

# Francis Marion University School of Health Sciences Nursing Alumni Newsletter

**FMU Nursing  
on the Move**

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## Exciting News at FMU This Summer!



There have been a number of wonderful changes at FMU this summer. The FMU nursing program is now part of the new School of Health Sciences at FMU, along with the physician assistant and healthcare administration programs. Dr. Ruth Wittmann-Price has been named Dean of the School of Health Sciences. Dr. Karen Gittings is now the Associate Dean of the School of Health Sciences and chair of the nursing program.

There was a ribbon cutting ceremony on August 4, 2016 for the Carter Center for Health Sciences. This new downtown building will house the nurse practitioner and physician assistant programs, along with the USC third and fourth year medical students and FMU graduate psychology students.

FMU received two federal grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). These grants will provide 2.3 million dollars in scholarships and incentivized loans for master's level nursing students at FMU. One grant will provide \$543,654 in scholarships to students in the FNP program starting this year. The Nursing Faculty Loan Program will provide \$75,452 in loans for MSN Nurse Educator students. Up to 85 percent of the loans can be forgiven if students serve as full-time faculty at an accredited nursing school for four years after graduation.

## ODK Inductees

The Nursing Program had two inductees into the FMU Chapter of Omicron Delta Kappa, the leadership honor society. Rose Williams, a junior 2 BSN student, and Archie Sims, a MSN student were inducted on April 14, 2016.



## FMU Receives NLN Center of Excellence Designation

The FMU Nursing Program has been designated an NLN Center of Excellence for 2016-2020. This is a prestigious national award. According to last year's information on the National League for Nursing website, less than 50 programs hold the designation of Center of Excellence. The only other school in South Carolina is Clemson University. Of the designated schools, only 7 schools were recognized in the category of "Creating Environments that Promote the Pedagogical Expertise of Faculty." Based on last year's numbers, FMU is only 1 of 7 schools in the nation to hold this designation. The nursing faculty are traveling to the NLN Education Summit in Orlando, Florida on September 21-23 to receive this national award.

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**Faculty Attend Conference in Philadelphia**

FMU faculty members Dr. Karen Gittings, Dr. Ruth Wittmann-Price, Dr. Deborah Hopla, Dr. Annie Muller, Dr. Tracy George, Dr. Gaye Douglas, Dr. Rhonda Brodgon, and Ms. Dorie Weaver, along with clinical nurse educators Ms. Ashley Hudson from Carolinas Hospital System and Ms. Ester Thomas from McLeod Regional Medical Center attended the Drexel University Academic Fast-Track Program in Philadelphia, PA from August 1 to 4, 2016.

This intense program provided the faculty members and clinical nurse educators with an update on evidence-based practices in nursing education and simulation. There were attendees from across the U.S. at this program.

Dr. Wittmann-Price was also a featured speaker for several of the sessions on nursing education.

Funding for this trip was provided by a grant from the Foundation of the National Student Nurses' Association.



**Dr. Hopla Wins National Award**

Dr. Deborah Hopla was honored at the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties Annual Conference for her work in health policy. Dr. Hopla is actively involved in nurse practitioner policy initiatives in South Carolina. The NONPF conference was held in Seattle, Washington in April 2016.



**FMU Student Leadership Conference**

On April 16, 2016, the FMU Nursing students were well-represented at the FMU Student Leadership Conference. The student director was Rose Williams, a junior 2 nursing student, who also led a session on leadership skills for students. The faculty advisor for the conference was Dr. Tracy George.



**FMU Hosts Update on Clinical Education in Nursing Conference**

On August 16, 2016, FMU hosted the Update on Clinical Education in Nursing conference. Full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, nurse educators from local hospitals, and nurses attended this event, which was held at the new Carter Center for Health Sciences downtown. The attendees also were able to tour the new facility.

**Alumni Social:** Please join your fellow FMU Nursing Alumni at Redbone Alley for a social on Thursday, September 29 from 6-8 pm. We will gather in the bar area.