



PhD Newsletter

College of Nursing UTK

September 2015

From the Program Chair:

It seems as though we just finished Orientation, but the fall semester is hurtling along! I hope the excitement of the first Colloquium is still with you as you pursue your coursework and research. It was great to have “standing room only” at the Colloquium.

Please review this newsletter carefully for upcoming events, as well as news about accomplishments of the doctoral faculty, PhD alumni, and currently enrolled students. If we did not list your accomplishments, we didn't know about them! Please remember to send news of your presentations, honors, and publications so that we can congratulate you.

--Sandra Thomas, Chair, PhD Program

Welcome to the Class of 2015—

At Orientation, we welcomed 7 new PhD students*:

- Shade Adigun, a resident of Cookeville, TN (native of Nigeria);
- Marissa Bunch from Cleveland, TN;
- Lauren Munoz, Knoxville;
- Lauren Oppizzi, Knoxville;
- Mary Salerno-Anthony, Maryville;
- Jennifer Shearer, Cleveland;
- Sheila Williams, Tazewell.



*We also admitted an 8th student, Lauren Speck, who is taking the BSN-to-PhD route; she is presently pursuing master's level core courses in preparation for her family nurse practitioner coursework, so she will not be enrolled in PhD classes right away.

I would like to tell you a little bit about each of these new students.

Shade Adigun earned her first nursing credential from Ecwa School of Nursing in Nigeria. After coming to the United States, she earned BS and MSN degrees, as well as a post-master's certificate as a family nurse practitioner. She has worked in critical care in Nashville and as charge nurse in cardiac telemetry in Chattanooga. Her goal in the PhD program is to acquire the skills to incorporate research into health care needs of patients in underserved African countries.

Marissa Bunch is a pediatric nurse practitioner who earned her MSN at Vanderbilt and her BS in health science at Lee University. She has done hospital nursing as well as pediatric primary care. Her primary research interest

is infant sleep, and specifically co-sleeping with parents. She has done some online teaching and will complete the nursing education minor to prepare her for a future role as faculty. Prior to transferring into the nursing PhD program, she completed a year of coursework in the department of Child and Family Studies.

Lauren Munoz will graduate from UTK with her MSN in December (FNP concentration) and begin PhD coursework in January. She has worked as a staff nurse in Evanston, Illinois and at UT Medical Center, and has worked for the College of Nursing as a Graduate Teaching Assistant since January 2015. She became interested in the theory of chronic sorrow while in the master's theory class, especially as it applies to patients with chronic illnesses who need counseling. She is eager to take classes in counseling to complement her nursing doctoral work.

Lauren Oppizzi is passionate about global disaster nursing and about promotion of better health in disadvantaged communities such as Clay County, Kentucky. Lauren worked while a master's student here at UTK in the federally funded "Appalachia Project" in Clay County. She earned her BSN at Lincoln Memorial University and has worked at UT Medical Center and as a GTA for our college. While pursuing the PhD, Lauren is also earning a post-master's certificate as an FNP. She is interested in a preceptorship in Kenya.

Mary Salerno-Anthony is a certified life care planner and catastrophic case manager, who owns and operates her own consulting and medical case management firm in Maryville, Tennessee. She has an interesting and varied 30-year career in nursing, including hospital staff nursing and home health, in Texas and Colorado as well as Tennessee. She received her ADN from Niagara County Community College, her BS from the University of Montana, and just finished the MS in Nursing Education at Austin Peay. While in our PhD program, she will earn a post-master's certificate in psychiatric-mental health nursing.

Jennifer Shearer has worked in California as well as Tennessee, and currently teaches at Cleveland State Community College. She is very interested in student engagement and the use of simulation in nursing education. She has been a staff nurse and charge nurse in neonatal ICU's as well as a clinical education coordinator. Jennifer earned her BSN at UTK and her MSN at Tennessee State. She teaches whitewater kayaking in summers.

Sheila Williams is interested in the risk behaviors of teenagers regarding hepatitis C, a growing problem in rural East Tennessee that she identified in her clinical practice. She worked as a nurse practitioner in a gastroenterology practice after receiving her MSN from East Tennessee State University. She also holds an Associate of Science degree from Walters State and a BSN from Lincoln Memorial University. She is certified as an Adult Nurse Practitioner. Presently, she teaches at Walters State.

Good news—

Ms. Melanie Allen is the new reference librarian for nursing, replacing Lana Dixon who served Nursing for many years. Ms. Allen spoke at Graduate Student Orientation, emphasizing her willingness to assist with literature searches. She can be reached by email at Melanie-allen@utk.edu and by telephone at (865)974-4700.



Dissertation Defenses –

Lisa Kirkland will defend her dissertation research on October 28 at 12:30 in room 313. Lisa's research focused on perceptions of newly licensed registered nurses who have remained in bedside nursing in an acute care hospital for at least 18 months after graduation.

Stasia Ruskie's defense is scheduled for November 3 at 11:30 in room 313. Stasia's phenomenological research focused on nurses' experiences of the environment during disasters.

Everyone is encouraged to attend these dissertation defenses.

Other Upcoming Events/Important Dates--

November 9 –Joint DNP- PhD Colloquium – 1-4 PM in room 234. At this colloquium, students in both doctoral programs will make presentations. Watch for details to be announced in the PhD-student-and-faculty community site in Blackboard.

Reception for December Graduates –Immediately before or after the university's Graduate Hooding Ceremony on December 10 (which takes place 4:30 to 6:30), we will be honoring the MSN, DNP, and PhD graduates with a reception. Information regarding the place will be provided in the near future.

February 24-27, 2016—Southern Nursing Research Society 30th Annual Conference in Williamsburg, Virginia. It is not too early to begin making your plans to attend this important research conference. Student abstracts are being accepted until **September 30**. SNRS permits students to submit work in progress, even though it is not completed. For example, you can present your dissertation research prospectus prior to data collection. The conference is a superb opportunity for networking with nurse scientists from diverse PhD programs across the entire Southern region. Attendance at the meeting is often 600 or more. Several sessions are designed especially for PhD students. You do not have to be a member to submit an abstract. However, you will be required to join if you are selected to present a poster at the conference. Please go to snrs.org for full information about the conference and abstract submission.



Welcome to new associate dean and faculty--

The College of Nursing is pleased to welcome Dr. Lyn Hardy as Associate Dean for Research, replacing Ken Phillips. Dr. Hardy comes to us directly from the National Institute of Nursing Research, bringing a wealth of knowledge about the institutes at NIH and strategies for success in obtaining federal funding for research. We are also very pleased to welcome Dr. Samareh Abdoli, a native of Iran, whose program of research focuses on diabetes. Those in attendance at the August 26 Colloquium heard Dr. Abdoli's presentation about her research. Dr. Rebecca Koszalinski was unable to attend the colloquium but is eager to meet and interact with PhD students. Rebecca is a recent graduate from Florida Atlantic University whose research focuses on development of technology that improves the lives of persons with disabilities. Her dissertation research involved development and testing of an Android mobile application called "Speak for Myself" for individuals who cannot verbalize.

Useful Book about Dissertation and Capstone Projects:

Sigma Theta Tau has announced a book that may be of interest to you: "A Nurse's Step-by-Step Guide to Writing Your Dissertation or Capstone." Please see the STTI web site for ordering information.



Call for Book Reviews:

The book review editor for *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, PhD alumna Kelly Carlson, invites students to contribute book reviews. This is another good opportunity to gain experience in publishing. Please contact Dr. Carlson at kcarlso3@gmail.com.

Kudos, Applause, and Hugs All Around to Faculty, Students, and Alumni for the Following Accomplishments:

Student Accomplishments:

PhD students Erin Arcipowski, Brenna Adelman, Stasia Ruskie, and recent graduate Suzanne Boswell presented research at the 19th World Congress on Disaster and Emergency Medicine in Cape Town, South Africa. Erin also participated in a mission trip to Malawi during summer semester.

Lt. Col. Deborah Jones, a PhD student on active duty with the Air Force in San Antonio, Texas, has received a grant award of \$26,996 from the Tri-Service Nursing Research Program for her dissertation research, "Military Children's Perceptions of Parents' Frequent Missile Base Deployment." Her dissertation chair is Sandra Thomas.

Jennifer Mabry, UTK's first Jonas Scholar, is attending the 2015 Leadership Conference in Washington, DC. Her faculty advisor is Carole Myers.

Melanie Morris was a winner in the 2015 Scholarly Writing Contest sponsored by the Tennessee Nurses Foundation. Winners received a check for \$1,000 plus a free one-year membership in TNA/ANA. The title of Melanie's paper is "Soul Fuel: A Self-Care Essential for Nurse Leaders."

At the August 25 Scholarship Banquet, Kim Powell received the UTK College of Nursing Research Award which provides funding to be used during her dissertation research. Kim is completing coursework this semester prior to beginning her research.

Scholarship awards to Carla Neale, Stasia Ruskie, Mary Salerno-Anthony, and Lauren Oppizzi also were announced at the Scholarship Banquet, as well as our two new Chancellor/Provost Fellowship awards, given to Shade Adigun and Lauren Oppizzi. Continuing as Chancellor/Provost Fellows are Erin Arcipowski, Susan Blaine, Julie Hubbard, Jean Sconza, and Beth Shieh, who has returned from the leave of absence necessitated by the birth of her daughter Clara.

Faculty Accomplishments:

Dr. Tami Wyatt has been named Torchbearer Professor of Nursing, the first endowed chair in the College of Nursing. Congratulations, Tami!

Dr. Nan Gaylord has been selected as a Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (FAANP). Dr. Gaylord has received nearly two million dollars of HRSA funding within the past five years, as well as funding from the National Assembly of School-Based Health Care and from Ronald McDonald House Charities.

Dr. Sadie Hutson received the Alan Solomon Oncology Nursing Faculty Award.

Dr. Reba Umberger received the 2015 Excellence in Research Award from Gamma Chi chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International.

Dr. Lora Beebe received the Excellence in Research Award from the American Psychiatric Nurses Association.

Dr. Carole Myers was named a Fellow in the SEC Academic Leadership Development Program.

Alumni Accomplishments:

PhD graduate Dr. Christy Hall has been funded for \$1.8 million by HRSA. Christy is an assistant professor at East Tennessee State University. She recently presented research at STTI in Puerto Rico.

Also presenting research at STTI in Puerto Rico was alumna Dr. Jessica Naber, who teaches at Murray State in Kentucky.

Dr. Tese Stephens is now Chair of the BSN Program at East Tennessee State University.

Dr. Julie Worley, currently a faculty member at Rush University, is presenting a paper “Doctor Shopping: What You Need to Know to Understand, Identify, and Manage It” at the American Psychiatric Nurses Association conference.

Dr. Stephanie Lewis is now Associate Professor of Nursing at Troy University in Alabama. The dean of that College of Nursing, coincidentally, is a PhD graduate from our program, Dr. Diane Weed.

In Memoriam: Faye Hughes

We were shocked and sorry to learn of the untimely death of PhD student Faye Hughes this summer, during a visit to her native Scotland. Faye had an inoperable cardiac tumor. For those of you who had not met Faye, I want to tell you a little bit about her. Faye had received her MSN from King University and entered the PhD program at UTK on our prestigious Dean Fellowship award. After two semesters of full-time study, she was forced to withdraw because of personal issues. We were pleased that she came back to UTK in August 2014, resuming doctoral study after a hiatus of several years. Faye was a very bright young woman with stellar grades and much potential. Her research focus was simulation in nursing education, and she was working closely with Dr. Tami Wyatt at the time of her death. A scholarship in her honor has been established in the College of Nursing, which is designated for a PhD student with financial need. I hope many of you will contribute. Any amount will be greatly appreciated. Please contact Debby Powell about making your donation: dpowell6@utk.edu.

**Wishing you an enjoyable and productive fall term!
Go Vols!**

