

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing

# CARING *Minds*



**THE UNIVERSITY of TEXAS**  
SCHOOL OF NURSING AT HOUSTON

*A part of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston*

# CARINGMinds

*Fall 2008 Issue*

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## *On the Cover*

These young faculty members at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing, all 2008 recipients of a PARTNERS grant, are undertaking research in challenging areas.

Deborah J. Jones, PhD, RN is working to identify biomarkers in saliva specific to ventilator-associated pneumonia in order to determine a less invasive diagnosis process. *Read more on page 11.*

Terri S. Armstrong, PhD, ANP-BC is working to determine the net clinical benefit of treatments by examining the impact a tumor and treatment-related symptoms have on patients' lives. *Read more on page 10.*

Rebecca L. Casarez, PhD, RN focuses her research on spirituality and management of chronic illnesses, particularly diabetes. *Read more on page 10.*

## *The Future is Here*



Greetings from Dean Patricia Starck

## *Milestones Lead to Success and Growth. The Future is Here.*

When I arrived at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing, I knew the school had a bright and promising future. I saw in the students, staff and faculty the drive to succeed in not only moving the school forward, but in advancing the science of nursing, as well. I am proud, humbled and privileged to have been a participant in that forward momentum and to be a part of the impressive legacy of the school.

Some of the young faculty members who are helping to move the institution and the profession forward are pictured on our cover. Read more about Terri Armstrong, Rebecca Casarez and Deborah Jones in the stories on pages 10 and 11.

Over the 35 years of our history, the school has reached many milestones. Significant landmark events that have occurred include:

- Construction of a new home for the school – a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified, state-of-the-art, environmentally conscious facility recognized as one of the Top 10 Green Buildings in the U.S.
- The formation in 1994 of PARTNERS (Providing Advancement Resources to Nursing Educators, Researchers & Students) to assist our students and faculty in pursuing their education and research goals
- Establishment of numerous endowments, including three PARTNERS professorships, as well as scholarships, faculty research and building contributions
- Creation and success of UT Health Services, the nurse practitioner-managed clinic and occupational health service, with locations that also serve as major practice sites for students

- The Center for Nursing Research, established to foster inventions and treatments to improve patient care
- Consistent placement in the top 10% in the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, currently in the top 5%
- Approval to initiate the state's first Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree program, which admitted the first class in Fall 2006
- Percentage of success for first-time writers of the RN licensing exam (NCLEX) consistently in the 90s for years 2001-2006. FY06's rate was 93 percent, an increase from 90 percent the previous year.
- Ranking as 31st in research dollars awarded by National Institutes of Health (NIH) to 102 schools of nursing (70th percentile) in 2006

I can only imagine the accolades and improvements by the time the school reaches its 50th anniversary in 2022. I know that one thing will remain constant: high-quality education and training will continue to be offered to graduates who will, throughout their careers, have more face-to-face contact with patients than any other health care professionals. The tradition of caring, compassion and excellence will always be a mainstay of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing. The future is here!

Patricia L. Starck, **dsn, rn, faan**

*John P. McGovern Distinguished Professor*

*Dean, School of Nursing*

*The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston*

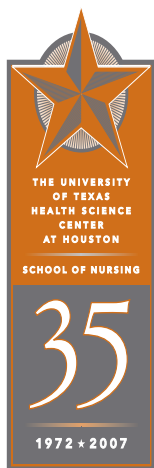
October 2008



# *Celebrating 35 Years*

1972 - 2007

*With the Return of our First Class*



*Seventeen members of the first class of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing traveled from as far as Washington state to attend the school's 35th year celebration. These 1974 graduates were joined at their reunion by the school's first dean, Elizabeth Jones Snyder, far left, in orange.*

## *A Timeline of Caring*

**1972** The UT School of Nursing at Houston begins as a "clinical campus" of Galveston's program of The University of Texas System School of Nursing. The school is housed at the Nurses Residence of Hermann Hospital, with Elizabeth Jones serving as Associate Dean. Later that year, the school of nursing moves into the Hermann Professional Building Annex (better known as 'the garage').



*Elizabeth Jones*

**1973** The school of nursing becomes an official campus of one of the UT System schools of nursing, which includes Galveston, Austin, San Antonio, El Paso and Fort Worth (Arlington). The first course catalogue is printed, with tuition costs for two semesters totaling \$166.



*Graduating Class of 1974 (above)*

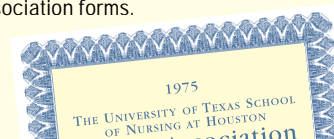
**1974** Eighty-six students in the first class graduate from the UT School of Nursing at Houston.

The school moves to 1100 Holcombe Boulevard, formerly the Prudential Life Building, and is there for 30 years.



The school establishes many programs including: an MSN degree program, Gerontological Nursing Program, Oncology Nursing Program, and the Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Program.

**1975** UT School of Nursing at Houston Alumni Association forms.



In September 2007 thirty members of the first graduating class of The University of



Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing gathered in the Albert and Margaret Alkek Auditorium to celebrate the school's 35th anniversary.

The school's first dean, Elizabeth Jones Snyder, attended the anniversary celebration, as did Chandice Covington, PhD, RN, member of the first graduating class. Covington, who now serves as dean of the University of North Dakota College of Nursing, delivered the keynote address.



During the 35th year two-day celebration, a time capsule was dedicated to commemorate the occasion. A display room showcased years of memories,



achievements and student/alumni support. Many of those items are included in the time

capsule, to be opened in 2022. Examples of the capsule's contents are articles of historical interest such as a timeline written by Dorothy Otto, EdD, RN, Associate Professor of Nursing Systems. Included too are photographs, a nursing cap, a 2007 course schedule, and a copy of the 2007 *U.S. News & World Report*, ranking the School of Nursing in the top 5 percent of nursing schools in the country.

Otto, currently head of the school's Department of Nursing Systems Management and Education Division, has served on the faculty continuously since the school opened in 1972. In recognition of her dedication, faculty and staff contributed to the Dorothy Otto Professionalism in Nursing Award Endowment. It also was announced during the celebration that Joanne V.



Hickey, PhD, APRN, BC, ACNP, FAAN, FCCM, had been awarded the second endowed professorship in nursing from PARTNERS, a community support group of UT School of Nursing at Houston.

Dr. Hickey is Assistant Dean and Chairperson of the Department of Acute and



Continuing Care and coordinates the school's Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program.

The professorship was named the Patricia L. Starck/PARTNERS Professorship in Nursing. Starck, who holds the John P. McGovern Distinguished Professorship in Nursing, has been the dean of the nursing school since 1984.



Dorothy Otto, RN, MS serves as acting dean from 1975 until 1977. Dr. Otto has served as a faculty member of the school for 35 years, the longest faculty tenure.



**1976** The UT System School of Nursing dissolves. The School of Nursing becomes part of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

The first Master's program at the school enrolls students.



**1977** Arlowayne Swort, PhD, RN, becomes dean of the School of Nursing.

**1979** Emergency Nursing Program is established.

**1981** Perinatal Nursing Program is established.

**1982** The Zeta Pi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau National Honor Society is chartered at UT School of Nursing.



**1983** Critical Care Nursing Program is established.



**1984** Patricia L. Starck, DSN, RN, is appointed dean of the UT School of Nursing at Houston. She subsequently is named the John P. McGovern Distinguished Professor.

**1985** The school establishes many programs including: Nurse Anesthesia Program, RN-BSN (called RN Flexible Option) Program, Women's Health Care Nursing Program.

**1986** The Center for Nursing Research is established.

**1987** The Center on Aging is established.



**1990** The Pediatric Nursing Program is established jointly with Texas Woman's University, and becomes solely a program of UT School of Nursing at Houston in 2001.

**1991** UT Health Services opens the first school of nursing primary care clinic, in the Texas Medical Center.



**1994** PARTNERS is established to provide advancement resources to nursing educators, researchers and students. Peggy Barnett serves as its first chairman.



# Celebrating 35 Years

## FIVE RECEIVE DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD



*Recognized for their outstanding achievement, these UT School of Nursing at Houston alumni are, left to right, Tom Flanagan, Joyce Antes, Mary Pat Rapp, Dean Patricia Starck, Debora Ybarra, presentation mc Sheryl Guidry, and Dean Chandice Covington.*

**Chandice Covington, PhD, RN,** *member of the school's first graduating class was one of five to receive the Distinguished Alumni Award, given during the school's 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Covington now serves as Dean of the University of North Dakota College of Nursing (see related story).*

### ALSO RECEIVING THE HONOR WERE:

**Joyce Antes, MSN, BSN, RN,** who graduated with honors, earning her MSN degree and Advanced Practice Nurse certification from UT School of Nursing in 1997. Antes is retired and an active alumni and school supporter.

**Thomas Flanagan, BSN, RN,** a 1994 graduate who began his career at Hermann Hospital and served as director of Life Flight. He now serves as Chief Operating Officer of Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center. American Eurocopter and the Association of Air Medical Services named Flanagan "National Program Director of the Year."

**Mary Pat Rapp, PhD, MSN, RN,** is a gerontological nurse practitioner who earned her Master's and Doctoral degrees at UT School of Nursing. Rapp is recognized locally, statewide and nationally as a pioneer in Gerontological Nurse Practitioner nursing facility practice. Her research interests include pressure ulcer prevention and nurse practitioner outcomes in long-term care. She is an Assistant Professor of

Nursing and served as President of the National Conference of Gerontological Nurse Practitioners.

**Debora Ybarra, BSN, RN,** earned her BSN in 1996 while serving as an officer of the Student Nurses Association working directly with community projects. Ybarra was recognized as one of the "Top Ten Nurses in Houston" during the *Houston Chronicle's* May 2006 "Salute to Nurses".

She currently works on the "Kangaroo Crew" Intensive Care Transport Team in charge of transporting critically ill pediatric and neonatal patients at Texas Children's Hospital.

## A Timeline of Caring

Joan Engebretson, DrPH, RN, and Diane Wardell, PhD, RN, receive patent for the first pacifier designed for low birth weight babies, now marketed internationally as Wee Thumbies.



The first dual degree MSN-MPH program in Texas begins in Houston.

Neonatal Nursing Program is established.

**1996** The Doctor of Science in Nursing, Acute Care Nursing and Family Nursing programs are established.



**2001** The school ranks in the top 12 percent of U.S. nursing school graduate programs as reported in *U.S. News & World Report*.

Tropical Storm Allison floods the Texas Medical Center, closing the nursing school.

*UT Health Science Center at Houston President James T. Willerson, MD, is introduced on the floor of the Legislature by State Rep. Martha Wong in 2007. Willerson traveled to Austin for dozens of meetings to discuss the need for storm recovery, among other legislative issues.*



**2002** Adult Health Nursing Program is established.

**2003** Nurse Anesthesia Program ranks 6th in the nation according to *U.S. News & World Report*.

**2004** The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Education and Research, and the BSN BAC2 degree program are established.

The UT School of Nursing and Student Community Center building, the largest "green" building in the southwest, celebrates its grand opening.



*UT School of Nursing Dean Patricia L. Starck, DSN, right, and Sandra K. Hanneman, PhD, Associate Dean for Research and Director of the Center for Nursing Research, unveil a painting of Jerold Katz, whose son, Evan represented the family. Dr. Hanneman is the Jerold B. Katz Distinguished Professor for Nursing Research, established in 2004.*

**2005** UT School of Nursing at Houston named in the top 8 percent of U.S. nursing Master's programs by *U.S. News & World Report*.

## 1975 GRADUATE DEAN OF NORTH DAKOTA COLLEGE OF NURSING



As Chandice Covington, PhD sees it, UT Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing is the same as it was when she was among its first students in 1972. It is still a place that uses cutting-edge technology to teach future and current nurses to be critical thinkers, problem solvers and compassionate caregivers.

After years of working as a professor at the University of California at Los Angeles, Northwestern State University in Shreveport, La., and other colleges around the country, Covington said, "I felt like I was ready to steer a school of nursing toward a mission of developing the best and brightest nurses for the nation." She became dean of the University of North Dakota College of Nursing in September 2005, but her path toward that position really started 35 years ago at the UT School of Nursing.

A lasting impression Covington has of the school is the encouragement she received from the faculty to do things she never thought possible. The video Covington made as her final project was on death and dying. The idea of interviewing a renowned expert on the subject seemed like a pipe dream until one of her professors handed Covington a phone and helped her place an international call.

"The faculty encouraged me to call Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, who wrote *On Death and Dying* about the stages of grief and dying. She was living in Switzerland at the time," Covington recalls. Calling long distance in the 1970s just wasn't done everyday. "Being part of a program that allowed you to dream, to use technology, to call up an expert in the field... that was pretty heady stuff."



The school opens the first biological sciences ("wet" lab) laboratory in a Texas school of nursing.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita cause devastation along the Gulf Coast. The school of nursing accepts five displaced students into its program with three successfully graduating.



UT School of Nursing, with UT Medical School, operates a comprehensive 24-hour emergency health clinic in Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center for hurricane evacuees.

Nurse Leadership and Administration Program is established.

**2006** The School of Nursing and Student Community Center Building is recognized as one of the Top 10 Green Buildings in the U.S. and receives an Honor Award from Texas Society of Architects, as well as nine other prestigious state and national awards.

UT School of Nursing is ranked in the top third of schools of nursing with research funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The Doctor of Nursing Practice program is established.

The PARTNERS endowment reaches \$1 million. The first PARTNERS professorship is established.

**2007** UT School of Nursing ranks in the top 5 percent of U.S. nursing school graduate programs as reported in *U.S. News & World Report*.



Pre-Clinical Critical Care Laboratory is constructed.

UT School of Nursing at Houston welcomes 140 new BSN students; 165 new MSN students; and 26 new doctoral students, bringing the total enrollment to 821.

Alumni of the school grows to 6,897.

The title of the research doctoral degree changes from the Doctor of Science in Nursing (DSN) to the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). Former graduates are given permission to request reissue of diploma to reflect a PhD degree.



### TIME CAPSULE DEDICATED IN HONOR OF 35TH ANNIVERSARY MILESTONE

*Sealed until 2022*

#### Time capsule contents include:

35 Years: *A Timeline of Caring*

35th Anniversary memorabilia  
(journal, programs and invitations)

Announcement of title change  
of DSN degree to PhD, 2007

Articles of historical interest written by  
Dr. Dorothy Otto

Current Texas Medical Center  
information and facts

*Distinctions, Caring Minds* publications

Faculty group photo, 2007

Governor's Proclamation in honor  
of 35th Anniversary

Graduation booklet, 2007

Information on newest academic programs  
(DNP, BAC II)

Letter from Dean Patricia L. Starck  
commemorating 35th Anniversary

Listing of Architectural  
and "Green Building" Awards

Photos of UT School of Nursing  
and Student Community Center Building

Nurses Cap

Nursing Pin, 2007

Pinning Ceremony program, 2007

PARTNERS Board members list

PARTNERS brochure, 2007-2008

The University of Texas Health Science Center at  
Houston School of Nursing course schedule, 2007

The University of Texas Health Science Center at  
Houston School of Nursing Fact Sheet, 2007

35th anniversary guestbook with photos

Presidential Century Club Seal

Pages from UT School of Nursing main Web page,  
iModules main Web page

Alumni Directory

Florence Nightingale Pledge

Financial Records for UT School of Nursing



# Nancy A. Akers Scholarship Endowment Shows Couple's Love of Nursing



*Akers Scholars Michael Nouchi and Darci Blackmon, both UT School of Nursing at Houston senior BSN students, visit with Dr. and Mrs. Akers in their Houston high rise home.*

*As the nation faces a nursing shortage, it is not from lack of qualified applicants or smart minds to enrich, but for lack of funding. Dean Patricia L. Starck, DSN, RN, FAAN, understands the need to raise awareness, and seeks government support of this national problem for UT School of Nursing at Houston; but the key is individual contributions through giving opportunities like planned giving. Planned giving can be done in many ways.*

William "Bill" W. Akers, PhD, and his wife, Nancy established the Nancy A. Akers Endowed Scholarship at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing in 2001, then five years later, chose to designate an annuity toward the endowment. This planned gift will ensure that the scholarship will continue to grow and help countless generations of nursing students. The scholarship endowment awards students single semester scholarships between \$1,000 and \$1,500.

The couple has a personal appreciation for nursing. Not only was Bill Akers' mother a nurse, but the couple's daughter, Susan Hirtz, is a nurse, as well. Hirtz earned a master's degree in 1992 from the UT School of Public Health. The couple has another daughter, Carol Klug, who works in finance.

Bill Akers credits his wife with the decision to create the nursing scholarship fund named in her honor. Nancy Akers said she had the opportunity to see, first-hand, the often challenging and crucial work nurses perform daily through her daughter's experience in nursing school and on the job as an intensive care unit nurse.

Bill Akers said establishing the scholarship fund has allowed the couple to receive an immediate emotional reward from their donation by meeting the students and knowing the contribution was needed and appreciated. "It pays a higher dividend than any other investment," he said of creating the endowment.

Dean Starck points out that the Akers' commitment to supporting nursing students has a far-reaching, positive effect.

"Bill and Nancy are two of the most caring people I know," Starck said. "They get great joy out of helping students, and they are making a difference in not only the lifetime career of a nurse, but in the lives of the many patients who will be cared for by that nurse."

Bill and Nancy Akers have enjoyed a long relationship with UT. Since 1995 Nancy Akers has been a member of PARTNERS, the school of nursing community support group.

Bill Akers is a member of the UT System Chancellor's Council. He is a professor emeritus of chemical engineering at Rice University, where he worked for 46 years, serving as chairman and in positions as vice president.

In the late 1960s, Bill Akers led the Biomedical Engineering Laboratory at Rice. In collaboration with the late Michael E. DeBakey, MD, former chancellor of Baylor College of Medicine, Bill Akers helped to produce the first successful left ventricular heart bypass device, a precursor to the artificial heart and to the ventricular assist device in wide use today as a bridge to heart transplantation.

*NANCY AKERS IS AN  
ACCOMPLISHED ARTIST. SHE  
PAINTS ABSTRACT LANDSCAPES  
AND STILL LIFE SETTINGS IN  
ACRYLIC MEDIUM.*



*A planned gift will assist in carrying out the school's mission and provide personal significance. A gift can be made in many ways; commitment through a trust, a bequest, a charitable gift annuity or other gift options. A planned gift will undoubtedly lead to a brighter future for nursing. For more information on establishing a scholarship endowment, or to discuss a planned gift (bequest/annuity), please call Gail Fox at 713-500-2006 or email Gail.S.Fox@uth.tmc.edu*



# Nursing Endowed Professorship Honors UT Health Science Center 'First Lady' Nancy Willerson



Nancy Willerson has dedicated much of her life to nursing and to support of the profession. Friends and admirers through the establishment of the Nancy B. Willerson Professorship in Nursing at The University of Texas Health Science Center School of Nursing at Houston are recognizing that lifelong devotion.

A registered nurse whose professional career has focused on diabetes, renal transplantation and end-stage renal disease, Willerson also is the wife of former University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston President James T. Willerson, MD.

Dubbed "our first lady extraordinaire" by UT Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing Dean Patricia L. Starck, Willerson has been a proactive supporter of the nursing school since she and her husband moved to Houston in 1989.

An endowed professorship recognizes rising stars and supports outstanding mid-career faculty. Funds from this type of endowment are typically used to help further research and teaching in areas of critical importance at the school. Endowed professorships help recruit, encourage and retain faculty.

"When people come forward and make this type of gift, it's multi-layered," Willerson said. "There is the sense of gratitude from the person who is honored, the professorship that draws publicity to the school and, of course, the students who benefit as a result."

"Only by being able to attract and retain top nursing faculty through these special endeavors, will we be able to address the nursing shortage that exists in this country," Dean Starck said.

"Obviously, others felt just as I did about this well-deserved distinction for our 'first lady extraordinaire,'" Starck said. "This is a legacy gift that will have a huge impact on our ability to train the next generation of nursing students."

*FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NANCY B. WILLERSON PROFESSORSHIP PLEASE CALL GAIL FOX, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT FOR THE SCHOOL OF NURSING, 713.500.2006.*

*James T. Willerson, MD (far left), then president of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, presents yellow roses to wife Nancy Beamer Willerson (center) at a February 2008 event at the home of former Houston Mayor Bob Lanier (second from left) and his wife Elyse (second from right). During the event, Peggy Barnett announced the creation of the Nancy B. Willerson Professorship in Nursing. Nancy Willerson is a registered nurse and a founding member of PARTNERS, the UT School of Nursing community support organization.*



*Peggy Barnett (left) spearheaded an effort to create the Nancy B. Willerson Professorship in Nursing. Nancy Willerson (center), dubbed "our first lady extraordinaire" by UT School of Nursing Dean Patricia L. Starck (right), is married to James T. Willerson, MD, former president of the health science center.*

# A Heart for Nursing

THE *Theme* OF ANOTHER *Successful* **PARTNERS** LUNCHEON

SINCE 1994, PARTNERS HAS RAISED ITS STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT TO MORE THAN \$1.5 MILLION. IT HAS FUNDED 78 FULL-TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS, 34 FACULTY RESEARCH PROJECTS, AND THREE ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIPS.

This information is as of May 2008.



*Nursing students enjoyed time with PARTNERS luncheon honoree Denton A. Cooley, MD (center) and speaker S. Ward Casscells, III, MD prior to the start "A Heart for Nursing."*

*James T. Willerson, MD, right, joined PARTNERS chairman Suzie Conway in presenting a gift to the UT School of Nursing in Dr. Cooley's name, a defibrillator for a teaching lab.*



*Kay English (left), PARTNERS luncheon chair, and Suzie Conway are pictured with S. Ward Casscells, III, MD, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs.*

Over \$250,000 in financial support was raised through the March 2008 PARTNERS luncheon chaired by Kay English. The proceeds funded seven student scholarships, three faculty grants, and a new professorship.

The new professorship was dedicated in honor of Peggy Barnett, PARTNERS' founding chairman and longtime supporter of UT Health Science Center at Houston and the school of nursing. In addition,

PARTNERS contributed to the Nancy B. Willerson Professorship (*see story on page 7*), recognizing their longtime member.

More than 450 people were on hand to hear featured speaker S. Ward "Trip" Casscells, III, M.D., former Vice President for Biotechnology at UT Health Science Center who is in Washington D.C. serving as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs.

Denton A. Cooley, MD, President of the Texas Heart Institute, was the event honoree. He founded the heart institute

and developed a school of surgery there. PARTNERS donated a defibrillator for a teaching lab in his honor.

A surprise announcement was made during the luncheon, that Phil Conway, member of the UT Health Science Center at Houston Development Board and former board chair, is honoring his wife Suzie with a Distinguished Professorship in her name. Suzie Conway is a registered nurse and the 2007-2008 PARTNERS chairman, as well as an active supporter of nursing education.



# UT Partners with Aldine ISD to Prevent Childhood Obesity

With obesity rates growing annually for both adults and children, it is important that members of our society team up to prevent and reduce obesity. Children, parents and community members need to begin working together to reduce obesity and obesity-related health issues.

Janet Meininger, PhD, RN, FAAN, Lee and Joseph D. Jamail Distinguished Professor at the University of Texas at Houston School of Nursing, and her research collaborators are working to engage parents, students and school personnel in the fight against obesity. Meininger's project, "Aldine-University of Texas Partnership to Prevent Obesity in Youth," partnered the UT Health Science Center at Houston with the Aldine Independent School District (AISD) to identify steps to take to prevent and reduce obesity in the AISD student population.

This project, a two-year developmental study, is funded with a grant from the National Institute of Nursing Research. Meininger's research aims to work with the community to design sustainable interventions to reduce obesity-related health issues. AISD and other school districts have been actively involved in programs such as Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) to improve children's health profiles by changing the school environment and developing the knowledge and skills necessary for health.

"I think one of the unique attributes of this project is the community partnership and collaboration," said Wendell Taylor, PhD, MPH, Associate Professor of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences at the UT School of Public Health, and co-investigator on this project.



"The hope is to give the community a way to mobilize themselves to make changes that may help their kids overall."

The research team began by determining the prevalence of overweight children, kindergarten through sixth grade, in AISD by measuring body mass index (BMI) and other risk factors of a random sample of students. Then the researchers moved on to the second phase, which was to engage the children, parents and school personnel in a participatory process to elicit their ideas about the causes and consequences of obesity, as well as what might be done to improve the situation.

Parents and school personnel pointed out some of the barriers and provided ideas about actions that could be taken at home and in the community to encourage healthy eating and physical activity. Next, the team measured the environmental characteristics of the neighborhoods in which the children lived, examining characteristics that might allow or encourage physical activity.

"After talking to the children, parents and school staff, we boiled it down to physical inactivity and unhealthy eating," said Meininger. "Then we looked at the environmental characteristics of the neighborhoods in which the children we were screening lived. We looked for characteristics that might allow or encourage physical activity. The other part of the

environmental assessment was looking at the opportunities for healthy food; so, we looked at the grocery stores in the neighborhood and the number of fast food restaurants in the area."

Undergraduate students from UT School of Nursing and graduate students from the University of Texas School of Public Health worked closely with the investigators in the process of collecting, recording and analyzing the data. One unique aspect of the research team's process was active participation of AISD high school students in the data collection process. Two high school classes interested in careers in healthcare learned about research, the ethics of working with human participants in research, and methods for eliciting data from groups of school-aged children. They also had the opportunity to interact with various healthcare professionals during training and data collection.

Although Meininger's research is currently in the analysis process, the team is working with AISD to develop strategies to help fight obesity in the community. The strategies for possible change will be based on the estimate of the current prevalence of risk factors among AISD students, assessment of the surrounding environment, and the strengths of the families, schools, and communities identified during the participatory workshops.



# The Future is Here.

## **Terri S. Armstrong, PhD, ANP-BC**

### **Seeking to Improve Tumor Patient Quality of Life**

Terri Armstrong, PhD, Associate Professor in the Department of Integrated Care at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing and an Associate Professor and Advanced Practice Nurse in the Department of Neuro-Oncology at UT M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, has cared for patients with tumors of the central nervous system for 18 years.

Armstrong recognized the impact a tumor and treatment-related symptoms had on patients' lives. Patients with tumors of the central nervous system commonly have weakness, which limits their ability to walk, as well as seizures and alterations in cognition. These tumor-related symptoms are compounded by treatment-related symptoms, such as nausea and fatigue that have a significant negative effect on the patient's life.

After this realization, Armstrong began reviewing literature on tumors of the central nervous system, only to find that little was known about the impact of symptoms on patients. Now Armstrong's primary research focuses on the assessment of symptoms in terms of symptom burden, quality of life and neurocognitive function in patients participating in the clinical treatment trial.

Her focus of research for these patients has been on developing new treatments. "Hopefully, my research will establish the prognostic value of symptoms for patient survival, demonstrate the importance of these surrogate markers on the effectiveness of treatment for these patients, and provide more information as to the trajectory of the symptom profiles so interventions can be targeted at specific symptom clusters."

To assess symptoms, Armstrong developed a questionnaire that allows patients with primary brain tumors to report symptom severity and how those symptoms affected their daily lives. Currently, Armstrong is working on a second questionnaire designed for patients with tumors of the spine. Armstrong, along with her team, and collaborators Charles Cleeland, PhD, Tito Mendoza, PhD, and Mark Gilbert, MD, is creating these instruments and research programs to improve the care of patients with tumors of the central nervous system.

"Our assessment of the impact of the treatment on patients, which we have termed 'net clinical benefit', has been incorporated into the largest brain tumor trial completed to date," said Armstrong. "I am leading a multidisciplinary, international team interested in the impact of these therapies on patient status. We hope to identify the importance of this assessment and establish these measures as integral to overall patient care."

With this research, Armstrong and her collaborators hope to provide new information about symptom impact on patients with tumors of the central nervous system. In the future, they believe this new data will be used to improve patient care.



## **Rebecca L. Casarez, PhD, RN** **Spirituality and Managing Type 2 Diabetes**

Rebecca Casarez, PhD, RN, Assistant Professor of Integrative Nursing Care at UT School of Nursing at Houston, focuses much of her research on spirituality and management of chronic illnesses, with a concentration on diabetes.

"Type 2 diabetes is a major health problem for African Americans," said Casarez. "Diabetes self-management is key to keeping blood glucose levels under control; however, diabetes is one of the most difficult illnesses to self-manage. It is important for health care providers to develop interventions to help African Americans manage their diabetes."

In her recent research "The Use of Spiritual Practices in Self-Management of Diabetes in African Americans," Casarez examined how spiritual practices affect self-management of the condition and how spiritual practices can be used in group settings to facilitate self-management.

"I believe that for some people, spirituality is a great source of comfort and support in their lives. I wanted to study why, if and





# THESE YOUNG FACULTY MEMBERS AT THE SCHOOL OF NURSING, ALL 2008 RECIPIENTS OF A PARTNERS RESEARCH GRANT, ARE UNDERTAKING RESEARCH IN A NUMBER OF CHALLENGING AREAS.



## **Deborah J. Jones, PhD, RN** **Working to Decrease Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia**

“My focus of scholarship is on improving outcomes of critically ill adults through developing best practices,” explains Deborah Jones, PhD. “Pneumonia in mechanically ventilated patients is a significant complication, so it is important to optimize care delivery through a timely and aggressive approach to prevention, diagnosis and treatment.”

Jones, Assistant Professor of Acute and Continuing Care at UT Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing, aims to impact patient care by identifying biomarkers in saliva specific to ventilator-associated pneumonia (VAP).

“Despite progress in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of ventilator-associated pneumonia, it continues to be a prevalent complication among patients receiving mechanical ventilation,” says Jones. “It is associated with prolonged hospital stays, prolonged mechanical ventilation, increased mortality with rates as high as 72 percent, increased health care costs, and use of resources.”

VAP, a type of pneumonia acquired by patients on mechanical ventilation, normally occurs in the first few days of intubation. According to Jones, VAP is reported in 9 to 27 percent of patients requiring mechanical ventilation with a tracheostomy or endotracheal tube during the first 48 hours before the onset of infection.

Because of the high morbidity and mortality attributed to VAP, it's important to gain additional insight into the origination and development of the disease, says Jones. “Inaccuracies of diagnosis and delayed results of microbiological cultures for clinical confirmation of the disease require research to explore more accurate, rapid and noninvasive methods of diagnosis.

“Improved identification of VAP through rapid and less invasive methods could improve time to diagnose, provide appropriate antibiotic therapy, decrease the risk for the emergence of resistant organisms, and ultimately improve patient outcomes,” Jones explains.

In her research, Jones is working to identify inflammatory markers and protein profiles specific to VAP. She hopes that the identification of biomarkers for VAP in saliva will lead to a quicker and less invasive way to diagnose it.

“This would guide appropriate antibiotic therapy, decreasing the risk for emergence of resistant organisms and ultimately improving rates of morbidity and mortality,” explains Jones. “This would decrease hospital length of stay, resource utilization, and patient and family burden.”



how people can use their spirituality to help them in the day-in and day-out challenges of taking care of their diabetes,” said Casarez. “This study suggests that spiritual practices may positively affect self-management and provides information on how to design a research study that incorporates spirituality into a diabetes self-management intervention.”

For her research on spirituality and management of chronic illnesses, Casarez has been selected to receive the Excellence in Research Award, sponsored by the Texas Organization of Baccalaureate and Graduate Education to promote innovative faculty research. She received the award in October 2008.



# Retired Physicians Share Years of Knowledge by Teaching UT Nursing Students

Dick Materson, MD, a friendly, engaging, retired physician who practiced physical medicine and rehabilitation for 36 years, was clearly in his element. During a neurology lab at UT School of Nursing at Houston, he was showing two students the finer points of detecting a reflex.



*Retired pediatrician Alvin Jaffee, MD, left, reviews an infant mannequin chart with nursing student Rachel Cain during a clinical skills lab.*

"You just have to get him to relax and get his mind off what you're trying to do," Materson explained to nursing student Karen Holland. Materson's presence was part of a ground-breaking pilot program in which retired physicians teach a health assessment lab for first-year baccalaureate nursing students.

The program was the brainstorm of nursing school Dean Patricia L. Starck, who is the John P. McGovern Distinguished Professor in Nursing.

"I was having a lunch meeting with a physician who was teaching in UT Medical School, and he made the comment that he wouldn't mind retiring if he could do something useful," Starck said. "That gave me an idea. There is a shortage

of nursing faculty and I wondered if retired physicians might be interested in teaching nursing students."

Starck discussed the idea with L. Maximilian Buja, MD, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs for the UT Health Science Center at Houston. Buja directed her to Shelly Liss, MD, president of the Retired Physicians Organization of the Harris County Medical Society, who took it to the membership.

Twenty retired physicians volunteered to teach the labs, some for one time, one for as many as six sessions. "All of these physicians have years of learning and experience and education, and if they don't find a way to use it, it goes to waste," Liss said. "You have young nursing students excited to learn and older physicians with lots of experience to relate to them. It's very heartwarming to see."

Starck says learning from physicians will help nursing students in a critical area.

"They will be able to learn in their first course how to communicate with physicians, which is important because of those times a nurse has to call a physician in the middle of the night about a patient," Starck said. "We hope that physicians will teach the students that if they have to make that call in the middle of the night, this is the information they need to have at their fingertips."

Retired nursing faculty member Gerda Gomez, EdD, organized the program. The labs, overseen by Erica Yu, Assistant Professor of Nursing, are tightly scripted with a book and videotape to ensure consistency. After watching the videotape, students pair up and test their skills on each other. Physicians monitor them, answer any questions and check their paperwork.

"These are the crème de la crème of students," Materson said. "The interesting thing is that it makes these physicians contemplate the role of the nurse."



The Retired Physicians Organization (RPO) of the The Harris County Medical Society (HCMS) began in 1995. It originated as an informal luncheon club. After its first year, the Harris County Medical Society invited the RPO to become a component of the society. The RPO now consists of over 600 members.

The purposes of the RPO are fellowship, leisure activities, sharing retirement experiences, providing volunteer services to support HCMS activities, and promotion of common interests. The Harris County Medical Society (HCMS) is the largest county medical society in the United States.



The Harris County Retired Physicians Organization and the UT School of Nursing were commended by President George W. Bush for this innovative program. The program also received recognition from Houston Mayor Bill White.





# Twenty-five Years of Caring for Babies

M. Terese Verklan, PhD, RNC, CCNS, Associate Professor of Nursing Systems and Neonatal Clinical Nurse Specialist became interested in nursing by accident.



"I never liked nursing," Verklan admits. Seems like an unlikely start to a great nursing career. Then, she was introduced to neonatology by a friend. "Neonatology was a brand new field then. After six months, I loved it!"

Early in her 25 year career Verklan explored many nursing directions to find her true calling, including working as a transport nurse and beginning school to become a neonatal nurse practitioner. Finally, she found her calling. "I wanted to be a clinical specialist. They can do many more things than a nurse practitioner. You're a process person; you can look at things from an individual perspective or a systems perspective. You can problem-solve, you're a leader, you're used to consulting, you can provide customized clinical care. You're used to thinking outside the box."

Love of research and Star Trek spurred an idea for a dissertation project on how babies develop in outer space. "The dean thought it was a great idea, but who was going to give me 30 trillion dollars to do it?" Verklan says with a chuckle. George Lucas?

So, instead of babies in space, Verklan assessed how she could apply the project to babies on earth, using earth dollars. Her theory is that if a baby is conceived and developed in outer space, it would not have enough strength in its left ventricle to live on earth.

"In space, the systems that are hit the hardest are the muscular and cardiovascular systems." Verklan studied autonomic nervous system variability in high-risk pre-term babies (preemies), healthy pre-term babies, and healthy full-term babies. "I was looking at how a change in parasympathetic (calms the body) and sympathetic nervous systems (fight or flight) might indicate a healthy or ill baby" — on earth.

*"I found that with increasing gestational age, the babies had more parasympathetic nervous system influence that indicated the autonomic nervous system was maturing."*

Verklan identified new criteria for monitoring neonatal health. "I found that with increasing gestational age, the babies had more parasympathetic nervous system influence that indicated the autonomic nervous system was maturing," the hallmark of a healthy baby. "The babies that were the sickest had the lowest amount of energy and the lowest influence of the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems."

She had found a noninvasive method to detect high-risk babies. "The monitors that we use are such gross measures of what's going on physiologically," says Verklan. Her findings provided a more detailed profile of baby health. "We looked at heart rate variability, blood pressure variability and respiration. We recorded this information using a computer and cardiopulmonary monitor, then brought it back to the lab software. The software began to

differentiate influences from both nervous systems." The results of her dissertation project had profound implications.

There are 10 laboratories in the world that are struggling to use a fetal magnetocardiography (fMCG) machine to characterize the normal range parameters of a healthy fetus in order to establish a standard. It's a worldwide race to be the first. Verklan's is the only team that is doing these studies in the clinical arena. "Everybody else is doing it in the lab," she says. "This is clinical real-world research."

"The goal of the project is to use fMCG in the clinical office, much like we use ultrasound. We would like to know if a fetus is not developing optimally, so that we can detect it and help the fetus." The technology would allow actual non-invasive research on developing fetuses, Verklan said.



# Research Stars

## PhD Candidate Researches Obesity's Impact on Pregnancy



Obesity rates continue to increase annually; as do concerns about obesity raising the risk of many diseases and conditions such as hypertension, diabetes and stroke. In addition to these risks, obesity may cause adverse pregnancy outcomes and a negative impact on the overall health of women and children.

Rebecca Jo Helmreich, RN, PNNP, Teaching Associate in Integrative Nursing Care at the UT School of Nursing at Houston, is completing her dissertation study, "Obesity on vagal tone and HbA1c." The goals of this observational study are to:

- compare the difference between vagal response, glycohemoglobin (HbA1c) and oxygenation in obese and non-obese pregnant women;
- examine the impact of excess weight gain on vagal response, HbA1c and oxygenation; and
- explain the occurrence of pregnancy complications and birth outcomes in relation to obesity and excess weight gain during pregnancy.

*"Forty pregnant women of four major ethnic groups were observed three times for 30 minutes, 20 each with obese and non-obese status determined by their body mass index."*

Helmreich, a PhD candidate at UT School of Nursing, observed vagal tone, oxygenation and HbA1c in obese and non-obese pregnant women at 20, 28 and 36 weeks of gestation, as well as a follow-up after birth. To track pregnancy complications and infant status after birth, Helmreich used chart audits and subject interviews.

"Forty pregnant women of four major ethnic groups were observed three times for 30 minutes, 20 each with obese and non-obese status determined by their body mass index," Helmreich said. "The time points for observation were selected because after 20 weeks the fetus could be viable if born; at 28 weeks the fetus, if born, would be preterm and at this stage, maternal disorders such as hypertension or diabetes may become clinically apparent with the stress of pregnancy and gestational weight gain; and at 36 weeks the fetus will be close to term birth."

Currently, Helmreich is in the process of analyzing her data and generating hypotheses about the relationship between obesity and adverse pregnancy outcomes. This observational study is funded by a National Institute of Nursing Research award. In the future, Helmreich plans to continue her research to determine the physiological changes of pregnancy in obese and non-obese women who may gain excess weight during pregnancy. She hopes this research will develop more effective interventions to promote healthy birth outcomes.

## PhD Student Researches Vascular Access Experience



Cleo Richard, PhD, MSN, RN, while a student at UT Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing, researched the shared cultural experience of clients living with a vascular access for dialysis.

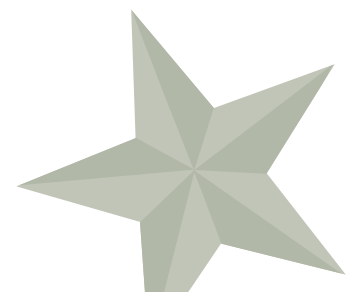
"End stage renal disease (ESRD) is a chronic, non curable condition that requires dialysis and/or kidney transplant to sustain life. A vascular access is required for hemodialysis and a fistula is the medically preferred access," said Richard. "The purpose of this study was to examine the experience of clients with ESRD on hemodialysis who are negotiating living with a fistula."

As part of this qualitative, ethnographic study, Richard gathered data through interviews with informants as well as field notes and artifacts, such as timers, rubber balls and protective sheaths used to assist in performing certain tasks and activities. During the interviews, informants explained their strategies for maintaining vascular access and expressed concern over pain and stigma associated with the access.

"From the informants' perspectives, caring for and maintaining an access and negotiating care during hemodialysis are complex processes," said Richard. "This study revealed new insights into clients' perspectives and experiences of the vascular access in the context of hemodialysis; stigma associated with the access was an important issue for informants and evoked the greatest emotional responses."

Richard's research was supported by a grant from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and Speros Martel Endowment for the Aging and The University of Texas School of Nursing at Houston Center on Aging. Her research was supervised by Joan Engebretson, DrPH, Professor of Integrative Nursing Care at UT School of Nursing.

*"This study revealed new insights into clients' perspectives and experiences of the vascular access in the context of hemodialysis; stigma associated with the access was an important issue for informants and evoked the greatest emotional responses."*







## PhD Student Researches ICU Practices



Being admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) is intimidating for most patients. Luckily, nurses like Mary Anne Vincent, RN, APRN, BC, CNS, CCRN work to make each patient's stay as comfortable as possible.

Vincent, a PhD student at UT School of Nursing at Houston, is working to cut the length of patient stays in ICUs and hospitals by rethinking nursing practices and patient care. She believes nurses can promote a better environment for restorative rest by changing the culture of night shift nurses and planning procedures around patient needs.

"A state of constant exhaustion and insomnia can be a symptom of inadequate sleep hygiene," explains Vincent. "Sleep hygiene is a routine of doing simple things to promote restful, restorative sleep to improve alertness while awake. ICU patients, especially those on mechanical ventilation, tend to suffer from poor sleep hygiene because of factors related to the ICU environment in combination with medications they are on and the illness itself."

During her time as a night nurse, Vincent realized that by better maintaining sleep hygiene in ICU patients nurses could quicken the patient's recovery time and decrease the length of the ICU stay, which could cut costs. By planning ICU care at night more efficiently, patients can get a full night's rest, which helps with quicker recovery and earlier discharge.

To prove her theory, Vincent uses biomarker circadian rhythm profiles to better time procedures, such as mechanical ventilation weaning, based on the patient's status. She collects data such as core body temperature, blood samples, patient history and clinical laboratory values from ICU patients to support her research. She also records environmental factors such as ambient noise, light

*"During her time as a night nurse, Vincent realized that by better maintaining sleep hygiene in ICU patients nurses could quicken the patient's recovery time and decrease the length of the ICU stay, which in turn could cut costs."*

and temperature that may affect the patient. These factors contribute to a patient's physiological well being and can determine the appropriate time to plan procedures according to the patient's needs.

Vincent searches for patterns in circadian rhythm by observing biochemical and biothermal measurements in critically ill patients. These patterns can show the impact of the environment on patients and determine if patients are physically ready for procedures.

"These patterns help us understand when someone may or may not be ready to wean from a mechanical ventilator," said Vincent. "This kind of data can optimize and individualize weaning procedures for the best patient outcomes."

Vincent explains "this project is an extension of the work of Dr. Sandra Hanneman, who is preparing a Pre-Clinical Critical Care Lab to measure the phenomena in my study under controlled conditions." Sandra Hanneman, PhD, RN, FAAN, is the Jerold B. Katz Distinguished Professor for Nursing Research, Associate Dean for Research, and Director of the Center for Nursing Research. "She has been a strong inspiration to me. It's her tenacity and grit that inspire me the most."

Vincent is the first nurse in the country to receive a T32 award from the National Institutes of Health – Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) center. UT Health Science Center at Houston is one of the first CTSA centers. The T32 award provides assistance for students whose research can be translated into real practice and has direct clinical implications.



## Stroke Issues and Elder Oral Care Are Subjects of Center on Aging Videos

The UT School of Nursing at Houston's Center on Aging has produced three videos pertaining to elder care issues.

"Living After Stroke: Conversations with Couples" and "Stroke: Early Recognition and Treatment" are two videos on one DVD. Sharon Ostwald, PhD, RN, FGSA, was the executive producer of these related videos, which received a Platinum Remi Award at the 40th annual Worldfest International Film Festival. Ostwald is professor and holder of the Isla Carroll Turner Chair in Gerontological Nursing. The two videos focus on warning signs, treatment and recovery, with one focusing on the impact of stroke on the lives of six couples.

"Oral Care Training for Caregivers of the Elderly" is the first of a proposed series of "Elder Loving Care"™ videos designed to educate caregivers of older persons such as nursing assistants, home health aides and family members. This topic, says executive producer and COA Director Nancy Bergstrom, PhD, RN, FAAN, who is the Trumble Professor of Aging Research, represents one of the great unmet needs of nursing facility residents. The video was created in collaboration with Dental Branch faculty June Sadowsky, DDS, MPH, FASGD, and Donna Warren-Morris, RDH, MEd. Phyllis Lengyel was medical writer/producer for the project, UT-TV provided video production, and the Isla Carroll Turner Friendship Trust funded the project.

See a stroke DVD clip at [http://son.uth.tmc.edu/coa/cares\\_media.htm](http://son.uth.tmc.edu/coa/cares_media.htm) (scroll to the link). Order the DVD (\$59.95 plus tax, shipping and handling) online at <http://kayandkay.home.comcast.net/%7Ekayandkay/teach.htm> See video clips of the Oral Care DVD at <http://son.uth.tmc.edu/coa/community.htm>. Contact [jball79686@aol.com](mailto:jball79686@aol.com) for purchase information.

# alumni news

## 2008-2010 Board

Carolyn St. Clair	<i>President</i>	Toni Sherrill	<i>Nominations</i>
Andrew Eller	<i>President-Elect</i>	Jan Garza	<i>Director</i>
Angela Snow	<i>Treasurer</i>	Patti Hardesty	<i>Director</i>
Melisa Frisby	<i>Secretary</i>	Julie Lindenberg	<i>Director</i>
Jeremiah Walker	<i>SON rep SGO</i>	Laura Ortiz	<i>Director</i>
Jerusha Harshman	<i>UTSNA</i>	Scott Stover	<i>Director</i>
Leslie Duncan	<i>Nominations</i>	Lorraine Frazier	<i>Board Member</i>
Paul Loflin	<i>Nominations</i>		

## online community

The new online community at [uthsonalumni.org](http://uthsonalumni.org) is an opportunity to reconnect with fellow alumni and the school.

We invite alumni to create a profile and check for exciting updates such as:

- News postings, lectures and seminars
- Educational lectures and seminars
- Posting of photos, class notes and messages to stay connected. See you online.

## Alumni Endowment

*DEAN PATRICIA STARCK AND THE UT SCHOOL OF NURSING ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, WHICH IS COMMITTED TO NURSING EXCELLENCE, ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ALUMNI ENDOWMENT. CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ENDOWMENT WILL SUPPORT BOTH STUDENTS AND FACULTY THROUGH SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS. TO CONTRIBUTE, SIMPLY CLICK "MAKE A GIFT" ON UTHSONALUMNI.ORG AND SELECT ALUMNI ENDOWMENT. FOR INFORMATION ON GIVING TO THE ENDOWMENT CALL 713.500.2095 OR EMAIL [alumni@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:alumni@uth.tmc.edu)*

## 2008 BSN CLASS (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING)





## Faculty Honors and Awards

### **Mara Baun, DNSc, RN, FAAN**

Member of the Nursing Research Grant Review Committee, American Nurses Foundation (2006-2009)

### **Nancy Bergstrom, PhD, RN, FAAN**

Member, Special Emphasis Panel, Institutional Training Grant (T32) Applications, National Institute for Nursing Research, NIH (2006); Reviewer, Nursing Science: Adults and Older Adults Study Section, Center for Scientific Review, NIH (2007)

### **Amy O. Calvin, PhD, RN**

College of Palliative Care Scholar, National Palliative Care Research Center and the American Cancer Society (2007-2008)

### **Marlene Z. Cohen, PhD, RN, FAAN**

Member, Nursing Science: Adults and Older Adults Study Section, Center for Scientific Review, NIH (2005-2008); Member, Special Emphasis Panel: Conflict Review Study Section, Center for Scientific Review, NIH (2007)

### **Joan C. Engebretson, DrPH, RN, AHN-BC**

Advisory Board Member, *Spirituality and Health International* (2007)

### **Lorraine Q. Frazier, PhD, RN**

Communications Chair, Functional Genomics and Translational Biology Interdisciplinary Working Group, American Heart Association (2007); Chair, Genetics Committee, Council for Collegiate Education in Nursing, Southern Regional Education Board (2006-2007)

### **Elizabeth Fuselier Ellis, DNP, RN, FNP-BC**

Member, CCNE Standards Committee (2007)

### **Sandra K. Hanneman, PhD, RN, FAAN**

Editorial Board, *Biological Research for Nursing*  
Editorial Board, *American Journal of Critical Care*

### **Thomas A. Mackey, PhD, RN-C, FAAN, FAANP**

President, American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Foundation Board of Directors (2007-2008); Recipient, Podium Research Award at the 2006 American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Conference (2006); Recipient, Damen Award, Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing, Loyola University-Chicago (2007)

### **Marianne T. Marcus, EdD, RN, FAAN**

Member, Drug Demand Reduction Advisory Committee, State of Texas (2006-2007); Edge Runner, American Academy of Nursing Scientific Symposium (2006)

### **Sharon K. Ostwald, PhD, RN, FGSA**

Best Poster Award, State of the Science Congress (2006); Member, Research Fund Committee, Rehabilitation Nursing Foundation (2007-2010); Platinum Award for "Living after stroke: Conversations with couples" video, 40th Annual Worldfest Film Festival (2007); Co-chair, Health Services Initiatives working group, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), NIH (2006); Member, National Stroke Association Rehabilitation and Recovery Advisory Board (2007-2010)

### **Mary Pat Rapp, PhD, RN, GNP-BC**

Recipient, Texas Nurses Association Leader in Clinical Practice Award (2006)

### **Mary Ellen Ross, DrPH, RN**

Nurse Researcher of the Year, National Black Nurses Association

### **Patricia L. Starck, DSN, RN, FAAN**

President, Southern Regional Educational Board's Council on Collegiate Education in Nursing (2006-2008)

### **Diane W. Wardell, PhD, RN**

Member, Special Emphasis Panel, National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (2006-2007)

## Publications

### **Terri S. Armstrong, PhD, ANP-BC**

**Armstrong, T.S.**, Mendoza, T., Gning, I., Coco, C., Cohen, M.Z., Eriksen, L., Hsu, M.A., Gilbert, M.R., Cleeland, C. (2006). Validation of the M. D. Anderson Symptom Inventory Brain Tumor Module (MDASI-BT). *Journal of Neuro-Oncology*, 80(1):27-35.

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### **Barbara K. Bailes, EdD, RN, CS, NP-C**

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### **Nancy Bergstrom, PhD, RN, FAAN**

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### **Amy O. Calvin, PhD, RN**

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### **Theresa L. Carroll, PhD, RN, CNAA**

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### **Rebecca L. (Polzer) Casarez, PhD, RN**

**Polzer, R.L.** (2007). African Americans and diabetes: Spiritual role of the health care provider in self-management. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 30(2):164-174.

*continued on next page*

**Marlene Z. Cohen, PhD, RN, FAAN**

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**Stanley G. Cron, MSPH**

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**Miguel F. da Cunha, PhD**

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**Joan C. Engebretson, DrPH, RN, AHN-BC**

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**Lillian R. Eriksen, DSN, RN**

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**Lorraine Q. Frazier, PhD, RN, NP**

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**Elizabeth F. Fuselier, DNP, RN, FNP**

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**Eileen R. Giardino, PhD, RN, APRN, FNP**

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**Sandra K. Hanneman, PhD, RN, FAAN**

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**Joanne V. Hickey, PhD, ACNP-BC, FAAN, FCCM**

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**Deborah J. Jones, PhD, MS, RN**

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**Thomas A. Mackey PhD, FNP-BC, FAAN, FAANP**

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**Marrianne T. Marcus, EdD, RN, FAAN**

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**Janet C. Meininger, PhD, RN, FAAN**

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**Sharon K. Ostwald, PhD, RN, FGSA**

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**Nikhil S. Padhye, PhD**

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**Elda G. Ramirez, PhD, RN, FNP-C, CEN, FAANP**

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**Mary P. Rapp, PhD, RN, GNP-BC**

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**Kathleen Reeve, DrPH, APRN, BC, AOCN, ANP**

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**Cathy L. Rozmus, DSN, RN**

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**Terry A. Rustin, MD, FASAM**

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**Linda Stafford, PhD, RN, CS**

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**Kristen Starnes-Ott, MSN, CRNA**

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**Sandra L. Upchurch, PhD, RN**

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**M. Terese Verklan, PhD, RNC, CCNS**

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**Diane Wardell, PhD, WHNP-BC**

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**Joan Wasserman, DrPH, MBA, RN**

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## Research

**Bergstrom, N.** (2005-2007) On-time Prevention of Pressure Ulcers: Partnering with Quality Improvement Organizations. Subcontract through ISIS, Inc. (\$19,369)

**Bergstrom, N.** (Mentor), **Missildine, K.** (PhD Student). (2007-2008) Promise of Nursing Regional Faculty Fellowship Program. National Student Nurses Association. (\$3,000)

**Bergstrom, N.** (Mentor), **Missildine, K.** (PhD Student). (2007-2009) The Role of Sleep and Sleep-Related Correlates in the Development of Delirium. Sigma Theta Tau Beta Alpha Chapter Hogstel Gerontological Nursing Research Award. (\$8,000)

**Cohen, M.Z.**, Bruera, E. (P.I.) (2006-2007) Parenteral Hydration in Advanced Cancer Patients: A Randomized Controlled Trial. Subcontract through M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. (\$59,139)

**Cohen, M.Z.**, Bruera, E. (P.I.) (2006-2008) Methylphenidate for Fatigue in Advanced Cancer Patients. Subcontract through M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. (\$140,367)

**Engelbreton, J.**, Moore, L. (P.I.) (2006-2008) Partners in Living: Theory of Planned Behavior as a Family Intervention Strategy to Influence Breast Cancer Screening Behavior of Latina Immigrants. Subcontract through Stephen F. Austin University. (\$24,570)

**Engebretson, J.** (Mentor), Richard, C.J. (Fellow). (2007-2008) Living with Arterio-venous Fistula for Hemodialysis. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. (\$37,800)

**Eriksen, L.** (2000-2009) Texas Instrument of Functional Assessment (TIFA). Texas Department of Human Services. (\$340,000)

**Frazier, L.,** Boerwinkle, E., **Meininger, J.**, Tyson, J., Vaughn, W., Willerson, J.T. (2003-2007) Inflammatory Markers and Cardiovascular Patient Outcomes. National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Nursing Research. (\$335,716)

**Frazier, L.,** Kirksey, K., Mastel-Smith, B., McFarlane, J., Symes, L. (2006-2007) Promoting Cardiovascular and Mental Health of Economically Disadvantaged Women Hospitalized for Acute Coronary Symptoms. American Nurses Foundation. (\$15,000)

**Frazier, L.,** Kirksey, K., Mastel-Smith, B., McFarlane, J., Symes, L. (2006-2008) Promoting Cardiovascular and Mental Health of Economically Disadvantaged Women Hospitalized for Acute Coronary Symptoms. Texas Medical Center – Howell Nursing Research Grant. (\$15,000)

**Frazier, L.,** Arnett, F. (P.I.) (2006-2011) Center for Clinical & Translational Sciences – BioBank Core. National Institutes of Health/National Center for Research Resources. (\$359,711)

**Frazier, L.,** Willerson, J., Boerwinkle, E. (2006-2007) TEXGEN: Premature Myocardial Infarction/Family Study. Greater Houston Partnership. (\$200,000)

**Grimes, D.,** Dougherty, K. (P.I.) (2007) Predoctoral Enrichment Program for Nurses in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. University of Texas Borderplex Health Council. (\$8,821)

**Hanneman, S.K.,** Gusick, G. M., Hamlin, S.K. (PhD Student), Gilman Wachtel, S. (PhD Student), Oldham, S., **Cron, S.** (2005-2008) Multi-site Randomized Clinical Trial of Horizontal Positioning to Prevent and Treat Pulmonary Complications in Mechanically Ventilated Critically Ill Patients: A Feasibility Study. Texas Medical Center/Howell Nursing Research Grant. (\$15,000)

**Hanneman, S.K.,** Gusick, G.M., Hamlin, S.K. (PhD Student), Gilman Wachtel, S. (PhD Student), Oldham, S., **Cron, S.** (2005-2008) Multi-site Randomized Clinical Trial of Horizontal Positioning to Prevent and Treat Pulmonary Complications in Mechanically Ventilated Critically Ill Patients: A Pilot Study. Society of Critical Care Medicine – Norma J. Shoemaker Nursing Research Award. (\$15,000)

**Hanneman, S.K.** (Mentor), Hamlin, S.K. (PhD Student). (2006-2007) Multi-site Randomized Clinical Trial of Horizontal Positioning to Prevent and Treat Pulmonary Complications in Mechanically Ventilated Critically Ill Patients: A Pilot Study and Hemodynamic Substudy. American Association of Critical-Care Nurses, Houston – Gulf Coast Chapter. (\$3,000)

**Hanneman, S.K.** (Mentor), Gusick, G.M., Hamlin, S.K. (PhD Student), Gilman Wachtel, S. (PhD Student), Oldham, S., **Cron, S.** (2006-2008) Multi-site Randomized Clinical Trial of Horizontal Positioning to Prevent and Treat Pulmonary Complications in Mechanically Ventilated Critically Ill Patients: A Pilot Study and Hemodynamic Substudy. American Association of Critical-Care Nurses. (\$10,000)

**Hanneman, S.K.** (2006-2007) Pre-clinical Critical Care Laboratory. The University of Texas System. (\$500,000)

**Hanneman, S.K.** (2007-2010) Pre-clinical Critical Care Laboratory. PARTNERS, The University of Texas School of Nursing at Houston. (\$67,840)

**Marcus, M.T.,** Dyer, C.B. (P.I.) (2004-2007) Consortium for Research in Self-Neglect in Texas (CREST). Subcontract through Baylor College of Medicine. (\$70,702)

**Marcus, M.T.,** Wetter, D. (P.I.) (2004-2008) Group Therapy for Nicotine Dependence. Subcontract through M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. (\$103,647)

**Marcus, M.T.,** Liehr, P.R., Moeller, F.G., Schmitz, J., Swank, P., **Cron, S.** (2004-2009) Stress Reduction in Therapeutic Community Treatment. National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Drug Abuse. (\$1,386,864)

**McNeill, J.** (Mentor), **Ethier, A.** (PhD Student). (2004-2007) Exploring a Parent's Memories as a Dimension of Resolving Grief. American Cancer Society. (\$45,000)

**Meininger, J.C., Brosnan, C., Upchurch, S.,** Eissa, M., Selwyn, B., Kelder, S., **Reyes, L.,** Taylor, W. (2005-2008) Aldine-UT Partnership to Prevent Obesity in Youth. National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Nursing Research. (\$443,265)

**Ostwald, S.K.,** Marshall, G., Swank, P.R., Robinson-Whelen, S., Hersch, G., Kelley, C. (2001-2007) Intervention for Stroke Survivors and Spousal Caregivers. National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Nursing Research (\$2,152,272)

**Ostwald, S.K.** (Mentor), Sixta, C.S. (Fellow). (2004-2007) Border Intervention by Promotors for Type 2 Diabetes. National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Nursing Research. (\$58,530)

**Padhye, N.,** Lasky, R. (P.I.) (2004-2008) Effects of Noise on Newborns <1000g. National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (\$119,618)

**Verklan, M.T.** (Mentor), **Helmreich, R.** (Fellow), **Meininger, J.C.** (Co-mentor). (2006-2008) Obesity on Vagal Tone and HbA<sub>1c</sub> during Pregnancy. National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Nursing Research. (\$74,272)

**Wasserman, J., Ostwald, S.K.** (2007-2008) Measuring Health Quality of Life in Stroke Survivors and Spousal Caregivers. Rehabilitation Nursing Foundation. (\$11,990)

## Endowed Faculty Positions

### chair

Sharon K. Ostwald, PhD, RN, FGSA  
*Isla Carroll Turner Chair in Gerontological Nursing*

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Patricia L. Starck, DSN, RN, FAAN  
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