat them.



*Pictured, left to right: Kate Lueders, 2nd-yr. Dr. of Physical Therapy student; Thomas Nye, 3rd-yr. Dr. of Physical Therapy student; Anna Albrecht, 3rd-yr. Dr. of Physical Therapy student; Katie Abrassart, 3rd-yr. Dr. of Physical Therapy student; Melissa Naegele, 3rd-yr. Dr. of Physical Therapy student; Katie Nielson, 3rd-yr. Dr. of Physical Therapy student and 2014-2015 President of the GSU Physical Therapy Student Association; Joyce Sligar, PT, MBA, MA, CEEAA, Faculty Advisor to the GSU Physical Therapy Student Association; Philicia L. Deckard, LSW CBIST, Executive Director, Brain Injury Association of Illinois, and Dr. Rebecca Wojcik, PT, Ed.D., GCS, Chair of the Department of Physical Therapy.*

### Faculty Research Salon: Impact of Environments on Children with Disabilities

Nine faculty members from the College of Health and Human Services and the College of Education discussed their evidence-based scholarship relating to the role that physical, social, cultural, political and economic environments play in the daily lives of children with disabilities. Additional information may be obtained at this website: <http://opus.govst.edu/fre/2015/>

### Doctoral Nursing Graduate Named Scholar



Yvette Rose, R.N., M.S.N., a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) graduate at Governors State University, was recently named Student Scholar by the 2014 American Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA) Board of Directors (BOD) Student Scholarship Program.

Rose is currently an Assistant Professor of Nursing at Olivet Nazarene University in Bourbonnais and teaches Mental Health Nursing.

Nursing students from across the United States were invited to apply for the Student Scholarship Program. Rose was one of just 10 graduate students chosen for this honor. Her fellow awardees hailed from Vanderbilt University, Yale University, University of Iowa, Rutgers University, University of California at San Francisco, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and East Tennessee State University. Ten additional undergraduate nursing students from across the nation were chosen, as well.

"With demonstrated commitment to their education and motivation to make a difference in psychiatric-mental health nursing care, they are students that we are honored to support," read a statement from the APNA Board of Directors. "These BOD student scholars have an enthusiasm for psychiatric-mental health nursing that is palpable."

Rose will enjoy one year complimentary membership in the APNA; she also was afforded registration, travel and lodging for the recent APNA 28th Annual Conference held October 22-25 in Indianapolis, IN.

Rose was nominated for the award by Dr. Martha Libster, Ph.D., RN, CNS, AHN-BC, a Professor of Nursing at Governors State University.

According to Dr. Libster, Rose is currently finishing her final scholarly project in the DNP program entitled, "Fighting a New Battle: A Bathing Care Standard for Elderly Male Military Veterans with Delayed-Onset Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (DOPSTD)." Rose presented the results of her project in a poster session at the 2015 Aging in America Conference, held last March in Chicago.

"Yvette is translating the current nursing science on the care in bathing elderly veterans with dementia to those seriously afflicted with DOP-STD. Her proposed work is strategic, innovative and enthusiastically received by her community" ... and "may prove to be an important dimension to care for this population of psychiatric mental health patients."

The American Psychiatric Nurses Association is accredited as a provider of continuing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

### 'The Best of the Best' — Health Administration Honor Society Welcomes Newest Inductees

Three Health Administration students were recently inducted as members of Upsilon Phi Delta, a national academic honor society for students in health care administration.

The 2015 inductees included Cristy Gallegos, a student in the Bachelor of Health Administration program and Kritika Sharma and Alexandra Gakopoulou, both students in the Master of Health Administration program.

"You represent the best of the best!" noted Dr. Rupert M. Evans, Sr., DHA, MPA, FACHE, Chair of the Department of Health Administration.

The students were welcomed with additional words of encouragement and praise by CHHS Dean Elizabeth A. Cada, Ed.D., OTR/L, FAOTA; Deborah E. Bordelon, Ph.D., Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Jennifer Groebner, Ed.D., MHA, BSN, Undergraduate Program Director, Department of Health Administration; and Sheree Y. Sanderson, M.A., CCSP, Assistant Dean of Students. Closing remarks were made by Risa Stegal, current President of UPD. Serving as faculty advisor for the Honor Society is Zo Ramamonjariavelo, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Health Administration. Also in attendance at the Induction ceremony was GSU alumni Jim Munz, a strategic partner with, and University lecturer for, the Health Administration Department for the past 15 years. Munz serves as Regional Director of Physician Relations for Advocate Christ, South Suburban and Trinity Hospitals in the Chicago southland market.

"Always be passionate about what you do," advised Provost Bordelon. "This (UPD Honor Society) is an indication of your passion and love for what you are doing. ... I have faith that you are going to continue to strive for excellence in your profession. Keep in touch with your network — remember us here! Stay in touch with your colleagues."

The Upsilon Phi Delta Honor Society - Governors State University Chapter (UPD-GSU Chapter) is an active member of the Upsilon Delta National Honor Society and is comprised of qualified students from both graduate and undergraduate programs. Upsilon, Phi and Delta are Greek words for health, care and administration (or leadership), respectively.



*Pictured, left to right, Dr. Rupert Evans, Chair of the Department of Health Administration at GSU; Kritika Sharma, Master of Health Administration program; Cristy Gallegos, Bachelor of Health Administration program, and Alexandra Gakopoulou, Master of Health Administration program.*

The founders of the society feel that Health is the objective of all our work; that Caring is an essential trait of all people in health care; and that Leadership is the essential trait of those who would lead and manage our healthcare systems.

### Physical Therapy Professor Receives Faculty Excellence Award



Congratulations to Dr. Dale Schuit, PT, Ph.D., Professor of Physical Therapy, who received a Faculty Excellence Award recently at GSU's Convocation, held in the Center for Performing Arts.

Excellence Award winners are chosen by a committee made up of previous winners and other representatives from tenured/tenure track faculty, university/senior lecturers and academic support professionals across the university. The committee submits recommendations to GSU President Elaine P. Maimon in April and the winners are announced at Convocation.

"Dr. Dale Schuit is a physical therapist, so helping others comes naturally," said President Maimon. Dr. Schuit is doing collaborative research to analyze the biomechanics and positioning of neck structures. Preliminary results were presented to an international spine conference in Great Britain.

Dr. Schuit's colleagues praise him for being a committed teacher and mentor. He co-chairs the University's Institutional Review Board, the group that ensures that faculty research meets or exceeds federal standards. With his co-chair, Dr. David Rhea, he has increased the expectations and clarity of the IRB process.

"Dale's work helps to bring GSU to a new level in the integration of teaching and research," President Maimon added.

Dr. Schuit treats students, faculty and staff with great dignity and kindness in his quest to help each individual achieve his or her own unique potential.

## GSU Nursing Professor Honored at National Black Nurses Day Ceremony

Yvette Roberts, DNP, MSN, MS, MHA, RN, CPHIT, a Visiting Professor of Nursing in the College of Health and Human Services, was honored for outstanding nursing service in the area of Nursing Informatics at the 27th Annual National Black Nurses Day Ceremony in February.



Dr. Yvette Roberts

The event is sponsored by the Chicago Chapter of the National Black Nurses Association, the Alpha Eta Chapter of Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Inc., the Beta Mu Chapter of Lambda Pi Alpha Sorority, and the Provident Hospital Nurses Alumni Association.

"It's rewarding to be recognized by your peers," Roberts noted. The professor specializes in the area of Nursing Informatics, which is "the science and practice that integrates nursing—its information and knowledge—with management of information and communication technologies to promote the health of people, families and communities worldwide," Roberts said.

Roberts joined GSU's Nursing Department as an adjunct faculty member in 2011, and has been a full-time Visiting Professor since 2014. "I enjoy teaching at GSU because the University is committed to lifelong learning and supports diversity and multiculturalism," she said. "Moreover, GSU is learner-centered, and supports positive change."

Delivering the keynote address at the conference was Dr. (Hon) Barbara Nichols, MS, RN, FAAN, past president of the American Nurses Association, former CEO of the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS), and International Diversity Consultant to Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

## Affordable Healthcare Act Symposium

GSU's Student Healthcare Management Association (SHCMA), in partnership with the Chicago Southland Chamber of Commerce, hosted a healthcare symposium on the ramifications of The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act this past spring at GSU.

Symposium topics that were discussed included:

- Understanding the economic impact to businesses;
- Identifying the benefits of care coordination;
- Tackling complexities to achieve a level of administrative simplification;
- Recognizing the imperative of integration and collaboration;
- What's next on the horizon?

Presenters at the symposium included: Michael Wojcik, Senior VP of the Horton Group; Michael Englehart, President of Advocate Physician Partners; Richard Allergetti, Vice President of Market Strategy & Business Development, Blue Cross Blue Shield; Raul Garza, President/CEO of Aunt Martha's Health Center; and Denise Scarpelli, Pharm D., Director, Walgreens.

## DNP Grad Contributes to PRISM® Award for Her Nursing Unit

If you don't think it pays to pursue advanced practice nursing education, just ask Kelly Banks.

A recent Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) graduate from GSU, Banks was pleased to learn that her capstone project for the DNP program was one of several projects submitted as part of the application process for a prestigious PRISM® award by her nursing unit 5 East at the University of Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences System.



Kelly Banks standing, front row, far right

The 5 East Surgical Specialties and Rehabilitation Unit received the Premier Recognition in the Specialty of Med-Surg (PRISM) Award—the first in Illinois to receive this esteemed award—which recognizes exceptional nursing practice, leadership and outcomes in hospital medical-surgical units across the country. Unit 5 East serves patients recovering from acute episodes, such as stroke, gastrointestinal and urological surgeries; Banks cares for postoperative patients.

The PRISM Award is sponsored by the Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses (AMSIN) and the Medical-Surgical Nursing Certification Board (MSNCB), the certifying body of AMSIN.

Banks' DNP project focused on implementing an interprofessional learning module on the non-pharmacological approaches to pain management.

"My focus was the acute postoperative patient," Banks said. "Research shows that postoperative pain continues to be undermanaged. The staff was able to translate this project at the bedside by incorporating many non-pharmacological approaches which resulted in good outcomes and an increase in patient satisfaction."

Banks received her Master of Science in Nursing Degree from GSU in 2007, and her DNP in May of 2014.

"GSU's DNP program was very challenging, but rewarding," Banks said. "Working at an urban academic institution, I value the lessons I learned from the DNP program about caring for vulnerable populations and translating evidence so that evidence-based practice can have its greatest impact at the bedside and across the population."

### CHHS Faculty Member Selected as Faculty-in-Residence for 2015-2016

Alicia Battle, Ph.D., Assistant Professor in the Department of Addictions Studies and Behavioral Health in the College of Health and Human Services, will join two other faculty members to serve as the 2015-2016 Faculty-in-Residence in Prairie Place, according to Betsy Joseph, Director, GSU Auxiliary Services & University Housing. Joining Dr. Battle as Faculty-in-Residence are Dr. Lucianne Brown, Director of the Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources program in the College of Education and Mr. Matthew Covic in Psychology.

These three faculty members will live in Prairie Place and will work with the university housing staff to create a living-learning experience for Prairie Place residents. They will provide opportunities for residential students to engage in activities/programs connected to the general education themes of civic engagement, global citizenship, and sustainability with an additional emphasis of living in art.

### Doctor of Physical Therapy Student Elected President of State Association's Special Interest Group



Congratulations to Katie Taylor, second-year Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) student, on her election as President of the Illinois Physical Therapy Association's (IPTA) Student Special Interest Group (SSIG). This is the first time that a GSU Physical Therapy student has been elected to office in the IPTA SSIG. Membership in the IPTA SSIG is now at an all-time high of 839 individuals.

According to the recently-amended IPTA SSIG bylaws, the purpose of the SSIG is to provide a means by which physical therapist student and

physical therapist assistant student members can share common interests and promote membership in their organization.

In addition to her new position with the IPTA SSIG, Taylor is president of the second-year DPT class at GSU and president of GSU's Physical Therapy Student Association.

"We are proud of the DPT students' involvement in the Illinois Physical Therapy Association SSIG, and wish Katie Taylor success in her office as President," noted Rebecca Wojcik, PT, Ed.D., GCS, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Physical Therapy.

### Department of Health Administration at the American College of Healthcare Executives' Congress



Representatives of GSU's Department of Health Administration attended the American College of Healthcare Executives' 2015 Congress on Healthcare Leadership, March 16-19, at the Hilton Chicago. Posing in front of the Health Administration Department's information booth are (left to right) Dr. Rupert Evans, DHA, MPA, FACHE, Chair of the Department of Health Administration; Dr. Ning Lu, Ph.D., MPH, Associate Program Director for the Master of Health Administration program, and a full Professor in the Department of Health Administration; and Julie Anderson, External Programs Liaison and recruiter for the College of Health and Human Services.

### Strong Occupational Therapy Presence at National Conference

The Department of Occupational Therapy at Governors State University was well-represented at the 95th Annual American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Conference and Expo, held in Nashville. A total of 20 students

went to the conference; there were three student/faculty poster presentations, plus faculty panel and podium presentations.



*Pictured at GSU's information booth at this year's AOTA Conference are (left to right) Caren Schranz, DrOT, OTR/L, Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy; Hannah Verborg, Master of Occupational Therapy student; Kristen Kozy, Master of Occupational Therapy student; Breanna Foley, Master of Occupational Therapy student; Elizabeth Wanka, DrOT, OTR/L, Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy; and Catherine Brady, Ed.D., OTR/L, Chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy. Also in attendance at the conference (not pictured) were Elizabeth Cada, Ed.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Dean of the College of Health and Human Services and Dean of Graduate Studies; Melanie Ellekson, DHSc, MBA, OTR/L, FAOTA, Associate Professor of Occupational Therapy; Cynthia Carr, DrOT, MS, OTR/L, Associate Professor of Occupational Therapy; and Julie Anderson, External Programs Liaison and recruiter for the College of Health and Human Services*

### Fundraiser for Sertoma Centre

The GSU Chapter of the National Student Speech Language and Hearing Association (NSSLHA) hosted a Spring Bowl fundraiser for Sertoma Centre, Inc., at Oak Forest Bowl and The Park. NSSLHA members are graduate and undergraduate students enrolled in Communication Disorders at GSU.

NSSLHA raised more than \$2,000 for the Sertoma Centre, Inc., a not-for-profit agency headquartered in Alsip that serves individuals with developmental disabilities.



*NSSLHA members pictured, back row: Danny Surdyk, Heather Groetzenbach, Jessica Wians, Anna Rogowski, Ashley Moultrie, Laura Brink, Brianna Morrow, Britnee Rubio, Julie Lee, Sheryl DeBoer and Laura Gardner, Volunteer Coordinator from Sertoma Centre. Front row: Pam Ortiz, Stephanie Diaz, Aja Jackson.*

## Stroke Support Group Established

A new Stroke Support Group has been established at GSU by Jessica Bonner, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, Eileen Brann, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, and Judy Platt, M.S., CCC-SLP, all from the Department of Communication Disorders in the College of Health and Human Services.

Survivors of stroke and their family members are invited to attend monthly meetings at the University.

The group is designed to provide social support, interdisciplinary educational programming, wellness programming and other resources. Heart-healthy snacks will be available at meetings.

More information may be obtained by contacting Dr. Bonner at 708.534.4591, 708.534.4590, or jbonner@govst.edu

The stroke support group is funded through the College of Health and Human Services Interprofessional Education Grant.

# Faculty and Staff Publications, Presentations, Grants/Awards

## PRESENTATIONS

### **Darrin M. Aase, Ph.D.** **Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association (Division 50) – Toronto, Canada**

Poster Presentation (Aase, D.M. & Jason, L.A.): August, 2015  
*Social Perception and Alcohol Use Disorders: Comorbid Psychiatric Symptoms*

### **Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association (Division 40) – Toronto, Canada**

Poster Presentation (Aase, D.M., Engel, K., & Pliskin, N.H.): August, 2015  
*Social Perception and Alcohol Use Disorders: Psychiatric and Interpersonal Problems*

### **13th Annual Meeting of American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology – San Francisco, CA**

Poster Presentation (Maucieri, L.P., Timko, A., & Aase, D.M.): June, 2015  
*The Relationship Between Social Perception and Crystallized Intelligence in Individuals with Alcohol Use Disorders*

### **Annual Midwest Psychological Association Conference – Chicago, IL**

Poster Presentation (Sycz, L., Aase, D.M., Majer, J.M., & Jason, L.A.): May, 2015  
*Legal Problems and Social Perception in Alcohol Use Disorders*

### **Third Annual Collaborative Perspectives on Addiction Conference – Baltimore, MD**

Poster Presentation (Aase, D.M. & Maucieri, L.): March, 2015  
*Social Perception and Psychiatric Symptoms Among Individuals with Alcohol Use Disorders*

**43rd Annual Meeting of the International Neuropsychological Society – Denver, CO**  
Poster Presentation (Aase, D.M. & Pliskin, N.H.): February, 2015  
*Alcohol Use History is Associated with Social Perception Task Performance*

### **Annual Midwest Ecological-Community Psychology Conference – Lisle, IL**

Roundtable Discussion (Nisle, S., Aase, D.M., Alvarez, J., Bahena, A., Brown, M., Callahan, S., Campagna, K., Cavers, M., Ciobotaru, S., Jason, L.A., Whitehead, N.): October, 2014  
*Marginalized Families: Alternative Models for Housing and Employment*

### **Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association / Division 40 – Washington, D.C.**

Poster Presentation (Aase, D.M. & Pliskin, N.H.): August, 2014  
*Social Perception and Alcohol Use Disorders: Early Findings from Pilot Data*

### **Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association / Division 50 – Washington, D.C.**

Poster Presentation (Aase, D.M. & Mejta, C.): August, 2014  
*Psychiatric Symptoms and Social Perception in Alcohol Use Disorders: Possible Sex Differences*

### **64th Annual Meeting of the Illinois Counseling Association – Skokie, IL**

Poster Presentation (Martino, A. & Aase, D.M.): November, 2013  
*Using Mindfulness Techniques in Treating Children and Adolescents with Trauma*

### **Jennifer Armstrong, Ph.D., CCC-SLP**

**Black Child Development Institute – Chicago Affiliate Conference – Chicago, IL**  
Presentation (Armstrong, J. and Huerta, L.): June, 2014  
*A Culturally Responsive Approach for Serving Children of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Populations*

### **National Speech Language and Hearing Association Conference – Chicago, IL**

Poster Presentation (Altosino, A. and Armstrong, J.): November, 2013  
*The Effects of a Service Learning Workshop on the Intellectual Life of Graduate Students in Communication Disorders*

### **Glenwood School – Glenwood, IL**

Presentation (Armstrong, J.): November, 2013  
*Enriching Language and Literacy Skill in School Age Children*

### **Illinois Speech Language and Hearing Association Conference – Rosemont, IL**

Poster Presentation (Altosino, A. and Armstrong, J.): February, 2013  
*The Effects of a Service Learning Workshop on the Intellectual Life of Graduate Students in Communication Disorders*

### **Catherine Balthazar, Ph.D. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association**

**Convention – Chicago, IL**  
Presentation (Balthazar, C.H., and Scott, C.M.): November, 2013  
*Scaffolding Complex Sentences: Treatment Procedures and Pre-post Comparisons in School-age Children with SLI*

**Symposium for Research in Child Language Disorders – Madison, WI**

Poster Presentation (Balthazar, C. H., and Scott, C. M.): June, 2013  
*Relative Clause Productions of Older School-age Children Referred for Language Testing and Relationships with Test Scores*

**Mark Blagen, Ph.D.**

**National Kaohsiung Normal University – Kaohsiung, Taiwan**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): December 26, 2014  
*Career Development with Y-Generation Students: What Can High School Counselors and Teachers Do?*

**Teacher Chang Institute – Taipei, Taiwan**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): December 20, 2014  
*The Use of Adlerian Counseling Strategies for Smoking Cessation*

**Wenzhou Ursine University – Kaohsiung, Taiwan**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): December 18, 2014  
*Understanding and Counseling College Students with Addictive Behaviors*

**National Kaohsiung Normal University – Kaohsiung, Taiwan**

Keynote Presentation (Blagen, M.): December 14, 2014  
*Internet Gaming and Adolescent Development: Implications for Educators and Counselors*

**Kaohsiung Municipal Kai-Syuan Psychiatric Hospital – Kaohsiung, Taiwan**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): December 13, 2014  
*Motivational Interviewing Workshop*

**26th International Congress of Individual Psychology – Paris, France**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): July 11, 2014  
*The Healing of Addiction: An Adlerian Perspective*

**North American Society of Adlerian Psychology – Chicago, IL**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): May 24, 2014  
*The Brain Disease of Addiction*

**National Chiayi University – Taiwan**

Keynote Presentation (Blagen, M.): November 28, 2013  
*What Matters Most: Discovering the Essence of Community and Family in a Rapidly Changing World*

**National Chiayi University – Taiwan**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): November 29, 2013  
*The Science of Addiction: Implications for Counselors*

**Teacher Chang – Kaohsiung, Taiwan**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): December 1, 2013  
*Autogenic Training and the Healing Process of Addictions*

**National Kaohsiung Normal University – Taiwan**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): December 6, 2013  
*Understanding Addiction: Challenges and Promises*

**National Taipei University of Education – Taiwan**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): December 9, 2013  
*Exposure, Enjoyment, or Addiction?*

**Taipei University – Taiwan**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): December 10, 2013  
*Addictions and DSM-5: The Example of Internet Gaming Addiction*

**National Taiwan Normal University – Taiwan**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): December 10, 2013  
*Motivational Interviewing and Internet Gaming Addiction*

**Association for Counselor Education and Supervision – Denver, CO**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): October 19, 2013  
*Understanding Addiction: Moving Beyond Etiological Differences*

**North American Society of Adlerian Psychology – San Diego, CA**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): June 21, 2013  
*Using Adlerian Psychology Techniques to Facilitate the Healing of Addictions*

**Chicago Counseling Association**

Presentation (Blagen, M.): April 8, 2013  
*The Meaning of Addiction: Adolescents and Substance Abuse*

**Kim Boland-Prom, Ph.D., MSW, MA**

**9th Annual International Interdisciplinary Conference on Clinical Supervision – Adelphi University, Garden City, NY**

Presentation (Gilbert, C. and Boland-Prom, K.): February 20, 2013.  
*Sanctioned Social Work Supervisors: Findings from a National Study of State Regulatory Boards*

**Jessica Bonner, Ph.D., CCC-SLP**  
**Annual American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Convention – Orlando, FL**

Paper Accepted (Bonner, J. & Huerta, L.): November, 2014  
*Mock Therapy Using LPA to Develop Clinical Skills*

**Governors State University, Doctor of Physical Therapy Class – University Park, IL**

Presentation (Bonner, J.): June, 2014  
*Speech, Language, and Swallowing: What Physical Therapists Should Know*

**Governors State University, Master of Occupational Therapy Class – University Park, IL**

Presentation (Bonner, J.): March, 2014  
*Dysphagia for MOT Students*

**Governors State University, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy Class – University Park, IL**

Presentation (Bonner, J.): November, 2013  
*Language and Speech Disorders: Signs, Symptoms and Facilitating Communication*

**Annual American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Convention – Atlanta, GA**

Poster Presentation (Strugalla, E. & Bonner, J.): November, 2012  
*Partnering with Parents in Pediatric Feeding and Swallowing: Expert Reflections*

**Annual American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Convention – Atlanta, GA**

Poster Presentation (Bonner, J.): November, 2012  
*Helping Students with Foreign Accents Transition to Practicum: A Case Description*

**Annual Ounce of Prevention Pre-Service Head Start Conference**

Invited Presentation (Bonner, J.): August, 2012  
*The Truth about Juice: Developing Healthy Nutrition Habits in Children at Risk for Feeding Problems*

**Eileen M. Brann, Ph.D., M.Ed., CCC-SLP**

**Annual Convention of American Speech-Language-Hearing Association – Chicago, IL**  
Technical Session presentation (Brann, E. M.): November, 2013  
*The Relationship Between Young Children's Gestures and Language Development*

**Dr. Jessica Bonner's Language and Cognition Course, Governors State University – University Park, IL**  
Invited Presentation (Brann, E.M.): October, 2013  
*Apraxia of Speech in Adults*

**Ph.D. Forum, Department of Special Education, University of Illinois – Chicago, IL**  
Invited Presentation (Brann, E.M.): May, 2013  
*The Relationship Between Young Children's Gestures and Language Development*

**Joseph Day, Dr.PH SRCD Special Top Meeting – Prague, Czech Republic**  
Presentation (Lewis, K., Vuchinich, S., Ji, P., DuBois, D., Acock, A., Bavarian, N., Day, J., Silverthorn, N., Flay, B.): October, 23-25, 2014  
*Effects of the Positive Action Program on Indicators of Positive Youth Development Among Urban Youth in the U.S. 2014 / SRCD Special Topic Meeting: Positive Youth Development in the Context of the Global Recession.*

**Annual Meeting of Midwestern Psychological Association / Affiliate Meeting, Society for Community Research and Action – Chicago, IL**  
Roundtable Discussion (Aase, D.M., Day, J., Blagen, M., Brown, M., Jason, L.A., Majer, J.M., & Mejta, C.): May, 2013  
*Integrating Care in Community-Based Treatment for Dually-Diagnosed Individuals*

**Raven James, Ph.D. Haymarket Center's Summer Institute on Addictions 19th Annual Conference – Elmhurst, IL**  
Presentation (James, R.): June, 2013  
*Women, Sexuality and Addiction*

**National Conference of Addictive Disorders (NCAD) – Anaheim, CA**  
Presentation (James, R.): September, 2013  
*What's Sex Got to Do with It?*

**Annual Conference of the Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association – Lisle, IL**  
Presentation (James, R.): September, 2013  
*Research to Practice: Developing Evidence-Based Treatment for Women*

**National Association for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors (NAADAC) Annual Conference – Atlanta, GA**  
Presentation (James, R.): October, 2013  
*Sexuality and Substance Abuse: Connections to Women's Recovery*

**The LGBTQ Health and Wellness Conference – Chicago, IL**  
Poster Presentation (James, R., Wadhwa, S.): November, 2013  
*Examining the Relationship Between Female Sexual Self-esteem and Sexual Orientation in Substance Abuse Treatment*

**VoiceAmerica Health and Wellness Channel Internet Talk Show**  
Invited Speaker (James, R.): April, 2014  
*Moving Forward: Wellness One Step at a Time*

**Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse – Kansas City, MO**  
Keynote Presentation (James, R.): June, 2014  
*Sex, Drugs, Rock & Recovery*

**Midwest Conference on Problem Gambling and Substance Abuse – Kansas City, MO**  
Presentation (James, R.): June, 2014  
*Providing Gender Specific Treatment: Strategies for Implementing Effective Approaches*

**Haymarket Center's Summer Institute on Addictions 20th Annual Conference – Elmhurst, IL**  
Presentation (James, R.): June, 2014  
*What's Sex Got to Do With It?*

**Rutgers Summer School for Addictions – New Brunswick, N.J.**  
Class (James, R.): July, 2014  
*Sex, Drugs, Rock & Recovery*

**National Conference of Addictive Disorders (NCAD) – St. Louis, MO**  
Presentation (James, R.): August, 2014  
*Examining the Relationship between Sexual Self-Esteem and Sexual Orientation for Women in Substance Abuse Treatment.*

**Haymarket Center's Summer Institute – Chicago, IL**  
Keynote Presentation (James, R.): 2015  
*What's Sex Got to Do With It?*

**Haymarket Center's Summer Institute – Chicago, IL**  
Workshop Presentation (James, R.): 2015  
*Developing Sexual Health Programming in Substance Abuse Treatment Settings*

**National Conference on Addiction Disorders – St. Louis, MO**  
Workshop Presentation (James, R.): 2015  
*The Bisexual Client: We Aren't Who You Think We Are"*

**Nicole Koonce, Ph.D., CCC-SLP/L Annual Convention of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association – Orlando, FL**  
Poster Presentation (Koonce, N.M.): November, 2014  
*Narrative and Expository Language of African American Children with Low and Average Reading Comprehension Profiles*

**Annual Convention of the Illinois Speech Language and Hearing Association – Rosemont, IL**  
Paper Presentation (Balthazar, C., Koonce, N.M., & Scott, C.S.): February, 2014  
*Teaching Complex Sentences: Practices with Impact for School-age Children with Language Disorders*

**2013 Scholarship of Pedagogy Symposium, Associated Colleges of the Chicago Area – Elmhurst, IL**  
Poster Presentation (Koonce, N.M., & Munro-Leighton, C.): November, 2013  
*Active Learning Strategies: Whiteboards in the College Classroom*

**Chicago Metro Association for the Education of Young Children – Chicago, IL**  
Presentation (Koonce, N.M.): January, 2013  
*Promoting Reading Success: Why Early Language Skills Matter*

**Northwest Suburban Special Education Organization – Arlington Heights, IL**  
In-Service Workshop Presentation (Koonce, N.M.): September, 2014  
*Connections Between Oral Language and Literacy: Language Therapy with Impact for Common Core State Standards*

**Northwest Suburban Special Education Organization – Arlington Heights, IL**  
In-Service Workshop Presentation (Koonce, N.M.): March, 2014  
*Connections Between Oral Language and Literacy: Language Therapy with Impact for School-Age Children*

**Roberta Kuchler O'Shea, PT, DPT, Ph.D.**  
22nd Annual Training Conference / National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns – Charlotte, N.C.  
Presentation (O'Shea, R. & Sood, D.): July, 2015  
*Impact of Environments on the Lives of Children with Disabilities*

**Martha Mathews Libster, Ph.D., MSN, APRN-CNS, APHN-BC Society for the Advancement of Modeling and Role-Modeling – Cincinnati, Ohio**  
Presentation (Libster, M.): September, 2014  
*Rooting Nurses' Cultural Diplomacy Skill through Application of Modeling and Role Modeling Theory*

**Lloyd Library – Cincinnati, Ohio**

Guest Presentation (Libster, M.): September, 2014  
*Herbal Self-Care: An American Healing Tradition Central to Health Care Reform Past, Present, and Future*

**National College of Natural Medicine – Portland, OR**

Convener and Presentation (Libster, M.): June, 2014  
*Don't Rock the Boat: Essences, Extracts, and Embrocations for Easing into Emotional Clarity*

**Inaugural Traditional Root Conference – National College of Natural Medicine, Portland, OR**

Presentation (Libster, M.): May, 2014  
*Embodying the Elements of Care: Making, Becoming, and Being Medicine*

**3rd Annual Conference on Medicine and Religion – University of Chicago**

Panel (Libster, M.): March, 2014  
*As Above So Below: Making "Medicine" as Embodiment of Health Care and Reform*

**Global Tea House – National Museum Te Papa – Wellington, New Zealand**

Convener and Keynote Presentation (Libster, M.): March, 2014  
**Caren Rossow, DHA, MSA, CIH, FACHE**

**Third International Conference on Disaster Management and Human Health: Reducing Risk, Improving Outcomes – Acourna, Spain**

Presentation (Rossow, C.): July, 2013  
*Healthcare Providers: Will They Come to Work During an Influenza Pandemic?*

**Annual Training Conference / National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns – New Orleans, LA**

Presentation (Rossow, C.): July, 2013  
*Multidisciplinary Service Learning in Belize, Central America*

**Great Lakes Conference on Teaching and Learning – Mt. Pleasant, MI**

Presentation (Rossow, C.): May, 2014  
*Enhancing Transfer Students Writing Skills*

**Annual Training Conference / National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns – St. Louis, MO**

Presentation (Rossow, C.): July, 2014  
*Creating a Gateway to Equity and Inclusion within the Healthcare System*

**Dale Schuit, PT, Ph.D., MS North American Spine Society Meeting – New Orleans, LA**

Platform Presentation (Patwardhan, A., Havey, R., Muriuki, M., Nguyen N-L, Voronov L., Patel A., Zindrick M., Carandang G., Schuit D., Ghanayem, A.): October, 2013  
*Postural Compensation and Disc Mechanics in Forward Head Posture – A Novel Laboratory Model of Cervical Sagittal Balance.*

**European Spine Society Meeting (Eurospine 2013) – Liverpool, England**

Platform Presentation (Patwardhan, A., Havey, R., Muriuki, M., Nguyen, N-L, Voronov, L, Patel, A., Zindrick, M., Carandang, G., Schuit D., Ghanayem, A): October, 2013  
*Effect of Global Cervical Sagittal Imbalance on Postural Compensation and Cervical Mechanics.*

**American Physical Therapy Association / Scientific Meeting and Exposition – Salt Lake City, UT**

Poster Presentation (Schuit, D., Diers, D.): June, 2013  
*Motion of the Spine and Lower Extremities During Performance of the Traditional and Modified Functional Reach Tests*

**Divya Sood, OTR, DrOT**  
**22nd Annual Training Conference / National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns – Charlotte, N.C.**  
 Presentation (Sood, D., & O'Shea, R.): July, 2015

*Impact of Environments on the Lives of Children with Disabilities*

**Phyllis West, Ph.D., MPH, MSW 2015 Inclusive Leadership Conference at Governors State University – University Park, IL**

Presentation (West, P. M.): January, 2015  
*Redefining Social Justice, The 2015 Inclusive Leadership Conference*

**ABWHE National Conference – Chicago, IL**

Presentation (West, P. M.): September, 2014  
*In the Middle: Redefining and Flourishing in Life (the Perimenopausal Years)*

**First Baptist Church, University Park, IL**

Presentation (West, P. M.): December, 2014  
*Lessons from Ferguson, Missouri: Town Hall Meeting*

**Governors State University – University Park, IL**

Presentation (West, P. M.): February, 2014  
*Hair Health and Heritage in the 21st Century: A discussion on black hair and body aesthetics and how they impact women's sense of self*

**New Faculty Orientation / Governors State University – University Park, IL**

Presentation (West, P. M.): August, 2013  
*Integrating Civic Engagement, and Service Learning in the Classroom*

**PUBLICATIONS****Darrin M. Aase, Ph.D.**

Aase, D.M. & Pliskin, N.H. Social perception and alcohol use disorder: Preliminary findings. *Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly* (in press).

Hahn-Ketter, A., Aase, D.M., Paxton, J., Fink, J.W., Kelley, K.M., Lee, R.C., & Pliskin, N.H. (in press). Functional outcome over a decade after electrical injury: Psychosocial adjustment and return-to-work status. *Journal of Burn Care and Research*, 36, 509-512.

Aase, D.M., Fink, J.W., Lee, R.C., Kelley, K.M., & Pliskin, N.H. (in press). Mood and cognition after electrical injury: A follow-up study. *Archives of Clinical Neuropsychology*, 29, 125-130.

Aase, D.M., Jason, L.A., Ferrari, J.R., Li, Y., & Scott, G. (2014). Comorbid mental health and substance abuse issues among individuals in recovery homes: Prospective environmental mediators. *Mental Health & Substance Use*, 7, 170-183.

Jason, L.A. & Aase, D.M. (in press). Community-clinical psychology. In M.M.D. Rodriguez (Ed.). *APA Handbook of Clinical Psychology. Volume 1. Clinical Psychology: Roots and Branches*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Aase, D.M. & Pliskin, N.H. (2014). Social perception and alcohol use disorders [Abstract]. *The Clinical Neuropsychologist*, 28, 695-696.

**Jennifer Armstrong, Ph.D., CCC-SLP**

Altosino, A. & Armstrong, J. (2014). The effects of a service learning workshop on the intellectual life of graduate students in communication disorders. Submitted to *Journal of Perceptions in Higher Education*.

**Catherine Balthazar, Ph.D.**

Balthazar, C.H., and Scott, C.M. (in press). *Complex sentence intervention*. In: McCauley, R., Fey, M., and Gillam, R. (Eds.), *Treatment of Language Disorders*, 2nd Edition. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Balthazar, C. H., and Scott, C. M. (2015). *The place of syntax in school-age language assessment and intervention*. In: T. Ukrainetz (Ed.), *Schoolage Language Intervention: Principles and Procedures for Oral and Written Language Success*. Pro-Ed.

- Scott, C.M., and Balthazar, C.H. (2013). The role of complex sentence knowledge in children with reading and writing difficulties. *Perspectives on language and literacy*, 39 (3), 18-26. NIHMSID: 510200.
- Mark Blagen, Ph.D.**  
Blagen, M.T. (manuscript in preparation) *Understanding Addictions: Destigmatization and Helping Strategies*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Blagen, M.T. (2015). Substance Use and Addictive Disorders. In Sperry, L. & Carlson, J. (Eds). *Psychopathology & Psychotherapy: DSM-5 Diagnosis, Case Conceptualization and Treatment*, (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Yang, J. and Blagen, M.T. (2013). Individual Psychology in Taiwan: Promises and Challenges (accepted for Publication). *Journal of Individual Psychology*, Special Edition.
- Blagen, M.T. (2013). Overcoming the Stigmatization of Addictions: Implications for Teaching and Supervision. (accepted for publication) in Waltz, G, Bleurer, J, Yep, R. Vistas 2012. Alexandria, VA: ACA.
- Kim Boland-Prom, Ph.D., MSW, MA**  
Boland-Prom, K., Johnson, J. & Gunaganti, G.S. (in progress) Sanction patterns of social work licensing boards.
- Boland-Prom, K., & Alvarez, M.E., (under review) Ethical challenges in school social work: A qualitative study.
- Boland-Prom, K., & Alvarez, M. E., (in press) School social workers sanctioned by state Departments of Education and Licensing Boards. *Children and Schools*.
- Boland-Prom, K. (2013) Sanctioned social workers: Research from regulatory boards and ethics committees. Offered online by Pearson Allyn & Bacon.
- Boland-Prom, K. & MacMullen, N. (2012) Postpartum depression within a social work paradigm. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 22 (6), 718-732. DOI: 10.1080/10911359.2012.692563
- Jessica Bonner, Ph.D., CCC-SLP**  
Bonner, J. (in preparation). Clinical practicum hours in aphasia and dysphagia: A retrospective look.
- Bonner, J. (2014). Facilitating clinical success for students with accents. *e-Hearsay*, electronic journal of the Ohio Speech-Language and Hearing Association (OSLHA), 4(1), p. 68-80.
- Donna Calvin, Ph.D.**  
Calvin, D. & S. Watley (2015). Diabetes and Hearing Loss Among Underserved Populations. *Nursing Clinics of North America*
- Delawna Comer-HaGans, Ph.D., MS, MBA**  
Comer-HaGans, D., Sood, D., Morrison, C. Anderson, D., Basmajian, D., Bohlen, A., Imanova, I., Grome, M., & K. Martin (2015) Preventative Health Program for Pre-school Aged Children: An Initiative Towards Health and Wellness. *Communique, Issue 2*.
- Joseph Day, Dr.PH**  
Day, J., Ji, J., DuBois, D., Silverthorn, N., Flay, B.R., (under review) Social-Environmental Adversity Exposure as a Predictor of Psychological Distress and Risk Behavior in Urban Youth. *The Journal of Child and Family Studies*.
- Bavarian, N., Lewis, K.M., Dubois, D.L., Acock, A., Vuchinich, S., Silverthorn, N., Snyder, F.J., Day, J., Ji, P., Flay, P.R. Using social-emotional and character development to improve academic outcomes: a matched-pair, cluster-randomized controlled trial in low-income, urban schools. *Journal of School Health* 11/2013; 83(11):771-9
- Ruggiero L., Riley B., Hernandez R., Quinn L., Gerber B., Castillo A., Day J., Ingram D., Wang Y., Butler P. Medical Assistant Coaching to Support Diabetes Self-Care Among Low-income Racial/Ethnic Minority Populations. Submitted to *Western Journal of Nursing Research*. 08/2013
- Lewis, K.M., Dubois, D.L., Bavarian, N., Acock, A., Silverthorn, N., Day, J., Ji, P., Vuchinich, S., Flay, B.R. Effects of Positive Action on the Emotional Health of Urban Youth: A Cluster-Randomized Trial. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 07/2013.
- Lewis, K., Schure, M., B., Bavarian, N., Dubois, D. L., Day, J., Ji, P., Silverthorn, N., Acock, A., Vuchinich, S., Flay, B.R. (2013). Problem behavior and urban, low-income youth: A Randomized Controlled Trial of Positive Action in Chicago. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* . 06/2013; 44(6):622-630. .2013.01.030 pp.622-630
- Jarpe-Ratner; Fagen, M.; Day, J.; Gilmet, K.; Prudowsky, J; Neiger, B. L.; Dubois, D.; Flay, B. (2013). Using the Community Readiness Model as an Approach to Formative Evaluation. *Health Promotion Practice* 14(5):649-55
- Melanie T. Ellexson, DHSc, MBA, OTR/L, FAOTA**  
Larson, B.A. & M.T. Ellexson (2015) "Industrial Rehabilitation and Work Injury Prevention" in *International Handbook of Occupational Therapy Interventions, 2nd Ed.* Ed. Ingrid Soderback. Springer: New York.
- Elizabeth Essex**  
Li, L.W., Essex, E. L., Long, Y. (2014). Quality of life as perceived by older persons with chronic illness in rural and urban Shandong, China. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*, 29, 417-428.
- Rupert M. Evans, Sr., DHA, MPA, FACHE**  
Evans, R. (2014) Textbook Chapter: *Work Force Diversity in Healthcare Management, Human Resources Healthcare*, 4th Edition, Health Administration Press
- Raven James, Ph.D.**  
James, R. (Ed.) Under contract. *Encyclopedia of Sex and Sexuality*. Westwood, CT: Greenwood Publishers.
- James, R. (2014). Women's Sexual Health and Substance Abuse Treatment. *Paradigm Magazine*.
- James, R. (In press). Social Influences and Stress. In S. Wadhwa (Ed.), *Stress in the Modern World: Vol. 2. Sources of Stress*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishers.
- James, R. (In press). Sex and Stress. In S. Wadhwa (Ed.), *Stress in the Modern World: Vol. 2. Sources of Stress*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishers.
- James, R. (In press). Writing as a Method for Stress Coping. In S. Wadhwa (Ed.), *Stress in the Modern World: Vol. 3. Stress Coping*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishers.
- James, R., Simons, L. (2011). Exploring Addiction Studies Students' Attitudes toward Research in a Graduate Program. *Journal of Alcohol and Drug Education*, 55(2).
- Nicole M. Koonce, Ph.D., CCC-SLP/L**  
Koonce, N.M. (in press). When it comes to explaining: A preliminary investigation of the expository language skills of African American school age children. *Topics in Language Disorders*.
- Scott, C.M., & Koonce, N.M. (2013). Syntactic contributions to literacy learning. In C.A. Stone, E. Silliman, & G. Wallach (Eds.), *Handbook of Language and Literacy: Development and Disorders* (2nd ed.). New York: Guilford.
- Martha Libster, Ph.D., MSN, APRN-CNS, APHN-BC**  
Libster, M. (2014). *Science of Energy Flow: Foot Reflexology with Herbal Stress Relief*. Golden Apple Publications.com
- Libster, M. (In Press – Jan 2015 Release) A History of Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing. In Potter & Moller, *Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing: From Suffering to Hope*. Pearson, Prentiss-Hall.

Libster, M. (2014). *APRNVoices: Holes in the Historical Fabric of American Nursing*. Monograph. *APRNVoices.com*. Golden Apple Publications

#### **Cheryl Mejta, Ph.D.**

Mejta, C. (In press). *Managing Stress Using Complementary and Alternative Medicine Approaches*. In: S. Wadhwa (Ed.) *Stress in the Modern World: Understanding Science and Society*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO Publishers.

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#### **Ravi Nigam, Ph.D., CCC-SLP**

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#### **Caren Rossow, DHA, MSA, CIH, FACHE**

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#### **Caren Schranz, DrOT, OTR/L**

Schranz, C., Sood, D., and M. Szymanski (2015) *Enriched Home Environment Program for Preschool Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders*. *Journal of Occupational Therapy, Schools, & Early Intervention*, 8 (1) 40-55.

#### **Dale Schuit, PT, Ph.D., MS**

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#### **Divya Sood, OTD/OTR/L**

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#### **Catherine Tymkow, ND/DNP, APRN, WHNP-BC**

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#### **Serena Wadhwa, Psy.D, LCPC, CADC**

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*Sexuality*, Raven James, Editor. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishers.

Wadhwa, S. A Holistic Perspective on Alcoholism. Accepted chapter in *Alcoholism: Impact Assessment, Intervention and Medical Treatment*. Eds. Vinod K. Shanwal and Bhupender S. Chhikara. Integrated Science Publishing. (In process)

Wadhwa, S. Coexisting Mental Health Disorders and Substance Use Disorders: A Western and Eastern Overview of the Prevalence, Treatment and Future Direction. Accepted chapter in *Chronic Mental Illness and the Changing Scope of Intervention Strategies, Diagnosis, and Treatment*. Ed., Varre Vijaya Prasad. IGI Global: Pennsylvania, PA. (Early 2016 Publication)

Wadhwa, S. (in process). *Addiction as a Disease, in Chronic Diseases: An Encyclopedia of Causes, Effects, and Treatments*. Marks, R., Ed.

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### **GRANTS AND AWARDS**

#### **Darrin M. Aase, Ph.D.**

2015 National Institute on Alcohol Abuse & Alcoholism AREA (R15)  
Principal Investigator, total funds requested \$446,211 (under review Cycle II)  
Project Title: *Social Perception Performance in Alcohol Users with and without PTSD during Residential Treatment*

2015 University Interdisciplinary Grant, Governors State University  
Principal Investigator, \$2800.00 (funded)

Project Title: *Social Perception and Alcohol Use Disorders*

2015 & 2014 National Institute on Alcohol Abuse & Alcoholism Travel Award for the American Psychological Association Convention

\$750.00 (awarded)

2014 American Psychological Association Early Career Achievement Award

2013-2014 University Research Grant, Governors State University  
Principal Investigator, \$2236.14 (funded)

Project title: *Social Perception and Alcohol Dependence*

#### **Rupert M. Evans, Sr., DHA, MPA, FACHE**

Elected Chairman, Roseland Community Hospital Board of Directors, August, 2015

#### **Cheryl Mejta, Ph.D.**

2015 American Psychological Association's Health Ambassador Program

Development and delivery of smoking cessation for individuals who are HIV positive  
\$500 (awarded)

Recovery Coaching Training Grant

Renewal in FY 2016 for \$171,765

#### **Dale Schuit, PT, Ph.D., MS**

Schuit, D. *Impact of Global and Regional Sagittal Mal-Alignment on Cervical Spine Mechanics*: Avinash Patwardhan (Hines VA Biomechanics Laboratory and Loyola University Department of Orthopedic Surgery), Leonard Voronov, Robert Havey, Murturi Muriuki, Dale Schuit, Raghu Natarajan, Alexander Ghanayem, Alpesh Patel. Funding total = \$1,100,000.00 provided by U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (Grant 1-101-RX-001269-01-A2)

#### **Roberta Kuchler O'Shea, PT, DPT, Ph.D.**

2015 Inductee into the Mother McAuley High School Hall of Honor

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