

University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire Nursing Alumni Newsletter

Greetings from the Dean



Dear Blugold Nursing Alumni and Friends of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences,

It seems like a blink of an eye since I wrote my note for the last annual newsletter. Much has transpired, most important being the development and distribution of COVID vaccines. Hence, we have ended this academic year with hope for returning to a new normal in our college and on campus this coming fall. The college faculty and staff demonstrated persistence and dedication throughout the year, ensuring that students received a quality education no matter the format or circumstance. Students and faculty and staff also exhibited flexibility, perseverance, and service, as they helped with COVID vaccine administration at various clinics this spring semester while still engaging in their regular coursework and clinical activities.

Didactic classes were held virtually this last academic year; clinicals occurred in the labs, following safety protocols, and at clinical sites. Ms. Jan Adams, our Learning Resource

Center Coordinator, created a video about our college during the pandemic, *A Year of Covid: A Year of Challenge, A Year of Change*. Here is the link for your viewing: <https://tinyurl.com/Yearofchallenge>

This past academic year, 2020-2021, we had 113 graduates from the traditional undergraduate nursing program, 26 BSN completion graduates, and 20 DNP graduates. Owing to the pandemic and the need for social distancing, the pinning ceremonies were held virtually via recorded events in which the students submitted video clips of family members or significant others pinning them. Whereas the winter graduation ceremony took place virtually, the spring ceremony was conducted in a hybrid format.

As many of you know, our Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) reaccreditation site visit was held virtually March 10-12, 2021. Besides reaccreditation, the goal of this visit was to align our undergraduate and graduate programs on the same evaluation cycle. The team doing our site visit determined we had no citations. We are now awaiting the official notice following the CCNE Board meeting this fall.

I want to thank all of you who participated in this site visit. The CCNE team expressed to me at our final meeting that they had never been part of a site visit where such a large

College of Nursing and Health Sciences

number of the community participated. Your presence sent a big message—support for our program and the importance of our program to the community. It indeed does take a village to ensure quality, relevant nursing programs.

In the coming academic year, we also are looking forward to a possible name change for our college. The college membership and the administrators at the university are supportive of the change in name from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences to the College of Nursing. Before such action can occur, however, it must go through college and university governance processes for approval. This is a request that many in the college, past and present, have been wishing to see happen.

We had been a School of Nursing up until 2004 when Chancellor Donald Mash notified the campus that the College of Professional Studies (which we had been part of from 1995-2004) would be dissolved in September of 2004, and we were to be officially named the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

Enjoy this newsletter. Even though we were in a pandemic, we accomplished much and connected with each other often.

Wishing you wellbeing and hope,
Dean Linda Young

Nursing Areas of Need

Nursing education is ever changing as we work to prepare nurse leaders for a more globally aware and diverse society. Please consider giving to our Nursing Advancement Fund (general fund to support Nursing) or any other one of our areas of need: Multicultural Clinical Experiences & Student Travel; Student Conferences; Faculty Professional Development; & Chair/Professorship of Evidence Based Practice (DNP Chair/Professorship). **To designate a gift, see <https://connect.uwec.edu/nursing-health-sciences> or call 715-836-5630 (UW-Eau Claire Foundation).**

Our Marshfield Site—Moving In and Moving Forward

Students returning to classes at our distance education site in Marshfield this fall will find themselves in a new location. This past May we moved out of the South

Building of the Marshfield Medical Center, where we had been since 1987, and set up our nursing program in the Helen Connor Laird Fine Arts Building of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point at Marshfield campus. Only our location has changed--the Marshfield Clinic Health System continues to support our distance education program. It will remain the UW-Eau Claire nursing program and the students are UW-Eau Claire nursing students.



Dedicated UW-Eau Claire entrance to the Helen Connor Laird Fine Arts Building on the UW-Stevens Point at Marshfield campus, signage pending

According to Dr. Matthew Jansen, Director of the Division of Medical Education of Marshfield Clinic Health System, the move is part of a multiyear Marshfield Medical Center campus renovation project that “has been in discussion and planning for several years.” These discussions included the leadership at both the UW-Eau Claire College of Nursing and Health Sciences and Marshfield Clinic Health System. The project involves tearing down the South Building during the summer of 2021 as it “had reached the end of its practical use and could not be feasibly renovated.” After its demolition, a new administrative support services building eventually will be constructed near the site.

This past winter, UW-Eau Claire and Marshfield Clinic Health System entered into a revised agreement, detailing the leasing of space at the UW-Stevens Point at Marshfield campus, in addition to moving and renovation costs that may be necessary at the new location. Marshfield Clinic Health System will continue to

provide funding for faculty and staff to teach at the Marshfield Site, on top of other resources and support they provide.

Our distance education site is situated in the lower level of the Helen Connor Laird Fine Arts Building. We have a dedicated UW-Eau Claire entrance, access to four distance education rooms, a main office, faculty offices, a Clinical Learning Center (CLC) that includes skills and simulation laboratories, student computer lab space, study spaces, a student success center, faculty lounge, and free faculty/staff and student parking. Besides having access to the UW-Stevens Point at Marshfield Hamilton Roddis Memorial Library,

dining and student lounge/common areas, and fitness center and lockers (for a student fee), students will continue to have clinicals at the Marshfield Medical Center and be able to utilize Marshfield Clinic Health System resources, such as the Magnin Medical Library, wellness programs, and designated meeting spaces for clinical post-conferences. Additionally, just as students and faculty/staff at the Eau Claire campus appreciate the walking trails and scenic views of Putnam Park, those at our new Marshfield Site may enjoy the walking trails connecting to and around campus through the 99-acre Marshfield Arboretum.

Many students already are familiar with the UW-Stevens Point at Marshfield campus, having taken prerequisite and general education courses there. It is located about two miles from the Marshfield Medical Center. Additionally, since the Villas student housing was built across the street from the campus, some of our



Main skills laboratory room of the Clinical Learning Center (CLC) —still in the process of being set up in this photo.

Our Marshfield Site—Moving In and Moving Forward (continued)

nursing students have chosen to live there.

In short, the move really is a positive for students. According to Dr. Rachel Merkel, Director of the Marshfield Site, in the new building, “we have our own



Part of the new Student Success Center

designated space just for UWEC students and more open CLC space that wasn't possible in our old building. Additionally, students will have more room to just be students--the larger campus environment provides more alternative spaces for studying and student collaboration. Students are excited for the move as one of the biggest requests at our old location was the need for more study and hang out spaces. This campus will certainly meet that need.” Dr. Jansen likewise noted that the new location “allows for an academic campus that is recently renovated. Students will be with other students for a true college atmosphere.”

The relocation also is seen as a means of enhancing the visibility of our program and recruitment of students from central Wisconsin, given the number of students who begin their college education at UW-Stevens Point in Stevens Point or at UW-Stevens Point at Marshfield. As Dr. Jansen acknowledged, “this is a win” for many parties. Besides benefiting the universities, Marshfield Clinic Health System hopes the move and their support will increase the number of bachelor's prepared nurses, “and most importantly,” as a result, “help the local community of Marshfield.” Dr. Jansen noted that “UW-Eau

Claire's nursing program has a strong reputation” and “we wish to support the nursing program in continuing to produce quality nurses for the area.”

Dr. Merkel stated similar thoughts, “our continued partnership with Marshfield Clinic Health System provides central WI with a reputable BSN program that also allows flexibility for those from the area who would otherwise be required to commute to Eau Claire for their nursing coursework. We value the continued partnership Marshfield Clinic has provided and look forward to educating BSN prepared RN's into a much needed profession.”

Dean Linda Young similarly echoed her valuing of the partnership with Marshfield Clinic Health System, which she considers to be “unprecedented, as reflected in those working with us and transitioning us to our new site. We appreciated that we were included as part of Marshfield Clinic's large renovation plans.”

Dr. Merkel, in addition to many others, spent countless hours organizing the move, working to minimize disruption to students and faculty and staff. In April, distance education and CLC simulation equipment and anything not needed for the remaining weeks of the semester were relocated to the Helen Connor Laird Building. Then, for the latter half of May, all remaining furniture, office, and room items and technologies including

computers and copiers/printers were moved.

Individuals from Marshfield Clinic Health System and UW-Eau Claire's Learning and Technology Services (LTS), including Mr. Jason Unseth, a Learning Spaces Technician with LTS, our own nursing technology specialists, particularly Ms. Lois Slattery, a Teaching and Technology Assistant at our Marshfield Site, Mr. Andrew Hanson, our Distance Education Coordinator, along with our CLC Coordinator in Marshfield, Ms. Vickie Zietlow, and our CLC directors in Eau Claire, Dr. Meg Lagunas and Dr. Gunnar Larson, were instrumental in accomplishing the move and are continuing to set up and test the equipment to ensure our distance education and simulation equipment, and other technologies are fully operational. Ms. Kari Vanden Busch, the Academic Department Associate at our Marshfield Site, also greatly assisted in helping to coordinate the move. We are grateful for their work, as well as the efforts of the nursing faculty and staff.

We are looking forward to welcoming the students to our new location when classes start up again in September. They will have the best of both worlds—access to a campus environment and a world class health system complex.



Nursing Distance Education Room 320

Vaccinating, Educating, and Caring

Like many nurses and nursing students across the country (and world), our students and faculty and staff stepped forward to assist our communities in managing the COVID-19 pandemic. Many put in extra hours, caring for patients in hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, veterans homes, and other community and public health care settings.

The need for care providers was so great this past year that UW System Interim President Tommy Thompson provided \$500 tuition refunds to UW System undergraduate and graduate students who worked a minimum of 50 hours in a Wisconsin clinical facility or health care setting between December 1, 2020 and February 1, 2021 in a role requiring health care licenses or certifications, e.g., RN, CNA, CMA. At least 294 UW-Eau Claire students, primarily traditional undergraduate nursing, BSN Completion, and doctoral students, received the tuition refund for work over the winter break.

Besides the hours spent in various patient care roles at the above settings, the students also helped educate and vaccinate communities. For the months of March through June, 2021, UW-Eau Claire and the Eau Claire City-County Health Department partnered to offer mass vaccination clinics in Zorn Arena on campus that were open to the public. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) added support beginning in April. Initially the clinics operated five days/week and eventually reduced the hours to two days/week in June as the public demand for vaccinations declined. In July, the vaccination clinic was transitioned to a weekly drive through clinic on Water Street. Between April and mid-June, more than 14,400 vaccine doses were administered at Zorn Arena.

The undergraduate and graduate students and many faculty and staff were eager to help, as these clinics provided great learning and service opportunities. In addition to nursing faculty who supervised the traditional undergraduate nursing program students when administering the vaccines, several staff members within the College also selflessly contributed. They volunteered in roles such as checking-in community members and scheduling sec-

19 prevention and promoting mental health, as featured on the Wisconsin Office of Children's Mental Health website. Many of the clinical education projects began well before the spring semester. For instance, in fall 2020, some of the first semester senior nursing students created the "Wask in the Mask" character to relay kid-friendly stories and poems as a means of helping children understand COVID-19 safety precautions.



Students Briunna Wells and Lyssa Mammel assisting with vaccinations at Zorn Arena, March 2021.

As vaccines became available, Interim President Tommy Thompson provided \$500 tuition refund incentives to nursing and pharmacy students working at COVID-19 vaccination sites in Wisconsin during the spring semester; a similar offer was later added for the summer. Students were eligible for the tuition refunds if they worked a minimum of 16 hours as vaccinators. At least 126 UW-Eau Claire nursing students (118 traditional undergraduates and 8 doctoral or BSN

Completion students) received the tuition credit for their spring vaccination activities.

ond doses of the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines. Students and faculty primarily participated in the campus vaccination efforts outside of and on top of their regularly scheduled clinical coursework. Within their clinical courses, however, UW-Eau Claire nursing students and faculty further aided our communities. They assisted many health care facilities in the state with their vaccination clinics, including for example, Marshfield Clinic Health System and Mayo Clinic Health System, in addition to several health departments in various rural counties.

When not vaccinating, efforts were directed at educating the public about the importance of vaccination and how to stay safe and well during the pandemic, including teaching grade school/middle school students about COVID-

Completion students) received the tuition credit for their spring vaccination activities.

The students and faculty also benefited in their vaccination and education efforts from a Wisconsin Partnership Program (WPP) grant that was awarded to UW-Madison School of Nursing. Activision Blizzard, a technology company in Wisconsin, provided a philanthropic gift that enabled the grant project, *Badger Nurses Collaborating on COVID-19 Vaccine Education and Delivery*, to be extended to the nursing programs at UW-Eau Claire, UW-Green Bay, UW-Oshkosh, and UW-Stevens Point. Some of the aims of the grant project were to prepare students, faculty, and volunteers to safely provide COVID-19 vaccinations and education about COVID-19 prevention and vaccination; and to support recruitment, scheduling, oversight, and evaluation of COVID-19 vac-

Vaccinating, Educating, and Caring (continued)

ination and education programs.

Although Dr. Debra Jansen, Associate Dean and Professor, was the lead for the WPP grant at UW-Eau Claire, the funding enabled us to hire Dr. Shelley-Rae Pehler, Professor Emerita, for the spring semester to facilitate the vaccination and education efforts. In particular, she created a course in CANVAS, our online Learning Management System, that served as a vaccination resource for students and faculty/staff in Eau Claire and in Marshfield. She also created systems for tracking hours so that students could receive the \$500 tuition refunds. As information continued to rapidly evolve regarding the vaccines, CDC guidelines, and the vaccination clinic hours of operation, she helped problem solve and keep students and faculty/staff informed. Plus, Dr. Jansen is grateful for the countless hours Dr. Pehler spent fielding questions from students and tracking data.

While the \$500 tuition refund was valued and needed by students, many wished to support the vaccination efforts, regardless of the monetary incentive. Besides gaining hands-on experience, enabling them to hone their technical, patient education, and therapeutic communication skills, the students appreciated being able to aid their com-

munities and to be part of an interprofessional team that worked to accomplish something much larger than their usual clinical goals.

To those points, Ms. Brooke Anderson, a first semester senior who assisted with vaccinating at the clinics held on campus, said she would have “done it for free,” but is thankful for the tuition refund. She had “always been interested in getting involved with public health. This has been a good experience to use clinical skills in public health.” It was “cool in the beginning to see how excited people were to get vaccinated and help them protect their families and friends.” She believes a “silver lining” to the pandemic was that it revealed “the importance of health care, especially of nurses, and the value of public health and the need to prioritize it in our communities.”

Ms. Emma Truchan, another first semester senior student who worked at the campus vaccination clinics this summer, felt “somewhat obligated to help. During the summer, a lot of people are not available. If I’m free, I want to help—it reinforces the importance and value of getting vaccinated. If it was important to me to get vaccinated, I want to support the community in

getting vaccinated, too, having access to it.”

Ms. Truchan acknowledged that much of her clinical and work experience to date has been in hospital settings, “usually not in public health,” which is part of a senior clinical course. “With the pandemic, student nurses’ roles have changed. It is nice to know you can help out. We are being given an opportunity to play a role in getting people vaccinated. It is a unique experience.” Like many other undergraduate and graduate students, Ms. Truchan and Ms. Anderson took shifts at the vaccination clinics despite being busy with course work, family obligations, and other jobs and responsibilities.

We were proud to see our students and faculty and staff live up to our Nursing vision of educating our students to “build bridges for a healthier world” and our mission to “promote health and the public good.” They persevered through likely the most difficult and challenging year our nursing program and much of the country has ever faced, owing to the pandemic. They were flexible, able to learn and perform under duress, and yet still were compassionate and caring individuals. We are immensely grateful for their efforts.

Dean Linda Young Inducted as a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing

Congratulations are in order for Dean Linda Young as she was inducted as a



Fellow into the American Academy of Nursing at its annual conference, via a virtual event held on October 31, 2020.

She was one of 230 inductees for

the class of 2020. As a fellow, she now can include *FAAN* in her signature line, one of the highest and most prestigious honors in Nursing.

New fellows undergo a very competitive and rigorous nomination and application process and are selected from the world of academia, policy, research, administration, and practice, based on their extraordinary leadership and contributions to improve the public’s health locally and globally. The Academy is a policy organization that strives to advance health and achieve health equity through nursing leadership, innovation, and science.

Dean Young began serving as Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences at UW-Eau Claire in August 2011. Prior to that, she was a faculty member at the Milwaukee School of Engineering where she also had been the co-leader in the creation of a new BSN program, a Program Director for

the BSN program, a Clinical Liaison, and a Family Coordinator, among other roles. Additionally, Dean Young previously was an instructor at the Milwaukee County Medical Complex-School of Nursing and at Alverno College of Nursing. She held staff and charge nurse roles at Mercy Hospital in Des Moines, Iowa and at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Milwaukee, in addition to being a Project Nurse for a year in the early 1980s at the National Heart and Chest Hospitals in London, England.

A few examples of Dean Young’s leadership over the years have included developing a health care partnership with the nursing program at the Milwaukee School of Engineering (and later at UW-Eau Claire) with communities in El Salvador, thereby enabling culturally

Dean Linda Young Inducted as a Fellow (Continued)

immersive clinical and volunteer experiences for nursing students; securing and leading a UW System Economic Development Incentive Grant, the \$3.2 million *Nurses for Wisconsin* initiative

to address the nursing faculty shortage; serving as president of the Administrators of Nursing Education Programs in Wisconsin (ANEW); and being a Commission on Collegiate Nursing

Education (CCNE) evaluator.

We are proud of Dean Young for her many accomplishments and this distinguished honor.

Wishes for Healthy and Joyful Retirements

This past May we experienced three retirements from our College. Not being able to gather together in person for meetings and events during the academic year has made these partings particularly difficult. The retirees will be greatly missed.

Dr. Debra Hofmann, Associate Professor, retired following completion of the Spring 2021 semester. She originally began teaching with us as a Clinical Instructor at our Marshfield Site in August 2011, before transitioning to a tenure track position as an Assistant Professor in 2013. In 2015 she relocated to the Eau Claire campus, following which she earned tenure and was promoted to Associate Professor in 2019. Dr. Hofmann was quite familiar with



UW-Eau Claire prior to teaching with us, as she earned her baccalaureate degree by way of our BSN Completion program and the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree through our graduate program. Her master's degree was awarded by UW-Madison School of Nursing with Adult Clinical Nurse Specialist and Nurse Educator role preparations. Prior to joining the faculty at UW-Eau Claire, Dr. Hofmann taught at Northcentral Technical College and

worked in various clinical practice roles, including as an Education Coordinator and Homecare Care Coordinator for Aspirus Comfort Care Hospice Services with Aspirus Wausau Hospital, and also in perianesthesia at the hospital. Previous to that, she was a critical care nurse and the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program Director at Good Samaritan Health Center in Merrill. Additionally, she was a staff nurse at the Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Treatment Unit at Sacred Heart Hospital in Tomahawk.

Dr. Hofmann is passionate about nursing and nursing education, having served as a role model for countless students and nurses both in the classroom and in clinical facilities. She taught students in the traditional undergraduate program, frequently in the areas of nursing care of chronically ill patients and their families, and death and bereavement, as well as mind body connections. At the doctoral level, besides supervising and guiding many students completing DNP Projects, some of the courses she taught addressed adult-gerontologic role preparation for clinical nurse specialist students, adult-gerontologic population theory, and organizational leadership and health policy. For her research and scholarship, she tended to focus on acupuncture to manage postoperative nausea and vomiting and published in this area.

Members of the College and University also have appreciated her service. Dr. Hofmann was chair of the Nursing Graduate Curriculum and Admissions Committee and was on the University Liberal Education Committee, Nursing Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, and the Nursing Student Affairs and Under-

graduate Admissions Committee. For the community, she has been involved in Horses Treat, which provides equine therapy for adolescents who self-harm, and the Eau Claire County Dementia Coalition, among other activities.

Dr. Hofmann was the recipient of many awards, multiple ones of which were from the College, including the Sue Peck Holism & Integrative Therapies Service Award in 2013, the Patricia M. Ostmo Award for Faculty and Academic Staff Excellence in Clinical Instruction in 2015, the Mary C. & Fred Bliss Endowment for Nursing Faculty Professional Development Award in 2016, and the Ihle Family Award for Caring in 2020. This is on top of recognitions by Aspirus Wausau Hospital.

With retirement, Dr. Hofmann plans on traveling a bit (Scotland and Norway), spending time with her daughter and her family and with friends, spinning yarn, gardening, and horseback riding. We wish her much health, happiness, and joy!

Ms. Katherine Sell, Clinical Assistant Professor, retired at the end of the Spring 2021 term. Ms. Sell describes herself as having been very fortunate in her nursing career, one with many wonderful opportunities, including being a nurse on the obstetrics unit at Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire for 25 years, where in she enjoyed her roles as a childbirth educator and a lactation consultant, helping new families. She also appreciated her 15-year career as an educator, enabling her to help students achieve their goals of becoming nurses. As she noted, "It is so nice to see the students I once had develop as the nurses of the future." Ms. Sell had been a faculty member

Wishes for Healthy and Joyful Retirements (continued)

at the Chippewa Valley Technical College for nine years, prior to teaching with us for these past six years, starting in 2015.



Ms. Sell originally earned a Diploma in Nursing from Saint Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing in Marshfield, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from UW-Eau Claire, and a Master of Science in Nursing degree from the University of Phoenix. Additionally, besides being a Certified Lactation Consultant, she held the credential of being a Certified Nurse Educator (CNE).

While at UW-Eau Claire, Ms. Sell was active on various committees within the College and also participated in a number of faculty-student research teams. For instance, she presented, often with students and other faculty, at national and regional conferences on topics such as the application to the baccalaureate program of the Outcome-Present State Testing (OPT) Model; team-based learning; and the use of roles for group work as an inclusive teaching strategy.

Ms. Sell's future plans include joining some of her nursing friends in hiking parts of the Ice Age Trail, an experience she has already taken part in during rather "interesting weather conditions." She acknowledged, "hiking in a gentle rain is much more pleasant than hiking in a downpour." Besides the Ice Age Trail, she is looking forward to exploring some national parks in addition to experiencing a "peace filled retreat" at her lake cabin. Importantly, she will be connecting with her son and daughter and watching her granddaughter grow, one of the many joys in her life.

We have appreciated having Ms. Sell as part of our College these past six years and wish her much quality family time, good weather to do all that she wants, and many peaceful retreats!

Dr. Mary Zwygart-Stauffacher, PhD, RN, APNP, GNP/GCNS-BC, FAAN, Professor Emerita, retired in May 2021 after 21 years of service to UW-Eau Claire. She initially joined the College in 2000 as a Professor and Chair of the Department of Nursing Systems and continued to lead and mentor innumerable students, faculty,



and staff throughout the entire course of her career at UW-Eau Claire. During those years she served as the Department Chair for two different nursing departments, and as the Associate Dean, Interim Dean (2008-2011), Assistant Dean: Post Licensure Programs, BSN Completion Program Director, and Nursing Graduate Programs Director. Many new initiatives were undertaken in the College in those years including the approval and then offering of the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program. In 2019 she returned to full time teaching during which time she continued to guide and lend her wisdom to students, faculty, and staff, sharing her passion for the care of elders, especially the oldest old, and her administrative, scholarship, and health policy expertise.

Prior to joining UW-Eau Claire, Dr. Zwygart-Stauffacher held positions as a faculty member and/or administrator in nursing programs in North Dakota, Iowa, Illinois, and Minnesota. Her prac-

tice experience also is extensive, beginning with working as a staff nurse and nursing supervisor, in addition to clinical nurse specialist and hospice care coordinator positions and serving as a Gerontological Nurse Practitioner (GNP) for the Rush University/Hines VA Robert Wood Johnson Teaching Nursing Home Program, and also for Hennepin County Medical Center. For over twenty years she practiced as a GNP for Mayo Clinic Health System—Red Cedar in Menomonie. Additionally, she has served as an independent consultant regarding gerontological nursing care and quality improvement since the early 1980s. She also was a surveyor for JCAHO—the Long-Term Care division in the 1990s. She has been board certified for over thirty years as a Gerontological Nurse Practitioner and Gerontological Nurse Specialist by the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

Dr. Zwygart-Stauffacher has authored or co-authored numerous peer reviewed journal publications and poster and paper presentations, and was an invited presenter at many regional, national, and international conferences. Her publication record contains several book chapters in addition to 6 books she co-authored on quality care and advanced practice nursing, including books for the consumer about understanding long term care services. Three of these books were recognized as American Journal of Nursing (AJN) books of the year. She was a principal investigator, co-principal investigator, co-investigator, project director, or project team member for multiple externally funded research and educational projects including two projects funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) and educational projects funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

She has been on technical expert panels for the federal government Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), county health and human services boards, hospital advisory boards, as well as other boards and task forces. She has chaired and been a member of numerous Division of Nursing, Bureau of Health Professions grant review panels, as well as an editorial board member and reviewer for many professional

Wishes for Healthy and Joyful Retirements (continued)

journals. She took on leadership positions for multiple professional international, national, and state-wide associations and organizations, in addition to serving on State, University, College, and Department committees.

In 2002 she was recognized with the distinction of being inducted as a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing (FAAN), one of the highest and most prestigious honors in nursing. She also was the recipient of many awards; examples are awards from Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing and the Midwest Nursing Research Society. She received multiple recognitions from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, includ-

ing the Rita Kisting Sparks Faculty Service Award and the Suzanne Van Ort Award for Faculty Creativity and Scholarliness, which she received twice.

Through the years Dr. Zwygart-Stauffacher has taught many different courses, especially in the graduate program. She reflected that to have increased time these last few years to focus more on teaching was truly a gift. She shared that all students have so much to balance and so many challenges, though the students who graduated this spring faced challenges unlike any others. "They were truly an inspiration." In a final communication to the students in a graduate course she

taught, she encouraged those graduating with their DNP degree to remember that "UWEC's mission is excellence. Always strive for it and bring others along with you in that pursuit of excellence. During your on-going search for excellence, remember to take risks, and know that you have the resilience and the support from those who came before you in that pursuit of excellence."

With retirement, Dr. Zwygart-Stauffacher will be structuring her time to continue to serve the nursing profession and our communities, always leading, mentoring, guiding, and caring!

We will miss her immensely!

Remembrances

Our sympathies are extended to the families and friends of our former colleagues who passed away in 2021.

Dr. Barbara R. MacBriar, Associate Professor Emeritus, passed away at the age of 72 in Lansing, Michigan on January 7, 2021, due to COVID-19. Dr.



MacBriar began teaching in the School of Nursing in the Family Health Nursing Department in 1990 and retired in 2006. She was born in Appleton, Wisconsin and earned a bachelor's degree in

nursing from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 1970, a master's degree in nursing with a clinical specialist in pediatrics focus from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1979, and a PhD in curriculum and instruction from Marquette University in 1986. Prior to teaching, she held nursing positions in Milwaukee, specializing in pediatric orthopedics.

While a faculty member at UW-Eau Claire, Dr. MacBriar taught in a variety of courses both in the undergraduate and graduate programs. For example,

at the undergraduate level she taught sophomore and junior classroom and clinical courses, including Professional Caring; Clinical Decision Making; and Health Promotion with Children, Families, and Community. She also taught senior elective school nursing classroom and clinical courses. At the graduate level, in addition to teaching family specialization/population courses and supervising many master's degree student theses, with her doctoral curriculum and instruction background, Dr. MacBriar was a faculty member for the master's degree nursing education classroom and clinical courses.

She cared deeply for the nursing students and even took undergraduate clinical groups to Milwaukee for hospital pediatric experiences. This was a wonderful opportunity for the students, as acute care pediatric clinical rotations were not options in Eau Claire.

Dr. MacBriar served on numerous School of Nursing and University committees, including the University Senate and the Senate Executive Committee. She was a strong advocate for student and faculty rights both within the School and across the University. We considered her to be an expert parliamentarian whose knowledge of rules and procedures for conducting meetings helped ensure governance was

followed.

We are saddened by her loss and have made a donation to the Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America in her honor.

Ms. Elizabeth (Beth) A. Tillotson, a former clinical instructor, passed away unexpectedly on May 12, 2021, at the age of 76. She taught with us from 2003-2008, initially in our Family Health Nursing Department, in both



undergraduate and graduate courses. She also was a Family Nurse Practitioner in the UW-Eau Claire Student Health Service.

Ms. Tillotson was a pioneer, as she was the first American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) certified nurse practitioner in Chippewa County in 1980. At the time there were no local nurse practitioner education programs and therefore she sought out the University of Colorado, UW-Madison, and the Uni-

Remembrances (Continued)

versity of Kentucky to assist her in creating a two-year independent study curriculum, which enabled her to certify with ANCC as an FNP. However, to augment her practice credibility, she earned an MSN degree with a family nurse practitioner role preparation and population focus from UW-Eau Claire in 1990.

Besides her work with UW-Eau Claire, Ms. Tillotson also practiced at the Bloomer Medical Clinic, Marshfield Clinic Health System, Community Health Partners, and the Chippewa Falls Free Clinic. Additionally, she volunteered with the Chippewa Falls Mentor program, to help children in their social and emotional growth and well-being; and provided nail care at the Chippewa Falls Senior Center, among other activities.

An avid quilter and charter member of the Delta Phi Chapter, in 2012, Ms. Tillotson made and donated the Delta Phi Chapter-Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing Quilt that adorns the wall outside of the Learning Resource Center on the first floor of the Nursing Building. Besides

showcasing her creativity, the quilt reflected her love of teaching, nursing, and art, as she intertwined different shades of fabric to represent nursing students progressing through their education as they acquired greater insight while caring for patients. Ms. Tillotson touched many lives both at the University and in our communities over the years and is greatly missed.

Ms. Vicki L. Vogler, a former clinical instructor, passed away on March 17, 2021, at the age of 68. She taught undergraduate courses with us in the



Adult Health Nursing Department in 2002 and 2003 and was an alum of our BSN (class of 1976) and MSN (class of 1998) programs. For 37 years she was a nurse at Luther Hospital/Mayo Clinic Health System in Eau Claire, where she precepted innumerable nursing students. And as

noted in her obituary, “she cared for countless mothers and babies at some of the most scary and joyous times in their lives.”

Ms. Vogler was quite active in volunteering with her church community, was a first responder with the Brunswick Fire Department for many years, and provided respite care for families of children with special needs.

A frequent attendee of our annual Nursing Alumni Walks, she crafted the Nursing Homecoming Walk T-shirt quilt on display outside of Room 119 in the Nursing Building. The quilt was made from 14 years of nursing walk T-shirts and was unveiled in 2015 during the 50th Anniversary of the Nursing program Nursing Alumni Walk. Besides commemorating the Anniversary and our Nursing Alumni Walks, with the quilt squares marking our transition from a School of Nursing to a College of Nursing and Health Sciences, the quilt is now a beautiful remembrance of Ms. Vogler. She was such a positive and uplifting person for students and faculty alike in the College. Her loss is deeply felt.

Welcomes

Although we said goodbye to too many people this past year, we were pleased to greet several new members in our College. In August 2020 we welcomed a few new Clinical Assistant Professors to the Eau Claire campus, including **Dr. Jessica Blackford**, **Dr. Jennifer Rock**, and **Dr. Shuba Samuel**; and **Dr. Jennifer Sperl** at our Marshfield Site. **Ms. Stephanie Briski** and **Ms. Christine Zimmerman** joined us at the Eau Claire campus as Clinical Instructors and **Ms. Stephanie Hill** likewise came to the Marshfield Site. **Ms. Allison Hannah** was hired as the new Dean’s Assistant for the College in August 2020. Already a clinical instructor at the Marshfield Site, **Ms. Stephany Andres** became our Prelicensure Academic Success Facilitator there, starting in Fall 2020.

For the Spring 2021 term, we welcomed **Dr. Benjamin Bogle** as an Assistant

Professor in a tenure track role. **Dr. Bogle** earned his DNP degree from UW-Eau Claire with a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) role preparation. He has several years of experience as an FNP at Amery Hospital and Clinic and as a perioperative nurse circulator at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Chippewa Falls and at a hospital in Oregon. **Dr. Bogle** also worked in many remote and underserved areas of the world as an international staff nurse and as a Director of Nursing Services.

Dr. Jennifer Sperl started in a tenure track position as an Assistant Professor at our Marshfield Site this January 2021 after originally joining us as a Clinical Assistant Professor. **Dr. Sperl** is an alum of our DNP program, with a Family Nurse Practitioner population and role focus, and of our BSN program. She has many years of teaching experience at Northcentral Technical

College where she taught nursing assistant and Associate Degree in Nursing students, in addition to paramedic students taking bridge courses to transition to nursing. **Dr. Sperl** also was a critical care nurse residency educator for Ministry Saint Joseph’s Hospital in Marshfield, where she had been a medical intensive care registered nurse.

Additionally, we greeted several new instructors for the spring term, some of whom had previously taught with us in past years. Clinical Assistant Professors at our Eau Claire campus included **Dr. Carla Griggs**, **Dr. Nygil Matthews**, **Ms. Mary Pomietlo**, and **Dr. Lindsey Zwaschka**; **Dr. Kimberly Radtke**, Clinical Assistant Professor, returned at our Marshfield Site. New Clinical Instructors for spring in Eau Claire included **Ms. Jessica Flatten** and **Ms. Sarah Schorsch**.

Honors, Recognitions, and Awards

We are proud to share the excellence demonstrated by the students, faculty, and staff of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, and by our alums. Highlights of many who were recognized this past year include:

Several faculty and instructional academic staff members were honored with awards from the College in August 2020 in a virtual meeting at the start of the 2020-2021 academic year.

Dr. Debra Hofmann received the Ihle Family Award for Caring; **Dr. Amanda Seeley** and **Ms. Sarah Conlin** the Suzanne Van Ort Award for Faculty Creativity and Scholarliness; **Dr. Meg Lagunas** and **Dr. Gunnar Larson** the Patricia M. Ostmo Award for Faculty and Academic Staff Excellence in Clinical Instruction; and **Dr. Debra Jansen** the Rita Kisting Sparks Faculty Service Award.

Dr. Jeanette Olsen, Assistant Professor, was the recipient of a new award in the College, the CeCelia Zorn Exemplary Teaching Award, created to recognize excellence in teaching in the clinical or classroom environment, or both. Former Associate Dean and Educational Administrator Dr. Marjorie Bottoms developed the award to honor Dr. CeCelia Zorn, a widely recognized and regarded educator who taught with us for 32 years before retiring in 2012. Dr. Zorn received multiple distinctions during those years, including the 2002 Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Wisconsin Professor of the Year award, a nomination for the 1998 University of Wisconsin Regents Teaching Excellence Award, and the University Excellence in Teaching Award in 1996.

Dr. Bottoms indicated selection preference may be given to educators early in their teaching careers who demonstrate the potential for exemplary, committed, and long-term dedication to nursing in higher education. Student evaluations are considered when choosing the recipient. Dr. Olsen has been teaching with us since 2017. We were privileged to have Dr. Bottoms and Dr. Zorn join us for our August College meeting for the award presentation.

Dr. Lorraine Smith, Assistant Professor, received the Colleen and Tom

Nevins College of Nursing Faculty Development and Scholarship Award from the College in August. This new award is intended to encourage currency in one's specialty and engaging in scholarship. The award money is to be used for scholarly activity. Considerations for the award include assistance in achieving a PhD or DNP degree, research towards achieving tenure, and scholarship activity.

Dr. Smith applied the funding to her ongoing scholarship in helping correctional health nurses to understand, identify, and manage moral distress to assist them in moving toward moral resilience. A goal is to publish the work, thereby disseminating the scholarship as a means of further educating and supporting correctional health nurses.

Ms. Catherine Wildenberg, Prelicensure Academic Success Coordinator, was the recipient of a new College award, the Diana Hancock Nursing Instructional Academic Staff Doctoral Studies Scholarship. Ms. Hancock was a nurse who worked for many years with Mayo Clinic Health System in Rochester, Minnesota before relocating to Eau Claire with her husband Chops to begin work at the local Mayo facilities. Mr. Chops Hancock created this award to honor his wife.

The award is intended for a nursing instructional academic staff member who is pursuing a PhD in Nursing or DNP degree, to facilitate doctoral degree completion. The recipient is required to work in the College for at least one year following the earning of the degree. Ms. Wildenberg currently is enrolled in the PhD program at Villanova University, M. Louise Fitzpatrick College of Nursing. Her goals while pursuing the degree are to expand her capacity to contribute to research, to continue to develop her skills as an effective nursing educator, and to grow as a leader in nursing.

Dr. Ann Aschenbrenner, Assistant Professor, received the Mary C. and Fred Bliss Endowment for Nursing Faculty Professional Development Award for junior faculty for her research project, *Forgiveness and Civility: Exploring the Relationship of these*

Concepts in Nursing Education and Practice. She is hoping to use the study as a foundation for future research that will contribute to understanding the core constructs of civility and strategies to promote civility in the workplace. We were honored to be joined at our virtual College meeting by the Blisses when the award was presented.

A number of promotions also were announced at the August 2020 College meeting, including **Dr. Der-Fa Lu** to Professor; **Dr. Mohammad Alasagheir** to Associate Professor and tenured; **Ms. Vickkie Zietlow** to Clinical Assistant Professor; and **Ms. Melissa Boellaard** to Senior Student Services Coordinator. Additionally, **Dr. Linda Sargent**, Clinical Assistant Professor, earned a DNP degree from Viterbo University; and **Dr. Der-Fa Lu**, Professor, received a sabbatical for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Dr. Benjamin Bogle, Assistant Professor, was presented with the Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences (MCSHS) Nurse Practitioner Clinical Education Collaboration (NPCEC) Outstanding Faculty Member Award at a MCSHS virtual graduation ceremony on May 21st. Dr. Bogle was selected for this honor by MCSHS based on feedback from students in the UW-Eau Claire DNP program who were taking part in nurse practitioner role preparation clinicals at a Mayo Clinic Health System facility.

Ms. Melody Burch, a first semester senior in the traditional undergraduate nursing program at the Marshfield Site, and **Dr. Dalete Mota**, Associate Professor, were selected in May to be one of the student-faculty pairs for a Gritzmacher Science Education Fellowship through the UW-Eau Claire Foundation for the 2021-2022 academic year. Ms. Burch and Dr. Mota will receive small stipends and funding to support travel and supplies for their project, *Thermography in the Health Field*. Ms. Christine Gritzmacher, a UW-Eau Claire alum with an undergraduate science degree, established the science education fellowship to "go to a student selected to be trained by faculty/staff in performing science education outreach activities."

Twenty DNP students presented their DNP Projects on Wednesday May

Honors, Recognitions, and Awards (continued)

5, 2021 via a virtual DNP Project Presentation Day. The students conducted literature reviews and developed evidence-based practice approaches to improve outcomes in health care.

Ms. Jennifer Rombalski, a 2001 alum of our traditional undergraduate nursing program, was named the La Crosse Tribune 2020 Person of the Year. At the time of the honor in January 2021, she was the Director for the La Crosse County Health Department. She was described by her nominator as the “Anthony Fauci of La Crosse County,” as she managed the County through some of the worst months of the pandemic.

Initially in her nursing career, Ms. Rombalski was employed at Gillette Children’s Specialty Healthcare in Minnesota, but later changed her focus to public health. She worked for 10 years in Alma with the Buffalo County Health Department and later accepted the Health Director role for Chippewa County. During that time, she earned a Master’s of Public Health degree from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. In 2016 she moved to take on the La Crosse County Health Department Director position.

However, more congratulations are due, as it was announced in February that Ms. Rombalski accepted a position with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services as the Director for the Office of Policy and Practice Alignment. In an online posting she indicated it was her “job to support the fabulous team of professionals in this office, build quality

relationships with our partners, and assure the work is strategically aligned across systems to bring opportunities for improved health to all who live, work, learn, and play in Wisconsin.”

Ms. Kari Schmidt, a 1980 BSN alum, received the Association for Nursing Professional Development (ANPD) Marlene Kramer Lifetime Achievement Award in September 2020 at the Association’s annual convention. The award honors individuals who have made significant and lasting contributions to nursing professional development and the organization. Ms. Schmidt is a charter member of ANPD and served as Vice President of ANPD from 1998-2001 and as President from 2005-2007.

Since graduation she worked in numerous healthcare settings and held several leadership roles. Some of Ms. Schmidt’s many accomplishments include publishing multiple articles on interprofessional and adult education, in addition to book contributions, and serving as co-editor for the *Journal for Nurses in Professional Development* (JNPD) from 2014-2019. She is certified as a coach through the International Coach Federation.

Ms. Barbara Piper, BSN class of 1970, shared two stories in honor of the 50th anniversary of her class graduating from the UW-Eau Claire nursing program. The stories reflect both the perseverance of nontraditional students in setting new precedents that paved the way for other students and the caring and wisdom of the faculty:

“In 1969, I was beginning my senior year in nursing. It was a rule, then, that any pregnant student could not attend school during the semester she was due. I couldn’t understand how that rule made sense, so my husband and I went into Dean Coffman’s office for a discussion. She agreed that I could continue since I was due right before semester break. I missed 3 days of school and had the best GPA of all my semesters. I guess that set a precedent, and how things have changed. My experience of pregnancy and delivery cemented in my mind that I wanted to be an obstetrics RN. I retired in 2013 after 46 years in Sacred Heart’s Obstetrics Department.”

“In 1970, it was 3 months before graduation, my husband and I had full loads, he had a full time job and we had a newborn. We didn’t have time for me to be sick, but I suddenly became seriously ill with acute abdominal pain, lost 14 pounds over a weekend, and was hospitalized. The doctors were baffled as to what I had. Enter Winnie Lund, Nursing Instructor. She told me to tell the doctors to test for acute pancreatitis but not to tell them that she suggested it. So I played the game and sure enough, she was right on. This was one example of a nursing instructor lifting up a student. My doctor asked me if I would like to become a diagnostician! I smiled and kept Winnie’s secret. A gall bladder filled with ‘gravel’ stones caused the pancreatitis and once removed, I was cured. I went back to being a full time student and graduated on time in June 1970. Thank you, Winnie!”

Special Thanks to Clinical Agencies, Preceptors, Alumni, & Donors

We extend our gratitude to the many health care agencies and individuals and preceptors at those agencies for the wide array of rich clinical and mentorship opportunities they provided for our undergraduate and graduate students. We also appreciate our many donors who funded scholarships for our students, provided funds for our simulation laboratories, enabled clinical and classroom offerings in Eau Claire and Marshfield as well as faculty development and recognition opportunities, or supported our general Nursing Advancement Fund.

This past spring we were particularly grateful for the many clinical agency representatives and leaders and alums who took the time to meet with the site visitors for our Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) reaccreditation site visit held March 10-12, 2021. Additionally, the time several of you have given serving on committees and advisory boards or otherwise volunteering for or assisting the College are deserving of praise and recognition.

We would not be able to offer our programs without this continued support. Thank you!

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Nursing Alumni Newsletter

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