



Dear alumni and friends,

National Nurses Week greetings to our 6,000 UT nursing alumni all over the world! It is extra special this year, given that the World Health Organization named 2020 The Year of the Nurse & Midwife, in recognition of Florence Nightingale's 200th birthday and the great work nurse have done over the past two centuries! And today, more than ever, as nurses on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world recognizes the tremendous impact nurses have on care. The global pandemic has had unprecedented impacts upon all of us, including our College, alumni and most importantly, our students. I wanted provide an update how the [College of Nursing](#) is working to protect our students and all members of the Vol Nurse family.

Spring semester courses, including simulation and experiential training shifted to online delivery immediately after spring break for most students, and will continue online throughout the summer. Senior BSN students had the option to stay in clinical preceptorships if the healthcare facilities allowed, or participate in "virtual" simulated learning for the remainder of their clinical preceptorship hours. Advanced Practice graduate students remained in clinical placements if the facility continue to allow it. Our faculty and staff rose to these challenges with commitment, determination and grace as they were determined to make this a positive experience for students.

All University wide and College of Nursing events for the spring were cancelled. This included all of the alumni events that were planned. Once this has passed we will reschedule those events, and visit a city near you. This decision also impacted our students as the May commencement ceremonies were cancelled. Until the time comes when the University can open its doors for a commencement ceremony, the College of Nursing will celebrate our graduates with a virtual recognition; please check out our [website](#) for this event in early May! We are very proud of the achievement of such a significant milestone in their lives!

On March 27th our learning and simulation labs packed up extra PPE equipment and delivered the items to a local hospital in need. Our faculty members continue to provide information to the community through radio shows, [op-eds](#), and other sources. Several students also stepped up to the plate in true Vol spirit, and volunteered to serve in areas classified as hotspots.

While the full impact of COVID-19 on our student community is still unknown, already it has significantly disrupted life on campus. Many of our students work hard to put themselves through school, and we are committed to helping meet their needs in uncertain times. In awareness of the immediate financial burdens that students have experienced in this crisis, the University has established the [VOLS HELP VOLS student emergency fund for COVID-19](#), and alums are among those contributing support to students who need the help.

We are educating the leaders who will be on the frontlines of COVID-19. Our students realize how important they will be, and I am thankful that so many of them have responded to the crisis with strength and toughness! They will be the reason we continue to reach our vision of leading care, creating partnerships and improving health.

To end on a brighter note it has been a stellar year in the College of Nursing. Some highlights include:

- We received the largest gift in our college's history of \$7.5 million from Ross and Sara Croley. The purpose of the gift was twofold, with \$5.5 million supporting the college's building renovation and expansion, and \$2 million establishing the Sara Rosenbalm Croley Endowed Dean's Chair. This investment will have a deep impact on the mission of the college.
- In 2019, our 1st time pass NCLEX pass rate for our BSN graduates was 98%.
- With the support of a generous donation from Poppy & Richard Buchannan, a new partnership was established between the College of Nursing and a nursing program and clinic in Kenya.
- The 2021 US News & World Report rankings for our MSN program rose 10 spots nationally to 25 and our DNP program rose 19 spots nationally to 38 overall and 27 for public universities.
- The Precious Prints Project, which provides a sterling silver charm to families who lose a child, expended nationally.

We will continue to actively communicate on social media platforms ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#)) to students, faculty and staff, and our friends. I hope you will stay up-to-date with the activities of the College by following us on social media.

THANK YOU for making a Volunteer Difference in the lives of those you touch.

Sincerely,



Victoria Niederhauser, DrPH, RN, FAAN

Dean and Professor