

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

CARINGMinds




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



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER AT HOUSTON (UTHealth) SCHOOL OF NURSING

Endowed Faculty Positions

CHAIR

Lorraine Frazier, PhD, RN, FAAN
Huffington Foundation Endowed Chair
in Nursing Education Leadership

Seeking candidates

Isla Carroll Turner Chair in Gerontological Nursing

DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR

Kristen Starnes-Ott, PhD, CRNA
Bette P. Thomas Distinguished Professorship
in Innovative Health Care Delivery

Sandra K. Hanneman, Ph.D., R.N., FAAN
Jerold B. Katz Distinguished Professorship
for Nursing Research

Seeking candidates

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in Addiction Nursing

Lorraine Frazier, PhD, RN, FAAN
John P. McGovern Distinguished Professorship
in Nursing

Terri S. Armstrong, Ph.D., FAAN
John S. Dunn Distinguished Professorship
in Oncology Nursing

Janet C. Meininger, Ph.D., R.N., FAAN
Lee and Joseph Jamail Distinguished Professorship
in the School of Nursing

Seeking candidates

Lee and Joseph Jamail Distinguished Professorship
in the School of Nursing

Duck-Hee Kang, Ph.D., R.N., FAAN
Lee and Joseph Jamail Distinguished Professorship
in the School of Nursing

Seeking candidates

Nancy B. Willerson Distinguished Professorship
in Nursing

PROFESSOR

Joan C. Engebretson, Dr.PH., R.N., AHN-CB
Judy Fred Professorship in Nursing

Seeking candidates

Margaret A. Barnett/PARTNERS Professorship
in Nursing

Seeking candidates

PARTNERS Endowed Professorship in Nursing

Cathy L. Rozmus, Ph.D., R.N.
PARTNERS Professorship

Joanne V. Hickey, Ph.D., R.N., ACNP-BC,
FAAN, FCCM
Patricia L. Starck/PARTNERS Professorship
in Nursing

Seeking candidates

Theodore J. and Mary E. Trumble Professorship
in Aging Research

Deanna E. Grimes, Dr.PH., R.N., FAAN
Suzie Conway Endowed Professor in Nursing

(As of September 30, 2015)

ON THE COVER:

Dean Frazier stopped to chat with BSN student Michelle Behrens during one of her informal “get acquainted” rounds of the school. Michelle graduated in Aug. 2015. (Photo by Dwight C. Andrews)

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CARINGMinds

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CARINGMinds is the annual publication of the UTHealth School of Nursing that celebrates achievements in philanthropy, research, faculty excellence and other areas of interest. For additional copies, please e-mail: David.R.Bates@uth.tmc.edu or call 713.500.2111.

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For information about programs
and opportunities, please see:
<https://nursing.uth.edu>

Greetings from Dean
**LORRAINE
FRAZIER**



I feel very honored to be the new dean of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Nursing – particularly so because I am a proud alumna.

I remember – more than 15 years ago now, when I received my PhD – feeling so thankful that I had finished and excited about my future!

My journey to becoming a nurse started right here in the Texas Medical Center when I was 13 years old. Just six years after with my parents immigrated to the United States from Northern Ireland, my father was diagnosed with serious kidney disease. My mother, my siblings and I spent a lot of anxious hours in hospitals, watching various clinicians going about their mysterious and frightening business. Even back then I knew that I wanted the knowledge those medical professionals had.

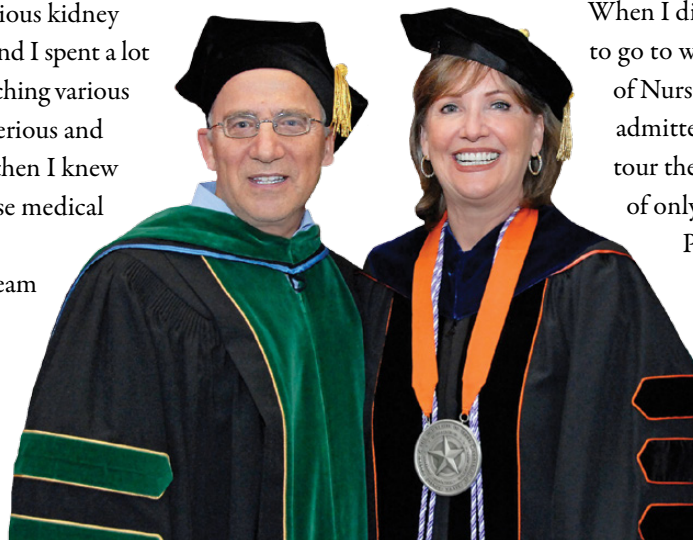
My family supported my dream to complete my education in nursing – although neither

of my parents had the opportunity to graduate from high school, both growing up in Belfast during World War II, where life was mostly about surviving. My parents instilled in me how only an education truly could give a person an opportunity and a voice in life.

With the help of scholarships, I completed my BSN and went on to gain experience as a nurse in acute care – first as a hospital staff nurse and then as a manager. I loved every minute of it! Nursing was both challenging and rewarding.

But, what I wanted more was to be a *voice* for patients and families, to be a *leader* in nursing, to help determine nursing knowledge and the direction the profession would take to improve health. So, to get a seat at the table, I needed to go back to nursing school for an advanced degree.

When I did, there was no doubt that I wanted to go to what now is called UTHealth School of Nursing. I was so excited when I was admitted, I went in before classes started to tour the building – which back then consisted of only three floors in the now-demolished, Prudential Building. On my way past the dean's office, I peered inside and



UTHealth President Giuseppe N. Colasurdo, M.D., with Dean Lorraine Frazier at the 2015 Commencement Ceremonies.

found it empty. The dean's assistant, seeing my fascination, asked me if I wanted to go in, since the dean was out. "Okay," I said – and I went in and had a look around. Given permission, I even sat a while in the dean's chair, feeling amazed. I remember thinking: Wow, who gets to run this school? Wouldn't it be wonderful to meet her!!

Soon, I did meet Dean Starck – and she eventually hired me as a faculty member and became a mentor of mine as I stepped into the role of assistant dean and department chair.

Leadership requires both mentorship *and* professional development. So, I was fortunate to be one of 20 nationwide candidates accepted in 2009 to the Robert Wood Johnson Executive Nurse Fellowship, a three-year national leadership training program. It changed my life that the RWJF invested \$500K in each fellow as they developed us into leaders primed to change healthcare practice and education. That experience challenged me to leave my comfort zone in Houston, so I took on the deanship at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences College of Nursing in Oct. 2011.

Not knowing anyone there, I learned very quickly that leadership was all about relationships, communication and working together.

Returning here as dean – to my graduate school alma mater, and where I started my career in nursing education as a research assistant back in 1997 (which seems *so* long ago!) – it's been a breathtaking transition. But, every busy work day has been smoothed by wonderful cooperation and support from the faculty and staff. Colleagues, both former and new, have been very welcoming!

My arrival in the deanship has coincided with the start of an ambitious, 18-month advertising campaign called "The Many Faces of UTHealth" (see page 4). It's hard to keep a low profile as a new dean when *my face* is one of a dozen up on billboards, on signs at Bush International Airport and adorning the side of a UTHealth shuttle bus!

This issue of our *CARING MINDS* annual magazine, now in its 10th year, tells about many of our accomplishments during 2015. Our total fall 2015 enrollment of 1,250 students was the highest ever – and forty-six percent were graduate students! Philanthropic giving is up 16 percent over last year. Among the 66 schools of nursing with NIH funding, we moved up from the 13th percentile to the 40th percentile in FY 2015.

I believe that the stories and pictures that follow also reflect important parts of who we are as a nursing school – a place where diligent students can achieve their dreams, where generous donors help to nurture talent and potential; where nurse researchers strive for discovery; and where we all collaboratively work together in a community of wellness, respect and caring.

As we develop our next five-year Strategic Plan, one thing is certain: our mission and values will drive everything we do. And all of us at UTHealth School of Nursing will be working to achieve a common vision – "To be sought out as a thought leader for creating health solutions."



Lorraine Frazier, PhD, RN, FAAN, FAHA

John P. McGovern Distinguished Professor and Dean

Huffington Foundation Chair for Nursing Education Leadership

January 11, 2016



UTHealth School of Nursing

The many faces of
UTHealth
The University of Texas
Health Science Center at Houston

New community awareness initiative launches UTHealth's "Many Faces"

Since October 2015, many of UTHealth's most prominent and accomplished faculty members have been showing their countenances around town. The eye-catching visual displays are stage one of a comprehensive community awareness initiative spotlighting "The Many Faces of UTHealth" and the incredible work being done at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth).

As a complex health science institution with many moving parts, each with its own identity and purpose – in the heart of the Texas Medical Center, the world's largest medical complex – UTHealth has encountered challenges over the years with name recognition and understanding of who we are and what we do. Stakeholder research indicated that the average Houstonian, and particularly our donor and volunteer bases, could not identify our core mission areas: that we are a university educating the next generation of health care professionals, that we provide comprehensive patient care through an expansive network of clinics around the city and that we conduct groundbreaking research to solve the greatest health challenges of our time.

After thoughtful study, UTHealth leadership agreed that the time had come to launch an unprecedented marketing campaign with the main goal of increasing this knowledge among our potential donor audiences, patients, community influencers and decision-makers. Working closely with experienced outside consultants, the

Dr. Lorraine Frazier is uncovering how depression impacts heart disease



development phase utilized surveys, interviews, workshops and research to gather input from both inside the university and from external sources.

“We started this effort many months ago and have retained the nationally renowned Richards/Carlberg agency to design and execute the campaign,” said UTHHealth President, Giuseppe N. Colasurdo, M.D. “The concept that came out of this process – ‘The Many Faces of UTHHealth’ – highlights the people who make our university such an important and exciting place to study and to work.”

A stronger, more recognizable brand will not only open the door for future fundraising opportunities, but also will raise our profile among the patients, faculty and students we serve. Thus, the institution has made an effort to connect with potential donors and community members where they live, work and travel, where they relax and via what they read and listen to on the radio.

Over a two-year timeframe, UTHHealth will use a variety of marketing mechanisms to tell the stories of our breakthrough work via billboards across the Houston area, airport and kiosk signage, customized UTHHealth shuttle buses, radio spots on Houston Public Media KUHF-FM, with compelling narration by distinguished actor William Devane. Print ads are appearing in national publications such as the *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New Yorker*, *Vanity Fair* and *Architectural Digest*. Engaging video spots will premiere at Houston’s River Oaks movie theatre and on the national television show “*Downton Abbey*.”

**THIS MESSAGE ... is brought to you by:
Houston’s Health University – UTHHealth –
whose school of nursing is working to solve
the nursing shortage by educating more
nurses than any school in Texas. More about
the many faces of UTHHealth at UTH.edu.**

Patients who have had a heart attack and suffer from depression are twice as likely to have a subsequent heart attack. Dr. Frazier researches genetics and other data to reveal which patient may need special treatment to address depression and decrease their risk of heart attack. That’s one of the many ways our community of experts is solving the greatest health challenges of our time.

The “Many Faces” initiative will showcase a cross-section of our community of experts made up of faculty members, researchers, students, patients and donors who are making a difference in our community, across Texas, nationally and internationally through their efforts to improve health care for all. The faculty and patients we spotlight in our creative materials have been strategically selected to align with our institutional priorities, and share captivating stories in simple, memorable and consistent language that we hope will resonate and inspire donors to give to an area that is meaningful to them.



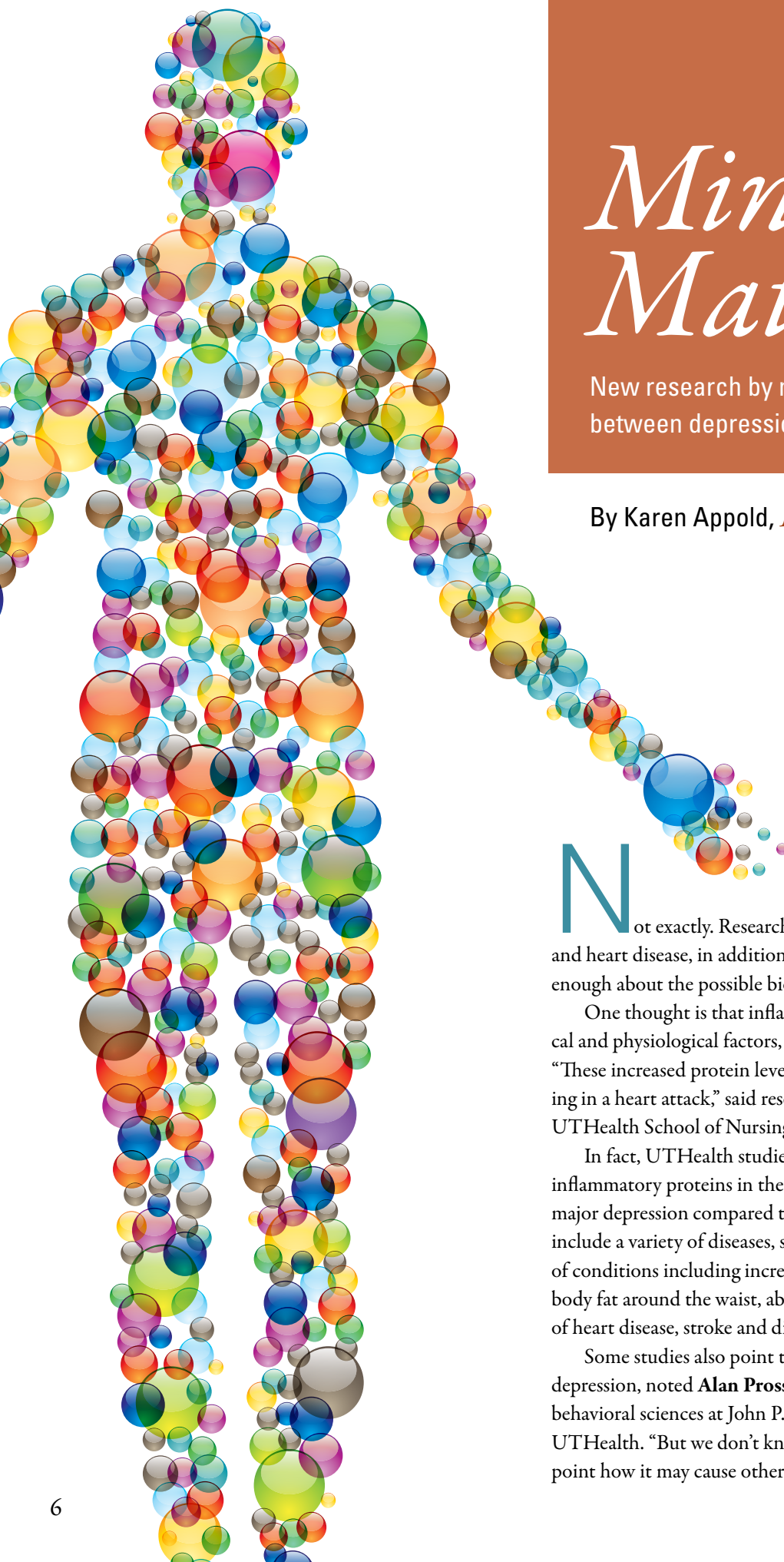
Throughout fall 2015, prominent billboards at several locations on major Houston highways have showcased UTHHealth School of Nursing Dean Lorraine Frazier. She has been featured in several print ads, as well as on UTHHealth shuttle buses circumnavigating campus buildings and on spectacular signage inside Terminal E of Houston’s George Bush Intercontinental Airport.

“The Many Faces of UTHHealth” will continue through August 2017. Please visit www.uth.edu/manyfaces to learn more about our live-saving work and this public awareness campaign.

Contributed by Sarah H. Miller, Development Communications



More about the many faces of
Houston’s HEALTH University at:
UTH.edu/ManyFaces



Mind over Matter?

New research by nurses and others shows connection between depression and other diseases

By Karen Appold, *Health*LEADER Online Magazine

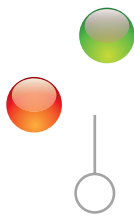
Heart disease and depression are two of the country's leading health disorders. But is the fact that an exceptionally high number of people with heart disease are depressed, or that a large number of depressed people develop heart disease, just mere coincidences?

Not exactly. Research shows a potential connection between depression and heart disease, in addition to other illnesses – but investigators don't yet know enough about the possible biological link.

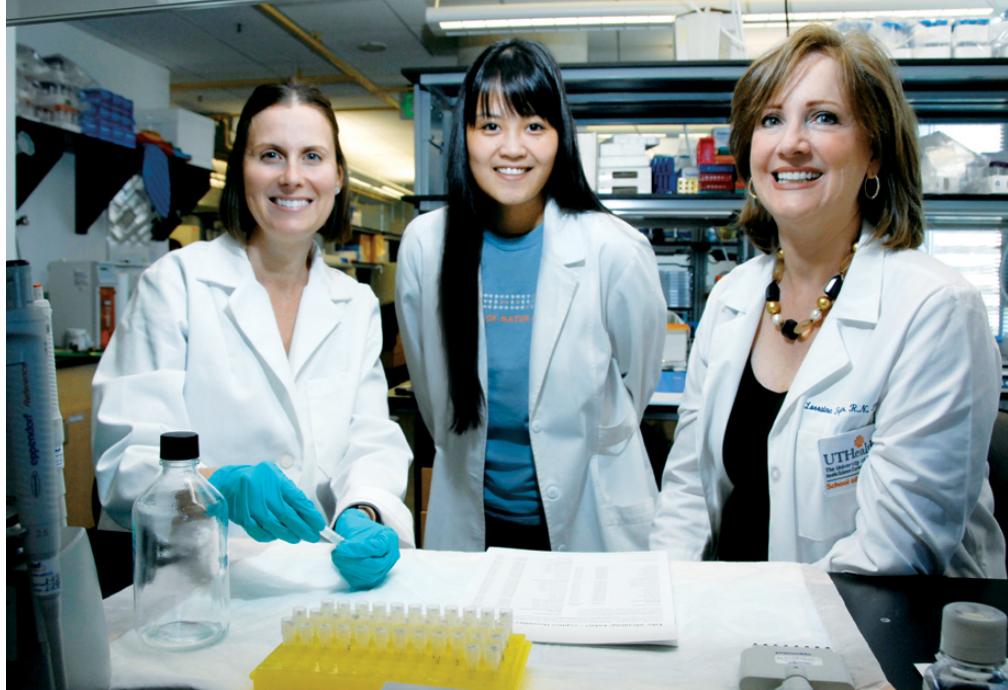
One thought is that inflammation, which can be caused by both psychological and physiological factors, can increase levels of specific proteins in the blood. "These increased protein levels may worsen plaque buildup in the heart, resulting in a heart attack," said researcher **Lorraine Frazier**, Ph.D., R.N., dean of UTHealth School of Nursing.

In fact, UTHealth studied 2,716 people with heart disease and found that inflammatory proteins in the blood were significantly higher in people with major depression compared to people who weren't depressed. Heart disease may include a variety of diseases, such as metabolic syndrome, the term for a group of conditions including increased blood pressure, a high blood sugar level, excess body fat around the waist, abnormal cholesterol levels that may increase the risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

Some studies also point to an increase risk of cancer in individuals with depression, noted **Alan Prossin**, M.B.B.S., assistant professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at John P. and Kathrine G. McGovern Medical School at UTHealth. "But we don't know enough about the biology of depression to pinpoint how it may cause other diseases," he said.



Dr. Jennifer Sanner (left), working in the CCTS Biobank with BSN honor student Marina Paz De Jesus and Dean Frazier, who was the first director of the CCTS Biobank.
(Photo by Dwight C. Andrews)



In addition, School of Nursing Assistant Professor **Luba Yammine**, Ph.D., R.N., said there may be a link between depression and musculoskeletal issues such as work-related injuries and subsequent return-to-work outcomes. Even some evidence shows a potential relationship between depression and autoimmune disease (i.e., lupus or rheumatoid arthritis).

Effects of depression

Depression is a very painful condition that deeply affects a person. “Their life loses value, and they feel hopeless and unhappy,” Yammine said. “Regardless of whether treating depression affects medical outcomes, depression should be detected and appropriately managed.”

Frazier said the links of depression to other disease may not necessarily be a cause of the disease. Rather, behavioral factors associated with depression could play a role. “Typically, depressed individuals may not eat or exercise in ways that enhance health. If they smoke or drink alcohol, they tend to increase either or both as coping mechanisms,” she said.

Depressed individuals are also less likely to take prescribed medications and face increased or decreased appetite, which could contribute to the development of other conditions, such as diabetes, Yammine said.

Researchers and clinicians who can gain a better understanding of the link between depression and heart disease may be able to better identify and manage people at risk for both, as well as those who experience a poorer quality of life and health associated with depression. “Identifying high-risk depressed individuals may lead to earlier behavioral and drug-related interventions in this vulnerable

population,” Frazier said. “Earlier treatment and management may lead to improvements in heart health, quality of life and overall improved public health outcomes.”

Cause/effect relationship

Most likely there is a bidirectional relationship between depression and heart disease, Yammine said. This means that people with depression are more likely to eventually develop heart disease, and people with heart disease have a higher risk of developing depression. In addition, patients with heart disease who are also depressed have worse outcomes than those patients who are not depressed.

Depression, Frazier added, may not only be a psychological reaction to heart disease, it may also play a role in the development and progression of heart disease. “Many researchers believe it plays a role in *both*,” she said.

Prossin, who also is the director of Neuroimmune Interactions in Depression, Addiction and Pain at McGovern Medical School, believes more research is needed to determine the cause/effect relationship, as it is difficult to determine whether a psychological illness, the treatment of an illness or a consequence of the illness contributes toward metabolic problems.

Prossin added that one study showed that the risk of depressed patients dying two years following an initial diagnosis of heart disease was two times higher than that of non-depressed patients. Another study looked at how depression predicted coronary heart disease (the buildup of plaque in the heart’s arteries that can lead to heart attack). “There was an increased risk, almost twice the normal rate, in depressed folks in terms of their risk for future heart disease,” he said.

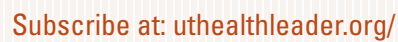
Specific protein identified

Prossin recently published a study in *Molecular Psychiatry* that identified a protein – interleukin-18 (IL-18) – altered by mood state. “If sad thoughts increase the amount of this protein, and if this same protein is involved in a host of illnesses that are highly

He continued to say that if a protein indeed becomes elevated, then this may need to be considered in treating depression and preventing illnesses linked with depression. The clinician may need to consider adding behavioral interventions into the treatment plan in order to reduce overall risk for heart disease. “We already knew that this would be beneficial, but now we have identified a potential link – a protein – that links both psychological health with physical illness,” Prossin said.

Because his study was the first of its kind, Prossin said it's too early to make any changes to treatment approaches, despite his findings. But if larger studies confirm his initial findings, it could open up new ways to reduce psychological risk of heart disease. "Perhaps we could intervene with a drug that could block the effects of IL-18," said Prossin, who noted that such drugs are currently under development.

Patients should also be aware that health care should have a holistic approach. This means that when treating a patient, the physician shouldn't just treat a specific condition, but evaluate the entire person and communicate with a patient's specialty physicians. "Patients should pay attention and manage their psychological health as well as their physical health as part of a healthy lifestyle," said School of Nursing Assistant Professor **Jennifer E. Sanner**, Ph.D., R.N., manager of UTHealth's Center for Clinical and Translational Sciences (CCTS) Biobank.



In addition, while many studies of heart disease focus on traditional risk factors, such as blood pressure, cholesterol, diet and exercise, future studies should focus on understanding non-traditional heart disease risk factors that can potentially be changed if treated, such as depression and sleep disturbances. "While death rates associated with heart disease have been on a steady decline, the burden of associated heart disease is still high," Sanner said. "This necessitates the need to understand additional new heart disease risk factors that may impact not only someone's health status, but also the quality of life of people at risk or already living with heart disease."



*A lot is new in the curriculum –
tracking new directions in healthcare*

UTHealth School of Nursing's new nurse informatics option in the post-master's D.N.P. program began admitting students in the fall 2015 semester. The only one of its kind offered in Texas, the new eight-semester program, which combines data management and clinical care, is a joint venture by the nursing school with the UTHealth School of Biomedical Informatics (SBMI).

Most courses in the D.N.P.-Nurse Informatics option are delivered online, requiring students to attend classes on campus only once a month on two consecutive days. Maximizing online teaching in its M.S.N curriculum, UTHealth also is offering new post-master's options – such as an Emergency/Trauma Care concentration and a new Psychiatric/Mental Health Family Nurse Practitioner track. The 100-percent online Forensic Nursing Science certificate is coming in fall 2016.

Starting in spring 2016, a new program headed by **Bridgette R. Pullis**, Ph.D., R.N., associate professor of clinical nursing in the Department of Nursing Systems, will expedite the transition of veterans into professional nursing by providing an opportunity for 10 veterans per semester to receive academic credit for prior military training and experience. An opening ceremony for the VBSN program is expected to include keynote speaker Georgeann McRaven, wife of The University of Texas System Chancellor Bill McRaven.

"I applaud Dr. Pullis's persistence and hard work over the past year in seeking funding for this much-needed program to assist veterans," said Dean Frazier. "It is important that the school's graduate curriculum move forward to meet new healthcare trends while also encouraging possibly overlooked future nurses, like former U.S. Armed Forces members, to successfully earn the B.S.N."

For more, go online to: <http://go.uth.edu/SONdegrees>.



YouthCount 2.0!

New funding supports Santa Maria's at-risk youth interventions research



“One of the successes of YouthCount 2.0! is that now we know a lot about homeless youth in Harris County,” Santa Maria (pictured in the foreground above) said during a June 11 presentation at the school. “As a pilot project, it was successful in laying the ground work for future counts and projects to improve methods of finding homeless youth.”

A three-year, \$462,000 grant was awarded in May 2015 to Assistant Professor **Diane M. Santa Maria**, Dr.PH., M.S.N., R.N., Department of Nursing Systems, by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), which is part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Santa Maria's new R15 award from the NICHD will fund a randomized controlled trial to evaluate the efficacy of a parent-based adolescent sexual health intervention delivered by UTHealth nursing students in a community setting.

“This is going to be an awesome project for the community and our nursing students,” said Santa Maria. “I am excited that NIH has provided this opportunity to me and UTHealth nursing students.”

Parents of minority youth, ages 11-14, will be recruited for study participation from afterschool and community programs such as the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Houston.

“I’m going to need two clinical groups each fall and summer during that three-year time period,” Santa Maria said.

YouthCount 2.0!

As co-principal investigator, Santa Maria also completed *YouthCount 2.0!* – a collaborative, community-based research study funded by the Greater Houston Community Foundation and the University of Houston's Graduate College of Social Work, Child and Family Center for Innovative Research.

Released in May 2015, *Youth Count 2.0!* looked at homeless youth aged 13-24 in Harris County during Oct.-Nov. 2014. A total of 632 youths were counted during that four-week period. Of those counted, 434 completed surveys from which data were drawn.

Strategies for recruitment of survey respondents included visiting shelters, attending magnet events and doing street outreach. YouthCount 2.0! was conducted by the University of Houston in collaboration with UTHealth School of Nursing and support from the University of Houston-Downtown.

Santa Maria is an adjunct faculty member in the Center for Health Promotion and Research at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Public Health, where she received her doctoral degree in 2013.

“Needless to say, she is a rising star in the research area of adolescent sexual health interventions and risk behaviors in homeless youth,” said Nancy Bergstrom, Ph.D., R.N., UTHealth School of Nursing's associate dean for research at the time of the report's release.

Starnes-Ott appointed to Bette P. Thomas Distinguished Professorship



Dr. Kristen Starnes-Ott, holder of the Bette P. Thomas Distinguished Professorship for Innovative Healthcare Delivery. (Photo by Gus Salinas)

Kristen Starnes-Ott, Ph.D., CRNA, director of the Nurse Anesthesia Division at the UTHealth School of Nursing, was appointed to the Bette P. Thomas Distinguished Professorship for Innovative Healthcare Delivery in May 2015.

The endowed professorship was created in 2010 by Houston businessman and philanthropist Ralph Thomas to honor his wife, Bette Thomas, who currently serves on the nursing school's advisory council. (see page 16)

Starnes-Ott maintains a clinical nurse anesthesia practice at The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center while also teaching the next generation of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs). Last year, her division pioneered a nine-semester B.S.N.-D.N.P. in Nurse Anesthesia program, which UTHealth was the first and only public university in Texas to offer. The flourishing program now has 38 students,

with a third cohort to begin studies in May 2016.

For the past year, she also served as interim assistant dean and chair of the school's Acute and Continuing Care department.

The last four consecutive classes of Nurse Anesthesia graduates achieved 100-percent first-attempt pass rates on the national certification exam (the national average is about 87 percent).

"The nurse anesthesia faculty and Dr. Starnes-Ott's leadership are directly responsible for the outstanding success of our CRNA graduates," said Dean Lorraine Frazier. "I am very pleased and proud that Dr. Starnes-Ott has been appointed to this Distinguished Professorship."

Starnes-Ott joined the UTHealth faculty in fall 2003. A 2011 Ph.D. alumna of UTHealth School of Nursing, she has led the Nurse Anesthesia Division since January 2011.



During the 2014 Ebola outbreak, faculty members provided refreshers on how to correctly use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for management of patients with the Ebola virus. (Photo by Edgar Veliz)

A “purposeful path”

Meditation labyrinth’s move enhances visibility, encourages use



Nursing students face difficult challenges every day. Between the pressures of their school coursework, unrelenting need to study, insufficient sleep, long work hours and – sometimes, even financial worries – stress can be significant and continuous. Stress-associated chemicals like cortisol, catecholamine, adrenaline and noradrenaline keep pumping. Depression, free-floating anxiety, substance abuse, weight-gain and chronic physical illness and discomfort all can result from stress overload.

Fortunately, since 2004, the UTHealth School of Nursing has provided a timely yet ancient device for promoting stress-relief and quiet contemplation: the meditation labyrinth.

The award-winning nursing building’s design team was committed to showcasing a philosophy that, if the School of Nursing is

teaching about health, it should also create spaces that feel like a nurturing environment.

The labyrinth is a powerful, complex design that has been found in societies as far back as 5,000 years ago. Most scholars think that ancient people used the labyrinth to experience and celebrate their relationship to life, nature and the world. Modern interest in the labyrinth reasons that the purposeful walking of this path, which circles back upon itself time and again, creates a zone for quiet reflection and meditation.

UTHealth’s labyrinth is modified from the design laid in the floor of Chartres Cathedral in France around 1220, since adopted and promoted by Veriditas™, the World-Wide Labyrinth Project of Grace Cathedral in San Francisco.

Several UTHealth School of Nursing faculty members have recognized the potential benefits of labyrinth-walking for nursing students and healthcare professionals, who

typically experience high levels of daily stress and anxiety.

“The labyrinth walk and/or other forms of reflective practice experiences should be an essential part of nursing education,” concluded **Linda Stafford**, Ph.D., R.N., and the late Mary Joe White, Ph.D., R.N., in their 2008 journal article.

“It is possible to integrate this ancient practice into all levels of the modern nursing curriculum,” said **Diane Wardell**, Ph.D., professor in the Department of Family Health and co-author of *Healing Touch: Enhancing Life through Energy Therapy* (2014). “The labyrinth could be an important tool for helping students learn about various aspects of themselves, provide a unique way of learning about stress reduction techniques, and offer a tool for helping in dealing with personal and clinical situations.”

In 2015 the meditation labyrinth was moved from its original site immediately outside of the nursing building’s café/bookstore and mechanical equipment spaces to a more prominent, shadier location.

With advice from holistic health consultant Margaret Harle, M.S.N., R.N., and oversight by UTHealth project manager Ginger Williams, the labyrinth was painstakingly relocated to the south (Pressler Ave.) side of the School of Public Health’s nearby Reuel A. Stallones Building.

Pro-labyrinth community nursing clinical group, left-right: Grace Chang, Julia Raquel, Chelsey Camp, Sidrah Syed, Treniece Benjamin, Lauren Robertson, Valerie Johnson, Ethan Funkhouser, Dr. Gallagher, Alexandria Douglas and Chelsea Meagher.



Recognizing that stressed-out students often make poor health choices, B.S.N. community nursing students in fall 2015 conducted a “windshield survey” of 110 of their peers to examine the risk factors that contribute to obesity in nursing students and recommend life-balance strategies. They concluded their study with flyers and

a “how-to” guide recommending better nutrition, physical activity, improved sleep hygiene and ... “finding peace on the meditation labyrinth.” Ageless, yet relevant.

SEE: <http://www.gentle-stress-relief.com/walking-the-labyrinth.html>

White, MJ, Stafford, L., Promoting reflection through the labyrinth walk. *Nurse Educator*. 2008 May-Jun; 33(3):99-100. doi: 10.1097/01.NNE.0000312177.67529.8f. Diane Wardell, Sue Kagel, Lisa Anselme. *Healing Touch: Enhancing Life through Energy Therapy*. (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2014. ISBN-13: 978-1491736333).

PREPARE: This can be as simple as taking a deep breath or saying a prayer or phrase that brings you peace. You may also ask for clarity on a particular problem or concern. This is your journey, so whatever you choose to do is right. There are no rules for using the labyrinth.

Walking the Peaceful Path

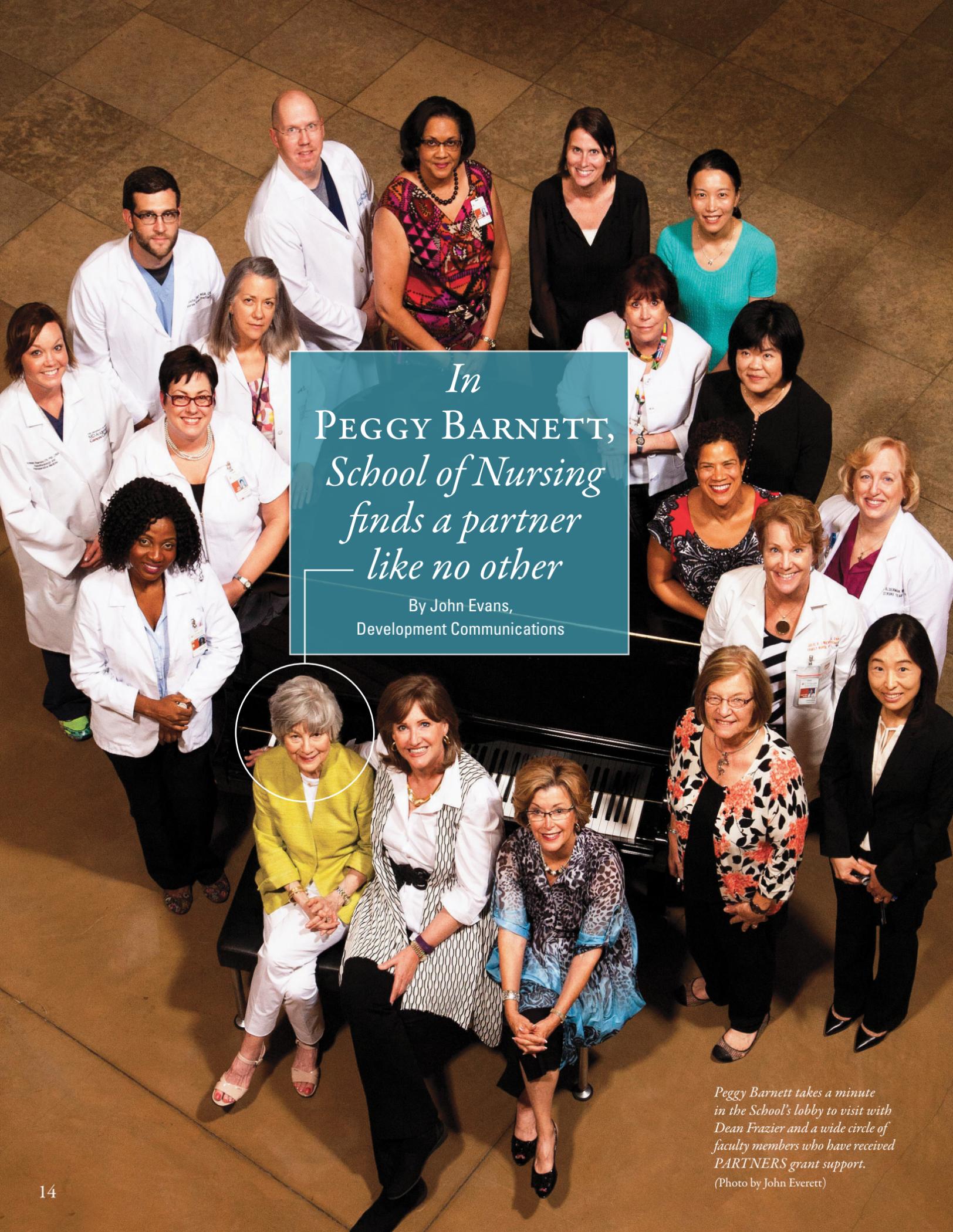
STEPPING ON THE STONES: As you do, think about letting go of the worries and distractions of everyday life. Begin to walk and follow the path towards the center. As you walk, become aware of yourself on the path.

CENTER: At the center stone, you may stand on any of the stones that span out from the center or on the center itself. Being in the center invites you to a sense of reflection and solace, which can awaken feelings of renewal, connectedness, wholeness and peace.



FINISHING: Turn around and offer thanks for any gifts of insight or physical awareness you might have received. You might want to spend time thinking, writing, drawing, or painting about your experience. This a timeless therapy that can be simple and peaceful—a gentle journey into the essence of one’s being.

STEPPING OUTWARD: Leaving the center you will retrace the entire path in the opposite direction. You will have a different perspective, and you may see things in a new light, with the wisdom you gained on your in-bound journey. Ask yourself if there is anything that can be taken out into the circle of your life.



In
PEGGY BARNETT,
School of Nursing
finds a partner
like no other

By John Evans,
Development Communications

*Peggy Barnett takes a minute
in the School's lobby to visit with
Dean Frazier and a wide circle of
faculty members who have received
PARTNERS grant support.*
(Photo by John Everett)

How can \$10,000 become \$2 million?

Dr. Lorraine Frazier made it happen!



While serving as a professor at the UTHealth School of Nursing, Frazier – now the school's dean – wanted to determine if depression made recurrent heart disease worse. She needed funds to conduct the research, but the National Institutes of Health (NIH) only awarded grants to researchers who had already proved they were onto something.

In stepped PARTNERS, a community support organization dedicated to the School of Nursing since 1994. PARTNERS provided Frazier with a grant of about \$10,000 that helped her produce initial research data, which she used to win more than \$2 million in funding from NIH. Her NIH-funded R01 project, focuses on the interactions of behavior and genetics on patients who are diagnosed with acute coronary syndrome. (See page 6)

"I can't think of another nursing school with an organization that comes anywhere close to PARTNERS," said Dean Frazier, who was selected as a Distinguished Alumna in 2002, the same year that she received that crucial first of several research grants from PARTNERS.

Today, PARTNERS equips the School of Nursing with an array of scholarships, professorships and research grants worth millions of dollars. But at its inception 21 years ago, it was only a small group of women determined to make a difference.

"At the time, we didn't even know it was going to last," said Margaret "Peggy" Barnett.

When Barnett suggested creating the organization as a way to fund student scholarships, she seemed a natural choice for its first leader. But she was initially reluctant to take the post.

"I don't know how they talked me into it, but eventually they did," she remembers. "And it's been one of the highlights of my life."

As the inaugural chair of PARTNERS, Barnett oversaw efforts to build the fledgling organization from the ground up. The group assembled an initial board of respected community members and hosted coffees at the homes of notable Houstonians. PARTNERS now comprises almost 250 members, of which 112 are lifetime members.

Starting in 1995, PARTNERS hit on what has proved to be a sure-fire winner – the PARTNERS Spring Luncheon – which quickly became its most popular and largest annual fundraising activity.

In its first year, PARTNERS raised about \$30,000.



Photo by Dwight Andrews

During May 2015 commencement ceremonies, PARTNERS founder Peggy Barnett received the first annual Dean's Award for special contributions to the School of Nursing.

The PARTNERS Endowed Scholarship fund now has a market value of \$1.9 million to benefit UTHealth nursing students. To date, PARTNERS has given more than 100 full-tuition scholarships and 45 faculty research grants for the school.

"A lot of our students are working," Dean Frazier said. "They have families and are coming to school full-time, so PARTNERS scholarships have been especially helpful to them."

Dean Frazier herself received a PARTNERS scholarship as a doctoral student, during a time when students seeking a Ph.D. degree were not permitted to work.

"I had a job in a local hospital as a manager of a large unit, and I had to give it up to go to school," she said. "For a family to lose a full-time worker was a lot, but PARTNERS really helped me afford graduate school."

PARTNERS supports students at the School of Nursing in other ways, too. In 2004, PARTNERS funded the student lounge in the new School of Nursing and Student Community Center, which affords students a setting for studying, special events, gathering with friends and enjoying the PARTNERS-provided healthy snacks during final exams. PARTNERS also supplies the school's traditional sterling-silver nursing pins for Bachelor of Science in Nursing graduates at Commencement each year – a much-treasured gift.

The group also has funded four PARTNERS endowed professorships for exceptional faculty members, and it was a major contributor to the Center on Nursing Research's Biological Sciences Laboratory and the Pre-clinical Critical Care Laboratory.

"I can't remember a time – as a student, faculty member, and now as dean – when PARTNERS wasn't with us every step of the way," Dean Frazier said. "PARTNERS continues to take an active interest in the school's fundraising priorities, such as our current effort to renovate and update the simulation and clinical performance lab."

During commencement ceremonies on May 15, Peggy Barnett received the first annual Dean's Award. "She is a special individual who has done wonderful things and contributed to the growth and success of UTHealth School of Nursing," Dean Frazier announced. "I am very pleased to give this honor to the founder of PARTNERS."

For Peggy Barnett, PARTNERS' support for the School of Nursing is the culmination of a heartfelt and ultimately rewarding dream with which she first inspired others more than two decades ago.

"It may seem trite to say that you get more than you give," she said. "But it's true."

PARTNERS faculty research grants invest in the future

Continuing its generous support of faculty research in promising areas, PARTNERS funded four Faculty Intramural Research Grants in the amount of \$61,754. Before making the grants last May, a PARTNERS committee chaired by **Kathy Redden**, R.N., took the unusual step of inviting School of Nursing investigators to present and discuss their research proposals with the committee. Partly chosen for their potential for future NIH funding, the principal investigators and PARTNERS-funded projects are:



1.

Stacy A. Drake, Ph.D., M.P.H., R.N. – “Investigation of Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) in Harris County.” Drake will utilize “Big Data” from the Harris County Institute of Forensic Science with the aims of describing and identifying predictive factors of sudden unexpected infant deaths.



2.

Diane Santa Maria, Dr.PH., M.S.N., R.N. – “Real-Time Risk Factors for Sexual Behaviors and Substance Abuse in Homeless Adolescents.” Her project will use a cell-phone-based application to assess real-time predictors of HIV risk in a difficult-to-reach homeless youth population and evaluate pathways leading to modifiable risk behaviors.



3.

Kristen Starnes-Ott, Ph.D., CRNA, Nurse Anesthesia track director – “Improving Student Nurse Anesthetists’ Communication Skills Using Simulated High Risk Occurrence Events.” She and four co-investigators will evaluate two teaching methods intended to improve non-technical skills among Nurse Anesthesia students. They also will measure retention over time. The study will be conducted in the nursing school’s Pre-Clinical Critical Care Laboratory (PCCL), a facility that has been philanthropically supported by PARTNERS.



4.

Luba Yammine, Ph.D., R.N. – “The Effects of Exenatide on a Cue-Induced Craving for Cigarettes in Pre-Diabetic Smokers.” This pilot study with other investigators at the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs proposes to obtain preliminary data for a smoking cessation intervention using a new drug that reduces cravings for both nicotine and food.

PARTNERS has a great track record for identifying and supporting talented young nurse scientists. From 2002 to 2006, PARTNERS invested three research grants in a young associate professor who was a master’s and a doctoral alumna of UTHealth. In 2008, that same faculty member was named the Nancy B. Willerson Distinguished Professor in Nursing. Today, she is the dean of UTHealth School of Nursing.

“Every day, I am reminded how generous donors have made huge impressions on this school, its faculty and its students,” said **Dr. Lorraine Frazier**. “One of those affected was me!”

UTHealth School of Nursing 2015 Philanthropic Highlights



School Development Director **Patty Rabel** reports that philanthropic gifts to the school, including endowment revenue, totaled **\$2,025,766** in FY 2015 from **417** individuals, foundations, corporations, employees and alumni. These gifts funded much-needed support for:

- Doctoral students enrolled in the Accelerated PhD program and Doctorate in Nursing Practice (DNP) programs who are meeting the Institute of Medicine's call to double the number of nurses holding doctorate degrees by 2020, thus adding to the essential cadre of future nursing faculty and researchers.

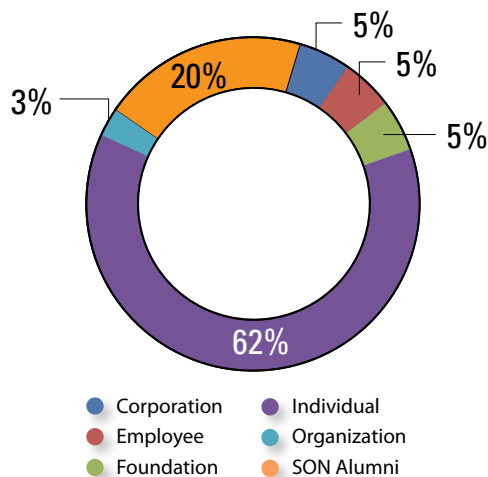
- Students earning their Bachelor of Science in Nursing who will help to relieve the nationwide nursing shortage

These students will be a part of the workforce that is prepared to meet the demand of a changing healthcare system.

- Master's level education that will prepare graduates, in a variety of clinical tracks, to assume leadership roles in clinical practice, nursing administration and nursing education.

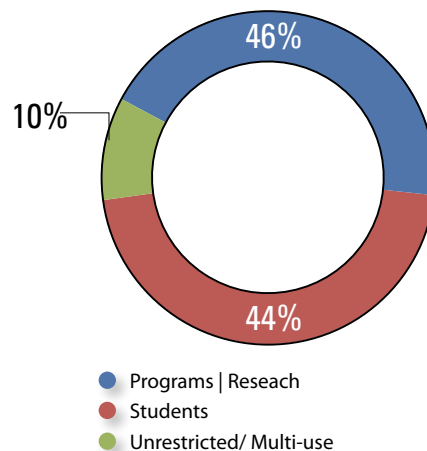
Sources of Philanthropic Funding

Percentages for fiscal year 2015



Areas of Philanthropic Support

Percentages for fiscal year 2015



The **Florence and William K. McGee, Jr. Family Foundation** established a new student scholarship endowment to support excellence in nursing education.



Keynoter shows the world of nursing at



All photos by Priscilla Dickson Photography



Honorees Ralph & Bette Thomas display a gift copy of Kasmauski's book.

Honoring “tireless” supporters Bette and Ralph Thomas

Among the dozens of current and former nurses in attendance at the 2015 PARTNERS Spring Luncheon stood an invisible network of other nurses spanning the globe. The keynote speaker – acclaimed National Geographic photographer and ardent global health advocate **Karen Kasmauski** – gave meaningful expression to the theme, “A World of Care,” during the sold-out affair April 22 at the River Oaks Country Club.

Warmly introducing Kasmauski, 2014-15 PARTNERS Board Chair **Susan M. Cooley**, Ph.D., R.N., said: “Karen Kasmauski’s work appeals to both hearts and minds – she brings light to the work nurses do.”

“A World of Care” –

In her book, *NURSE: A World of Care* (Emory University; 2008. ISBN: 978-0981456508), Kasmauski focused her lens on the inspiring and compelling story of nurses around the globe: from midwives working on the Texas/Mexico border, to nurses fighting AIDS in Kenyan slums, to the Thai nurses who care for and comfort hospice patients.

Cooley recalled first meeting the globe-trotting photographer by coincidence on a street corner in Rockland, Maine. “Right out of the back of her car, I bought several copies of her book on nurses – one for myself, one for my mother (who is a nurse), and one for my youngest daughter, Mary, who had just started nursing school,” Cooley said. “This book, *NURSE: A World of Care*, has become much more than part of my library – each page inspires me!”

Describing herself as a storyteller with a camera, Kasmauski shared compelling color slides and anecdotes from her years of reporting on global health issues for magazines including National Geographic, for which she photographed 25 major stories on six

continents. Her 2003 book, *Impact: From the Frontlines of Global Health*, was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

Kasmauski’s passionate interest in the “ecology of disease” occasionally has led her into danger zones, where nurses “somehow remained focused on their work amid poverty, sickness, and possible violence.” Amazed by their dedication, she became a chronicler of “nurses around the world who were facing the same dangers as their neighbors and their patients, whether it’s war or environmental disaster.”

“Exotic diseases are emerging in complex ways all around the world, and nurses are in the middle of all of that,” Kasmauski said. “Nurses are like a finger on the pulse of a community’s health.”

Around the world, healthcare delivery systems are in crisis, she observed. “In the poorest places, millions of people lack access to even the most basic care, while at the same time, in the world’s prosperous nations, the soaring cost of advanced medicine has begun to exact a crippling strain on budgets,” Kasmauski said.

The global health advocate commended the trend of nurse practitioners providing critical expertise and health care with NGOs as well as rural clinics.

Kasmauski told the audience that she also has witnessed “nurses reaching out to the lonely and sad, as well as the sick, offering concern and connection.”

“They *listen!* – that’s what nurses do in caring for people,” Kasmauski said. “The human touch ... it will always be the hallmark of the nurse. Nurses are there when life begins and when it ends.”

As technology advances at a rapid rate, nurses will have to adapt to all kinds of new tools and increased training demands, she observed.

“Nurses are on the forefront to meet the challenges and offer solutions,” Kasmauski concluded. “I salute all of you for supporting nursing education!”

PARTNERS *Spring Luncheon*



Luncheon co-chairs Soraya McClelland (left) and Dr. Susan Cooley share the podium.



Dean Frazier hugs Peggy Barnett while announcing that she will receive the first Dean's Award at 2015 Commencement.



Dean Frazier hosted Pacesetter BSN student Lidia Medina (left) at her table as winner of the "My Picture of Wellness" photo contest. At right is keynote speaker Karen Kasmauski.

Honoring the Thomases –

During the luncheon, the organization honored 2009 PARTNERS chair **Bette Thomas** and her husband **Ralph Thomas** for their “tireless efforts in support of the UTHealth School of Nursing and to the community,” and for the couple’s years of philanthropy. PARTNERS founder Peggy Barnett said: “Ralph is a *leader* and always makes things happen – so does Bette! – and they believe in nursing, they believe in UTHealth School of Nursing, and they believe in giving back.”

In 2010, Ralph Thomas endowed the School of Nursing’s Bette P. Thomas Distinguished Professorship for Innovative Healthcare Delivery to honor his wife. Bette currently serves on the nursing school’s Advisory Council.

“I’m just happy to be here – ‘Mister Bette Thomas’ – and I’m more than okay with that,” Ralph Thomas cheerfully joked.

Thanks to Peggy Barnett –

Participating in the event for the first time as UTHealth School of Nursing’s dean, **Lorraine Frazier**, Ph.D., R.N., FAAN, welcomed those in attendance. “I am often asked about PARTNERS when I am traveling on behalf of the School, she said. “What I can tell you is that PARTNERS is the envy of every other nursing school dean in the country. PARTNERS allows me to do my job by providing

endowed professorships, which in turn helps attract and retain top-quality faculty and researchers.”

Standing on stage with the Thomases, Dean Frazier proffered special recognition to PARTNERS founder **Peggy Barnett**.

“Peggy, we are all grateful to you for your support and your many years of untiring service to PARTNERS and the School,” Frazier said. “We thank you from the bottom of our hearts.”

Kathrine G. McGovern and the John P. McGovern Foundation, H-E-B, Soraya McClelland and her husband Scott McClelland, as well as Bette and Ralph Thomas were the major underwriters of the event. Others underwriters included: Lesha and Tom Elsenbrook; Patti and Richard Everett; Paula and Steve Letbetter; Starlett and Ben Hollingsworth; PARTNERS Lifetime and Board Member Sheri Henriksen; and Texas Children’s Hospital.

The pre-luncheon invocation was given by Reverend Dr. Linda Christians, executive pastor at St. Luke’s United Methodist Church – and also a former nurse – who memorialized “the passing of PARTNERS board member Diana Brown.” Mrs. Brown (1957-2015) – survived by her husband of 35 years, Steve Brown – was a former PARTNERS treasurer and a University of Texas at Austin alumna.

The luncheon, co-chaired this year by Cooley and **Soraya McClelland**, is PARTNERS’ largest annual fund-raising activity, and proceeds benefit programs and services for UTHealth School of Nursing.

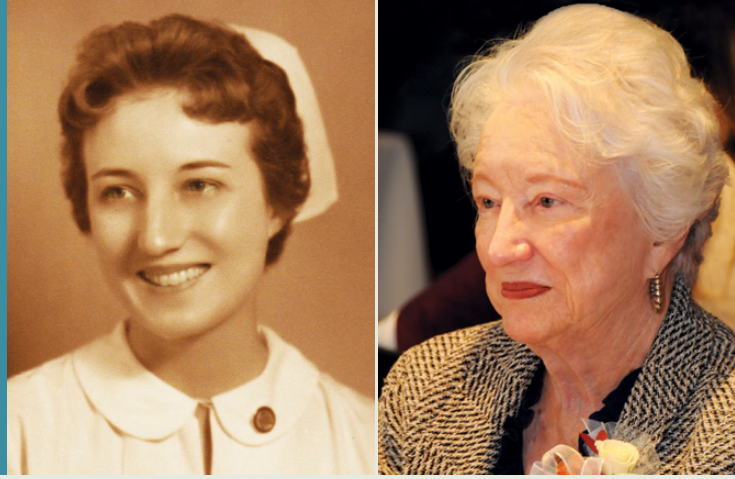
“Now go out and spread the word about our School of Nursing and the wonderful work that nurses do in Houston and around the globe!” Cooley encouraged as the luncheon ended.



The annual Spring Luncheon owes a big “Thank you!” to the faculty, staff and students who volunteer and help make everything go so smoothly... Dr Stacy Crandall, Dr. Mary E. Ross, Patty Rabel, Dena Baier, Tracy McGee, Dr. Karen Mellott, Dr. Faith Strunk, Susan Alderman, Jessica Kruse, FNP Will Glass, Diana Padron, Efe Ighovoyiwui, Mandy Boyce and Alex Luton.

“A true pioneer!”

Dr. “Pat” Starck steps down as dean amid accolades and song after 30 pacesetting years



Houston’s healthcare community commemorated the extraordinary 30-year tenure (1984-2014) of **Patricia L. Starck, Ph.D., R.N., FAAN**, as dean of the UTHealth School of Nursing with a variety of tributes during her final months on the job. **The most emotional (and just plain fun) of these celebratory events was a Jan. 30, 2015 farewell luncheon honoring Starck and two retiring faculty leaders filled with years of experience and institutional memory.**



Retiring faculty members Drs. Patricia Starck, Dorothy Otto & Nancy Busen (left-right) represented nearly 97 years of experience and institutional memory. (Jan. 30, 2015)

About 100 faculty members, staff and others gathered at the school and offered best wishes to Starck and to:

Dorothy A. Otto, Ed.D., M.S.N., who was retiring as an associate professor in the Department of Nursing Systems. Hired as an instructor in 1972, Otto was the only currently serving faculty member who had witnessed the nursing school’s entire history.

Nancy H. Busen, Ph.D., the school’s Master of Science in Nursing program coordinator and holder of the Margaret A. Barnett/PARTNERS Professorship in Nursing, first joined UTHealth in 1992. She retired as assistant dean and chair of the Department of Family Health.

All three departing nursing educators received personalized gifts, as well as individual engraved Tiffany crystal vases.

Wish you all the best, much happiness, good health, fulfillment, love, peace, prosperity – and we wish for all your dreams and new dreams to become true,” said Executive Director of Student Affairs and Admissions Laurie G. Rutherford, M.B.A., who served as the relaxed event’s MC. Rutherford also led the vocal trio – “All altos, so I’m calling us The Altoids,” she announced – as they serenaded Starck with a wittily customized parody of the 1969 hit song, “Both Sides Now.”



**“Years and tears and through it all
You kept on course, you followed the call
You’ve made good friends along the way
We look at you that way”**

Starck noted that both she and Otto – along with 2013 retiree and 32-year UTHealth veteran **Marianne T. Marcus, Ed.D., R.N., FAAN** – had enjoyed sufficiently lengthy careers that they were asked to contribute material to the Texas Medical Center Library’s John P. McGovern Historical Collections and Research Center. At the farewell luncheon, Starck told the audience that she would stop with just short remarks. **“This is supposed to be a celebration and not a time to get teary,” she said. “Anyway, what do you say after more than 30 years? It’s really been a wild ride, and it’s been fun!”**

A visionary leader –

Under Starck’s leadership, UTHealth School of Nursing climbed to a Top Five Percent ranking among U.S. nursing graduate programs surveyed by U.S. News and World Report. The school’s total number of nursing students increased from 443 in 1984 to the fall 2014 total enrollment of over 1,070. Starck raised millions of dollars to support nursing education, including funds for UTHealth’s \$58-million LEED® Gold-certified green building.

The future dean started her nursing career in small-town Georgia back in 1960.

Starck's deanship produced 33 endowed scholarships, nine distinguished professorships, seven professorships, seven research project endowments and two endowed chairs.

Nationally admired for her academic innovations, Starck introduced the "Pacesetter" B.S.N. program, with its emphasis on a full-time clinical experience in the final semester, as a pilot project in fall 2010. Reported results from a 2014 study found that first-year job retention rates were 63 percent for traditional B.S.N. graduates and 100 percent for Pacesetters.

Faced with a pressing shortage of nursing educators, Starck decided to address it by growing her own. Following a successful \$2-million fundraising effort, local philanthropic support provided student stipends to launch "The Patricia L. Starck Accelerated Ph.D. Scholars Program" in fall 2010. Those 10 outstanding students earned their doctoral degrees in 2013 and became assistant professors on faculty.

"Dean Pat Starck has provided tremendous leadership as dean, and thousands of patients will receive better outcomes because of skills learned by nurses during Dean Starck's tenure said Tom Brown, grants director of **The Hamill Foundation**. "We have been proud to support the UTHealth School of Nursing under Pat Starck."

Another \$1.3-million fundraising initiative completed by Starck currently is supporting a second group of six accelerated Ph.D. students in the intensive three-year degree program, building on her model.

Among recent professional distinctions, Starck was elected in 2012 to The University of Texas Academy of Health Science Education, an organization of distinguished scholars recognized for their teaching excellence. Capping 24 years of support for the organization, Starck received the 2014 President's Award from the Texas Nurses Association (TNA) District 9 Foundation. In 2010, she was named one of "60 Visionary Leaders" out of 11,000 graduates of the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) School of Nursing, where she earned her doctorate in 1979.

"Patricia Starck is a true visionary who has had an exceptional career in nursing, mentoring many future leaders in nursing and contributing extensively to the body of nursing literature."

— fellow UAB doctoral alumna Judy Holcombe, D.S.N., R.N.



In Dec. 2014, Starck officially presented to the TMC Library's John P. McGovern Historical Collections and Research Center an assortment of her papers, mementoes, archival materials and other items.

Her 1985 book, *The Meaning in Suffering Test*, builds on her doctoral research – which was inspired by the work of her mentor Viktor Frankl – applying logotherapy to a nursing model in a way that remains in use throughout the world.

Starck leaves the nursing school with a thriving UT Health Services (UTHS), which helped to pioneer nurse-practitioner-managed comprehensive primary care. UTHS opened its first clinic in the Texas Medical Center in 1991 and now receives about 12,500 patient visits each year.

Summing up her remarkable career in nursing, Starck observed: "My 50 or so years of experience tells me that the future of nursing is more and *more* education."

"Dr. Starck was a true pioneer who has made many invaluable contributions to the field of nursing throughout her career," said UTHealth President **Giuseppe N. Colasurdo**, M.D. "She is also an outstanding leader and mentor, and we are so grateful for all that she has done – and continues to do – for this university."

The pioneering educator will continue her service to the university as UTHealth's Senior Vice President for Interprofessional Education.

"Pat always had, and still has, a passion for helping patients, faculty and students whenever she could and however she could – it's a legacy I hope we all try to emulate," said longtime colleague George M. Stancel, Ph.D., UTHealth Executive Vice President for Academic & Research Affairs.

"You've been great and we've been blessed / It's been our joy to work with the best," sang the Altoids (left-right: Dr. Allison Edwards, Rutherford, Susan Krawtztz).





Dr. Starck has taken her place on the 8th Floor wall where the school proudly displays commissioned oil portraits of her two predecessors: founding dean Elizabeth Jones Snyder (1972-75) and Dr. Arlowayne Swort (1977-83).

SALUTING Dr. Pat Starck –

“Dr Starck was my colleague for many years. In my view, she is the quintessential Steel Magnolia, the “velvet hammer. Pat Starck spearheaded innumerable wonderful accomplishments for UT Houston, but what I have always admired most about her is her all-encompassing love for her twins and their children...”

—Pamela G. Watson, ScD, RN, Dean and Professor, School of Nursing, The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston.

“Dr. Bill Butcher was the head of the search committee that hired Dr. Starck as Dean of Nursing. Toward the end of the process I asked him if we had any good applicants, and he started raving about this great candidate from Georgia that he was hoping we could recruit – the rest is pretty much history. Pat has been a great leader and advocate for the School of Nursing, but she has also been a great leader for the Health Science Center – for Texas, the nation and the

nursing profession in all ways.” —George M. Stancel, Ph.D., UTHealth Executive Vice President for Academic & Research Affairs.

“Dr. Patricia Starck has been an influential nursing leader for the profession in the Texas Medical Center, and her impact has been felt in the State of Texas and beyond. She has been a dean, mentor and teacher for thousands of nurses whose care spreads worldwide. Dr. Starck has been a respected, strong and steady force for the nursing profession as she worked for quality in scholarship and research, expanding opportunities for nurses to pursue doctoral education in Texas, and providing strategies for nursing workforce solutions. For those of us influenced by her, we are all better healthcare providers because she had a vision for the future and challenged us to be our best, because that is what she always offered, her best.” —Kathryn Tart, EdD, MSN, RN, Founding Dean and Professor, University of Houston School of Nursing.

Transitions in 2015



Mara M. Baun, Ph.D., holder of the Lee and Joseph Jamail Distinguished Professorship, retired in 2015. She had directed the PhD degree program until the start of FY 2014 and is a well-known expert on the health benefits of animal companions.



Global Health Program Director **Susan Benedict**, PhD, CRNA, FAAN, retired at the end of Aug. 2015 from leadership positions that included assistant dean and chair of the Department of Acute and Continuing Care. She also was the holder of the PARTNERS Endowed Professorship in Nursing.



Associate Dean of Research **Nancy R. Bergstrom**, PhD, RN, FAAN, and holder of the Theodore J. & Mary E. Trumble Professorship in Aging Research, retired in Aug. 2015 after more than 15 years' service. Bergstrom co-created and tested the first clinical practice guidelines for the prediction, prevention and treatment of pressure ulcers.



Dr. Dorothy A. Otto (left) is still involved with teaching and research as Associate Professor Emerita, after officially retiring in 2015 following a 42-year career.

Dr. Nancy H. Busen retired after 22 years of service. During her career, Busen's research focused on leadership development for nurse practitioners and health issues associated with underserved populations.



Assistant Professor **Edith B. Summerlin**, PhD, RN, first joined UTHealth in 2001. She also had been a faculty member, 1989-1998, at The University of Texas at Arlington. From 1978-1999 she proudly served in the U.S. Army Reserve, leaving with the rank of Colonel.

"Pushing us to reach our potential"

Graduating students choose 2015 McGovern Outstanding Teachers



Dr. Eileen R. Giardino is one of two winners of the 2015 John P. McGovern Outstanding Teacher Awards.

(Photo by Todd Taylor)

Graduating students of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Nursing selected a graduate and an undergraduate honoree from the school's faculty as 2015 winners of the John P. McGovern Outstanding Teacher Award.

The graduate teacher of the year – for the second time in three years – is **Eileen R. Giardino**, Ph.D., R.N., an associate professor of clinical nursing in the Department of Family Health. Assistant Professor **Ruth S. Burk**, Ph.D., R.N. – who no longer is at UTHealth – was named as the school's undergraduate teacher of the year.

Cathy L. Rozmus, Ph.D., R.N., professor and associate dean for academic affairs, announced this popular annual faculty honor during May 15 commencement ceremonies at the George R. Brown Convention Center in downtown Houston.

Giardino was lauded by her students as "easily approachable and supportive of Doctor of Nursing Practice students." She also was described as "engaging," "always available to students," "responsive," and as a professor who "pushes students to reach their potential." In 2012, Giardino was named graduate teacher of the year, the first time the School of Nursing recognized two McGovern Outstanding Teacher Award recipients.

After 16 years in several positions at La Salle University School of Nursing in Philadelphia, Pa., Giardino joined the UTHealth School of Nursing faculty in 2006. She received her Ph.D. degree in 1989 from the University of Pennsylvania, where she also had earned her B.S.N. degree in 1976.

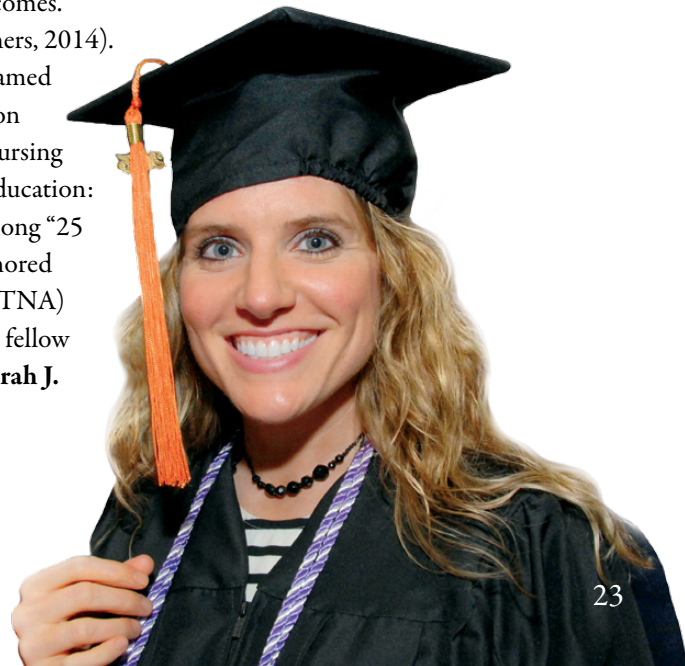
Giardino has co-authored two books on the evaluation of child sexual abuse and child physical abuse/neglect. She also recently co-edited a book with Assistant Dean and Family Health Department Chair **Robert G. Hanks**, Ph.D., R.N., *Collaboration with the Advanced Practice Nurse: Role, Teamwork and Outcomes*. (Hauppauge, NY: NOVA Publishers, 2014).

In Sept. 2015, Giardino was named by the Good Samaritan Foundation among the 2015 "Excellence in Nursing Award" winners in the Nursing Education: Faculty category. She also was among "25 Outstanding Nurses of 2015" honored by the Texas Nurses Association (TNA) District 9 Foundation, along with fellow UTHealth faculty member **Deborah J. Jones**, Ph.D., M.S., R.N.

Students at each of the six UTHealth schools choose a John P. McGovern Outstanding Teacher for stimulating curiosity, promoting professional development and contributing to students' abilities to think creatively. The awards, announced at Commencement each year, are made possible by an endowment from the John P. McGovern Foundation.

McGovern Award finalists from the graduate faculty are: **Terri S. Armstrong**, Ph.D.; **Carlos Buford**, M.S.N., R.N.; **Stanley Cron**, M.S.P.H.; **Joanne V. Hickey**, Ph.D., R.N.; **Duck-Hee Kang**, Ph.D., R.N.; **Julie Lindenberg**, D.N.P.; **Mariya Tankimovich**, D.N.P.; and **Geri L. Wood**, Ph.D., R.N.

Undergraduate faculty members who were 2015 award finalists are: **Amy O. Calvin**, Ph.D., R.N.; **Pei-Ying Chuang**, Ph.D., R.N.; **Christina Nunez Desomeaux**, Ph.D., R.N.; **Dana El-Hajj**, Ph.D., R.N.; **Melissa D. Ethington**, Ph.D., R.N.; **Ngozi Mbue**, Ph.D., R.N.; **Linda Stafford**, Ph.D., R.N.; and **Rebecca Tsusaki**, Ph.D., R.N.

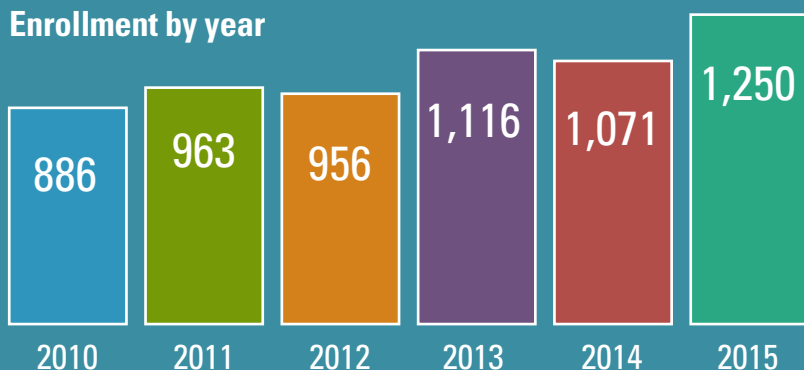


By the Numbers

Fall 2015 student enrollment was the highest ever – and forty-six percent were graduate students!



Enrollment by year

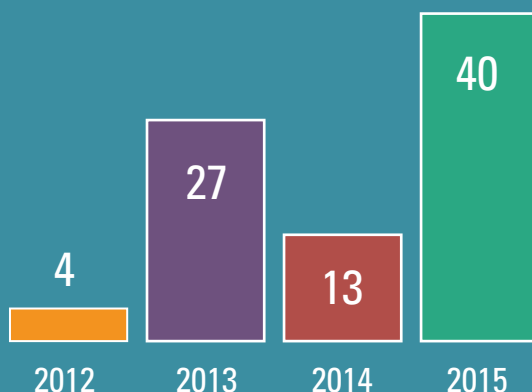


Ranked by
U.S. News & World Report
among the Top Five
Percent of U.S. nursing
graduate schools

Percent of MSN graduates applying for advanced practice certification in Texas, Fiscal Year 2010 to Fiscal Year 2014, who were granted certification = 100 percent

	2010	2012	2011	2013	2014
MSN Graduates Applying for Advanced Practice Status in Texas	64	73	92	91	120
Percentage of Graduates Granted Advanced Practice Status in Texas	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Among the 66 schools of nursing with NIH funding, Uthealth moved up from the 13th percentile to the 40th percentile in Fiscal Year 2015.



100% pass rate
for the *last four* Nurse
Anesthesia graduating
classes on first attempt
taking the National
Certifying Examination

Re-energized Alumni Association embraces needs of school's graduates



The next best thing about graduating? – the UTHealth School of Nursing Alumni Association! Like its terrific new logos – designed by alum **Brandon Boykin**, B.S.N., R.N., from concepts by Brandon and fellow alum **Chris Draper**, B.S.N., R.N. – the organization has taken on refreshed energy, imagination and relevance.

In mid-April 2014, the school hired **Kristi J. Rodriguez**, M.Ed., for the new position of director of recruitment and alumni affairs. Rodriguez quickly developed a plan to reconnect with alumni, demonstrate to current students the value of being known as a UTHealth alum, and provide networking opportunities for all involved.

A new slate of committed officers was elected in Aug. 2014, led by 2014-16 Alumni Association Board President – **Colleen Kehr**, B.S.N., R.N., M.B.A. With guidance from Rodriguez and the dedicated board, the Alumni Association now has more activities and opportunities for involvement that anyone has seen in years!

Starting in Nov. 2014, a regular series of Career Nights hosted by the Alumni Association on consecutive evenings help current students sharpen their presentation and interviewing skills and learn about “real life” after nursing school. “Career Nights have been one of our greatest successes, and every time we conduct the event, alumni involvement and student attendance increases,” said Kehr.

Kehr noted that alumni are encouraged now more than ever to get involved, which is critical to sustaining long-term success. “My daughter now attends UTHealth, and to hear about her experiences I know how things have changed. We need recent grads to actively participate in the planning process because they can help create a picture of the current student experience,” Kehr said. “We also need our more experienced alums to help educate on changes in the profession and employment practices. If we can put those two things together, *great* things can happen!”

“There’s never been a better time to be a UTHealth nursing alum!” promised Rodriguez.

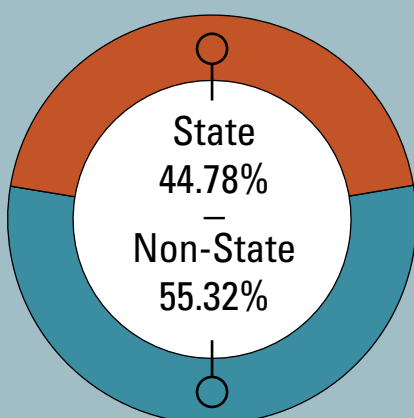
There a number of ways to get connected. An eye-catching, lively newsletter now goes out by email to roughly 3,200 alumni. Last October, the School launched an alumni group page on Facebook: **“UTHealth School of Nursing Alumni.”**

The future for our alumni group looks as bright as the new logos. In August, Chris Draper will become 2016-18 Alumni Association president.

If you are interested in volunteering or attending the next alumni board meeting, visit: <http://go.uth.edu/sonalums> or email: alumni@uth.tmc.edu.

Sources of UTHealth School of Nursing Revenues

Fiscal year 2015



FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

Fiscal Year 2015

TERRI S. ARMSTRONG, PH.D., FAANP

Acquaye, A. A., Lin, L., Vera-Bolanos, E., Gilbert, M. R., & **Armstrong, T. S.** (2015). Hope and mood changes throughout the primary brain tumor illness trajectory. *Neuro-Oncology*, doi:nov101 [pii]

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- LORRAINE FRAZIER, PH.D., R.N., FAAN, FAHA**
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FACULTY RESEARCH

Fiscal Year 2014-15

- Armstrong, T.**, Gilbert, M. (2015-16). Collaborative Ependymoma Research Network (CERN). Collaborative Ependymoma Research Network (CERN) Foundation (\$52,000)
- Armstrong, T.**, Scheurer, M., Bondy, M., Gilbert, M., Sulman, E. (2013-18). Toxicity Profiling: Creating Novel Paradigms to Personalize Cancer Treatment. National Institute of Health/National Institute of Nursing Research. (\$2,146,673).
- Armstrong, T.**, Kang, D-H., Sherwood, P. (PI) (2013-18). Smartcare: Innovations in Caregiving Interventions. University of Pittsburgh/National Institute of Health/National Institute of Nursing Research. (\$478,907)
- Armstrong, T.** (Mentor), Reynolds, R. (PhD. Student). (2015-17). Pancreatic Cancer: Uncertainty in Illness. American Cancer Society Fellowship. (\$30,000)
- Armstrong, T.** (2015-17). IPA - National Cancer Institute. DHHS/NIH/NCI/Center for Cancer Research. (\$29,737)
- Armstrong, T.** (2015-16). Brains for a Cure. Head for the Cure Foundation. (\$57,144)
- Branson, S.**, Boss, L., Kang, D., Baun, M. (2014-15). Biobehavioral Profiles of Cat Ownership in the Community Dwelling Elderly. International Society for Anthrozoology. (\$45,000)
- Branson, S.**, Boss, L., Kang, D., Baun, M. (2015-16). Biobehavioral effects of therapy dog visitation in elderly intensive care unit patients: A pilot and feasibility study. Human Animal Bond Research Initiative Foundation/Morris Animal Foundation. (\$5,923)
- Chuang, P.** (PI) (2014-15). The Link Between Neuroglobin and Cerebral Infarct Following Aneurysmal Subarachnoid Hemorrhage. Southern Nursing Research Society (\$7,500)
- Drake, S.** (2015-16). Factors Predicting Premature Natural Death: A Pilot Study Within a Medicolegal Death Investigation Setting. Sigma Theta Tau International. (\$5,000)
- Engbretson, J.**, Etchegaray, J. (PI) (2014-16). Parent perceptions of NICU Safety Culture: Parent-Centered Safety Culture Tool. National Institutes of Health/Agency for Health Care (\$2,763).
- Gallagher, M.**, Reifsnider, E. (PI) (2013-17). Preventing Childhood Obesity Through Early Feeding and Parenting Guidance. Arizona State University/National Institute of Health/National Institute of Nursing Research. (\$141,883)
- Jones, D.** (2015-16). HAPPI (Hospital Acquired Pneumonia Prevention Initiative). National Patient Safety Foundation. (\$17,400)
- Mbue, N.** (2014-15) A Multiple Behavior Self-Monitoring Intervention for African American Veterans with Diabetes: A Feasibility Study. National Black Nursing Association. (\$5,000)
- Mellott, K.**, Hanneman, S. (2014-16) Learning Transfer from Simulation to Bedside in Nurses Using Technology to Interpret Patient Ventilator Asynchrony. American Association of Critical Care Nurses. (\$9,994)
- Sanner, J.**, Frazier, L., Willerson, J. (PI.), Boerwinkle, E. (2001-present) TEXGEN: Premature Myocardial Infarction/Family Study. Greater Houston Partnership. (\$200,000)
- Sanner, J.**, Frazier, L., Willerson, J., Boerwinkle, E. (2006-present). Genetics and Heart Disease. Greater Houston Partnership. (\$1,094,906)
- Sanner, J.**, McPherson, D. (PI.) (2006-17) Center for Clinical and Translational Sciences – BioBank Core. National Institutes of Health/National Center for Research Resources. (\$1,807,931)
- Santa-Maria, D.** (2015-18) Efficacy Trial of a Brief Parent-Based Adolescent Sexual Health Intervention. National Institutes of Health. (\$300,000)
- Strunk, F.** (2014-15) Measuring the Symptom Distress of Cancer Patients: Development of a New Assessment System: The MDASI-Breast. Houston Chapter Oncology Nursing Society. (\$2,500)
- Wang, J.** (2013-16) Connecting Smartphones with Electronic Health Record to Facilitate Behavioral Goal Monitoring in Diabetes Care. Robert Wood Johnson Faculty Scholar. (\$350,000).
- Yammine, L.**, Newton (PI) (2015-17) Clinical Research Education for Drug Abuse Professionals. National Institutes of Health. (\$93,744)



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