

THE BEAT

for CUAA School of Nursing Students



GRADUATION!

Edition

FROM ORIENTATION TO GRADUATION TO SERVICE

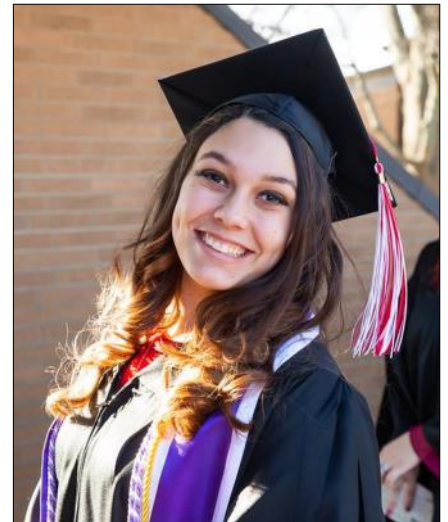
Rev. Dr. Ryan Peterson



Just a few weeks ago, our first class of nursing students graduated from Concordia University Ann Arbor. This “Alpha” class made history, distinguishing themselves as the first class and also members of the first December commencement ceremony Concordia has held in many years. What an incredible, joyous, fun, and memorable day it was!

I remember back to the first day, though. I remember serving as the Campus Pastor and welcoming this “first” class to Concordia’s School of Nursing. I remember the excitement and anxiety in the room. We were all nervous. We all wondered what the upcoming years would bring. By God’s grace, and through the hard work of all, we celebrated commencement together in December. I am so proud of this class, and so grateful for the faculty and staff who have led each of them along the way.

Recently I became the Vice President of Administration and Chief Executive of Concordia University Ann Arbor, following in the very capable footsteps of Curt Gielow. Truly, I want to applaud and recognize the powerful impact the School of Nursing has had on our student body, our campus community, and our reputation in the community. Students have now moved from orientation to graduation, and now are living out the CUAA mission of “serving Christ in the Church and the world.” Our world needs Concordia nurses. Our world needs the expertise and compassionate care of our graduates, and the honest and humble hearts of these new registered nurses. As you read this newsletter, whether you are a nursing student, a CUAA student in another program, or a friend of the university, please join me in giving thanks for the incredible gift the School of Nursing has been and will continue to be in our world. Our students and our recent graduates are daring to LIVE UNCOMMON lives of greater purpose for the betterment of our society and world.





“MURMUR”INGS FROM THE DEAN



Dean Cindy Fenske, DNP, RN, CNE

Welcome back! I hope you had a wonderful time with family and friends, as well as some time to relax and recuperate.

This edition of the newsletter will be dedicated to our first graduation and pinning ceremony. I hope that it encourages you as you see some of the excellence exhibited

by your schoolmates. God has already done more for us than we could have ever imagined as He brought us the nursing team members, the building, the students, and now here we are celebrating the graduation of these very students.

December 9 was a very full day. It started with an induction for a number of students into Sigma Theta Tau International, the nursing honor society. They learned about the goals and mission of the organization and recited the pledge of membership. It was a proud moment for me as we celebrated a high level of grade achievement for these students. *See the back page for more about Sigma Theta Tau.*

“God has already done more for us than we could have ever imagined.”

Next on the agenda, a delicious lunch buffet was catered by our very own Sodexo. It was wonderful to see so many family and friends in attendance to support the graduates. Every inch of the North Building Library was filled with beautifully decorated



tables covered with evergreen, pine cones and candle décor. Pastor Ryan Peterson, the Campus Pastor, gave the welcome and opening prayer. Nearly 300 people came to be with our graduates, including President Ferry, Vice-President Curt Gielow, Provost William Cario, and a number of Concordia Board members.



I spoke to the graduates and did some reminiscing with them as we revisited their nursing orientation two and a half years ago. Back then I had asked them to “imagine” a number of things that I believed would happen in their future at Concordia. I asked the students to imagine things such as practicing their nursing assessment skills on their classmates who were now their closest friends, nailing a challenging simulation, amazing their preceptors with their ability to manage multiple patients, traveling globally to help improve health in faraway communities, and graduating as BSN nurses who serve God and others with compassionate and excellence who are sought after by area healthcare agencies. I reminded them of these imagined scenarios and shared numerous examples of how each of these things have become a reality. It was heartwarming to see them remembering and realizing all that had happened. God is good!

Shalena Blocker and Hannah Phillips both gave inspiring and humorous speeches that reminded us all of the fun, yet stressful ride the last two and a half years has been.





The nursing team created graduate awards based on the four value words on our cornerstone wall, which is found just inside the simulation center. These values of service, excellence, compassion, and integrity, are preeminent in our program. We expect all of our students and graduates to emulate these values in their lives and as they care for their patients. An additional award, The Nightingale Award, was created as a tribute to Florence Nightingale who viewed nursing as her calling from God. It is meant to highlight a graduate who exemplifies this type of character. The award recipients did not know they were receiving the award until their names were called. I think all the winners were surprised.

“These graduates and those to follow will put Concordia on the map as a strong and effective nursing program.”

The last part of the event at the North building was the pinning ceremony. Each student was given the opportunity to select a person to pin them. Family, nursing team members, mentors, and preceptors were among those who pinned the graduates. As the pinning took place, Kathleen Sheehan read words of thanks from the graduates to the selected pinner. There were hugs and handshakes on stage amidst photographs and applause.

Once the pinning ceremony was over, Pastor Randy Duncan gave a closing blessing and prayer before dismissing everyone to main campus for the official graduation ceremony in the chapel. Nursing graduate Aubrey Alfano gave the student speech during the service. Aubrey highlighted the challenges she experienced as a nursing student and she explained how simulation helped to shape her as a nurse and how the Concordia experience shaped her as a person.

After all of the graduates received their diplomas, I saw families



come together to celebrate the students' hard work. I was included in numerous pictures, some planned and others spontaneous. I was thrilled to experience this day with our students and their families. Since graduation day, I have heard of numerous students already procuring jobs at a number of health care agencies around Southeast Michigan. These graduates and those to follow will put Concordia on the map as a strong and effective nursing program.

In the two and a half years they spent in nursing school, our graduates showed their mettle as students, as friends, and as aspiring nurses. The CUA nursing class of 2018 gave their studies, clinical practice, and volunteer spirit their all, even when it meant giving up free time and sleep. With relentless good nature, they personified the integrity, compassion, and excellence that is expected in all who are to serve as Concordia nurses. Throughout this article, I've used words like "thrilled", "proud", and "celebrate". Those words are heartfelt, as I know that those we imagined as the best prepared for their mission of service to Christ in the Church and in the world have proven to be our graduates.



NURSING AWARDS



COMPASSION AWARD *Maria Lulgjuraj*

Maria exemplifies the definition of compassion in nursing. In the world of nursing, compassionate care isn't simply about relieving suffering but "entering into a patient's experience and enabling them to retain their independence and dignity."

Maria's immersion preceptor reported that she was looking to

see if Maria had what it took to deliver compassionate care to a group of indigent mothers and children. At the end of the rotation, she reported that "Maria has it". She shared how Maria was able to achieve what Dietrich Bonhoeffer described as "regarding people less in the light of what they do or omit to do, and more in the light of what they suffer".

Maria grew to love the mothers and children she cared for. She was able to enter into their experiences and care for them in a way to retain independence and dignity. She understood that these mothers often did not have the advantage of stable homes and a good education. She understood that she was there for a period of time to extend grace and compassion.



EXCELLENCE AWARD *Desiree Reyes*

Excellence is defined as the demonstration of actions and character that show merit or greatness and that are above the expected level. "Whatever you do, work at it with all of your heart, as though you were working for the Lord and not for human beings", Colossians 3:23-24.

Desi demonstrates advanced problem solving skills in theory and clinical practicum courses, as well as commitment to success in complex situations. Her excellence in behavior and communication also is reflected in her Christian faith and character.

Desi has frequently demonstrated excellence through hard work, perseverance, dedication to patients and to peers. Her simulation instructors describe her as always prepared and never looking to take any shortcuts. She also invests in helping other students reach for excellence by serving as a tutor. This student demonstrates excellence not only in her nursing courses here in the U.S., but also abroad during a summer clinical experience. Her clinical instructors describe her using words like team player, flexible, cheerful, passionate, and dedicated regardless of the circumstances.



INTEGRITY AWARD *Turome "Tea" Chandler*

Integrity is defined as soundness of moral character, and adherence to ethical principles. For Concordia nursing, integrity means doing the right thing even when it goes unnoticed, and is an attribute of the very best nurses.

We expect Concordia nurses to display aspects of integrity: not to grandstand, and to be decent, fair and honest. Turome is attentive and attuned to those in our Concordia family: he has initiated service projects and events even when it wasn't convenient for him. Each day during his clinical work in Kenya, he was good-natured in spite of the heat, sand, insects, homesickness, and being the only man amongst 8 women. Most of all, he can be counted on to say what he means and mean what he says. Turome's integrity drives him to be at his very best. Tea can be trusted to unfailingly bring care and cheer with integrity to patients, families, and providers; the word "Integrity" fits him to a "T".



SERVICE AWARD

Shalena Blocker



Service is defined simply as that act of doing something for someone else without the expectation of being rewarded. I Peter 4:10 "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in various forms".

The very nature and art of the nursing profession implies caring for and meeting the needs of others. Nurses meet people in the midst of some of the toughest challenges of their lives. An average nurse will provide care for the patient based solely on the provider orders given. A service-oriented nurse will seek ways to serve the patient and individualize care based on knowing the patient's story; taking into account the challenges and desires of that patient. Concordia nurses are service-oriented nurses.

The Nurse Excellence Program is a program designed to reward students for their service both on and off campus. Each semester, students are rewarded for their hours of service. Shalena has achieved the platinum level (highest) award all 6 semesters of the Concordia Nursing School program. She has volunteered a total of 142.75 hours. She is a woman who has a heart for service to others.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE AWARD

Samantha Southwell



Florence Nightingale is an iconic figure who is responsible for the philosophy and underpinnings of modern day nursing. Prior to her, nursing was looked down upon as unimportant and was a low status job. Through her efforts, nursing was reborn into the trusted profession we know today. The name of Florence Nightingale is often associated with nursing excellence, compassion, quality, and the ability to care for others no matter what the conditions. Florence Nightingale viewed nursing as her calling from God and gave her life and passion to the care of others. It is in her name that we give this award to a student who displays these same qualities.

It was clear from the beginning of the program that Sam possessed these characteristics. She is always prepared for class, on time and ready to learn. Her eagerness to learn was only dwarfed by her compassion and genuine care for her patients in clinical. She even carried that same compassion forward to simulation where she would often comfort the manikin as if it were human. You never heard her complain about anything, no matter the circumstance. She shows excellent leadership qualities and was a valuable team member to those she worked with. Not only is she caring and compassionate, but she exemplifies excellence in the clinical setting as well. While caring for a patient in the clinical setting as a student, she was able to piece together a problem with a patient that was missed by the regular staff. Utilizing the patient's physical assessment data along with lab results she was able to determine that the patient was suffering from digoxin toxicity, a potentially fatal condition. Because of their recognition of this condition, the staff was alerted and appropriate interventions were able to be taken on the patient's behalf.

SIGMA THETA TAU INTERNATIONAL

Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) is a prestigious nursing honors organization that has been in existence for 95 years. It supports nurses in their efforts to improve world health. Students must be invited by the Governance Committee of Sigma Theta Tau International in order to apply.

23 Concordia Nursing students were inducted into the organization on December 9, 2018.

The purple cords they wear signify their membership in STTI. To find out more: <https://application.stti.org/>



NEXT UP! GRADUATION: SPRING 2019

BETA STUDENTS: Apply for Graduation by March 1st! *Portal > Student Tab > Banner Self-Service > Student > Apply to Graduate*

Monday, March 11, 1-4pm: Countdown to Commencement

Career Engagement Studio, Central Campus

Swing by to order your cap and gown, update post-graduation information, double check your student status, celebrate with fellow graduates, and enter a raffle for your chance to win VIP parking and seats for your family on graduation day!

Friday, May 17: Senior Banquet

Earhart Manor Tent, Central Campus

A celebratory dinner in the Earhart Manor Tent, just for you! Come with your friends or bring a plus one, CUAA's senior banquet tradition is for students and planned by students. If you are interested in being on the planning committee, contact Julia.Cassell@cuaa.edu.

Saturday afternoon, May 18: Pinning Ceremony

Location and time TBA

Sunday, May 19, 11am: Baccalaureate

Chapel of the Holy Trinity, Central Campus

Sunday, May 19, 2pm: Commencement

Fieldhouse, Central Campus



SCHOOL OF NURSING

Located at:
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