

Inaugural White
Coat Ceremony



curapersonalis

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF NURSING

Winter 2015

WHAT'S IN A NAME? *Cura Personalis* is a Latin phrase that translates as "care for the entire person." The expression is a hallmark of Ignatian spirituality and describes the Jesuit ideal of encouraging the fullest possible development of all people.

The phrase speaks to the School of Nursing's mission of promoting human dignity and care for the mind, body and spirit of all students. The phrase also promotes the belief that educating future nurses not only requires helping them develop their skills but developing their life purpose and vocation as well.

***Cura Personalis* is published annually by the Saint Louis University School of Nursing and is mailed to alumni and friends.**

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From the Dean

Welcome to the third edition of *Cura Personalis*, Saint Louis University School of Nursing Magazine. This has been an especially exciting year as Dr. Fred Pestello joined Saint Louis University as our 33rd president in July. Dr. Pestello spent his entire 30-year career in Catholic higher education and is the first permanent lay president in the University's nearly 200-year history. We welcome his vision and energy, which is contagious.

For this issue of *Cura Personalis*, we are reinforcing a theme in Dr. Pestello's inaugural address that inspires us all to excellence. "The most important part of the education we offer is not in the facts that are mastered but in the character that is formed," he told us. In this edition of our magazine, you will see examples of the formation of strong character within our nursing students.

We are highlighting our first White Coat Ceremony, which Dr. Pestello joined our nursing faculty in leading. The White Coat Ceremony is a rite of passage that symbolizes the student's recognition that compassionate care is the gold standard for his or her clinical practice. The ceremony reminds us that nursing is the only profession that is synonymous with caring — the origins of nursing lay in the most fundamental of human impulses: to care for those who are sick, frail, helpless or in distress. We were quite proud to have as our keynote speaker Marcus Engel, who shared his personal story of how one nurse's compassionate care brought comfort to him in his darkest hour.

I'm also inspired by stories of our students as they embrace the Jesuit ideal of service to others. Whether they travel more than 1,500 miles to spend a week caring for patients in Honduras or serve in our military, they demonstrate strong character and a commitment to others. The gratitude that we owe our servicemen and service-women is immeasurable, and I'm particularly proud of our nursing students who are members of the military.

Our preceptors play a significant role in our students' character formation. I cannot emphasize strongly enough their importance in providing one-on-one mentorship and guidance to our nursing students during their clinical rotations. I am grateful to those preceptors — many of whom are SLU nursing alums — who give of their time and talent to show the next generation of nurses how to care for patients with compassion and technical proficiency. If you would like to become part of our family of preceptors, please contact School of Nursing faculty member Emily Gunn at 314-977-6653 or by email at egunn2@slu.edu.

In this issue, you'll also find stories about how our 2014 Alumni Merit Recipient touches many lives worldwide via her award-winning textbook and about the research contributions of our faculty as they enhance scholarship in our profession.

In addition to acknowledging the contributions of our faculty and alumni in student character formation, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the generosity of our donors. Because of your contributions, the University's "Go Further" Scholarship program matched \$275,085 in scholarship dollars for the School of Nursing. I am grateful to all who join with us as the School of Nursing continues to serve a higher purpose while seeking the greater good.



“The most important part of the education we offer is not in the facts that are mastered but in the character that is formed.” PESTELLO



Fondly,

Teri A. Murray

Teri A. Murray, ('79, '93, '97) Ph.D., A.P.H.N.-B.C., R.N., F.A.A.N.
Dean, Saint Louis University School of Nursing

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The School of Nursing leads the way in supporting the professionals training the next generation of nurses



TANNER

Nursing Journal Editor to Give Potter Lecture

Christine Tanner, R.N., Ph.D., F.A.A.N., will be the featured speaker for the 2015 William and Grace Potter Lecture.

The title of Tanner's address is, "Knowing the Patient," which refers to both knowing a patient's typical pattern of responses and knowing the patient as a person. Tanner's research indicates knowing the patient is central to skilled clinical judgment and sets up the possibility for patient advocacy and for learning

about patient populations.

Tanner is best known for her 21 years as senior editor for the *Journal of Nursing Education* and for her leadership with the Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education, a statewide coalition of nursing faculty that has developed curriculum to address the nursing shortage in Oregon.

The lecture will be held March 20. For more information contact **Lee Smith** at smithli@slu.edu.

APPRECIATION VISITS



The Billiken made the rounds to area hospitals last spring to show appreciation for the School of Nursing's clinical partners. The Billiken and nursing faculty stopped by Saint Louis University Hospital (the team pictured above), Mercy Hospital, Des Peres Hospital and SSM corporate headquarters with certificates of appreciation for the health care institutions that provide nursing students with robust learning experiences. "Our clinical partners go above and beyond in serving our students and the profession," said Emily Gunn, M.S.N., R.N., clinical placement coordinator. "We wanted to let them know how much we value them."

More Dancing, Less Pain

Dancing eases hip or knee pain and helps older adults move better, according to a School of Nursing study.

"After dancing over several months, the older adults reported less pain and were able to walk faster," said Jean Krampe, Ph.D., R.N., C.P.H.Q., C.L.M., assistant professor of nursing and author of an article published in the journal, *Geriatric Nursing*.

The findings are significant because older adults who walk too slowly are more likely to fall, become hospitalized or require care from others, Krampe said.

"Doctors and nurses recognize gait speed as the sixth vital sign that can help us predict adverse outcomes for older adults," Krampe said. "Walking just a little more rapidly can make enough of a difference for a person to get across the street more quickly or get to the bathroom faster,

which keeps them functional and independent. In our study, those who danced didn't walk dramatically faster, but they had a meaningful change in their walking speed."

In addition, study participants who danced reported that they reduced their consumption of pain medicine by 39 percent, and those who didn't dance said they took 21 percent more pain medicine.

Krampe and her colleagues from SLU's School of Nursing and SLU's department of physical therapy conducted the 12-week study with 34 residents of a senior citizen apartment complex, who were mostly women with an average age of 80.

The specific dance therapy used for the study is known as Healthy-Steps, a low-impact aerobic activity that can be done sitting or standing.

SLU SCHOOL OF NURSING BY THE NUMBERS

643

out-of-state students

1,120 total students

26.6 average ACT score

22

international students

33

states with online students, plus Washington, D.C.

493

online students

53 faculty



Farewell

At a reception last summer, the School of Nursing said goodbye to several long-time faculty members who took advantage of the University's Voluntary Enhanced Retirement Program.

L-R, front row ● Associate Professor **Dorothy Cooke**, Assistant Professor **Diane Malloy**, Associate Professor **Mary Lee Barron**, Associate Professor **Mary Ann Lavin**, Associate Professor **Dorcus McLaughlin**, Assistant Professor **Linda Haycraft**. L-R, back row ● Associate Professor **Andrew Mills**, Associate Professor **Judy Carlson**. Not pictured ● Associate Professor **Deborah Sanazaro**.

Appointments and Awards

Langan Appointed Associate Dean



LANGAN

After a national search, **Joanne Langan, Ph.D., R.N., CNE**, has been named associate dean for undergraduate and pre-licensure education in the School of Nursing, a position she had held on an interim basis.

Educated at the University of Southern Mississippi and George Mason University, Langan has a strong background in nursing administration and education, along with a deep understanding of the Jesuit mission. As associate dean, Langan oversees the faculty and curricula of the four-year traditional baccalaureate, accelerated baccalaureate, R.N.-B.S.N., and accelerated master's programs. Langan has conducted research in the area of disaster nursing, published extensively, presented nationally and internationally, and is the recipient of numerous awards and honors.

Nursing Faculty Captures Top State Nurse Practitioner Award



BENZ

Margaret Benz, ('72, '82, '96) M.S.N.(R), R.N., A.P.R.N., A.N.P.-B.C., assistant professor of nursing, received the AANP State of Missouri Excellence Award, the highest state award from the American Association of Nurse Practitioners for her teaching and clinical expertise.

In addition to teaching the next generation of nurse practitioner students, Benz is a champion for nursing, health care and those who are disenfranchised. She sees elderly and disabled patients in the Saint Louis Housing Authority's Parkview Clinic two and a half days a week, serving as their primary care provider.

Active at St. Patrick Center which serves those who are homeless, Benz also is the nursing representative to the Missouri Health Net Oversight Committee and actively promotes the advancement of the role of nurse practitioners in the state of Missouri.



From Left ● Patrick, Beth, Zachary and Kathy Carron

Family Matters

Four generations of Carrons may have chosen different health care paths, but they all chose SLU

When B.S.N. student Zachary Carron, E.M.T., walks across the stage during commencement ceremonies this May, he will become a fourth-generation SLU graduate and a second-generation nursing graduate.

Carron's paternal great grandfather, Oscar Carron, graduated from SLU School of Medicine in 1929; his paternal grandfather, Dr. Chauncey Carron, graduated from SLU's School of Dentistry in 1958; and his parents, Patrick and Kathy (Zinner) Carron met in nursing school and graduated in 1986 and 1988 respectively.

"It was obvious my parents enjoyed their careers, but they never pressured us to follow in their footsteps," said Carron, whose sister, Beth, is a sophomore in the School of Nursing. "I thought I'd be a paramedic, but while I was working as an intern at Perry County Memorial Hospital, I met some amazing nurses. I saw the different directions a career in nursing could take me. I guess my parents had it right all along."

Carron said Saint Louis University not only is his school, it's his home.

"Our entire family holds SLU in high regard," said Carron, an active service volunteer and finalist for the 2014 March of Dimes Nurse of the Year-Student Nurse. "The Jesuit values have an impact on every aspect of one's life, and I can't think of a better educational environment for someone who's learning how to care for people."

Carron has carried on another tradition started by his family. His father, now CEO of Perry County Memorial Hospital, was a founding member of the School of Nursing Student Nurse Association (SNA) in the 1980s. Patrick Carron served as treasurer and recruited his future wife to replace him when he graduated. Zachary Carron is current president of the SNA, and his sister is treasurer.

"We couldn't have had a better college experience," said Kathy Carron. "Watching our children go to SLU and have the time of their lives while getting the best education possible is very gratifying."

Zachary Carron's grandfather, Chauncey Carron, practiced dentistry in Perryville, Missouri, for 38 years after graduating from SLU.

"When I started at SLU back in the '50s, the professors told me that I'd be getting a liberal arts education," he said. "At the time, I didn't understand how that was going to make me a better dentist. Now I see that the philosophy and sociology are what sustained me throughout my career. I appreciate that my family continues to get that same quality education that I know will sustain them."

Zachary Carron is working as a student nurse in the neurological ICU at Saint Louis University Hospital. He plans to pursue a career in critical care nursing.



From WHITE CAPS *to* WHITE COATS

The School of Nursing Holds its Inaugural White Coat Ceremony

The simple white cotton lab coats draped over the arms of the nursing students appeared insignificant but once those coats were slipped onto their shoulders, they became a source of pride and professionalism.

In November, the School of Nursing held its first-ever White Coat Ceremony for 125 sophomore students, signaling their transition from the classroom to clinical studies. Hundreds of family members and friends filled Saint Francis Xavier College Church to watch the students make their way to the altar for the cloaking.

The White Coat Ceremony, a ritual formerly reserved for medical students, was held for the first time last fall in nursing schools across the nation to emphasize that all health professionals play an essential role in providing compassionate care. The inaugural events were supported by a collaborative partnership between The Arnold P. Gold Foundation and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. The two organizations awarded grants to 100 of the nation's 750 nursing schools to defray the cost of the ceremonies.

"Many of the traditional nursing rites of passage, such as capping and pinning ceremonies, unfortunately have become obsolete," said Associate Dean Joanne C. Langan, Ph.D., R.N., C.N.E., whose successful grant application helped the SON secure the honor. She also was one of the faculty members at the altar cloaking students. "The White Coat Ceremony restores some of that tradition," she noted. "It says, 'I have arrived.' It also welcomes students into their profession at a pivotal time in training. It was an honor to share this experience with them."

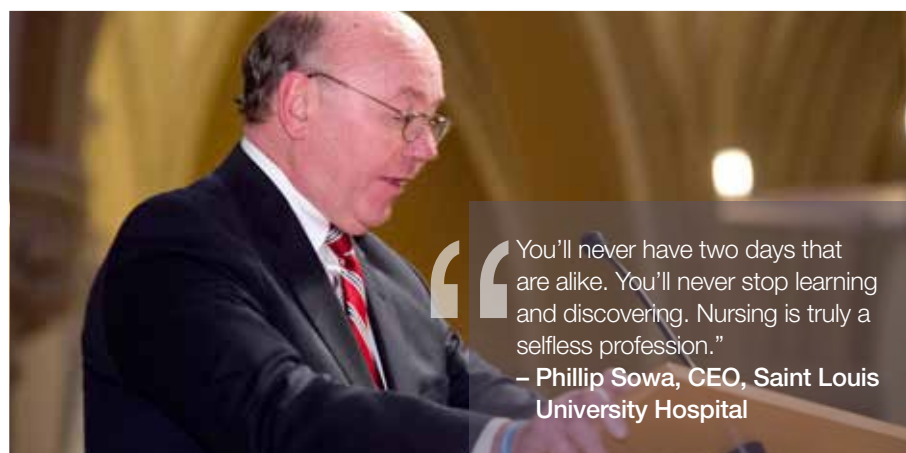
The ceremony will become an annual tradition for the SON's sophomore students.

“It was a privilege to be part of the first White Coat Ceremony. I was touched to see how happy and excited our students were to be taking the first step on their nursing journey.”

— GERALYN A. MEYER, Ph.D., R.N., C.N.E., C.N.L., associate professor and coordinator of the Traditional B.S.N. Option, cloaking sophomore Nick Mayer



“Certainly we prepare you to know the technical details of your profession but much more so in our Catholic and Jesuit traditions, we prepare you to provide care not only with a keen mind but with a compassionate heart and spirited hands. It’s a privilege to participate in this ceremony and to watch you go through your studies at Saint Louis University.”
 — Fred P. Pestello, Ph.D., President of Saint Louis University



“You’ll never have two days that are alike. You’ll never stop learning and discovering. Nursing is truly a selfless profession.”
 — Phillip Sowa, CEO, Saint Louis University Hospital

“It’s a reminder of why we chose this profession and how we can make a difference in someone’s life.”
 — Erik Solorio



“Nurses care for individuals, families and communities when they are most vulnerable. Because of this, compassionate and humanistic care is not only needed but essential. Today’s ceremony is symbolic and celebratory of your commitment to render that care from this day forward.”
 — Teri A. Murray, Ph.D., Dean of the School of Nursing



Cloaks OF COMPASSION

The keynote speaker at the White Coat Ceremony knows a little something about compassionate care. Marcus Engel was a college freshman when he and his friends were driving home from a hockey game 22 years ago. Their car was broadsided by a drunk driver in south St. Louis city and Engel was thrown from the car. The impact crushed every bone in his face and left him completely blind.

He was barely conscious and in “complete and utter darkness” when he arrived at Barnes-Jewish Hospital. Though he couldn’t see, every time he stirred he could feel someone gently squeezing his right hand.

“A voice repeated, ‘Marcus, my name is Jennifer. You were in a car accident. You are in the hospital,’” Engel recalled to the audience. “And then she said the two most compassionate words a human being can say to another: ‘I’m here.’ I didn’t even know where ‘here’ was but I knew that in my pain, terror and darkness, I was not alone.”

It took two years of rehabilitation and more than 300 hours of reconstructive facial surgery before Engel was able to return to college and to realize his mission: change the culture of health care with those two words – I’m here.

“Simple human presence is the cornerstone of compassionate care,” said Engel, founder of the non-profit I’m Here Movement. “It’s also the cornerstone of our movement, which promotes the idea that health care professionals can comfort patients simply by being present.”

Engel is an author and motivational speaker who earned his master’s degree in narrative medicine from Columbia University.

“No matter how much education you get, always remember the power of those two words and, most importantly, remember that interaction between patient and caregiver is the essential foundation of healing.”

Footnote: Engel did not meet the woman who held his hand until two years ago. Jennifer Aycock was a 20-year old emergency room technician when Engel was brought in by paramedics. Now, she is the clinical nurse manager of the surgical ICU at Barnes-Jewish Hospital where Engel received his care. She attended the School of Nursing’s White Coat Ceremony at Engel’s invitation. Engel said meeting her was one of the most precious moments of his life.



“The ceremony demonstrates that nurses play a critical role on the health care team. We’re just as important as doctors, occupational therapists, physical therapists. No one is more valuable than the other.”
 — Aly Fridley



MADRID WHITE COAT

“The ceremony signified that we will be entrusted with the responsibility of providing comfort and care for our future patients. Even though our families couldn’t attend our ceremony in Madrid, the other eight nursing students have become my family while abroad and that made our White Coat Ceremony so incredibly special.”
 — Sherin Thomas, Madrid

HEALING IN HONDURAS

NURSING STUDENTS BRING HOLISTIC CARE TO SMALL VILLAGES

The clinic was in a school yard, the triage “room” was a plastic table under a tree; and the line of patients was 100 deep in the 105-degree heat, but the nursing students never faltered. For a week, they cared for hundreds of patients who walked miles to see them in two Honduran villages.

The School of Nursing students traveled to the Central American country in August with SLU Global Brigades (GB) a student-led global health and development organization that promotes sustainable projects in Panama, Ghana, Nicaragua and Honduras. SLU has had a GB chapter since 2006 and typically organizes two to three mission trips a year. The six nursing students were among 26 SLU students from various programs – chemistry, biomedical engineering, psychology, biology, public health and occupational therapy. They, along with volunteer physicians, nurses and nurse practitioners, treated patients and provided health education classes.

“It was cool watching students disconnect from the modern world and put the needs of others before their own,” said Assistant Professor Christopher Hemmer, D.N.P., R.N., A.N.P.-B.C., R.N., one of three School of Nursing faculty members who traveled with the students.

Associate Professor Kristine L’Ecuyer, Ph.D., R.N., C.C.N.S., C.N.L., was impressed with how tirelessly the students worked. “They threw themselves into the mission,” she said. “They were respectful of the patients and kept things moving, morning to night. It also was great to highlight for the non-nursing students what nurses can do, from performing triage, to checking blood pressure to obtaining an accurate patient history.”

Assistant Professor Kelli M. Fuller, D.N.P., R.N., A.N.P.-B.C., worked alongside the students as well. She said the students benefitted from being part of an interdisciplinary team because the situation reflected the real-world health care environment. Fuller, L’Ecuyer and Hemmer plan to propose that students on future GB missions be given the opportunity to earn academic credit for their service.

“We strongly believe that what they learn in Honduras in a week can be as valuable as anything they can learn here in a semester,” Fuller said. “They get plenty of hands-on experience and a taste of globalization.”

Three of the six nursing students offered to share their GB experiences with *Cura Personalis*: senior Neil Danner, who has participated in two GB missions, sophomore Allison Jedlicka and senior Kate Burrows.

What motivated you to join this medical mission?

DANNER: In the application process, Global Brigades asks why you’re choosing to do a service trip abroad rather than in your own community. I don’t see the separation. As an individual who’s been given many blessings, it’s my duty to spread my talents and gifts to those who are underserved/underprivileged whether they are 3,000 miles or three miles away. I love GB. Everything they do is for the purpose of creating sustainable projects.

JEDLICKA:

I’ve gone on a few mission trips in the past and loved them. I wanted to try something a little bit more outside my comfort zone, something that directly had to do with nursing and helped others in need outside the United States.

BURROWS:

I see myself working overseas when I graduate, and what better way to get my feet wet than to live in Honduras for a week. The goal of GB is not to be just the “medicine man” but to give supplies, education and

personnel to a community that will ultimately function successfully and independently once the brigade has completed its mission there. I wanted to be a part of that holistic model.

Describe a patient encounter that was particularly meaningful to you.

DANNER: It wasn’t so much a patient but a community that touched me. One day, GB took us to El Ojochal to teach us about the microfinance brigades. I helped on a clean water brigade there seven months earlier. I began to

see familiar faces and they recognized me. A little boy I bonded with when I was there in January walked up to me and hugged me. I showed him a picture of us from the earlier trip, and he immediately ran home and put on the same shirt he was wearing in the photo. Likewise, a girl came up to me sobbing and asked if



Above ● Members of the SLU Global Brigades in Honduras.

Left ● Sophomore Shae Genenbacher checking a patient’s vital signs in a village clinic.



I remembered her. In my broken Spanish I told her it made me so happy to see she finally had water. She told me, “All because of you,” to which I said, “I couldn’t have done it without you and your community.” What gets to me about this encounter is that more than 24 GB missions visited that community over 12 months. That’s more than 300 people, and despite only seeing those people for four days seven months ago, they remembered me.

JEDLICKA: There was a girl named Maria who was 12, and she kept looking at me and smiling. She kept trying to get my attention so I kept smiling at her and tried to communicate with her. When we were leaving she gave me a hug and said, “I know we just met

but I feel like we have a bond so thank you so much for everything you have done for us.” It made me realize the simplest thing, such as a smile, can mean so much.

BURROWS: I was touched by a young man who sat down and spoke English. He started listing off his symptoms, and by the end of the conversation he was diagnosed with hypertension, diabetes, allergies, chronic back pain, stomach upset and asthma. When we did the physical exam, however, it revealed no true signs or symptoms that supported the diagnoses. He explained to me and the doctor that his wife, grandmother and newborn child couldn’t make it to the clinic today and he needed to care for them. He presented as having all of their symptoms so he could get medicine for them. He traveled 50 miles to help his family. Selflessness. It’s not something I see every day.

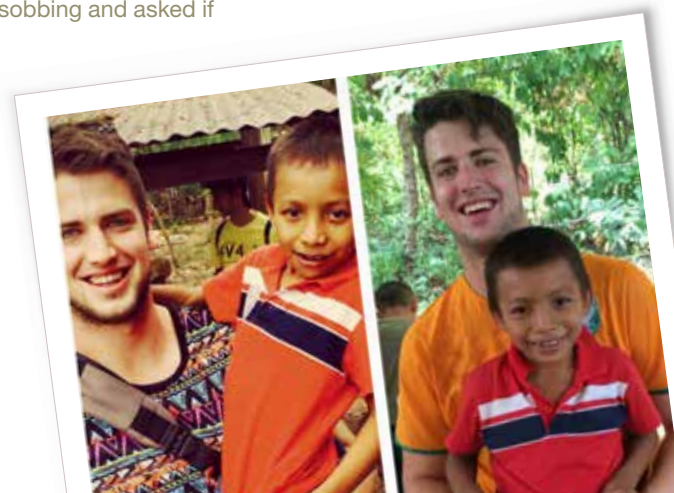
How has this experience helped shape you as a nurse?

DANNER: These trips remind me of why I got into a medical profession. The missions are about more than simply medicine. They’re about identifying community issues that affect a patient’s health. They’re about healing the whole person. Nursing is the exact embodiment of this philosophy. The trips reinforce all the things I’m being taught in a Jesuit, mission-based nursing program. Each trip brings to me a new sense of humility and perspective.

JEDLICKA: To be honest, my freshman year I was a little hesitant about becoming a nurse. I wanted to help people, but other than that I wasn’t 100 percent sure nursing was for me. This trip made me excited and eager to work with patients. One morning we had hundreds of patients lined up outside, and I was scheduled to work triage in the morning and pharmacy in the afternoon. I enjoyed

triage so much that I asked if I could stay there all day. I learned how to take a history and blood pressure readings, and I learned to treat someone not only as a patient but as a person.

BURROWS: Being able to apply the basic skills and knowledge I’ve obtained in nursing school and sharing that with a group of individuals I couldn’t even communicate with, well, that’s amazing. I understand what being a health care professional means. It means to give of yourself so that one day your patients can give of themselves. A quote by Mahatma Gandhi sort of became my anthem after this trip: “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”



Left ● Danner with his young friend. The boy ran home and put on the same shirt Danner had given to him the year before.

HONORED TO SERVE



U.S. Army Captain M. Scott Scammahorn, R.N., B.S.N. (12)

Saint Louis University nursing students had the opportunity to see how members of the U.S. Army provide health care in the field when members of the 5th Medical Recruiting Battalion set up a surgical suite in the Edwin Everest Education Union. The demonstration last fall was part of a program to expose health care students to opportunities available to professionals who want to serve those who have served.

Several students in the School of Nursing already have chosen this path, including a U.S. Army captain.

In 2012, the day before U.S. Army Captain M. Scott Scammahorn, R.N., B.S.N. (12), EMT-P, planned to submit his admissions packet to the School of Nursing's M.S.N.-N.P. program (acute care), news broke about Robert Bales.

Bales, a U.S. Army Staff Sergeant and decorated veteran of four combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, walked off his post in Kandahar in the middle of the night and opened fire on villagers in their homes. He killed 16 people, most of them women and children.

"I was horrified," Scammahorn said. "I read everything I could about the case. By all accounts he was a good soldier who suffered a traumatic brain injury somewhere along the line. He was cleared to go back to combat duty, but obviously something wasn't right. I had to believe that better mental health services might have helped him and prevented this tragedy. That's when I changed course."

Instead of enrolling in the acute care option, Scammahorn chose the psychiatric/mental health track.

"You don't have to look past the current headlines to know that mental health care

is among the largest medical needs in the military," he said. "Psychiatric nurses are on the wartime critical skills shortage list. Helping soldiers is my passion, and I wanted to go where I'd be needed most."

DEFINING MOMENT

Scammahorn has been helping soldiers and civilians one way or another for a quarter of a century. In 1990 at the age of 26, he enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserve; first as an infantry soldier, then as a drill sergeant. While in the Reserve, the Oklahoma native graduated from paramedic school. His overnight shift just ended on April 19, 1995, when a terrorist detonated a bomb in front of the Alfred P. Murrah federal building in downtown Oklahoma City. He triaged and treated dozens of patients that day, including a badly burned, 2-year-old boy who had been in the building's day care center. Scammahorn cradled the boy all the way to the hospital and prayed out loud that he would live.

When he left the EMS garage that day, Scammahorn was convinced he'd never come back. It was only after a friend took him to the hos-



"Our military offers nurses many unique opportunities to serve the medical needs of our servicemen and women. Working as a mental health nurse practitioner is the best way I can think of to help my fellow soldiers." SCAMMAHORN

pital to see that the 2-year-old boy survived that Scammahorn reconsidered.

"Seeing him in the PICU was just the thing I needed to find the will to go on with my career," Scammahorn later wrote in his incident report. "If this little boy had the courage to make it through then I wouldn't give up either."

THE SLU CONNECTION

Scammahorn furthered his training and became a critical care paramedic and a flight paramedic for Mercy Health Center in Oklahoma City. He worked alongside nurses who inspired him to enroll in nursing school.

"I saw the opportunities nurses had for advancement and growth, and I thought it was fantastic," he said. "Plus, challenging myself has been a theme throughout my life."

Scammahorn continued to work as a paramedic and stay active with the Reserve while earning his associate's

degree in nursing from Rose State College. When he explored climbing the clinical ladder even further through on-line studies, a supervisor suggested he look to Saint Louis University.

Scammahorn earned his B.S.N. from SLU in 2012 and began the online M.S.N.-N.P. program the same year. Between his studies and his Reserve obligations, Scammahorn works full time as an emergency department nurse at St. John Broken Arrow in Oklahoma.

When he graduates in December 2015, Scammahorn hopes to serve with a Tulsa-based Army Reserve mental health unit that travels to different posts throughout the country. Scammahorn said he will work in the civilian sector as well, as long as the health care institution accepts TRICARE, the insurance program that covers military members and their families.

"I'm a little too old to be crawling around in the dirt with an M-16," he joked. "Working as a mental health nurse practitioner is the best way I can think of to help my fellow soldiers."



Left ● U.S. Army Sergeant First Class Thomas Fortner shows School of Nursing students what medical equipment is available and how surgeries are performed in a battlefield surgical suite.

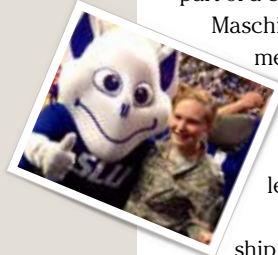


1 Larissa Masching

Age 22 • Senior • Milwaukee

As part of her training, Masching spent last summer on the oncology floor at Madigan Army Medical Center in Fort Lewis, Washington.

"In a military setting there's a mutual understanding because we've all been through similar training," she said, "and the patients were from throughout the country. So, on one hand I was broadening my horizons and on the other I was part of a close-knit community."



Masching values the time management techniques and triage skills she's learned through the ROTC, but most importantly, she values the emphasis on leadership.

"In nursing school, leadership courses don't come until your fourth year, but I've been taking leadership classes all along," she said. "While some students might be intimidated, I'm comfortable speaking to other health care providers, even if they're older than me or have a higher-level position. I think patient care improves when there's better communication on the team."

After she graduates in May, Masching hopes to go on active duty in an Army medical center on an oncology floor.

2 Katherine Wilkerson

Age 22 • Senior • Rolla, Mo.

For more than half of Wilkerson's life the United States has been at war.

"Someone told me that less than one percent of the people in this nation are serving in the military and defending our freedom," she said. "I think that's outrageous. I've always wanted to give back. I want to be that nurse for that soldier coming off the front lines."

Wilkerson's ROTC scholarship to SLU is allowing her to pursue both of her passions.

"Caring for people at their weakest moments truly is a privilege," said Wilk-

erson, who spent a month last summer at Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu. "As a nurse, you're not always doing the fun stuff. Sometimes you're cleaning up fecal matter or vomit, but you find a way to do it so that the patient still feels like a respected human being. I can't think of a greater purpose than that."

Wilkerson hopes to go on active duty with the Army Nursing Corps and eventually work in pediatrics.

3 Lauren Murray

Freshman • Age 18 • St. Charles, Ill.

Murray was attracted to the sense of family the military offered. She played team sports in high school and values the bonds that form between players.

"I've always had that sense of belonging in my life, and I wanted to continue that in my career," she said. "Plus, I really respect anyone who has dedicated his or her life to serving our country. They have a certain passion about what they do, and I want to share that with them."

Last fall, Murray went for a leadership weekend at Fort Leonard Wood, where she rappelled off towers, navigated obstacle courses and participated in group problem-solving exercises.

"I'm learning that I can push myself beyond anything I ever imagined I could do," Murray said.

After graduation, Murray hopes to go on active duty as a nurse in a U.S. Army hospital emergency room – preferably overseas.

4 Shelby Aleksick

Senior • Age 23 • St. Charles, Mo.

In addition to her School of Nursing courses, Aleksick is required to take electives in Military Science where she learns land navigation, basic soldier skills, survival skills and military mission strategy.

"These courses may not seem applicable to nursing practice," she said. "I won't be conducting an ambush anytime soon, but the courses are designed to

help us develop our leadership skills and those skills I definitely will use as a nurse."

Aleksick put her skills to the test last summer when she completed a nursing internship at the San Antonio Military Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston.

"Being able to provide health care to soldiers who've served in Vietnam, or Desert Storm or Iraq is incredibly rewarding and a privilege. I'm inspired by them," she said.

After she graduates Aleksick hopes to go on active duty with the U.S. Army Nurse Corps and eventually become a flight nurse.



5 Kayla Howard

Sophomore • Age 19 • Cincinnati

Howard joined the Air Force ROTC during her sophomore year.

"The military constantly stresses that everything you do is for the person standing next to you. That's exactly what nursing is about for me," she said.

That, and having the right attitude.

"Nurses work long hours and handle tasks that aren't always pleasant, but if you have a positive attitude, it makes all the difference in the world. You can care for someone in ways you never thought you could."

Howard was on the receiving end of that care last fall. She fell during a civilian mud run and obstacle course, and dislocated her shoulder. Howard's fellow cadets helped care for her as she healed.



"The military is a family. I'm part of something bigger than me and I find that humbling," she said.

After graduation, Howard hopes to go on active duty and eventually serve as an Air Force flight nurse.

2014 Alumni Merit Award Recipient

If the name "Potter" rings a bell to nursing students throughout the world, it's probably because they've seen the name printed across one of their core textbooks.

For nearly three decades, Patricia Potter ('78, '02) and Anne Griffin Perry ('76), M.S.N., R.N., Ed.D., F.A.A.N., have co-authored *Fundamentals of Nursing*, a seminal text for nursing students at SLU and throughout the world.

But widespread notoriety was never Potter's ambition.

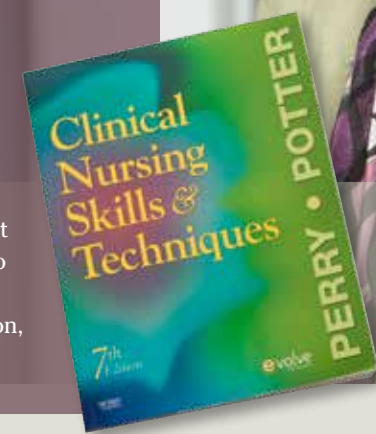
After earning her M.S.N. from the School of Nursing in 1978, she joined the faculty as an assistant professor. Her introduction to the world of publishing came when Potter volunteered to help Perry, a fellow faculty member, edit a brief book about shock for publisher C.V. Mosby.

Soon after submitting the manuscript, the duo earned a much weightier assignment: the creation of a new fundamentals textbook.

The 1,600-page book's first edition, published in 1985, required more than two-and-a-half years to write, with each author drafting 26 chapters.

"I was working fulltime at the time, so I spent every weekend getting up at 5 a.m. and writing," Potter said. "I hand wrote every word on legal pads, and then my assistant editor typed it all for me. You can imagine how the advent of the computer has made a difference in my life."

The book has evolved into an ongoing project that encompasses the writing of four books (two core texts and two skills texts) every four years. The authors are currently drafting the 9th edition, scheduled to be released in 2016.



Patricia A. Potter

Ph.D., M.S.N., R.N., F.A.A.N.

THE NURSING CONNECTION

Complementing Potter's publishing work has been her flourishing nursing career.

In 1981, she joined Barnes Hospital in St. Louis as a nurse manager. She earned a series of promotions and eventually was appointed director of nursing practice, overseeing nurse specialists, performance improvement and nursing standards.

After Barnes Hospital merged with Jewish Hospital, Potter decided to take a leave of absence in 1996 and return to SLU's School of Nursing to pursue her doctoral degree.

Armed with her Ph.D., she returned to Barnes-Jewish Hospital in 1999, initially serving as a research scientist within the oncology area before assuming her current role as director of research for patient care services for the entire hospital.

"I have a staff of six remarkably talented people, and we conduct research as well as evidence-based practice projects," she said. "It's been extremely rewarding and has allowed me to continue to write, while working at a nice balance and pace."

JOINING THE WALL OF FAME

Potter credits her parents for instilling the values and work ethic that has sustained her career.

"Neither of my parents went to college, and I was an only child, so they were pretty excited when I graduated and went on to nursing," she said. "They were two marvelous people, but neither one was around to see how the books and my career developed."

To honor their memory, in 2006, Potter established an endowed memo-

rial scholarship that assists SLU doctoral students engaged in qualitative research. More recently, she created the annual William and Grace Potter Lecture, which brings international scholars to campus each spring to discuss innovations in health care research and practice.

"At the awards luncheon, they surprised me by reading some letters and also inviting a couple of guests who spoke about what they were able to achieve through the scholarship," she said. "In a couple of cases, it sparked a series of collaborations for developing new knowledge, which was really rewarding to hear."

And, through a new scholarship she established, Potter is making it possible for deserving high-school students in Ferguson, Mo., to attend nursing school.



The School of Nursing Leads the Way in Recruiting and Retaining

Preceptors

Eve Holzemer ('97, '10), D.N.P., M.S.N., A.N.P.-B.C., is a natural born preceptor. As one of nine children — she's in the middle — taking care of and being a role model for younger siblings was part of the territory.

"I learned early on that we should be givers as well as takers," she said.

This philosophy has infused Holzemer's personal life as well as her professional career. For more than 20 of her 30 years as a nurse, Holzemer has served as a preceptor, or mentor, to dozens of SLU nursing students.

Much like being an older sister, a preceptor's hours are long, the job doesn't pay and there is no academic training — at least not when Holzemer was starting out. The rewards, however, are plenty.

"Being a preceptor is time well spent," said Holzemer, manager of the Women Veterans Program and clinical manager for the Veterans Administration St. Louis Health Care System. "When you empower a nurse, you empower every nurse he or she teaches, and this has a direct impact on the quality of patient care."

"When you empower a nurse, you empower every nurse he or she teaches." HOLZEMER

Above ● Eve Holzemer (right), a longtime School of Nursing preceptor, guides Janet Severine, N.P., as she works toward her doctoral degree.

Bridging Theory to Practice

Clinical exposure is an essential component of nursing education, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Preceptors play a key role in helping students to bridge the gap between the classroom and clinical practice. Preceptors serve as role models, demonstrate skills and provide constructive feedback to students.

"If we didn't have preceptors we wouldn't be able to provide nursing education at any level," said Joanne Thanavaro, D.N.P., A.P.R.N., A.N.P.-B.C., D.C.C., F.A.A.N.P., associate professor of nursing and associate dean of graduate education. "That's how important they are to what we do."

In 2014, the School of Nursing utilized 903 preceptors across 33 states for advanced practice students, and another 248 preceptors for undergraduate students.

Supply and Demand

Recruiting preceptors has become increasingly difficult as competition for clinical sites swells and nursing faculty shortages continue to place a strain on the system. According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's 2013 report on "Enrollment and Graduations in Baccalaureate and Graduate Programs," U.S. nursing schools turned away more than 78,000 qualified applications due to insufficient faculty,

funding, clinical sites, classroom space and clinical preceptors.

The School of Nursing has a clinical placement coordinator to help students find preceptors. Due to the growing number of advanced practice students and the fact that preceptors can't always oversee a student every semester, the School of Nursing continually works to replenish its preceptor bank.

Yet quality rather than quantity is the primary driver of a national conversation on preceptors. How do you recruit excellent preceptors? How do you retain them? Should formal training be mandatory, and how do you facilitate training when your advanced practice programs are online and many of your preceptors are practicing outside the St. Louis area, as is the case with the School of Nursing?

Payment Plans

Any conversation about recruiting and retaining professionals turns to incentives, financial or otherwise. Some schools may offer small stipends to preceptors; some offer perks, such as laptops or tablets. Many more, including SLU, offer free continuing education courses and access to conferences and lectures, but the preceptors are unpaid.

A 2012 study by the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions in Boston found that the top five incentives for precepting are: professional obligation; learning opportunities as a preceptor; association with faculty; association with students; and confidence with clinical expertise. Financial remuneration was number seven.

Nancy Cibulka ('06), Ph.D., R.N., W.H.N.P.-B.C., F.N.P.-B.C., adjunct clinical instructor in OB-GYN at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and adjunct assistant professor at the SLU School of Nursing, has served as a preceptor for 20 years. Cibulka considers nursing knowledge an asset to be shared, not sold.

"Educating the next generation of health care providers is our professional obligation," she said. "It's satisfying, fulfilling and energizing to work with students. That's payment enough."

Sandra Tempelhoff ('06, '08), B.S.N., R.N., a registered nurse advisor at Cigna Health Insurance and a nurse practitioner student who graduates in May, agrees. She is concerned that if preceptors are paid or offered other tangible incentives, some nurses may step up for the wrong reasons.

"I wouldn't want a preceptor who is motivated by anything other than altruism."

TEMPELHOFF



Severine (left) and Holzemer

"A nurse may be very strong clinically but cannot teach or guide you when you need it the most," she said. "Your preceptor sets the tone for your semester and, in many ways, your career. Not everyone is cut out for it."

Tempelhoff recalls one of her preceptors who, upon being asked by a colleague whether she was precepting again, rolled her eyes and complained she was going to be stuck with a student for an entire semester. Tempelhoff had a more positive experience with her clinical rotation through women's health. Tempelhoff initially had little interest in the specialty but her preceptor was so nurturing, open and supportive that Tempelhoff considered women's health as a career path.

"I wouldn't want a preceptor who is motivated by anything other than altruism," said Tempelhoff, whose preceptor for that clinical rotation through women's health was Cibulka.

Training the Trainer

Even if a nurse is willing to serve as a preceptor, he or she may need and want some training to prepare for the role. Previously, once a nurse had a couple of years of clinical experience and felt comfortable in that position, he or she was considered qualified to be a preceptor.

But clinical competency no longer is qualification enough for preceptors in a rapidly evolving health care environment. Preceptors are expected to demonstrate not only how to do something; they must explain why it's done a certain way. They are expected to be aware of the latest research in their specialty and to know how to assess students on safety issues, efficiency, effectiveness and time management.

Formal training for preceptors is a relatively new concept. Within the last five years, there has been an explosion of preceptor training

programs, especially online. In spite of research that demonstrates preceptors benefit from and desire this training, no standardized or universally accepted guidelines for preceptor training exist. Some health care facilities offer preceptor preparedness education programs — ranging from a few hours to a few days — but not all require that nurses complete the programs before they're assigned to work as a preceptor.

The School of Nursing is taking an active role in the national discussion and is developing a reputation as an innovator in preceptor training strategies. Through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Executive Nurse Fellows program, Dean Teri A. Murray ('79, '93, '97), Ph.D., A.P.H.N.-B.C., R.N., F.A.A.N., secured grant funding to work with faculty members on creating an online comprehensive course to train nurses to be preceptors for undergraduate students. The course covers techniques for facilitating clinical learning; learning styles; generational issues; preceptor-preceptee relationships; conflict management techniques; and evaluator processes.

Support System

At the advanced practice level, School of Nursing faculty members developed an award-winning wiki to orient and train its preceptors. The wiki outlines course descriptions, which help preceptors understand exactly what students are expected to learn. It also lists faculty contacts and contains a tool box loaded with the latest literature on preceptorships in nursing education. The National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties awarded the wiki the Outstanding Electronic Poster Award in 2012.

Nancy Bickel ('91, '10), M.S.N., A.P.R.N., A.C.N.P.-B.C., A.C.N.S.-B.C., has been a nursing

"SLU provides more structure and resources for their preceptors than other programs."

BICKEL

For more information about becoming a preceptor, contact **Emily Gunn, R.N.**, clinical placement coordinator, at **314-977-6653** or by email at **egunn2@slu.edu**.

preceptor for 20 years. She mentored SLU advanced practice students in Florida before taking a position as a nurse practitioner in the department of anesthesia and critical care at Washington University School of Medicine in 2014. She said she appreciates having access to the wiki.

"I feel SLU provides more structure and resources for their preceptors than other programs," said Bickel. "Continuity for the students between didactic and clinical sessions is critical for their success in the program."

The School of Nursing also is a leader in quality control. In addition to site visits to clinical settings in the St. Louis area, School of Nursing faculty members work closely with preceptors to assess preceptor-preceptee relationships.

Holzemer appreciates these efforts because she said that relationship has a significant impact on student learning outcomes.

"The relationship between student and mentor during a student's nursing education has a profound effect on his or her formation as a nurse," she said. "And the best part is that the relationship works both ways."



Severine (left) and Holzemer

"If we didn't have preceptors, we wouldn't be able to provide nursing education at any level."

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The Saint Louis University School of Nursing Executive Advisory Board is composed of alumni and friends. Members support Dean Teri Murray with the school's planning and development activities. The board serves as stakeholders to further the School of Nursing's mission, scope, goals and programs. Members also help facilitate communication with the public and other community stakeholders, challenge the school's administration to make periodic reviews of its activities and expand the School of Nursing's circle of friends and supporters.

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April 4 ● Alumni Easter Egg Hunt

May 13 ● Sigma Theta Tau Induction

May 14 ● Pre-Commencement

May 16 ● Commencement

Sept. 25 ● White Coat Ceremony

Sept. 25-27 ● Homecoming and Family Weekend 2015

CONTINUING EDUCATION

March 20 ● Third annual William and Grace Potter Lecture. Featured speaker: Christine Tanner, Ph.D., R.N., F.A.A.N., recently retired interim dean of the School of Nursing at the Oregon Health Science University and senior editor for the *Journal of Nursing Education*

May 29 ● Pharmacology Day for the Primary Care Provider

Oct. 1-2 ● Advanced Practice Nursing Conference

Oct. 16 ● Saint Louis University Hospital/ School of Nursing Research Day

Oct. 29 ● Advanced Practice Nursing Workshop Day **June**

2-3 ● Comprehensive Brain Anatomy and Neurological Assessment

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