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BC NURSING
voice

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Reflections on Now and Then

Welcome to the inaugural issue of Boston College Nursing VOICE. It is fitting that in this first issue, we celebrate our history with a photo essay on the 60th anniversary of the William F. Connell School of Nursing, and look forward, with a feature on our new palliative care specialty.

In future issues we will bring you news from campus, but will also feature our alumnae/i who are making a difference and creating positive change in their professional and personal lives. We will explore what it truly means to be a Boston College nurse.

Please enjoy this first issue of Boston College Nursing VOICE. We’re excited to hear your response to this issue, and hope you find yourself better connected to and better informed about the Connell School of Nursing community.

BY KATHLEEN SULLIVAN

New Associate Deans
Tabloski and Read

Connell School of Nursing faculty members Catherine Read and Patricia Tabloski have been appointed to fill key leadership positions in the school’s academic programs, the Connell School announced recently.

Read, an associate professor in the Adult Health Department, will serve as associate dean for the undergraduate program, while Tabloski—an associate professor and former chair in the Adult Health Department—is associate dean of graduate programs.

Read, who joined Boston College in 2001 as an assistant professor, is a researcher in the field of health promotion and psychological adaptation in persons with, or at risk for, genetic disease, and last year co-chaired a National Institute on Aging-sponsored conference on aging and genetic technology.

Tabloski is recognized nationally for her expertise in the care of the elderly, and her research has resulted in new strategies for improving the care of aged clients.

“Cathy brings extraordinary knowledge of the core curriculum, as well as the School of Nursing curriculum to the job. She has an amazing ability to relate to students, parents, faculty, and staff,” said Hazard. “She hears them and finds creative solutions to their issues. Cathy is playing a major role with our partners in clinical settings to devise new models for the education of nurses.”

“Pat is recognized nationally for her expertise in the care of the elderly, and her research has resulted in new strategies for improving the care of aged clients.”

Barbara Hazard, PhD, RN, FAAN
Dean and Professor

MTS Photography
“Pat has been a leader in advancing our graduate programs. Our new palliative care program is a testament to Pat’s determination and commitment to current societal needs. This expands the focus on end of life care, which has been of interest to ethicists, social workers, and others at BC.”

Read is a senior nurse scientist at the Center for Nursing Excellence at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, and a member of a research team at Boston University School of Medicine. She also serves on the Burlington Board of Health.

A graduate of the University of Illinois-Chicago, Read also holds a master of science in physiology from the University of Illinois-Chicago, Read also holds a master of science in physiology from the University of Illinois-Chicago, a master of science in nursing from Seton Hall University and a doctorate from the University of Rochester.

Discussing this increased interest in nursing, Read said, “When I sit and talk with students they speak about their desire to go to work every day and help people. Nursing is such a personally rewarding career.”

“This is my 30th year as a nurse and I have to say it is the most exciting time for the nursing profession,” she said. “Job prospects are great for nurses. I have fielded a lot of calls from those interested in our undergrad program. We had 25 internal transfers last year.”

Offering a brief overview of the state of graduate studies at the Connell School, Tabloski said, “Our most popular program is the master’s entry program, where non-nurses with a bachelor’s degree complete two years of full time study to earn a master’s degree in advanced practice nursing. The nurse anesthetist program has been highly successful. Our recent graduation class achieved 100 percent certification.

“It is a great time to be in nursing. I’ve worked a lot of places and BC is the best.”

Reprinted with permission from the Boston College Chronicle (Oct. 19, 2006)
Jennie Chin Hansen ’70, RN, MS, FAAN, of San Francisco, CA, recently was elected to serve as AARP President-Elect for the 2006-2008 biennium and will automatically succeed to AARP President in 2008.

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. AARP has staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

In 2005, Hansen transitioned after nearly 25 years as executive director of On Lok, Inc., a nonprofit family of organizations providing integrated and comprehensive primary and long-term care community based services in San Francisco. On Lok is the prototype for PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly), which was signed into federal legislation in 1997 making this Medicare/Medicaid program available to all 50 states.

Hansen serves in various leadership roles that include Commissioner of the Medicare Payment Advisory Committee (MedPAC), board member of the National Academy of Social Insurance, and the Robert Wood Johnson Executive Nurse Fellows Program. She also serves on boards of the Effective Healthcare Stakeholders Group of AHRQ, Lumeta (California’s Quality Improvement Organization) and the California Regional Health Information Organization (CalRHIO). She is past president of the American Society on Aging.

In 2006, Ms. Hansen served as a national juror for the first-ever Purpose Prize sponsored by Civic Ventures.

STUDENTS AND FACULTY SERVE, LEARN IN NICARAGUA

This past January, three Boston College faculty, eight undergraduate students and two graduate students traveled to Nicaragua as part of the Connell School’s Global Health Initiative.

This team provided nursing service and health education to residents of one of the poorest communities in Nicaragua, Nueva Vida in Ciudad Sandino. Built originally for survivors of the 1972 earthquake, the community was further populated in 1998 by families displaced by Hurricane Mitch. The community lacks running water, sanitation facilities, and electricity. There is much acute and chronic illness, inadequate employment, and educational disadvantage.

Prior to their trip, students worked with Connell School faculty members Joyce Pulcini and Ronna Krozy, and with Kathy Lee, an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the department of Romance Languages and Literature. Students developed critical community nursing skills, Spanish language proficiency, and cultural sensitivity as part of their preparation for the trip.

While in Nicaragua, students worked at the Nueva Vida community health clinic, developed health strategies in collaboration with local health promoters, and educated themselves on the cultural, political, economic, and healthcare issues facing the country.

Jennifer Cundall, class of ’07, at the Nueva Vida community health clinic.

SCHAUS STAYS FOCUSED ON THE GOAL

She may be a freshman, but Connell School student Molly Schaus is already making a name for herself at Boston College. As goaltender for the women’s ice hockey team, Schaus has scored an impressive collection of awards and recognition throughout her first season at BC.

Women’s Hockey East has named Schaus Rookie of the Month twice (October and February), as well as Goalie of the Month (November). In the Beanpot, Schaus stopped 99 of 103 shots for the tournament and was recognized as the Beanpot’s most outstanding goaltender with the Bertagna Award. Schaus set a new NCAA record for single game saves when she stopped 73 Harvard shots on February 6 in the triple overtime Beanpot semifinal.

The aim of this project was to provide web-based materials that school nurses can access and use, to help students develop better coping skills and become more resilient in handling bullying situations.

The undergraduate research symposium on February 4, 2007, which was the first of its kind, provided undergraduates a chance to present the results of their research and grant-funded travel to their peers. The event was divided into three parts—poster presentations, film presentations, and panel discussions. Of the students representing the Connell School, Jina Rameau, class of 2007 (pictured below with Dr. Joseph Quinn, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences), was designated an Award Winning Presenter for her poster entitled “WEBQUEST: An Evidenced-Based Practice Approach Promoting Resilience in Students with Disabilities to Better Manage Teasing and Bullying.”

The PolyMedica Corporation Thomas O. Pyle Nursing Fellowship Fund will provide financial support for master’s or doctoral level study at the Connell School, with preference given to RNs who work in either oncology or endocrinology at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

For more than a decade, PolyMedica Corporation has been the nation’s largest provider of blood glucose testing supplies and related services to people with diabetes and today serves more than 250,000 active diabetes patients. The Company also offers a full service pharmacy to meet patients’ medication needs and provides patient education to help its patients better manage their health conditions. Pyle was elected Chairman of the Board of Directors in September 2005 and has served as a director of PolyMedica since June 2004.
A Teacher at Heart

BY JOSHUA J. JENSEN

Forget your stereotype of the solitary librarian – Wanda Anderson sees her role at Boston College’s O’Neill Library as an educator and resource person. As Senior Reference Librarian/Bibliographer for Nursing and Health Sciences, Anderson spends much of her day interacting with students and faculty.

“We’re here for service, for the School of Nursing and the whole BC community. People come and drop by, and schedule consultations. Whether students are working on a paper, or a faculty member is giving a talk in Japan or needs statistics for a grant, we’re available.

“I really am a teacher at heart. Students come and we consult on their research and get to know their research more in depth so I can provide individualized, customized services at that point in time. It is one thing to have a lot of materials available—like with the millions of records on Google—but you need to access them in a meaningful way. This is where the teaching aspect comes in.

“After working with students for a while you feel as if you’re launching them, and they go on to do so many wonderful things. To really be a part of that is very rewarding; knowing that the research helps impact care at the bedside, in the home or in the community.”

Anderson’s diverse experience serves as a basis for her work. “Originally I studied to be a biology teacher. After I got my degree some friends worked in medical laboratories and asked me if I would be interested. So I worked in laboratory medicine for about 10 years. Then I sort of sculpted out my philosophy of health promotion, both preventive screening, and eventually adding the aspect of health education.

“I was working as a biology librarian and was also studying for my master’s degree in health education, so I could round out my approach to health care. When this position at Boston College became available, it seemed a perfect fit. I could use the skills I had gained, participate in the education of future nurses, and also collaborate with faculty to provide resources and services for their own research.”

Anderson believes that providing a high level of service is impossible without this collaboration with faculty and students. “I have to know what’s being published. I have to have the knowledge to discern what is beneficial to the collection, what is going to help the faculty. I do that by working with the faculty and the students. Professor Mary Duffy is the faculty liaison to the library. She keeps me abreast of what’s going on in the school of nursing—the new faculty and new programs. The interaction with the students helps me to know what subjects they are studying, what the research trends are. Each part of my work informs the others; everything is a continuum or circle, everything informs the other part.”

Anderson sees the impact of her work reaching far beyond the campus community. She explains, “We are one of the best nursing collections in the country—certainly the most comprehensive in New England. I recently had the head of a nursing department at a hospital call me and say, ‘You know your library is the standard for nursing libraries and I hope you’re going to keep that challenge.’ So that’s my challenge.

“In the achievement of that challenge, Anderson is quick to give credit to her predecessors and collaborators. “The vision to have a very comprehensive nursing collection was inspired by [founder of the nursing library] Mary Pekarski. Also, I want to emphasize that the faculty at the Connell School have an inspiration to me; they are leaders in the field of nursing care and nursing research as well as dedicated, caring, hard-working human beings whom I am honored to know.”

Wanda Anderson

faculty publications Connell School faculty in bold


The Smallest Act of Caring

Staring longingly into the eyes of my boss, Dr. McDreamy, and taking in every one of his complicated commands in his fancy, medical jargon and then running off to use his wisdom to save lives is always a dream of mine. It isn’t, however, my motivation for becoming a nurse. Nor is the fact that the career I’ve chosen is in great demand and my chances of finding a job right out of school are high. I am not motivated by the thought of working under gorgeous, intelligent doctors or by becoming a hero or even by the job security that comes with a career in nursing. Instead, I am inspired to be a nurse by my mother and grandmother; by the opportunity to ease people’s pain and by the education I am receiving here at Boston College.

Throughout my life, my mother and grandmother have been my own personal nurses. When I was a child, my grandmother would turn my bath tub into a McDonald’s drive thru and as she whizzed by, pretending to be a police officer or a construction worker, inside the tub, I’d scurry to fill her order with my plastic Happy Meal toys. My mother served as nurses in several hospitals before they came to be the nurses to my body, mind and spirit. Regardless of whether I had just won a basketball game or wrecked my brand new car, they were there waiting with kind words and open arms. By their constant care and enduring love, they nursed me into the person I am today and inspired me to be a nurse, as they were and still are.

As a nurse, I aim to follow the example of my mother and grandmother: to be kind, generous, thoughtful and honest. I aspire to carry the values these women have instilled in me into the hospital and to use them to brighten the spirits and relieve the pain of my patients. A magnet on the wall in my room displays a quote from Leo Buscaglia that reads: “Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.” With this quote constantly in the back of mind, I hope to bring comfort to the stressed, happiness to the sad and relief to the suffering by giving the love and care that my mother and grandmother gave to me to all of my patients.

Last spring, when it came time for me to choose my route for becoming a nurse, my mother and grandmother were by my side once again. They helped me to identify what factors were important to me in selecting a university to continue my education. After many tours, long information sessions and frustrating web searches, we found these elements— which included a Jesuit education, an exciting locale and a unique philosophy of care that truly teamed up my mind and heart— which together, made Boston College one challenging and thrilling semester later, I couldn’t be happier with my decision to enroll in the Boston College Connell School of Nursing. Everyday I am amazed by my experienced professors and the abundance of opportunities that await me. While Ohio and Illinois are a long way from Boston, I still feel the encouragement and love of my mother and grandmother and I know I am in the right place to become the nurse they’ve motivated me to be.
As the Connell School celebrates 60 years of excellence in nursing education, we’re taking a moment to look back at where we’ve been, and look forward to where we are going. The photos on the following pages give a glimpse into the rich history of our school. Although much looks different today, we can’t help but notice that some things look very much the same.
Building a Foundation — The School of Nursing was founded in 1942 but was not integrated into the Chestnut Hill campus until Cushing Hall was dedicated in 1960.

The school was further fortified in 2003 with a significant financial donation, naming the school the William F. Connell School of Nursing.
**Striking a Balance** — BC students have always been able to integrate social and academic life. Those who attend Boston College enjoy a well-rounded college experience in addition to their nursing studies.
Knowledge for Practice — Although nursing has become more diverse in recent years, Boston College has always strived to integrate classroom theory with hands-on learning.
Caring for the Individual — In the Jesuit tradition, Boston College nurses have always worked to improve people’s lives; while techniques continue to evolve, our goal remains the same.
People come to Boston from across the world for cutting-edge, life-saving healthcare. But amid aggressive treatment that can sometimes last many months and even years, where do people turn to address the many side effects and debilitating symptoms that often accompany chronic and terminal illness?

Some may turn to advanced practice nurses with specialization in palliative care.

For many years palliative care has been thought of as an alternative to curative treatment, or something that is chosen when all other treatment options have been exhausted. However, this attitude is rapidly changing. A newer approach dictates palliative care for the patient beginning hand in hand with treatment for chronic conditions.

According to Patricia Tabloski, Associate Dean of Graduate Programs at the Connell School, “The healthcare community is finally beginning to realize the importance of beginning palliative care as early as possible, alongside curative treatment.”

Katherine Tardiff, Project Coordinator for the Connell School’s Palliative Care Program, explains, “Over time, the experience of serious illness, death, and dying has evolved. People used to die sooner, but in the relative comfort of their own homes. As technology has improved, healthcare began to focus more on the cure, sometimes in lieu of comfort.”

According to Tardiff, demographic shifts are helping to move the focus toward comfort. “Baby boomers have seen their own parents experience aging and chronic illness. As they age themselves, they are beginning to think about what they want the next phase of their lives to look like. This is one factor that is driving the emphasis on quality of life, and in turn, palliative care.”

Tardiff sees advanced practice nurses as central to providing this care. “The nursing role is already focused on the fundamentals of palliative care—educating the patient and family, providing support, explaining the illness trajectory, and acting as a liaison between the interdisciplinary healthcare team.”

This might make intuitive sense, but there is little opportunity for advanced practice nurses to get appropriate graduate education.
in palliative care, let alone develop specialization in this emerging field. Nationally, there are only a handful of nursing schools offering advanced practice nurses the opportunity to specialize in palliative care, and no existing programs in the Boston area.

To meet this need, Tabloski won a grant for more than $725,000 to develop a Palliative Care Nursing specialty at the Connell School. Funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Palliative Care specialty is currently enrolling students and will start offering courses this summer.

Tardiff sees a strong fit between the BC faculty and this new program. “The team of professors designing and teaching the palliative care curriculum has broad expertise: Margie Laccetti and Jane Flanagan in oncology; Rosanna DeMarco with HIV and community health issues; Judi Vessey in program evaluation; and Pat Tabloski in the area of geriatric nursing and dementia.”

“Of course, the connection between BC’s Jesuit mission and palliative care is obvious,” Tardiff notes. “The Jesuit commitment to care of the individual and to serving the needs of underserved populations are mirrored nicely in the focus of the palliative care program.”

Tabloski agrees that this is a strong fit for the Connell School.

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Palliative care courses

NU 640 Palliative Care I: Foundations of Serious Illness, Disease Progression and Quality of Life

An historical, sociopolitical and cultural perspective of the personal, professional, societal, cultural, spiritual, and ethical/legal issues related to serious illness and the end of life. Philosophy, principles, and models of palliative care are analyzed, as well as the role of the advanced practice nurse and others in a caring society.

NU 641 Palliative Care II: Pain and Suffering in the Seriously Ill Patient

Focus is on improving the quality of life of individuals and families as they experience life-threatening illness, through nursing assessment and interventions. Issues include pain management, improving quality of life, alleviating suffering and evaluation of outcomes using established palliative care standards.

NU 642 Palliative Care II: Practicum

Prepares students to provide comprehensive care to patients and their families with advanced life-threatening illness. Students engage in holistic assessment of pain and quality of life of patients with advanced illness including AIDS, cancer and serious illness in a variety of settings under the direction of a skilled clinician in palliative care. Seminars integrate concepts from the core and theory courses.

NU 643 Palliative Care III: Palliative Care and the Advanced Practice Nursing Role

Students analyze the impact of serious life-threatening illness on patient, family, community and the health care system. Resource availability and barriers to care are analyzed. The leadership role of the advanced practice nurse in palliative care is delineated with emphasis on policy development, protocols, standards of practice, fiscal management, research utilization, quality improvement, patient advocacy, ethics, social-cultural issues and the role of the nurse leader in the interdisciplinary team.

NU 644 Palliative Care III: Practicum

Prepares students to integrate advanced knowledge of palliative care in assessing and managing the symptoms of those experiencing life-threatening illness within the palliative care focus. Complex psychological, ethical, social and spiritual issues and grief reactions will be the focus of the clinical practicum.
1960s
Patricia Triggs ’61 served as interim dean of nursing following her retirement as director of nursing at Holyoke Community College. She also received a Distinguished Service Award from the college.

Ann Hurley ’63, co-authored “The Medication Administration System – Nurses Assessment of Satisfaction (MAS-NAS) Scale,” published in the Journal of Nursing Scholarship 38:3 (2006). This study was supported by an AHRQ grant to Brigham and Women’s Hospital’s Center for Excellence in Nursing Practice.


Linda Tenofsky ’69 received the 2006 Academic Advisor of the Year Award from Curry College.

1970s
Antoinette Hays ’74 has recently been appointed dean of the School of Nursing and Health Professions at Regis College.

Susan LaRocco ’76 published an article, “Who will teach the nurses?” in Academe, 2006.

Kathy Mancuso Regan ’76 had a book published and released in November of 2006, entitled Opening Our Arms: Helping Troubled Kids Do Well. The book describes the journey she and the staff took on a child psychiatric unit in transforming the care they provided to children to a model that was more humane, trauma-sensitive and child-centered.

Ann Marie La Rocc’a ’78, associate chief nurse at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, presented a paper, “Growing our own: A program to develop nurse leaders,” at the Association of Rehabilitation Nurses’ Annual Education Conference. She also served on the panel of nurse executives judging the entries for Best Nurse Leader for Advance for Nurses.


Pat Maguire ’79 has been named director of nursing at Nashoba Valley Medical Center in Ayer, Massachusetts.

1980s
Jacqueline Somerville ’80 discussed the impact of patient input into design decisions for the new Yawkey Center for Outpatient Care at Massachusetts General Hospital, including the use of natural light, colors, indoor and outdoor gardens, and family-friendly facilities. This was one of the innovative healing environments lauded in “Tomorrow’s health care today,” published in Advance for Nurses October 9, 2006.

Kathleen Beyerman MS ’82 was a featured speaker at the Nursing Research Day sponsored by Winchester Hospital in October 2006.

Diane Carroll ’82 PhD ’93 and Laurel Radwin MS ’85 have been appointed as nurse researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital’s Yvonne Munn Center for Nursing Research. These newly created positions reward Diane’s and Laurel’s established records in, respectively, cardiovascular nursing and clinical expertise for patient-centered nursing for acutely ill patients.

Anne Fryer ’87 MS ’88 has recently exchanged her role as a consultant practice to become the director of nursing practice, education and research at Northeast Health Systems (Beverly and Addison Gilbert Hospitals).

Mary Jane Costa PhD ’98, director of cardiac services at North Shore Medical Center, was named 2006 Best Nurse Leader in Advance for Nurses’ award process.

Denise Farrell-Sanseverino MS ’89 was selected to receive the Robert H. Ebert Teaching Award, for her roles as an exemplary clinician and clinical teacher. This award reflects Dr. Ebert’s dream that Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates/Harvard Pilgrim Health Care would be a first class health care organization with teaching and research as deeply cherished objectives.

1990s
Carolyn Hayes PhD ’99 is the 2006 recipient of two Partners in Excellence Awards from Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, presented at Brigham and Women’s Hospital. One she received individually as the director of the center for patients and families and the Women’s Center, the other she shared for her work with the patient navigator program.

2000s
Karen Daley MS ’04 was inducted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing in November 2006. Daley was also recently honored as a Living Legend in nursing by the Massachusetts Association of Registered Nurses (MARN).

Mary Jane Costa PhD ’98, director of cardiac services at North Shore Medical Center, was named 2006 Best Nurse Leader in Advance for Nurses’ award process.

Denise Farrell-Sanseverino MS ’89 was selected to receive the Robert H. Ebert Teaching Award, for her roles as an exemplary clinician and clinical teacher. This award reflects Dr. Ebert’s dream that Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates/Harvard Pilgrim Health Care would be a first class health care organization with teaching and research as deeply cherished objectives.

Alumnae/i news is compiled from alumnae/i submissions as well as from a variety of outside media sources. To include your news in the next issue, email us at nursing.alums@bc.edu.
Musings on the 60th Anniversary

Courage and vision in starting a school at the end of a devastating world war, confident that nurses would need baccalaureate and eventually master’s and doctoral degrees • Pride in our graduates, in being an alumna and a faculty member • Gratitude for my own education at Boston College • Thankful for the opportunity to be part of a large university family that demonstrates caring and concern about individuals • Awe and amazement at what the program has become from its beginnings on Newbury Street to national ranking and recognition • A sense of history, of continuity, links with a past of which we can all be proud • Mindful of our heritage from those who went before us—the students, faculty, deans, and staff members • Standing apart from classmates and faculty colleagues in other disciplines because we are privileged to be present at the beginning and end of life • Generations of commitment to caring, teaching the daughters and sons of former students • Humility at the privilege of mentoring the next generation of nurse practitioners and faculty members • Dozens, maybe 100 or more alumnae whose names are icons in the history of nursing practice, education, and research—few of these names will be remembered in a generation or so but their contributions may outlive the memories of their names • Thousands of alumnae whose names are unfamiliar or forgotten—these women and men are the backbone of nursing, the unsung heroes whose compassion and caring have made nursing what it is today, who have made our graduates sought after and valued across the country and around the world. 

Today’s nurses may not wear nursing caps, but the stained glass depiction of the BC cap still illuminates the Cushing Hall chapel.