For Dear Life
Hospice of Dayton Founder Betty Schmoll Helped Revolutionize End-of-Life Care
There are seasons in the life of a college. Springtime has a sense of anticipation for the graduations to come. A new class of students in the fall brings renewal and hope for the future. Winter is a time to stay the course and rely on all of the great things that are in place, the positive momentum and the people. To experience each season, change is required.

The past year brought a number of organizational changes to the college, including the retirement of colleagues Diane Hamilton and Millie Biggers. We also restructured the administrative team to position the college for greater effectiveness in serving students. We now have two assistant deans—Deb Poling, assistant dean for graduate programs, and Sherrill Smith, assistant dean for undergraduate programs. Deborah Ulrich is now the associate dean for academic affairs and Lee Ann Bradfield has joined our staff as the new assistant to the dean.

We also have new changes on the horizon coming to our DNP program. Our consortium program with the University of Toledo is being dissolved as of 2019. Our college is developing its own progressive and transformational DNP program. It is currently under construction and will be moved forward for approval in 2018.

Other changes involve enhancements to our facilities, including the addition of a new state-of-the-art lab in the lower level of University Hall and space on the third floor dedicated to research. We’re also in the process of launching a collaborative effort with St. Leonard’s in Centerville to relaunch the Living Lab, which was previously located on the campus of Bethany Village.

We recently hosted a reunion for the class of 1976, the first ‘generic’ class to graduate from the College of Nursing and Health, with the help of class members Bobbe Nolan and Bonnie Sommerville. I was so impressed by how accomplished these alumni were in their careers. This reunion was such a success we look forward to holding similar events for future 40th anniversary classes.

Finally, with mixed feelings, I would like to announce that my season at Wright State is coming to an end. I have accepted a position with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing in Washington, D.C. I will be leaving Wright State University at the end of January 2017.

I have had the honor of following in the footsteps of true leaders in nursing education. The people I have had the pleasure of working with—the outstanding students, the committed faculty, the strong community partners—all will carry a lasting influence on me. I am excited to continue shaping the profession of nursing by working with leaders in colleges of nursing across the country.

I have no doubt the legacy of nursing excellence will continue at Wright State in the coming years. I encourage you to be part of it and do what you can to influence the next generation of nursing professionals. It is a noble cause and one I am glad I was able to share with each of you.
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She was a pioneer. Her efforts improved the end-of-life experiences for thousands of patients and their families.

And yet Betty Schmoll, founder of Hospice of Dayton and graduate of the Wright State University–Miami Valley College of Nursing and Health, is not a household name.

And that may just be how she wanted it.

Schmoll avoided the limelight. She had a modest lifestyle, making her own clothing and doing brown-bag lunches with subordinates in the hospice cafeteria. Yet she founded one of the first hospices in the nation and helped change the face of end-of-life care.

She had “that spark,” according to Kent Anderson, president and CEO of Ohio’s Hospice of Dayton and Ohio’s Hospice.

“She was one of the most down-to-earth, focused people I think I’ve ever, ever known,” Balster said. “Her way has influenced how I live my life and certainly how I do my work. If you come back to putting the patient at the center of care, you’re never going to be wrong. That’s what she taught me.”

Credit for the modern hospice movement is given to nurse and physician Cicely Saunders, medical director of St. Christopher’s Hospice in England. The seeds for the hospice movement in the United States were planted by Saunders in the 1970s during a talk at the University of Connecticut that caught the attention of Schmoll.

Schmoll, a registered nurse and mother of five, had been caring for her mother, who was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and at 55 had only a few months to live. Schmoll became passionate about the need to minimize suffering at the end of life and to provide support for symptoms that were hard to manage.

“At the time, nurses and physicians often didn’t have the skills to care for terminal patients and even avoided them because of the perceived failure of not being able to save them.

“Nobody understood what joyful work it was,” Schmoll said. “We each accepted that death is part of life. And if you do that, your next step is to say, ‘We can do it better.’ We can be part of making this whole process the best it can be.”

So Schmoll led the effort to establish hospice care, pulling together support from Wright State, area hospitals, and volunteers. And in 1978, Dayton became one of the first communities in the country to offer hospice care.
The leadership of Ohio’s Hospice of Dayton has established an endowed scholarship in honor of Betty Schmoll and her close colleague Carol Dixon through a generous lead gift.

The Betty Schmoll and Carol Dixon Endowed Scholarship for Leadership through Nursing is named in honor of Betty Schmoll, founder and first president of Hospice of Dayton, and Carol Dixon, Betty’s friend and colleague—the first vice president of Hospice of Dayton. These two prominent graduates of the College of Nursing and Health worked together for many years to establish Hospice of Dayton as a model in providing superior care and services to those with life-limiting illnesses. Both were strong leaders who also happened to be nurses.

The scholarship will benefit an undergraduate and graduate student each year who show leadership potential. It is intended to encourage the recipients to use their leadership skills and nursing vocation to make a difference in the lives of others.

If you’d like to make a gift to this endowed scholarship fund, you can give via our webpage wright.edu/give/schmolldixon or send your check to The Wright State University Foundation, care of The Betty Schmoll and Carol Dixon Endowed Scholarship, 3640 Colonel Glenn Highway, Dayton, OH 45345. Or contact Bill Bigham, bill.bigham@wright.edu or (937) 775-3694 for more information.

Today, Hospice of Dayton serves over 4,000 patients a year for a total of 83,000 over its lifetime. About seven percent of hospice patients come to the facility, which employs nine full-time physicians and nearly 300 nurses to care for about 625 patients at any given time.

Services were initially offered in patient homes and 13 inpatient beds at St. Elizabeth Medical Center. Hospice’s administrative offices were in a house next to Miami Valley Hospital. They were later moved to a tiny storefront, which also served as a repository for donated supplies such as walkers and wheelchairs.

Schmoll soon realized it was time to build a hospice facility to serve patients—those with symptoms and burdens that couldn’t be managed at home.

“She just started banging on doors and talking to really, really wealthy, influential people,” Balster recalled. “They gave her money.”

Thanks to more than 14,000 donors, Hospice House became a reality. Seventeen wooded acres of land near downtown Dayton was purchased from the government. Construction was complete in 1990. A second building went up in 1996.

“I could take you to cities much larger than Dayton and you would never find a facility like this or the grounds that go with it,” Anderson said. “By almost every measure, I can show you this is one of the best hospices in the country.”

In the hallway just off the entrance, a silver glass-ribbed sculpture hangs strategically from the ceiling to meet the eyes of patients arriving on gurneys. Inside, there are pianos, a library, a café, a chapel, and even a great room that has played host to slumber parties and graduations.

“One of the things we try to do is celebrate every day. Every day you have, you celebrate,” said Vicky Forrest, media content editor. “It’s about the wonder and the joy of being alive while you’re here.”

The grounds and gardens are designed to provide serenity, comfort, and pleasure to patients and their families in every season.

“We don’t want Hospice to be a scary place,” said Anderson. “We wanted to create a welcoming environment and not fearful. We want it all to be very peaceful, supportive.”

Nature is a theme at Hospice. There is leaf-patterned carpeting. Alcoves sprout what appear to be groves of birch trees. A main conference room features a bamboo table. Ponds beautify the grounds.

“God doesn’t design in straight lines. In walking around here, you won’t see many hard edges or straight lines,” said Anderson.

It’s all part of a principle called healing hospitality.
“The closer you are to nature, the more it promotes healing,” said Anderson. “There may not be a lot of physical healing—we do try to treat symptom burden—but there is emotional and spiritual healing that can go on. And it’s not only important for the patient to be near nature, it’s important for the family.”

One popular place is the Hospice solarium, a skylighted, year-round greenery space that smells of nature and living things.

“Many of our patients come from rural areas,” said Anderson. “We’ll hear them say, ‘Boy, I wish I could get my hands in the dirt.’”

Today, Hospice of Dayton serves over 4,000 patients a year for a total of 83,000 over its lifetime. About seven percent of hospice patients come to the facility, which employs nine full-time physicians and nearly 300 nurses to care for about 625 patients at any given time.

“The building has such karma to it,” said Mary Murphy, chief nursing and care officer. “It comes from the energy of all of the people who work here.”

Murphy, who has a master’s in nursing from Wright State, arrived at Hospice of Dayton after working as a nurse on a hospital oncology unit.

“This is the utopia of nursing,” she said of Hospice. “Nursing is tremendously valued here. You can be autonomous. You take care of your patients. You’re challenged. You’re respected.”

Balster said the best caregivers are emotionally strong and able to cope with their patients’ reality.

“You have to have a compassionate heart and that caring, giving servant kind of heart,” she said. “The work really becomes impossible to do if you don’t have that. I’m not sure you can teach that. It’s something people are gifted with.”

Balster said that when patients are dying, their relationships with caregivers become “instant intimacy.”

“They’re not in the mood to play games,” she said of the patients. “They’re in the mood to talk about really deep things.”

Balster said being a caregiver in a private space where someone is dying is very humbling and uncomfortable. The best caregivers can go into a room “like a vapor,” do what is needed, leave, and it was like they were never there.

She remembers one couple in which the woman was dying, her mattress was on the floor, and her husband was lying with her, holding and comforting her.

“You are walking in on these most intimate moments. There is a lot of that,” she said. “The more invisible you can be sometimes, the better.”
Family members are often in denial about the imminent death of a patient. But Balster says the realization can come suddenly and happen in front of your eyes.

“It’s amazing,” she said. “You can be just protesting—protesting, say, your mother’s death—but there’s that hour sometimes. It happens like that, where people move out of protest into acceptance.”

Family relationships at the end of life can change and are sometimes so poignant that “they stick with you forever,” Balster said.

She recalled the time a 20-year-old man returned to Dayton to try to repair a broken relationship with his dying father. He swiped the flowers from every table in the hospice cafeteria and placed them around his father’s room.

“It speaks of unconditional love,” Balster said. “There are countless stories like that—people and their relationships and what happens at the end.”

She said caregivers cope with the grief by sharing feelings with co-workers, praying, and realizing that not everything is on their shoulders.

“We try to stay focused on the joyful things in life and celebrate the happiness that we can find in each day,” Balster says. “A sense of humor is important to maintaining emotional balance in hospice care.”

Many of the nurses at Hospice have earned degrees from Wright State. Hospice has established an endowed scholarship in the name of Schmoll and Carol Dixon, former vice president at Hospice, at the university’s College of Nursing and Health. In addition, Hospice plans to participate in a Wright State continuing-education program called the Power of Nursing.

“We have a strong clinical connection with Wright State, and we have a strong educational connection,” said Anderson.

Nationwide, there are about 4,000 hospice programs. An estimated 1.6 to 1.7 million patients received hospice care in 2014. Nearly one-third of them received the care at a hospice facility.

Three years ago, Hospice of Dayton formed Ohio’s Hospice, which includes Hospice of Miami County, Hospice of Butler & Warren Counties, Community Care Hospice of Wilmington, and Hospice of Central Ohio. Ohio’s Hospice employs about 500 nurses, who care for more than a total of 1,000 patients daily.

Ohio’s Hospice was formed as a collaboration to share mission support services at the affiliates, such as accounting and human resources.

“That means we can continue to invest more at the bedside and raise that standard of care,” said Anderson.
Two Wright State nursing faculty members were honored by a national nursing association for providing vital information to healthcare professionals about the effects bath salts can have on pregnant women and their babies.

Bobbe Ann Gray, Ph.D., RNC-OB, CNS-BC, associate professor in the College of Nursing and Health, and Cindra Holland, D.N.P., RNC-OB, ACNS-BC, assistant professor and director of the nurse education concentration, received the 2015 Excellence in Writing Award from the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses for their co-authored article, “Implications of Psychoactive ‘Bath Salts’ Use During Pregnancy.”

The article was published in 2014 in *Nursing for Women's Health*, the association's clinical practice journal, which circulates to more than 25,000 nurses who care for women and newborns.

Bath salts is a common name for recreational designer drugs that contain synthetic chemicals similar to amphetamines. They are highly addictive. The drugs can cause agitation, paranoia, hallucinations, chest pain, increased pulse, high blood pressure, and suicidal thinking and behavior.

Usage of bath salts escalated in the United States from 2010 through 2012, following rapid spread of the drug in Europe. Since a federal ban on the major ingredients in the drugs in October 2011, usage in the United States has declined, though the drugs are still available online.

“One report we read said they were probably the worst drug that had come out on the market,” Gray said.

Gray and Holland began researching the use of bath salts at the height of their popularity. They wanted to provide information to nurses to help them understand how the drugs affect pregnant women.

“The nurses at the hospital were starting to become aware of it, seeing more and more of it,” Gray said.

It can be challenging for healthcare professionals to know whether a patient has taken bath salts, the researchers said. The drug does not reliably show up in urine screenings, and the drugs' effects often resemble those of other drugs like LSD or ecstasy.

Holland said she sought to answer such questions as, “how do these particular drugs act in the human body and how does it affect a growing fetus? Were they similar to some of the other drugs that we were seeing and were they causing some of the same problems we were seeing in high-risk problems?”

Gray and Holland found that patients who took bath salts are often violent, have high blood pressures and pulse rates, and behave incoherently.

"Nurses have to worry about the physical complications, the safety complications for the patient who may have done some violence to themselves, and the possibility of them becoming violent toward the caregivers—which is big problem,” Gray said.

They also found a fairly high pregnancy loss rate among women who admitted using bath salts while pregnant, the researchers said. Babies born to women who took bath salts have physical problems with withdrawal and can expect long-term consequences with learning disabilities and behavioral issues.

Gray and Holland plan to follow up on their bath salts research in a few years. They found that after use of the drugs in Europe declined there was a resurgence of usage. They expect to see a similar pattern in the United States.

They are currently working together on another article looking at new guidelines for stroke and how a high-risk pregnancy affects a woman's future risk for stroke.

Gray and Holland say they are interested in research as a way to advance the nursing profession. “It’s that evolving circle of giving back to our profession,” Holland said.

“Nurses essentially spend their entire day collecting data. That’s what we do,” Gray said. “We collect data, and we analyze data.”
As they met for the first time in a nursing laboratory in Wright State’s University Hall, Joyce Rutherford-Donner and Micah Hurd developed an instant bond. Even though more than three decades separate their days as Wright State students, the similarities between the two women are striking. Both were drawn to nursing because of their desire to help others. Both share a love for learning. And both women know all too well the hardships and heartaches of being a single mother going to school, raising her family, and trying to put food on the table.

“There were many sleepless nights,” Rutherford-Donner said as she reflected on her time as a nursing student at Wright State in the late 1970s and early 1980s. “Those years are really a blur of sleep deprivation and just trying to keep all of these balls in the air all the time. It was a moment-to-moment life.”

The divorced, single mother of two young children also struggled with returning to school 12 years after her high school graduation. “My high school education was no longer relevant,” she explained. “I had to study really hard in order to be able to keep up and in order to keep my Pell Grants and the little bit of money I was getting.”

Every day was a constant struggle. Figuring out her finances, keeping her grades up, trying to be a good mom, doing work-study. The pressure was incredible and often overwhelming.

But Rutherford-Donner persevered, graduating from Wright State in 1982 with a BSN. Her original post-graduation plans included working in a hospital for a couple of years and then going back to school to get her master’s degree. She wanted to specialize in her first love—geriatrics—and then start working on a Ph.D. to move into a university professorship, eventually working her way up to become dean of a nursing school.

“Unfortunately, there was a glut when I graduated and you couldn’t get a job in a hospital,” she said. “I’d done all of this to support my family and I couldn’t get a job.”

Fortunately, Rutherford-Donner landed a full-time position in long-term care. She described the job as a “godsend,” since she didn’t have to work nights.

After working nine months as a bedside nurse, she became an assistant director of nursing—a job that she admits she wasn’t fully prepared for. “When the doors open, I have always walked through. It doesn’t make
any difference whether I think I can do it or not,” she explained.

Eighteen months later, she became director of nursing and then, five years later, the nursing home administrator. Her career has also included stints as an executive director of a continuing care retirement community in Columbus and as a compliance auditor. Rutherford-Donner recently retired as a senior customer service representative for eHealth Data Solutions, a company that provides software for long-term care facilities.

Throughout her successful career, Rutherford-Donner has never forgotten the struggles of her early days as a single mom. “I know how desperately difficult it was to get the money together to be able to continue to go to school and not have to interrupt it and stop and get the money together again,” she explained. “I just wanted to be able to do that for a single parent who was in the same kind of situation that I was in.”

In December 2015, she and her husband, Larry, established the Joyce M. Rutherford-Donner Nursing Scholarship to provide tuition, books, and supplies for a nursing major who is also a single mother. Micah Hurd is the first recipient of the scholarship.

A single mother of three, Hurd is slated to graduate in December 2017 and hopes to become a nurse practitioner in an emergency room. She would one day like to open a clinic to serve the poor.

“I have been in situations—still am in situations—where I need medical care and I can’t find a doctor to take my insurance,” she explained. “I want to be able to help the people that need it the most.”

In many ways, Hurd’s life is a mirror image of Rutherford-Donner’s more than 30 years ago. The same sleepless nights. The constant worry about how to make ends meet. Fortunately for Hurd, the scholarship has lifted some of that burden.

“It helps so much,” Hurd explained. “It’s life changing. It makes you feel like there’s somebody who cares about you and who’s right there with you even though you don’t know them. And they’re saying, ‘We’re going to help you out and you’re worth it. You can do this.’ It gives you hope.”

For Rutherford-Donner, it was important to meet her scholarship recipient and develop a personal relationship. “For me, it isn’t just giving the money; it’s giving the chance,” she explained. “You can’t feel that unless you get to meet the person that you’re helping.”

“She’s an angel,” said Hurd as she fought back tears. “She literally changed a lot of my perspective, because there is so much in me that wants to give up, because it’s so hard. But I’m doing really well and she’s pushing me to do better. She’s done so much with her life. I want to be there one day.”

“You will be. You’ve got the drive,” said Rutherford-Donner. “There are so many single parents who would be fantastic nurses if only someone would give them a leg up. Someday Micah will be sitting here doing her own scholarship.”

“I will. I definitely will,” Hurd replied. “I will be taking up her legacy and saying, ‘This is for Joyce.’”

Watch the video at wright.edu/donner-scholarship
Hospital
65.27%
Wright State University—Miami Valley
College of Nursing and Health graduates are making an impact across the healthcare industry.

Our alumni work in many different settings. Take a closer look at the types of employers who hire Wright State nursing graduates.

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<th>Type of Employer</th>
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Alumni—stay connected by joining the College of Nursing and Health Alumni Society. For more information, visit [nursing.wright.edu/our-alumni](nursing.wright.edu/our-alumni).
Sarah Harrison isn’t like other students at Wright State, or even other students within the nursing program. With a mountain of responsibilities, she is busy from morning to night. Yet she wakes up with the energy and motivation to succeed each day.

“I start the day with a really good prayer. I try to take it one day at a time,” said Harrison. “My faith has taken me farther than I’d ever imagine. Because if you would’ve asked me if this is what I’d be doing even a month before nursing school, I would’ve said, ‘absolutely not.’”

Harrison grew up in Detroit, Michigan, and was raised by her mother’s family. Both of her parents died when she was young. A love for sports led her to pursue kinesiology at the University of Michigan with a focus on athletic training.

She remembers how difficult she thought her first undergraduate years were, but this second time around she is reaching new heights with the added pressures of being a parent.

“I look at this as a second chance and second opportunity,” she said.

Harrison met her husband, Brandon, while in college. They later married and moved to Ohio. They wanted to start a family, but Sarah realized her career as an athletic trainer working for after-school programs meant lots of evening hours, keeping her away from home. She wanted to be present in her kids’ lives while working full time.

So she began researching careers with more family-friendly hours and eventually decided to pursue nursing, which offers a variety of career paths and schedules.

Now a mother of three, Harrison works three 12-hour shifts per week as a support patient care technician at Miami Valley Hospital. Somehow she still finds time to serve as a member of the Dean’s Student Advisory Board (DSAB), Wright State Student Nurses Association, and Sigma Theta Tau International, Zeta Phi Chapter, an international honor society for nursing students. She is also pursuing a business management minor.

“My faith and trust in God has taken me to this point. I plan my life to a ‘T,’” she said. “Having a Type A personality, I used to know what I’d be doing by now. But I’ve learned by having kids that no matter what plans you have, it doesn’t work out that way,” she said. “And I think that is what has prepared me for juggling everything that I have now.”

Harrison was elected president of the college’s Student Mentoring and Retention Team (SMART) during her third semester. SMART consisted of about 70 nursing students who tutored and mentored peers in class scheduling, study skills, and learning how to be successful.

“As a person who already has a previous degree, you would assume ‘I’ve already done college, I’ve already gotten a degree, I can just come and it’ll be easy,’” she said. “Nursing is not easy at all. In order to be mentally prepared, you really have to have an open heart, and an open mind. With SMART, you felt ‘I can really do this.’”

Harrison encourages fellow students to stay motivated, keep their mind healthy, and find support during their studies. She believes in reading positive affirmations or listening to motivating music. She also suggests starting each day by thinking for five minutes about how to use that day to be successful.

“These things helped me to make it through day by day, because there were many days where I felt like I wanted to give up,” she said.

Harrison started to doubt her calling as a full-time mother, student, and nurse when she was pregnant with her third child.

“I was in class from sunup to sundown and doing...
homework in my spare time,” she said. “Finding the time to balance school and family and take care of myself to have a successful pregnancy was also a challenge. Honestly, being really busy sometimes helped me to forget about the morning sickness and other things that come along with being pregnant.”

Harrison remembers when her 2-year-old son was sick while she was taking nursing classes during the summer. She had clinicals the same day, requiring her to be on campus from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. She questioned how to balance her career and parental priorities.

“Is what I’m doing right now the best thing for my family?” she said. “I knew this was my calling when I started, but I didn’t know how it was going to happen. What I did know was that with the support from my husband and with my kids being there for me, this journey would be a little bit easier.”

Being a nurse has taught her to be grateful and humble despite the obvious challenges.

“Even though nursing school is hard, actually going to clinical is harder. You see people go through the disease process and having the opportunity to change the course of someone’s life,” Harrison said. “It makes me really grateful to have my life even though it’s not perfect. And it keeps me humble because no matter how crazy or bad things get, it can always be worse.”

The nursing field may feel like a roller coaster of emotions, from healing one patient to witnessing another in pain. Yet nurses bring perseverance and valor to a world in need.

“The nursing field may feel like a roller coaster of emotions, from healing one patient to witnessing another in pain. Yet nurses bring perseverance and valor to a world in need.

In the medical field, it’s crucial that medical staff work together as a team to ensure the health of a patient. “Getting a patient back to their ‘best them’ can’t happen unless they have a team who works hard, works together, and are advocates for them,” she said.
The College of Nursing and Health honored 18 outstanding nurses from the Dayton area at its 15th annual Cameos of Caring.

Dean Rosalie Mainous welcomed the nurses and other guests from the Dayton medical community at the Benjamin and Marian Schuster Performing Arts Center. The event raises scholarship funds for Wright State University nursing students.

“We are excited to report we have 18 agencies participating, many of which have been with us since our initial program in 2001,” Mainous said in her opening remarks. “It is our pleasure to host an event that spotlights registered nurses who have made a real difference in people’s lives, their families, and the community as a whole.”

Mainous also announced the first annual Community Partner Award of Distinction for recognizing a non-nurse community partner who has made outstanding contributions to nursing. This year’s winner is Glenn Costie, director of the Dayton Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC).

Costie is responsible for the healthcare of more than 38,000 veterans and their families in a 16-county area in Ohio and one county in Indiana. He is also active in the community, volunteering countless hours to the American Veteran Heritage Center Board, Habitat for Humanity Board, Homeless Solutions Policy Board, and numerous others. The Dayton VAMC also provides training to Wright State nursing students.

The Cameos of Caring Awards gala was started in 2001 as a way to both honor nurses working in the Dayton area and raise scholarship funds for nursing students at Wright State. This gala has raised $450,000 in scholarship funds since its inception in 2001.

The 16th annual event will be held on April 22, 2017. For more information, contact Diana Lewis at (937) 775-3572 or diana.lewis@wright.edu.
2016 Registered Nurse Cameos of Caring Recipients

Ashley Koontz  
Atrium Medical Center

Erica Yanney  
Dayton Children’s Hospital

Bonnie Tobias  
Dayton Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Cynthia Balzer  
Fidelity Health Care

Michael Eldridge  
Fort Hamilton Hospital

Deborah Felter  
Good Samaritan Hospital

Robert Hemmelgarn  
Grandview Medical Center

Lori Morgan  
Greene Memorial Hospital

Michelle Bowman  
Hospice of Dayton

Daniel Thomas  
Kettering Medical Center

Brandon Back  
Kindred Hospital Dayton

Amanda Brannon  
Mercy Memorial Hospital

Deborah Warniment  
Miami Valley Hospital

Ashley Barnett  
Soin Medical Center

Karen Drewing  
Southview Medical Center

Heather Tudor  
Springfield Regional Medical Center

Ellen Wheatcraft  
Sycamore Medical Center

Pamela Homan  
Upper Valley Medical Center

To read more about each recipient and view their videos, visit wright.edu/cameos.
Wright State University nurse practitioner students will learn alongside medical residents and psychology, pharmacy, and physician assistant students during a new hands-on interprofessional training program.

Under a three-year grant, Professionals Accelerating Clinical and Educational Redesign (PACER), the College of Nursing and Health will work with the Wright State Boonshoft School of Medicine, the School of Professional Psychology, the Cedarville University School of Pharmacy, and Kettering College Physician Assistant Program.

Faculty from each institution will collaborate on the design of an interprofessional curriculum called Transformation Interprofessional Sessions (TIPS), to engage residents and students during problem-based in-person and online training lessons.

The project involves primary care residents in family medicine, internal medicine, and pediatrics, and graduate students studying to be nurse practitioners, psychologists, pharmacists, and physician assistants. The residents and students will learn how to work together to provide patients with the best physical and mental health care using an interprofessional team approach.

“I think it helps us take better care of patients, and it’s good for students because they’re receiving training in the way that they’re going to need to be practicing. So having nurse practitioners and physician assistants work alongside us is the reality of the future,” said Therese Zink, M.D., M.P.H., FAAFP, professor and chair of the Department of Family Medicine in the Boonshoft School of Medicine and principal investigator on the project.

“If I have a clinical problem, what better way to solve it than to bring together the nurse, the physician, and the pharmacist to solve the problem together, each bringing their wisdom to the table,” said Rosalie Mainous, Ph.D., APRN, NNP-BC, FAANP, FAAN, dean of the College of Nursing and Health.

Wright State is one of nine interprofessional teams nationwide chosen to participate in PACER. Other institutions selected include the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine, the UC Davis School of Medicine and School of Nursing, and the University of Colorado.

PACER is funded by the Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation with matching funding from the Boards of Family
Medicine, Internal Medicine, and Pediatrics and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. The project is implemented and evaluated by educational researchers in the Department of Family Medicine at Oregon Health and Science University.

Brenda Young, D.N.P., RN, CNP, clinical assistant professor and director of the family nurse practitioner concentration, said the PACER grant will give nurse practitioner students more opportunities to train in clinical preceptor sites with medical residents.

“This is going to change the educational landscape, especially in Ohio, where we are training in silos,” she said. “The PACER grant offers us a chance to train side by side in an interprofessional setting—and that is huge.”

Clinical training will take place at several health facilities around Dayton, including the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base Medical Center, Dayton Children’s clinics, and Five Rivers Family Health Center in Dayton.

Medical residents and other professional students will meet regularly at the clinics to discuss and try to solve a medical case. Team members will discuss their specific roles in each case. Cases will be made available online for those not able to attend.

Nursing faculty will play an important role in setting up the online learning component. “One of the things nursing brings to the table is they’re much better with distance and web-based learning than the rest of us,” Zink said.

Because PACER is an initiative to redesign education, Young said the project needs to start with the faculty. That’s because the faculty will not only develop the interprofessional curriculum, they will also teach the health professionals in the training sites how to work collaboratively.

“Education redesign starts with faculty training on how to help these sites,” she said.

Margaret M. Dunn, M.D., M.B.A., FACS, dean of the Boonshoft School of Medicine, is providing information technology support personnel, while Mainous is providing an education specialist to assist the faculty in the design of the curriculum.

The College of Nursing and Health, Boonshoft School of Medicine, and Cedarville University School of Pharmacy have also collaborated in another interprofessional clinical training program in the trauma unit at Kettering Medical Center.

Mainous said she believes strongly in providing interprofessional clinical training for students. “I believe that’s going to produce the best professionals who will give us the best care in the future,” she said.

Interprofessional collaborations like the one afforded through the PACER grant also help Wright State provide students with unique opportunities. “I thought this would be a chance for Wright State to shine because this community is one of the most collaborative I’ve seen,” she said. “It enables us to do very innovative and creative things.”

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act and Ohio’s decision to expand Medicaid, more Ohioans have access to care, especially in primary care areas. Wright State faculty emphasized the importance of redesigning healthcare curriculum to provide innovative team-based training for nurse practitioners, medical residents, psychologists, pharmacists, and physician assistants.

“This is the new landscape, I hope, of health reform and health delivery in the United States,” Young said.
Walking through the colorful spaces of Dayton Children’s, Jayne Gmeiner, MS, RN, NEA-BC, is reminded of the 300,000 reasons why she loves her job. That’s the number of infants, children, and teens who come through the doors of the hospital each year.

From kids’ artwork on the walls to therapy dogs in the halls, Gmeiner feels honored to work in such a special place, where you’re just as likely to see a red wagon as a wheelchair.

As chief nursing officer and vice president for patient care services at Dayton Children’s, Gmeiner is dedicated to providing family-centered care from crib to college.

“It is a privilege to care for our future generations, providing them the most comprehensive and compassionate care close to home,” said Gmeiner, a two-time graduate of the Wright State University–Miami Valley College of Nursing and Health. “I think the mission of a pediatric facility ties me personally to providing the best place to take care of our future generations.”

Prior to joining Dayton Children’s in July 2015, Gmeiner was director of professional practice at Premier Health. She also held several leadership roles at Miami Valley Hospital over her 35 years of tenure, including director of nursing excellence, director of integrated care management, and director of case management and staff development.

A diploma in nursing from Miami Valley School of Nursing provided Gmeiner with foundational nursing knowledge and skill attainment to begin her career in a critical care nursing environment.

“This foundation was critical to my nursing career as it provided exceptional basic knowledge, the importance of strong nursing assessment skills, and the importance of interprofessional relationships to promote the best outcomes for my patients,” she explained.

When she earned her diploma, she already had 44 college credit hours at Wright State University, so it was a natural progression to begin her BSN at Wright State while still finishing her diploma program.

“Wright State prepared me for a broader perspective on nursing practice, awareness of the importance of research and evidence-based practice, with a much stronger foundation on nursing theory,” Gmeiner said.

She went on to earn a Master of Science in Nursing Administration, which was pivotal in preparing her for a career as a nursing leader. It helped her network and learn from both internal colleagues and external relationships—skills that would help define her leadership style.

“The experience of balancing full-time employment with formal education also provided a framework for organizational skills and fortitude, which is one of the key attributes of many of my nursing colleagues,” she added.

Gmeiner’s impact on the nursing profession extends throughout the state and nationally. She participated in...
the Ohio Action Coalition, led by the Ohio League for Nursing and the Ohio Hospital Association, to create innovative solutions where nurses are leading the way to address Ohio’s health challenges. She also has served as a member of the American Organization of Nursing Executives and president of the Dayton Chapter of the Ohio Organization for Nursing Executives.

Love Your Job

Her evidence-based research has been published in the *Journal of Nursing Administration* and *Heart and Lung*. Proud to be a Wright State Raider, Gmeiner is also president of the Nursing Alumni Association. “I feel it is important to ‘pay it forward,’ borrowing a theory of Woody Hayes to our nursing profession,” she said.

“One way I can pay it forward is to give time back to an organization that helped me prepare for a great career in nursing.”

Through her various professional roles, Gmeiner has had the opportunity to work closely with thousands of nurses in the Dayton community. “My goal is to continue to link nurses with role models, leaders, and mentors who will serve our future nurses in the Dayton region.”

She also serves on the College of Nursing and Health’s Academic Strategy Planning Board, which gives her the opportunity to partner with even more members of the community. The board’s goal is to assist the dean and the faculty to make CONH the best community partner for developing exceptional nursing students and graduates in the region, based on the latest evidence and technology.

“Wright State provides a priceless service to the Dayton community, by providing nursing graduates who care for all of us—from the beginning of life to the end,” said Gmeiner. These graduates can be found in all of the nursing roles at local hospitals, home care agencies, Dayton VA, Hospice, as well as partners in healthcare insurance companies.

She recalled that the founding dean of Wright State’s nursing college had a mission to broaden the profession of nursing beyond the acute phase of healthcare in the hospital setting. “I believe Dean Gertrude Torres would be very proud of where Wright State nursing graduates currently sit in the community,” she concluded.

“Many of my mentors have been Wright State nursing graduates and they have served as strong colleagues along my career,” she noted. “The bond you establish in this profession is stronger than any I have witnessed.”

Gmeiner summed up her career this way: “The profession of nursing provides a great cast of professional colleagues, lifelong friends, and a learning environment that sustains my passion for the profession and to do right by creating the safest and best environment possible for our patients, families, and nursing colleagues.”
For the 18th consecutive year, the students from the Adult-Gerontological Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Program had a 100% pass rate on the national certification exam.

In Memoriam

We were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Dr. Gertrude Torres. Torres was Dean of the College of Nursing and Health from 1975 to 1980. She will always be remembered for starting the college's graduate program, recruiting nationally renowned faculty, and for her influence on the nursing profession as an innovator in nursing curriculum.

Two CONH students, sophomore Rebecca Brinkman and junior Chelsea Stewart, were selected to attend the first Presidential Debate at Hofstra University on September 26, 2016. They were among the 15 Wright State students chosen at random from the pool of students who had applied to get debate tickets or be debate volunteers at the formerly planned Wright State debate.

Beth Croucher, DNP student and graduate of WSU’s Adult/Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Program, was selected as a 2016–18 DNP Jonas Nurse Leader Scholar. Beth was one of only 75 DNP students nationwide to receive this prestigious award and will receive $10,000 and work on a leadership project in Washington, D.C., in 2017.

The College of Nursing was a founding partner and event sponsor for the Center for Healthy Communities’ 25th Anniversary Celebration events.

On June 17 and 18 members of the Class of 1976, along with a few faculty from that era, gathered to celebrate their 40th Class Reunion. The Class of 1976 was the first “generic” class to graduate from the College of Nursing and Health. Class members traveled from California, Texas, Arizona, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania to meet up with local alumnae and celebrate this milestone.

Nursing major Pamela Nelson was named Wright State’s Presidential Scholar for 2016. The Presidential Scholarship recognizes one outstanding senior student each year. Every college recommends one applicant with a high GPA, and the university president makes the final selection. As part of the scholarship, Nelson will participate in a collaborative research project with President David R. Hopkins during her senior year. Nelson is a nontraditional student pursuing her second undergraduate degree. She earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Wright State in 2004. Nelson recently accepted a position as a labor and delivery nurse at Miami Valley Hospital. She plans to pursue a master’s degree and someday teach labor and delivery nursing at the university level.
The College of Nursing and Health celebrated the grand opening of its new, state-of-the-art simulation lab. The lab enhances the opportunities students have to develop their clinical skills in a realistic learning environment.

CONH Dean Rosalie O’Dell Mainous Ph.D., APRN, NNP-BC, FAANP, FAAN, has been selected as a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing, one of the highest honors in the profession. The fellowship recognizes Mainous as among a select group of national nursing leaders. As the only nurse appointed to the American Academy of Pediatrics’ Committee on Fetus and Newborn, Mainous helped develop clinical guidelines for the care of newborns that have been adopted by nurseries around the country.

Mainous also helped revise national perinatal standards and contributed a manuscript on the transformation and future of nursing education for an Institute of Medicine report, *The Future of Nursing*, the most read in the institute’s history. In her leadership roles with the National Association of Neonatal Nurses, Mainous helped established the Neonatal Research Summit, a premier mentoring program that has touched more than 150 neonatal investigators.

**PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**


Wright State University—Miami Valley College of Nursing and Health

Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Accelerated Option

The WSU-VBSN program is an accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing program developed for veterans and active duty personnel from the Air Force, Army, Navy, National Guard, and Reserves who have completed training as a medic or corpsman. The program is designed to recognize the healthcare training of military personnel so they can achieve their BSN.

Why Wright State University?
Wright State University has been ranked as a military-friendly school for six consecutive years by GI Jobs and Military Advanced Education. We’re home to more than 1,000 veteran and military-affiliated students, ROTC cadets, guardsmen, and reservists. Our new, state-of-the-art Veteran and Military Center employs full-time staff and student veterans who provide student support, including help with GI Bill benefits. Wright State is located near Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and the Dayton VA Medical Center.

Accelerated Option Highlights

- Opportunities to obtain college credit for military training and experience
- Completion of nursing sequence in shorter time than traditional pre-licensure BSN program*
- Full-time academic advisor to help navigate college life from applying to graduation
- Full-time student success coordinator and tutors available for academic assistance
- Faculty trained to understand the unique veteran student population

*Assumes completion of all required prerequisites for the nursing program

If you have any questions please contact nursing.veterans@wright.edu or call (937) 775-3377

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