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## School of Nursing Promotes Civic Engagement

Each year, the School of Nursing participates in the Mississippi Nurses Association's (MNA) Lobby Day which provides students with an inside look at the legislative process. The event included a tour of the State Capitol and meetings with elected officials focusing on issues relevant to the nursing profession. **Dr. Kate Fouquier**, course coordinator for leadership and management in nursing, collaborated with MNA to facilitate a valuable and effective professional-learning experience for the senior BSN students. This type of experiential learning can serve as a catalyst for continued professional engagement in the legislative process to effect change.

The students had the unique opportunity to sit in the viewing gallery of the House of Representatives to observe a debate on a bill. Students also met with elected



*This year, students had the opportunity to meet Gov., Phil Bryant, who spoke with them about the future of health care in Mississippi. Bryant commended the School of Nursing for its dedication to training professionals who provide the highest-quality care to the residents of our state.*

officials from both the Senate and the House to discuss current nursing legislation and to address priorities for nursing practices outlined by MNA. To continue this learning experience and further their development as professionals, students participated in MNA Summit, where they gave presentations to the statewide attendants on their Lobby Day experience.

## RN-BSN Program Pilots LMS for Campus

This spring, the School of Nursing demonstrated its willingness to pioneer innovative methods to educate and embody its mission by being the first school on campus to pilot Canvas. A cloud-based learning management system (LMS), Canvas was selected to replace Blackboard at UMMC in May at the start of the summer semester.

The RN-BSN program was chosen to pilot the transition for the campus, since the program is all online and many students already have taken Canvas courses while attending a community college. Under the guidance of Dr. Christian Pruett and his training team, all of the RN-BSN faculty completed training last fall and saw the first Canvas courses implemented this spring.

*...continued on page 2*

## Dean's Corner



Dr. Kim Hoover

*It takes a village.* For the past year, SON faculty, staff, students, alumni and community partners have been developing and implementing the second iteration of our strategic map. Our central challenge of providing “leadership to shape the future of health and health care in Mississippi” is particularly relevant in today’s constantly evolving health-care environment. This issue showcases some of our accomplishments around education, research, scholarship, practice and service.

Such efforts ensure that the 850 students enrolled in our programs experience education that transforms thinking and prepares effective nursing leaders – leaders who are part of the solution, working collaboratively to improve health, wellness and quality of life for all Mississippians.

## Harris Named DNP Director; Franklin named RN-BSN Director



Dr. Janet Harris

Dr. Janet Harris, associate dean for practice and community engagement, was named director of the DNP program for the School of Nursing. Before this appointment, she served as Chief Nursing Executive Officer of University Hospitals and Clinics. With Harris’ 40 years of experience in nursing, she brings a wealth of knowledge to her new role. Harris succeeded retiree Dr. Barbara Boss after her more than 30 years of service to the school.



Sherri Franklin

Sherri Franklin, assistant professor of nursing, received the director reins of the RN-BSN program from predecessor Dr. Susan Lofton. Franklin received her BSN and MSN in Health Care and Nursing Administration from the University of Mississippi. She has many years’ experience in case management, utilization management and discharge planning. Immediately before to her transfer to the School of Nursing, she worked as a manager for Batson Children’s Hospital in Quality and Clinical Documentation Improvement.

## RN-BSN Program Pilots LMS (cont.)

“I think the move to Canvas will mean two things for the school. The first is that Canvas will be more stable and reliable because it is hosted in the Cloud,” said Pruett. “The second difference is that Canvas is much more user-friendly for students. The transition to Canvas will allow the School of Nursing to provide improved reliability in our online learning space, as well as access to additional resources for all of our students.”

## Editor's Notes

*Vital Signs*, a School of Nursing internal publication, is published three times per year. Content includes alumni, faculty, staff and student achievements, as well as photos from the semester. Please direct comments, suggestions or questions to [nsrecruiter@umc.edu](mailto:nsrecruiter@umc.edu).

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*“The School of Nursing is dedicated to developing nurse leaders through unique community-based systems serving vulnerable populations; innovative partnerships; exemplary clinical experiences across the continuum of care; evidence-based practice and a research-intensive environment; a focus on excellence in teaching and life long learning; and highly qualified, expert faculty.”*

## Alumni Greetings

On behalf of the University of Mississippi School of Nursing alumni chapter, I would like to thank each of you for supporting our school. Our alumni live up to the school's mission to develop nurse leaders and improve health within and beyond Mississippi. I am constantly amazed at the energy, enthusiasm and innovation of the nurses and nursing students I am surrounded by each day. I love the opportunity to speak to nurses and nursing students and I am inspired when I envision the future of our profession and the limitless opportunities for nurses to make a difference. I believe our school is shaping the future.

As the alumni body comes together again this week at our Nursing Alumni Annual Meeting and Symposium, I want to welcome everybody back to campus. The theme this year is Nursing Trends in Global Health Awareness and we have an exciting agenda, with speakers such as Dr. Fleetwood Loustalot from the CDC in Atlanta, Dr. Mary Currier, Mississippi State Health Officer, Kevin Cook, CEO of University Hospitals and Health System, and Jonathan Wilson, Chief Administrative Officer at UMMC. The day will also include time to review and discuss nursing research with School of Nursing students and faculty. The event will be a special one as the Class of 1965 will be having its 50th class reunion! This group has kept in touch for all these years, and believe me when I say, you do not want to miss some of the stories they have to tell from their nursing school experiences. They have a special bond that is amazing to witness.

As always, the Alumni Association sponsored an incredible reception in October at the Redding House in Biloxi during the annual Mississippi Nurses Association convention. The reception has earned a reputation as a "can't miss" event and it was a great opportunity to interact with alumni and friends. It was an excellent opportunity to welcome and get acquainted with April Mann, UMMC's new alumni director. It did not take long to see that April is full of energy, has tons of innovative ideas and has a vision for a successful future for the alumni association. She is a dynamic leader! Welcome aboard, April!

It has been my extreme pleasure to work alongside Amber Arnold, the president-elect, for the last two years. Amber will assume the role of president in October. Please call or email me if you would like to contact me. I am always happy to talk to you.

Sincerely,  
Michelle Burns, MSN, RN  
Nursing Alumni President, 2013-15  
Class of 1998 (RN-BSN) and Class of 2008 (MSN)  
(601) 815-3860 [mjburns@umc.edu](mailto:mjburns@umc.edu)



*Michelle Burns,  
Nursing Alumni  
President*

## Upcoming Events

**Family Day**  
Thursday, April 16

**Mental Health Nursing  
Conference**  
Friday, April 17

**Honors Day**  
Friday, May 1

**Application Deadline for  
RN-BSN program**  
Friday, May 1

**RN-BSN Orientation**  
Tuesday, May 12

**RN-MSN, MSN Orientation**  
Wednesday, May 13

**BSN Orientation**  
Wed.-Thurs., May 13-14

**Classes End**  
Saturday, May 16

**Pinning**  
Thursday, May 21

**Commencement**  
Friday, May 22

**Memorial Day Holiday**  
Monday, May 25

**Classes Begin**  
Tuesday, May 26

**Application Deadline for  
PhD in Nursing Program**  
Monday, June 1

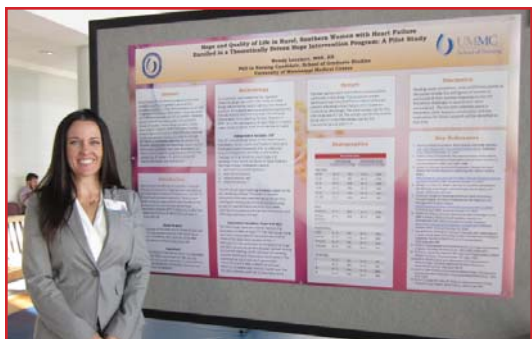
**Fourth of July Holiday**  
Friday, July 3

**Classes End**  
Friday, July 31

**Mississippi Nurses Association Convention**  
**October 20 - 23**  
**Biloxi, Mississippi**



## PhD Student Presents on Behalf of SON for Rural-Health Issues



*As the only nursing participant at Research Day, Wendy Lovelace Ray presented her poster, "Hope and Quality of Life in Rural, Southern Women with Heart Failure Enrolled in a Theoretically Driven Hope Intervention Program."*

PhD in Nursing student **Wendy Lovelace Ray** participated in the School of Graduate Studies in the Health Sciences' Research Day this past October.

Within the same week, Ray also competed in the inaugural Rural Interdisciplinary Case Experience (RICE) Bowl. This health-care competition promotes an experiential-learning opportunity for students from multiple disciplines to interact together in teams to address rural-health issues facing our state. Health-care administrators are becoming increasingly aware that the evolution of quality patient care requires a more collaborative and interprofessional approach. The RICE Bowl encourages students to think outside their own disciplines and experience other approaches to patient care before entering the professional arena.

"The RICE Bowl reinforced the necessity of collaborating with other health-care and professional disciplines in order to successfully target patients' overall health-care needs," said Ray.

This event brought together three teams of students from 12 different academic disciplines, including business, law, psychology, social work and various medical disciplines, to work together on a clinical case study prepared by a panel of interdisciplinary faculty. Participants came from Belhaven University, Jackson State University, Mississippi College, the University of Mississippi and the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

## School of Graduate Studies Resources Advance Nursing Scholarship



*Angie Duck*

PhD in Nursing student **Angie Duck** spent more than 20 years in the LSU hospital system, which made the choice to leave to pursue an advanced education very difficult.

After learning she was the first PhD in Nursing student chosen to receive the dean's scholarship from the School of Graduate Studies in the Health Sciences, she heeded her husband's advice of "when someone gives you a gift, you take it." The dean's scholarship is a recruitment scholarship awarded to students for outstanding academic achievement and offers full tuition plus a generous student stipend for up to five years. The intent of the scholarship is to allow students the freedom to pursue studies and research full time.

"The program is perfect for someone who loves learning," said Duck. The scholarship makes it possible for Duck to devote herself to full-time study and research in pursuit of her degree.

The dean's scholarship is a full-tuition recruitment scholarship awarded to students for outstanding academic achievement. Students who are citizens of the US or permanent residents also are eligible for the dean's scholarship. Students wishing to be considered for a stipend and/or dean's scholarship for the upcoming fall semester should apply for admission before April 1. Stipends and scholarships are assigned on a competitive basis. The current graduate student stipend is \$24,150 per year for up to five years.

For more information related to this and other opportunities in the PhD program, please contact Dr. Mary Stewart, director of the PhD in Nursing program at (601) 984-6221 or [mstewart4@umc.edu](mailto:mstewart4@umc.edu).

## BSN Students' Stars Shine Brightly at MNA/MASN Conference



*Faith Sherman, far left, and Connor Fairchild, far right, with the rest of the MASN delegates.*

Encouraged by Mississippi Association of Student Nurses (MASN) faculty advisor **Mary McNair**, two BSN research groups gave presentations at the MNA research session with fellow undergraduate and graduate peers from across the state.

**Connor Fairchild** earned second-place honors for his group with the poster, "Experiences and Feelings of the Patient on Isolation." Other group members included Tiona Pogue, Rebecca Poe, Brittany Cavett, Bradi Davis, Chelsey Buie, Hailey Parks and Anna Posey.

**Emily McCulloch's** presentation of her group's poster, "The Nurse's Role in Communicating with the Patient's Family during End-of-life Situations," garnered an honorable mention prize. Molly Harlow, Tyler

Slay, Cody Hyatt, Meredith Worley, Bailey Allen and Georgia Smith were fellow contributors.

In addition to this SON demonstration of scholarship, students exemplified leadership Traditional BSN senior **Faith Sherman** was elected to the MASN Board of Directors on the Nominations and Election Committee for 2014 - 15.

Kudos to these students for representing the school in such a positive and professional light during this important event!

## DNP Student Honored at TIGR Conference, Nightingale Gala



*Akanji's work with TIGR was further recognized when she was honored with the Nurse in a Non-traditional Setting of the Year Award at this year's Nightingale Awards gala.*

This past November, DNP student **Joy Akanji** spoke at the Television Integrated Guided Response (TIGR) Conference in Tampa, Florida. In her presentation, "Just in Time Training (JITT)," Akanji demonstrated how she uses TIGR to provide JITT to both patients and staff to promote behavioral changes and maximize staff capacity to engage in patient education using best practices that support national patient-safety goals.

Akanji received a TIGR Innovation Award for her work on the premier UMMC patient greeting video. The video served as an opportunity for senior leadership to welcome patients to the hospital and teach them how to access the TIGR patient education system.

"Working with Telehealth's TIGR team, UMMC successfully paired the greeting video with other TIGR usage efforts, such as flyers, stickers and even a TIGR cheer," said Akanji. "This led to increased use of the system and nursing efficiency, including a whopping 78 percent growth of EMR documentation for a single unit within four months."

Akanji credits the success of the endeavor to her dedicated TIGR committee members who work tirelessly to promote standardized quality patient education that is based on best practices, and to the clinical staff who consistently implement quality patient education through the use of the TIGR system to improve patient outcomes. Go TIGR! Gr-r-r-r-r!

## Nursing Faculty Inducted into Nelson Order of Teaching Excellence

The School of Nursing had four more of its faculty members inducted into the University of Mississippi Medical Center's Norman C. Nelson Order of Teaching Excellence. The Nelson Order, named after former Vice Chancellor Dr. Norman Nelson, was established to honor the institution's finest educators. The inductees will receive a luncheon in their honor on May 12 and be publicly recognized at this year's Commencement.

The recipients, pictured from left, include Dr. Mary Stewart, Dr. Kate Fouquier, Dr. Cindy Luther and Mary McNair.



## Lee Appointed to the ANCC Content Expert Panels

Assistant professor **Lishia Lee** was recently reappointed to the pediatric nursing content expert panel for the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). The content expert panel consists of 10 nurses from around the country that meet at the ANCC headquarters every three years during each test rotation. They participate in practice analysis and then develop a test content outline reflective of current practice and evidence base. Lee served one term on the pediatric content expert panel from 2010 to 2014, and was elected as chair in 2014. Her second term will run from January 2015 through December 2018. In addition to her role on the expert panel, she has also been selected for the ANCC Appointments Committee which reviews applications for the various working panels and makes recommendations for acceptance or denial based on candidates' qualifications and documentation.

## Robinson Selected as Speaker for National APHA Meeting



*Dr. Jennifer Robinson*

Associate professor **Dr. Jennifer Robinson** was invited to be a featured speaker at the American Public Health Association's annual meeting in New Orleans last November. She was selected to speak on her research agenda, "Physical Activity in Neighborhood Context." Robinson, who has a specific interest in cardiovascular health disparities associated with geographic location and socioeconomic position, felt privileged to be considered. "It [was] a real honor to be invited to speak and serves as an indication that my work is known nationally and valued by nurse researchers," she said.

## Wilson Selected as Classroom Presenter at INACSL Conference



*Kristi Wilson*

**Kristi Wilson**, instructor in nursing, was accepted for an interactive-classroom presentation at the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning (INACSL) Conference. Her abstract is based on clinical simulations with nursing students exposed to sensory deprivation and how their empathy levels for patients increased after being subjected to symptoms their patients cope with every day. In June, Wilson will deliver an hour-long, interactive presentation at this prestigious international event in Atlanta. Her long-term goal is to turn this simulation practice into a publication.

## Faculty and Staff Receive Medical Center Service Pins

Several SON faculty and staff received service pins this quarter. Among those recognized for five years were Dr. Lisa Byrd, Sandy Stanton, Kristi Wilson and Dr. Lei Zhang. Dr. Sheila Keller received her 10-year pin. Staff member Annie Mooney received her 15-year pin. Dr. Susan Lofton and Dr. Sharon Wyatt were recognized for 20 years. Lastly, Elaine Jacobs and Mike Luttrell were recognized for their 25-years of service to the Medical Center. Congrats to everyone!



## SON Receives Governor's Initiative for Volunteer Excellence (GIVE) Award for Outstanding Volunteer Outreach by a health-care education program

SON Service



Students served at more than 170 organizations/ events last year.



"We truly have the opportunity to make an impact. By taking time to serve in the community, we reach out to those most in need. We care for the sick, but can also raise awareness on wellness and preventative care. Not only that, but we have the opportunity to get involved in the community we will be working in, learning its qualities and makeup."

~ MSN student Amy Wall



To see what the School of Nursing is doing in the community, visit <https://givegab.com/universities/university-of-mississippi-medical-center-school-of-nursing>.

CAMP RAINBOW DIABETES WALK  
BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB MERCY  
UMMC HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER DELTA  
SUSAN G. KOMAN RACE FOR A CURE CAMP  
ALZHEIMER'S WALK GRACE HOUSE KANDU  
GRANT'S FERRY RELAY FOR LIFE  
HEALTH FAIR HABITAT FOR HUMANITY  
MRA SCIENCE FAIR FITNESS FEST MARCH OF DIMES  
CAMP BLUEBIRD BLOOD DRIVES MAKE A WISH  
JOHNSON ELEMENTARY NIGHT OUT HEART  
11,826 hours valued at  
\$266,671  
1 CAMPUS 1 COMMUNITY IHL HEALTH FAIR  
ROSA SCOTT HEALTH FAIR BROWN ELEMENTARY  
MAKING STRIDES FOR BREAST CANCER WALK SIDS WALK  
DISCOVER NURSING DAY  
ELIZA PILLIARS HEALTH FAIR  
MS MASN 4 LEAF K  
WALK



Students participate in a minimum of eight hours of service-learning activities each year. Most students exceed this number.

"Service learning has played a tremendous role in shaping who I am as a student, a future nurse and a member of the community. I have had the opportunity to connect with the community on a personal and profound level, making their individual needs and concerns more apparent. A particular event that comes to mind is the Midtown Partner's Night Out Against Crime. This is an event put on every year for the Jackson community where we as students have the opportunity to provide health information and education to members of the community and conduct health screenings. I was able to interact with members of the community, assess their individual learning needs, answer their various questions and concerns, and address the barrier that sometimes exists between the community and health care. Through this one event alone, I felt like we were able to make such a positive impact on the community. This event really made me aware of the difference we can make in the lives of others and the impact we can have on the future of health care if we simply take the time to engage. The impact is truly immeasurable."

~ BSN student Erica Simmons

## NP Students Screen ERC Employees during Health Fair



FNP student Whitney Zhou draws blood from an ERC employee during the screenings.

Ten School of Nursing faculty members and 17 nurse practitioner students volunteered their services at the 2015 Education Research Center Health Fair in January. The event allowed more than 60 ERC employees to get a healthy start to the New Year. The NP students and faculty provided health screenings, including blood pressure, visual acuity, BMI and bone density checks and blood draws (lipids, glucose, HbA1c). They offered information on dental hygiene, men's and women's health, hypertension, diabetes, obesity and depression.

**Dr. Audwin Fletcher** coordinated the event with other faculty members and participating students from the Psychiatric/Mental Health, Adult-Gerontology Primary Care and Family Nurse Practitioner tracks, including Dorothy Adams, Iesha Blaylock, Gail Chancellor,

Shelby Davis, Leo Easley, Lodie Farber, Flora Green, Katherine Griffis, Joanne Haynes, Kristen Ingram, Amelia Kelly, Rosanne Lee, Chelsea McClain, Rhonda Moore, Sarah Stone, Ebony Washington and Whitney Zhou.

Spring 2015

# Semester in Review

## Phi Kappa Phi Inducts 17 New School of Nursing Members



*A total of 17 School of Nursing graduate and undergraduate students were honored at the ceremony, pictured here with Dean Kim Hoover.*

Closely reflecting the core values of the School of Nursing, the national honor society Phi Kappa Phi recognizes students with high scholastic achievement and strong character in their distinguished society. Membership into the multidisciplinary honor society is by invitation only and students must rank in the top 10 percent of their class to be eligible.

New inductees included Stephanie Atkins, Brittany Boolos, Callie Brown, Carsyn Byars, Sherrikee Causey, Jessica Davis, Connor Fairchild, Dr. Terri Gillespie, Eliza Inman, Michael Jones, Robbye Anne Lee, Holly Mahalitic, Brook Ponder, Erica Simmons, Jessica Smith, Cassala Ward and Shardai Williams.

## Oxford Accelerated BSN and DNP Students Participate in IPE

The Oxford campus showed its dedication to collaborative learning this semester by having Accelerated BSN and DNP students participate in an interprofessional-education (IPE) activity with the School of Pharmacy and the School of Applied Sciences. The three-week activity involved combined lectures, problem-based learning, skills lab and simulations with all three schools. The focus was on communication and roles between each profession. Students learned the skills and content needed to treat type I and type II diabetes while they participated in a clinical simulation in which each of the professions carried out their roles in the scenario.

Oxford Accelerated BSN student Ashley Trussell, left, conducts the IPE with second-year pharmacy student Jessica Ruiz, center, and Jennifer Mitchell, junior dietetics and nutrition major.



## Sigma Theta Tau Inducts New Class



The School of Nursing's Theta Beta chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) inducted 89 new members this past St. Patrick's Day. Membership in this prestigious nursing honor society is by invitation only to undergraduate and graduate nursing students who exhibit excellence in scholarship, strong leadership qualities and high professional standards. These students will be joining the ranks of more than 135,000 active members residing in more than 85 countries within the organization.

Robbye Anne Lee, senior class president, receives her STTI pin from fellow STTI member and School of Nursing alumna Bess C. Blackwell.