

Francis Marion University School of Health Sciences Alumni Newsletter

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FMU Health Sciences on the Move

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Doctor of Nursing Practice Program

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at FMU began in January 2018 with its first class of students. The launch of the DNP is the first doctoral program at FMU. The DNP degree will allow graduates to attain the highest possible standing within the field of nursing practice. The program requires 27 credit hours of classroom work for candidates who enter the program with a masters-level degree already in hand.

FMU's DNP program recently received its final regulatory approval from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC).

FMU added the masters level degree for Nurse Educators and Family Nurse Practitioner in 2013, and graduated its first FNP class in 2014.

More information on the DNP program is available at www.fmarion.edu/healthsciences.

December 2017 Graduation

On December 16, 2017, FMU held their fall commencement ceremony. This was an exciting time for the School of Health Sciences. There were 17 RN to BSN students who graduated, along with 29 BSN students. There were 22 Healthcare Administration graduates.

There were 26 FNP students who graduated. There were 4 nurse educator graduates. Pictured below are the MSN-FNP students who gathered for a group photograph following the ceremony.



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Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society Update

Dr. Tracy George presented on Long-Acting Reversible Contraception on October 5, 2017 at the fall educational meeting for the FMU Chi Lambda Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI). Dr. Tracy George and Mrs. Katelyn Poston Robinson, BSN 13, MSN 17 attended the STTI Honor Society 44th Biennial Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana from October 28 to November 1, 2017. They brought back some great ideas for the FMU Chi Lambda Chapter! Our upcoming spring events include induction on February 15, 2018 at 6 pm in Lowrimore Auditorium. The spring educational program will be on March 29, 2018 at 5:30 pm. The spring program features Dr. Tiffany Phillips, who will be speaking about diabetes. If you were previously a member of STTI, please consider rejoining the Chi Lambda Chapter.



Students Providing Screenings at Felician Center

Students in the IPHC 500 Rural Health course have been providing health screenings at the Felician Center in Kingstree this fall. The students provide blood pressure screenings, as well as glucose and cholesterol finger-stick tests. This course provides students a greater understanding of rural health and health disparities. The instructor for this course is Dr. Chiko Umeweni.



Accreditation Visit: Resiliency in Nurse Educators!

Ruth Wittmann-Price

I had the privilege of being an accreditation team leader for a College in FL one week after hurricane Irma. I was sure the site visit was going to be cancelled, but the nurse administrator said she was prepared and to "come on down."

The team met in Orlando and was transported to the college. The hotel where we stayed was completely booked with FEMA workers. We could see the destruction of Irma as we drove to the college. The nursing faculty only had power for 18 to 24 hours before our arrival! The document room was perfectly put together; the faculty baked snacks for us and had everything in order. It was a great team and great program with enthusiastic educators. This peer-evaluator site visit just enforced my belief that nurse educators are among the most resilient!

Annual FMU Nurse Educator Conference

Full-time and part-time FMU nursing faculty met for the Annual Nurse Educator Conference on August 17, 2017 at the Carter Center for Health Sciences. The featured speaker was Crystal Rookard, JD from Midlands Technical College. She presented on Liability Issues: Nursing Faculty Interactions with Students.

Dr. Karen Gittings spoke on Clinical Expectations. Dr. Ruth Wittmann-Price discussed Evaluating Clinical Performance. Dr. Nina Russell and Ms. Wendy Hatchell discussed Concept Mapping Made Easy and Consistent. Lunch was provided. This was a great day for full-time and part-time faculty to learn more about nursing education.

PA Students Have White Coat Ceremony

The inaugural class of the FMU Physician Assistant program gathered at Chapman Auditorium on December 1, 2017 for a White Coat ceremony. The ceremony is a tradition for PA students as they near the end of the didactic portion of their education. Following more than a year of classroom work, they receive white coats as they prepare to begin their clinical rotations. The PA program is now accepting applications for its second class which will begin in August 2018.



Mercy Health Walk by Dr. Nina Russell

On Saturday October 14, 2017, Mercy Medicine Free Clinic (MMFC) in Florence, SC held its very first 'Mercy Health Walk.' This initiative is part of a proactive study led by Dr. Nina Russell and Dr. Tracy George who joined forces to conduct a metabolic syndrome study that aims to reduce cardiovascular risk factors or conditions such as hypertension, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, and obesity. Francis Marion University nursing students were among the 50 participants and provided blood glucose screenings as well as dietary education before walking in support of a healthier tomorrow. The October 14th Mercy Health Walk was the first of two planned for the 12-week study which began September 1st and is part of a community-wide effort to promote better lifestyle choices with regard to diet and exercise. The premise for each Mercy Health Walk is to depict a sense of commitment and togetherness as clinic providers and other healthcare personnel walk side-by-side with patients, their family, and members of the community.



Health Assessment Students in the Community

Through generous support from a Francis Marion University Project REAL grant, the undergraduate health assessment students in NURS 301 have participated in screenings at various community sites this fall. Some sites have included the Johnson Controls industrial site, the McLeod Diabetes fair, a housing development, a health walk, and Carolinas Hospital System.

The screenings are a great way for first-semester nursing students to practice their blood pressure skills. The students also obtain fingerstick blood glucose and cholesterol measurements. The students obtain each patient's weight and calculate the BMI using a smartphone-based app. The students also discuss recommended screenings for the participants based on the from the US Preventive Services Task Force using the EPSS app.



Faculty and Staff Participation in Career Fair

Dr. Freda Campbell-Wilson, Ms. Robyn Morgan and Dr. Sarah Kershner participated in the Darlington County School District Interactive Career Fair at the Darlington Institute of Technology where we met with over 80 high school students in small groups and introduced students to all the programs being offered in the School of Health Sciences. It was a great opportunity to market the programs in our school.



Nursing Pinning Ceremony

The December 2017 graduating class of Francis Marion University's BSN Program held a Nurse Pinning Ceremony on December 14, 2017 at FMU's Chapman Auditorium. FMU Nursing Faculty members presented the prospective grads with nursing pins and students recited the *Nightingale Pledge*.



Faculty Updates



Ms. Kellie Gainey, MSN, RN began with FMU in January 2018 as an instructor of nursing. She received her BSN from FMU in 2013, and she graduated in 2017 from FMU's MSN/Nurse Educator program. Ms. Gainey has previously served as a part-time clinical instructor for FMU and a graduate mentor for FMU's pre-nursing freshmen students. She has a clinical background in community health and dialysis nursing. She will teaching the fundamentals of nursing course in the pre-licensure nursing program and will be serving as the lab director.

SCAPA Student Challenge Bowl by Ms. April Martin

In October 2017, FMU PA students competed in a challenge bowl against the other 3 PA programs in the state of SC.

This is the first year that SC has been able to host a challenge bowl with the addition of 3 new PA programs.

FMU PA students competed against North Greenville, USC, and MUSC PA programs to win the first SCAPA Challenge Bowl!



Ms. April H. Martin has been named the FMU PA Program Director. Ms. Martin graduated from UNC-Pembroke with her Bachelor of Science in Biology with a Biomedical Emphasis and received her Masters of Science in Physician Assistant Studies from South University in Savannah, GA. She has practiced clinically for the past 13 years in Emergency Medicine, Primary Care, Urgent Care, Pediatric Orthopedics, and College Health. She joined the faculty of FMU in January 2017 and was named Program Director in October 2017.

FMU PA Students Hold Blood Drives

This past year the PA students successfully organized 2 blood drives for the American Red Cross. With the leadership of Taylor Fitch, a student in the current cohort, they collected a total of 39 units of blood. They hope to sponsor another drive in the summer. This is a great service to the community!



Holistic Admissions by Dr. Ruth Wittmann-Price

Dr. Karen Gittings, Associate Dean of Health Sciences, John Nolette, Grant Assistant and I went to the American Academy of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) conference on November 15 in Atlanta GA. The day-long conference was excellent and the topic was diversifying the student body to replicate the demographics of the population being cared for by future health professionals. All the “urban myths” about holistic admissions were dispelled. It does not open a program up to legal consequences, it does not decrease rigor, and it does not decrease program outcomes. What diversity and inclusion does do; 1) it opens up opportunities for everyone, 2) it promotes richness in perspectives in the classroom, 3) it increases enrollment, and 4) it serves our patients better because studies show they are more comfortable with people caring for them who they can relate to. The conference included interprofessional speakers. Speakers included dentists, directors of admissions, lawyers, and nurses. Understanding to view people individually rather than a cohort who meets a specific quantitative GPA is a culture change that we are ready to explore in the School of Health Sciences. If you have questions about Holistic Admissions, please email Ruth Wittmann-Price. Thank you.

MNA Update by Dr. Rhonda Brogdon

The Minority Nurses Association had its first meeting for the Fall semester on September 7th. The guest speaker was Ms. Kellie Gainey, MSN-Ed, RN. Ms. Gainey is a graduate of FMU’s BSN and MSN-Ed programs.

Ms. Gainey’s topic was “mind mapping” which is a graphical way to represent ideas and concepts. Ms. Gainey said mind-mapping can help students to structure, analyze, comprehend and synthesize information learned. Ms. Gainey said that mind-mapping contributed to her success in nursing school.

We have several dynamic speakers scheduled this fall for our MNA meetings!

Long-Acting Reversible Contraceptive (LARC) Training



Francis Marion University and Bayer offered an intrauterine device (IUD) training at the Carter Center for Health Sciences on November 8, 2017, as part of the Choose Well Grant that Dr. Deborah Hopla and Dr. Sarah Kershner received. There were over thirty healthcare professionals in attendance, including NPs, RNs, PAs, and MDs. They represented McLeod, Care South, Hope Health, DHEC, and several medical practices. On November 16, 2017 FMU and Merck offered contraceptive implant training. Through these trainings, more providers in the Pee Dee will learn how to insert Long Acting Reversible Contraceptives.

School of Health Sciences Basketball Night

The School of Health Sciences Alumni, Chi Lambda Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau members, FMU students and faculty attended the FMU home basketball game on November 16, 2017. Preemie and newborn clothes were collected for the McLeod Neonatal Intensive Care Unit as a service project. It was a fun evening for all who attended!



Collaborative Learning by Mrs. Marty Hucks

Dr. George and Mrs. Hucks are conducting a research project to determine student perceptions regarding collaborative learning activities between undergraduate and graduate nursing students and will present their findings at the Nursing Education Research Conference (NERC) in Washington, DC in April. In a planned collaboration, community assessments done by the BSN students as part of their Population-focused Nursing and Healthcare Policy class will be utilized by MSN students enrolled in the Patient Education and Advocacy course to create low-literacy pamphlets that meet the needs of the target populations. These pamphlets will then be utilized as a teaching tool by the undergraduate nursing students to educate members of the population previously assessed.