The theme of this issue is “firsts”. On May 10th, we joyously watched 82 members of our first class cross the stage and receive their diplomas. This was followed by our “first” pinning ceremony where I announced that we had received our “first” national accreditation (Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education) for the school. Our graduates have interviewed for “first” nursing jobs and the majority has been offered positions. As we wait in great anticipation for the NCLEX-RN results, we are confident that this “first” class will successfully pass the exam on the “first” time. A successful “first time” pass rate on the NCLEX-RN will complete the cycle started with the “first” discussion of a BSN program at Texas State over 10 years ago.

The bar has been set high for achievement and we are very proud of our graduates! Dr. Bourgeois, the Provost of Texas State University, repeated an interesting comment a few weeks ago told to him by a colleague. He said that Texas State is riding on the tide of being the “IT” university. At Texas State we have record application numbers and enrollment, programs noted for excellence, and faculty who are making their mark on the map. Our graduates have much to be proud of and at graduation I indicated that they are the “IT” graduates. Clinical partners have relayed to us that our students rise above in terms of appearance, professional behavior, and knowledge.

I think it is safe to say that during the past two years our experiences have often felt surreal, akin to Alice falling down the rabbit hole in the beloved Lewis Carroll novel “Alice in Wonderland”. For students, there is no prior experience that can prepare them for the foreign world of nursing school. It requires a new dictionary, new way of thinking, new way of studying, and new way of interacting. For faculty and staff, there is no prior experience for building a new school from the ground up (literally). When the Cheshire cat tells Alice that “we are all mad here”, I would not be surprised to see nods of agreement. I frequently felt a bit like Alice as I wandered the halls and thought I heard rumblings that sounded like “off with her head” or perhaps they were just auditory hallucinations.

“Which way should I go from here, asks Alice; that depends a good deal on where you want to get to, replies the Cheshire cat; “I don’t care much where, so long as I get somewhere”; “Oh you’re sure to do that, if you only walk long enough.”

Congratulations, to our new class of graduates—they found their way. Congratulations to the faculty—they provided the direction. I am confident our “first” class will continue to make us proud to call them graduates of the St. David’s School of Nursing at Texas State University.
CCNE Accreditation Received!

Dr. Marla Erbin-Roesemann, Director of the St. David’s School of Nursing stated, “National accreditation affirms our commitment to the public that we have fulfilled our promise to educate and prepare graduates to meet the health care challenges of the present while looking to the future. Simply—we have done what we said we would do!”

The review that Texas State’s BSN program underwent in November 2011, was extensive and comprehensive. All aspects of the program were examined, from director and faculty qualifications, how the curriculum was developed and is being taught, to the criteria used for admitting students, student involvement, progress and satisfaction, and campus resources available to students, just to name a few. All of the areas closely reviewed and analyzed by the accreditation review team were determined to have met all CCNE standards, which translates into Texas State’s nursing students receiving a high quality education which prepares them well for a successful career in nursing.

Dr. Ruth B. Welborn, Dean of the College of Health Professions, stated that recent graduates, current students, and future applicants may be proud to receive a distinguished baccalaureate education from Texas State’s St. David’s School of Nursing. She extended her congratulations to Dr. Erbin-Roesemann, faculty, staff, students, and clinical healthcare affiliations, adding that each played a significant role in reaching this milestone in the program’s history.

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program offered by the St. David’s School of Nursing at Texas State University received accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), a national autonomous accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education. As stated on its website, CCNE “… ensures the quality and integrity of baccalaureate, graduate, and residency programs in nursing.” Accreditation for Texas State’s BSN program is retroactively granted beginning November 7, 2011, extending to June 30, 2017. The value of achieving this standing for nursing programs is many fold. It assures students that they are receiving a superior education that exceeds the minimum requirements mandated by the state in which it is located. The BSN program will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by not only the state licensing board, but also the CCNE, which demonstrates the St. David’s School of Nursing’s commitment to continuing to meet and surpass quality standards for its students. It is also important to note that some future employers will require that its nursing professionals are graduates from accredited colleges and universities.

“CCNE Accreditation Received! The Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at Texas State University-San Marcos is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 530, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 887-6791.
St. David’s School of Nursing faculty and staff were excited to watch their first class of Nursing students graduate on May 10, 2012, in the Strahan Coliseum on the San Marcos main campus. Seventy students graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree from Texas State University.

Following graduation, chartered buses took the new graduates and their families and significant others to Evans Auditorium, for the Nursing Pinning Ceremony. After welcoming the attendees and giving a motivating speech on their next exciting career paths, Dr. Marla Erbin-Roesemann, Director of St. David’s School of Nursing, introduced esteemed guests to also address the graduates: Dr. Denise Trauth, President of Texas State University, Dr. Gene Bourgeois, Provost, and Dr. Ruth Welborn, Dean of the College of Health Professions. Dr. Barbara Covington, Associate Professor, followed by describing the significance and symbolism of the nursing pin’s design.

The pinning of the graduates then commenced, with Ms. Beth Biggan, Clinical Assistant Professor, and Nursing juniors assisting. Ms. Paige Greene, Nursing graduate and Senior Class President closed the ceremony by presenting faculty awards, and leading students in the recitation of the Nightingale pledge.

Please enjoy photos that captured the excitement on that special day in the hearts of Nursing faculty, staff, and students. Best wishes to our first graduates!
Nursing Students in Peru

From May 14-30, 2012, Dr. Lyda Arevalo-Flechas, Assistant Professor, and five nursing students traveled to Peru to join a volunteer group supporting "Operation Smile International" in Lima. This organization performs cleft lip and cleft palate surgeries for children worldwide. Students Meghann Seal, Melody Bingham, Amanda Bazan, Whitney Milburn and El Burley were able to participate in the admission, screening and attention of over one hundred and sixty children admitted for cleft lip and palate surgery. Ms. Seal said "It was heartwarming to see how a little volunteering of our time changed some of these families' lives forever—everyone deserves a chance to smile." Ms. Burley added that "... after one day working with this organization and the community, it changed my perspective and reinforced my love for humanitarian aid."

Dr. Eduardo Lescano facilitated the opportunity for the students to rotate to the operating room under Dr. Arevalo-Flechas' supervision. They were able to practice OR circulating skills learned prior to this trip, as well as participate in patient care in the PACU and the Post-Op Unit.

In Viña Vieja the students were exposed to the reality of living conditions in rural Peru in an area devastated by earthquakes in 2007. The students reorganized the pharmacy, disposed of all expired medications, provided blood pressure and glucose screening, well-baby exams, and trained over 20 youth in lay CPR procedures. Ms. Bingham noted that the CPR class was her favorite "... because it was amazing to see adolescents and children demonstrate CPR, knowing that this education could save someone's life." In addition, our nursing students were a part of the first inter-professional team of health professions students. They were joined by three dental school students from the Cayetano Heredia University. Together they provided fluoridation treatments for over 45 people, the vast majority children. While nursing students learned about dental examination and fluoridation, they taught dental students how to draw blood samples, take blood pressures, and use glucometers.

The students were provided a complete cultural and linguistic immersion. The community of Viña Vieja and Mr. Lucas E. Queirolo embraced the students as family. Ms. Bazan added, "Peru was an absolutely amazing and humbling experience with exposure to different types of healthcare in other countries. The people of Peru are truly what made this a memorable experience."

Dr. Arevalo-Flechas praised her students, saying "My Peru 2012 crew is a team St. David's can be proud of—I know I am. It was my privilege to guide the learning of the students who so generously followed me to serve in Peru. These future nursing colleagues will be the ones providing care and leading teams in the future. Texas Partners of the Americas, Texas-Peru Relief Fund, Operacion Sonrisa Peru, and St. David's School of Nursing made possible this life changing experience."

Ms. Milburn expressed her gratitude to Dr. Arevelo-Flechas, saying that she "... helped show us the 'art' of nursing that we have read about in class—caring about people, not just for them."

Click here to view photos and read more about the students’ experiences!
Being a Doctor of Chiropractic working with simulation in a school of nursing, Dr. Holmes is often asked how she got into the simulation field and away from chiropractic. She gives a very simple reply, “It was a God thing.” Let’s start back at the beginning.

During high school, when given the aptitude test that determines what you should be when you grow up, Dr. Holmes’ results were very specific: go into teaching or go into medicine. Since her mother was a teacher and she had helped out in the classroom on many occasions making bulletin boards, cutting out lamination, and helping with craft projects, Dr. Holmes rebelled against the teacher direction. The medical field came into direct play in the blink of an eye.

During a high school basketball game, she sustained a knee injury (her ACL had been ruptured) and she was told that she would never play sports again. Her only hope of returning to the sports that she loved so much was to complete physical therapy on her damaged knee. Many hours were spent in the PT office where her interest in the anatomy of the human body and the science that goes with it was cultivated into a desire to become a physical therapist. After rehabilitation of her knee, Dr. Holmes was able to return to sports but was plagued with severe headaches every day. This led her to the chiropractor where she was able to gain firsthand knowledge how chiropractors and physical therapists worked hand in hand to get athletes back in the game.

After receiving a BS in Biology from Fort Hays State University, Dr. Holmes dream of being a Physical Therapist was cut short by not being accepted into a physical therapy program at either of the two universities in Kansas that offered the degree. Not one to stand idle, Dr. Holmes began working as a telephone support computer technician for a large computer company. One of her customer phone calls was from a chiropractor trying to connect his spinal imaging equipment to the new computer he had just purchased. For what should have been a standard 3 minute call, Dr. Holmes proceeded to discuss chiropractic for 45 minutes. Once again her journey towards the medical field had taken another surprising turn.

Within 6 months, Dr. Holmes had moved to Dallas, Texas and was attending Parker College of Chiropractic and on her way to becoming a Doctor of Chiropractic.

Fast forwarding 6 years that included 4 different private practice locations, coordinating the hiring of personnel at 50 different distant clinics, computer helpdesk and software trainer, a marriage and the birth of twins, we find the crossroad that brought Dr. Holmes into the world of simulation. Having separated from her last clinical experience on a negative note, Dr. Holmes reflected on starting a new career that involved either getting her teaching certificate to teach science or going back to school to be a nurse. Her career choice had to be conducive to raising her pre-mature babies and still allow for a steady income. Dr. Holmes became aware of an open position at the University of Texas at Arlington School of Nursing. The Simulation Technician job description appeared to have been written with her in mind. And so the twists and turns of the journey had resulted in Dr. Holmes being a part of teaching nurses and nursing students. She was able to meld her medical, computer and business management knowledge to benefit future healthcare givers in providing a safe, realistic environment to learn.

During her time at UTA, Dr. Holmes helped to design the Smart Hospital™, a 13,000 sq ft simulation facility, which officially opened in August of 2007. With a staff of one (herself), Dr. Holmes began simulation activities for over 400 undergraduate and 100 graduate nursing students. Throughout the following three years, Dr. Holmes became the founding Director of the Smart Hospital™, added 7 staff members under her supervision and coordinated simulation experiences for community partner hospitals as well as industry partners.

How did Dr. Holmes find out about the St. David’s School of Nursing program at Texas State University? “I have friends that live in the Austin area and they had been telling me for 2-3 years that the nursing program was in the works and that I needed to move down here. At the time, I was enveloped in the Smart Hospital and it wasn’t the right time to look elsewhere.” The winds of change began to swirl in July 2010 and the journey rounded another bend.

Dr. Holmes joined the St. David’s School of Nursing in September of 2010 as the Coordinator of Simulation Laboratories. “I was excited to take my experiences and apply them to a brand new program and see what I could be a part of developing” said Dr. Holmes when asked why she decided to become a program faculty member. Her responsibilities include coordinating all activities within the simulation lab, managing the vast inventory of consumable supplies and manikin equipment, collaborating with faculty to create realistic simulation scenarios and training faculty on the use of the simulation equipment. Dr. Holmes is a member of several simulation organizations and often speaks at several international conferences each year. She has also been a contract Educator for Laerdal Medical Corp. teaching other schools and hospital educators the intricate workings of the simulation manikins.

When she is not creating fake wounds, counting IV catheters or making manikins talk, Dr. Holmes keeps busy supporting her children in their many activities as their basketball and soccer coach and participating in an adult bowling league. She is an avid reader and enjoys camping, hunting and playing dominoes with her husband and friends.
Shining the Light On Our Simulation Laboratories

St. David’s School of Nursing has many outstanding attributes that make it a leader in nursing education, but the one that most defines it as a high-tech program is its simulation laboratories. Located on the second floor of the St. David’s School of Nursing building, nine unique labs, akin to a mini-hospital and other healthcare settings, provide environments for students to put into practice what they learn in the classroom. The labs’ specialty areas include:

- Medical/Surgical
- Maternal/Child
- Basic Skills
- Intensive Care Unit/Critical Care
- Health Assessment
- Standardized Patient Examination Suite
- Operation room/patient private room (2 labs)

From the furniture (hospital beds, exam tables, etc.) to equipment and supplies used (crash carts, computers for electronic charting and vital signs monitoring, and interchangeable body parts, to name only a few), each lab provides the realistic tools and experiences that students will later use in actual clinical settings.

In addition to creating a realistic healthcare environment, the simulation labs further enhance the simulated learning experience for students with the addition of life-size patient manikins that mimic many human functions and on which students will practice skills learned. Nursing students will encounter manikins that breathe, including the rise and fall of the chest, talk and provide details of symptoms, and simulate heart, lung, and bowel sounds. There are several types of manikins used that come in various sizes, genders and ethnicities. Some higher fidelity manikins are even able to cry, bleed, convulse, and speak recorded phrases and sounds. Students are able to perform many procedures on the manikins, including administering medications, starting IV’s, caring for wounds, inserting foley catheters, and checking blood pressure.

Most student work completed in the simulation laboratories can be viewed and/or recorded from an audio/visual room, for later review by the faculty. Dr. Tiffany Holmes, Coordinator of Simulation Laboratories, and Mr. Ryan Douglas, Simulation Laboratories Information Specialist, work closely with faculty each semester to develop scenarios for use in lab settings.

In addition to providing telecommunications support while serving in the US Marines, Ryan also worked in IT for both state government and private healthcare prior to the St. David’s School of Nursing. Ryan holds a BS in IT and several technology certifications. Ryan grew up in central Virginia before joining the military. After his enlistment, he moved to California for a few years but eventually settled here in Round Rock. Outside of work, Ryan enjoys spending time with his family, exercising, and occasionally slicing a few golf balls into the woods.

The Sim Lab Team has posted a wealth of information and photos detailing simulation labs and manikins on the St. David’s SON Web site. Click HERE to learn more!
Nurses Week Celebration

Each year, a week is designated to honor the Nursing profession. St. David’s School of Nursing celebrated Nurses Week 2012 with an open house on May 4, showcasing the building, student poster presentations, tours of the simulation laboratories, door prizes, and the launching the first annual Nurse of the Year award. Dr. Marla Erbin-Roesemann, Director of the Nursing Program, kicked off the celebration by reading a proclamation from City of Round Rock Mayor Alan McGraw.

An additional celebration took place for Dr. Erbin-Roesemann, who was given the first “Nurse of the Year Award”, by vote of the St. David’s School of Nursing faculty.
Paws for a Cause

Nursing students, faculty, staff, vendors, and the general public came together on April 21 for the first annual “Paws for a Cause” 5K Run to raise money to purchase well-fitted shoes for children in need in Williamson County. Over $800 was raised for this worthy cause.

St. David’s School of Nursing Additional Parking

Parking availability for Nursing faculty, staff and students has expanded with the construction of a new parking lot near the back entrance to the St. David’s School of Nursing. Installation of parking lot permit signage is anticipated in time for the beginning of the Fall 2012 Semester. Because of a few minor corrections to be made, faculty, staff, students and visitors are asked to utilize available parking in other lots until signage is installed and the lot officially opened.
Students’ Corner

Look at what our students have been up to in addition to their studies!

Poster presentations at St. David’s School of Nursing Open House in honor of Nurses Week

Juniors helping out at the 2012 Pinning Ceremony

The torch has been passed. Meet the new Student Nursing Organization officers: President Erin McCracken, Secretary Raegan Rasberry, Treasurer Amanda Bazan, Historian Suzy Pierce, and Events Coordinator JaCinta Turner.

Bake sale fundraiser

Community service in Austin

Nursing students Whitney Hunt and Paige Greene presented a poster outlining their research on the “Relationship of Children with Inadequate Shoes to Injury Rates” at the annual National Student Nurses Association conference in Pittsburgh, PA. The “Paws for a Cause” 5K run fundraiser (see page 8) was based upon this research. New Nursing Student Organization President Erin McCracken also attended the conference.
Nursing Faculty/Staff Achievements

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Dr. Marla Erbin-Roesemann, Director, Professor, was the recipient of the first St. David’s School of Nursing “Nurse of the Year ” award given during our Nurses Week Open House on May 4, 2012. This award is given annually to a nurse nominated and voted for by the faculty of the St. David’s School of Nursing. Dr. Roesemann was selected based upon her long nursing career and community service, her vision for the St. David’s School of Nursing, and her caring nature towards students, faculty and staff. She embodies the qualities of an outstanding leader and compassionate nurse who works tirelessly to lead a new school and program into the future.

Texas State’s Nursing students honored three of our Clinical Assistant Professors with the following awards: Ms. Beth Biggan, “Outstanding Faculty in Service”; Ms. Regina Jillapalli, “Outstanding Faculty Member in Teaching”; and Ms. Alisha Johnson, “Outstanding Clinical Instructor”.

Ms. Cynthia Zolnierek, Clinical Associate Professor, was appointed in February 2012 as the Central Region representative to the Texas Nurses Association Governmental Affairs Committee.

PRESENTATIONS AND CONFERENCES

Dr. Lyda Arevalo-Flechas, Assistant Professor, was selected to deliver an oral presentation entitled, “Caregiving Through the Eyes of Hispanic Caregivers,” during the Sigma Theta Tau International’s 23rd International Nursing Research Congress. August 3, 2012, Brisbane, Australia.

Dr. Tiffany Holmes, Coordinator of Simulation Laboratories, attended the International Meeting on Simulation in Healthcare in January 2012 in San Diego where she co-presented a Meet the Sim Pro session entitled, “Other Duties as Assigned: The True Meaning when Running a Simulation Center”. Dr. Holmes also presented a poster co-created with Clinical Assistant Professor Regina Jillapalli entitled, “Teaching Patient Care Time Management and Skills Within a 4-Week Course” and participated in an expert panel discussion on AV solutions within a simulation center.


Ms. Cynthia Zolnierek, Clinical Associate Professor, made the keynote presentation at the annual meeting of the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants held in San Antonio on March 30. Her presentation was entitled, “Responding to a Never Event: Nurse Advocacy in Winkler County”.

Ms. Marylyn Kajs-Wyllie, Clinical Associate Professor:


Ms. Cynthia Zolnierek, Clinical Associate Professor:


PUBLICATIONS

Dr. Lyda Arevalo-Flechas, Assistant Professor:


Dr. Tiffany Holmes, Coordinator of Simulation Laboratories, had an article published in the February 2012 Clinical Simulation in Nursing Journal entitled, “Acquisition of Simulation Skills: A Survey of Users” that she co-wrote with three faculty members from the University of Texas at Arlington College of Nursing. Click HERE to read the article.

Ms. Marylyn Kajs-Wyllie, Clinical Associate Professor:
Nursing Faculty/Staff Achievements (continued)

SERVICE

Dr. Lyda Arevalo-Flechas, Assistant Professor, led a group of nursing students in a community service learning trip to Peru. Please turn to page 4 to read more.

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Dr. Lyda Arevalo-Flechas, Assistant Professor, served on the planning committee for the April 14, 2012, health fair "Tus Medicinas Tu Salud" Brown bag medication that took place at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio. This event serves over 1,000 people annually. During the event she supported nursing, pharmacy, and optometry students with her team of translators (3 RNs and 5 senior girl scouts). The translation team is a key component of this event as health profession students teach a mostly Spanish speaking group of attendees.

Dr. Lyda Arevalo-Flechas, Assistant Professor, was selected as Final Judge for the 19th Annual Spanish Spelling Bee Competition held at the University of The Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Texas February 25, 2012. The competition is sponsored by KWEX-TV/UNIVISION 41.

Ms. Marylyn Kajs-Wyllie, Clinical Associate Professor, represented the St. David’s School of Nursing at the annual College of Health Professions Research Forum on April 10, 2012. As a Research Forum Committee member, Ms. Kajs-Wyllie participated in abstract reviews, poster judging and follow-up.

Where In the World Are Our Grads?

Now that the we have graduated our first class of Nursing students, we want to hear what our new alums are up to since leaving St. David’s School of Nursing.

Click HERE to complete the “Nursing Alumni Update Form” so that we can share your updates in future issues of Nursing on the Rock. It’s a great way to stay in touch!
The St. David's School of Nursing at Texas State University educates and prepares graduates, using innovative teaching strategies and state-of-the-art technology, to function in professional nursing roles to promote, maintain, and restore health and wellness and to prevent illness among diverse individuals and communities. Graduates demonstrate competence as critical thinkers who effectively collaborate as members of the inter-professional health care team and utilize scientifically-based interventions. These future nurses will provide ethical, safe, and effective patient-centered care and contribute to present and emerging research and health management practices.

Help Support the St. David’s School of Nursing!

Click here to learn how you can make a difference!