

Hartwick Nursing News

Spring 2010

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Jeanne-Marie Havener
Ph.D., APRN, CNS

As we go to press I am surrounded by the mounting stress and fatigue that comes at the end of the semester. I hear students and faculty alike saying, "I can't wait for summer," "I can't wait for graduation," "I wish the semester were over," "I just want some sleep," "I am so tired," and so forth. Mind you, as a pragmatic realist, these are all understandable statements, but they also are all symptomatic of the need, within our busy lives, to reclaim some personal control. I am reminded of the fact that we bring meaning to the events of our lives; that is, stress is not necessarily a given fact, rather it is something we ascribe to an event or events. Further, as a nurse researcher with a great deal of interest in the topic of fatigue, I know that nurses are at high risk for fatigue because we take on too much; that is, we often create some of our own stress, i.e., "you are not in the traffic jam, you are the traffic jam." Throughout the day I remind myself and others to take a deep breath, take a moment to experience a sense of joy or peace, and enjoy some simple moment in the day. Yes...life can be stressful, particularly when you are a nurse or a nursing student, but we should all commit to making ourselves "the first patient" and slow down, and feel the rhythm of being alive. You deserve it. Our patients deserve it. Best wishes to you for a safe and happy summer! Please keep in touch.

Emerson International Internship Experience in Ghana, West Africa

By Vicki Luppino '10

This year I was the recipient of an Emerson International Internship Scholarship; during January I visited Ghana, where I observed and studied how health officials have been combating the HIV/AIDS epidemic. I worked side-by-side with the locals providing care at a hospital and providing public education about the disease in the schools.

The first thing I learned was that nursing is very different in Ghana. Despite my preparation and research I was surprised by Ghana's healthcare system and their limited resources.

My experience began in the village of Hohoe at the District Hospital on the children's ward and the HIV visiting clinic. The hospital is the only healthcare facility with an isolation ward for patients with tuberculosis and River Disease.

Ghanaians have a relaxed work ethic; nurses might be found charting while gathered around a television or talking on their cell phones. A "no problem" attitude prevails; they believe everything will happen in time and so, why stress.

Nurses in Ghana complete either a two year nursing certificate program or a college degree in nursing. While I did not learn about the nursing curriculum in Ghana, I did witness how the nurse on the children's ward was a secretary, cashier, gatekeeper, and assistant to the physician. They work eight-hour shifts, six days a week and do not get official breaks for meals; if they are sick and need time off they get paid.



Nurses also control hospital visiting hours: 4:30-6 a.m. and 6:30-8 p.m. The doors are bolt locked during the off hours. Mothers may be permitted to stay at their child's bedside but are given only a stool and must bring food and water from home. Doctors' rounds are early in the morning and the nurse accompanies the physician as he talks to the mom and writes orders. The doctor-to-patient ratio in Ghana is 1:10,000. Fifteen doctors and 150 nurses are employed at the district hospital. Most of the admitted patients were being treated for malaria or sepsis. There is only one crash cart for code blues in the entire hospital and it is kept in the labor and delivery room. The experience I had in Ghana has reinforced my nursing philosophy to provide holistic care for the patient and family in a non-judgmental manner and to consider the social and cultural context when caring for or educating a patient. For example, I cannot tell an HIV-

positive mother not to breastfeed her infant if she does not have access to baby formula or if it is socially unacceptable not to breastfeed. During my time in Ghana I made home visits to HIV-positive patients. Because of the social stigma surrounding a diagnosis of HIV in this country, members of the healthcare team dressed in street clothes when visiting patients so we would not arouse suspicious neighbors.

This experience away from the high "tech" world of a modern hospital also reminded me that the little things a nurse can do for a patient – teaching, counseling, and demonstrating care and understanding of the person as a human being – are as important as the medical interventions. For example, one day I spent some time playing catch with a 6-month old baby using a small balloon; he giggled as he caught the balloon while his mom looked on and smiled. As the sign on the wall in the children's ward reminded me, "You are here for the patient, without them we would not be here"... Indeed, it was a privilege to be with these nurses and patients, one I will not soon forget.

This experience away from the high "tech" world of a modern hospital also reminded me that the little things a nurse can do for a patient – teaching, counseling, and demonstrating care and understanding of the person as a human being – are as important as the medical interventions.

Rural Health Nursing 2010: Life Outside the City

By Christie Traynor and Sarah Johnson



During J Term this year eight junior nursing students had the opportunity to learn about the various health beliefs and practices that exist right here in rural upstate New York. Since most of us are from urban or suburban areas, this was an eye-opening experience. During the month-long course, we were exposed to concepts about rural culture including distance, isolation, lack of anonymity, and occupation—all of which influence healthcare in rural areas.

Tina Sullivan, Ph.D.-C, RN, FNP-C led the course; her expertise in rural healthcare and occupational hazards such as farming accidents provided us with unique insights, and her enthusiasm for the subject matter made learning fun. During the experience we engaged in health promotion, disease prevention, risk reduction, and illness/disease management with different nurses in the rural community, including those from public health, home care, and the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health.

After an investigation of surrounding counties, including Delaware, Otsego, and Chenango, we concluded that many rural residents lack

immediate access to healthcare, a factor that should be considered when working with this population. We saw firsthand the geographic barriers that exist to healthcare as we traveled alongside home health nurses as they visited patients in remote rural communities. At the conclusion of the course we took a trip to a large dairy farm near Cooperstown, where we were able to explore the benefits and health risks of working in the agricultural industry. We also had the chance to play with baby pigs, milk cows, and observe the vast assortment of farming equipment and machinery that workers use daily. Seeing the farm equipment made it easier for us to understand the risks of using such powerful and dangerous machinery.

The experiences that we had with our small group allowed us to build close friendships and share new insights related to rural culture and rural nursing practice. Although we trucked through snow and cold weather, we were able to get firsthand accounts of what it is like to live and face the challenges of living in a rural area and how this impacts health. This is something that we will always keep in mind throughout our future professions.

Partnership for Nursing Opportunities

Hartwick College's Partnership for Nursing Opportunities with Bassett Healthcare began its ninth year in September. RNs from Bassett this fall included Mark Anderson, Shannon Baker, Rebecca Dianich, Karen Faller, Jennifer Fina, Rachel Gural, Krista Puffer, Alicia Sagendorf, and Anna von Tsurikov. Over the next two years these RNs will continue their nursing education and graduate in December 2011 with a bachelor of science degree with a major in Nursing. The junior RN students take two courses in the fall; Dr. Ray McPhail teaches American Short Stories and Dr. Jeanne-Marie Havener teaches the RN Transition Seminar. Both classes are taught at Bassett Healthcare. Writing Your Spiritual Autobiography was taught by Dr. Alice Lichenstein.

This December the Partnership Program will graduate six students:

Errico Agostino, Mary Farrell, Vicki Luppino, Nanette Root, Steven Connors, and James Truesdell.

This past December, Partnership students Cathy Coughlin-Phraner, Robin Lopez, Denise Ruley Famolaro, Melissa Worthington, Brittany Decker, Patricia Otis, and Carrie Stockwell attended the Nursing Pinning Ceremony and conferral of their Hartwick degree at Bassett Healthcare. Dr. Jeanne Marie Havener, Nursing Chair; Dr. Michael Tannenbaum, Provost and VP of Academic Affairs; and Dr. William Streck participated in the ceremony. Congratulations to all.

Hartwick's Partnership for Nursing Opportunities with Bassett Medical Center is accepting applications for its 10th cohort.

Student News

Senior Thesis Podium and Poster Presentations

On March 23, 26 senior nursing students presented their research topics at Senior Thesis. This year 11 students gave podium presentations, with the remaining 15 displaying their posters and discussing the research and answering questions. The Hartwick Nursing Web site will have a list of senior nursing students and topics of their Senior Thesis.

Lobby Day By Sara Cunningham '10

Hartwick senior nursing students, accompanied by Professor Emeritus Sharon D. Dettenrieder '65, headed to Albany, New York on April 20 to meet with legislators of New York State regarding four bills: nurse staffing ratios, prosecution of violence against nurses, mandatory continuing nursing education, and safe patient handling. Nursing students lobbied for their legislators' support of the bills. Attendance for this New York State Nurses Association-sponsored event was around 2,200 registered nurses and nursing students.

And the award goes to . . .

Malorey Muzzy '14, who will enter Hartwick this fall as a Nursing major, has been honored as one of 28 winners of the Student Community Service Award presented by Senator Thomas Libous, BOCES, and WBNG-TV. Muzzy will graduate from Oxford Academy, where she excels in the classroom and on the playing fields. She makes time to volunteer in Oxford, including with the Big Brother Big Sister program, which she enjoys. We welcome Malorey and hope she will continue to be involved in community service.

Accelerated Summer 2009 and 2010

Six students enrolled in the nursing program last summer. The Accelerated Summer Program was taught by Nursing Professors Cynthia Ploutz and Tina Sullivan. The 2010 Accelerated Summer Program, beginning in June, has 12 students enrolled.





FRIENDS OF HARTWICK NURSING FUND

This past fall the Department of Nursing launched the Friends of Hartwick Nursing Fund. Please consider making a gift this spring to the Friends of Hartwick Nursing Fund. Your support will have a direct impact on enriching the experiences of current Nursing students.

The restricted fund will provide resources for scholarships for Transcultural Nursing, nursing lab equipment, faculty development, Nursing Students without Borders, and the Hartwick College Association of Nursing Students. Each individual gift, no matter its size, helps us to advance as one of the top nursing programs in the Northeast. If you would like to make a gift to the Friends of the Nursing Fund, contact Stacey Grady '03 at 607-431-4044. Your support is greatly appreciated by our students and faculty.

2010 January Term in Jamaica By Colleen Moran, Gabrielle Evans and Chelsey Gill

On January 3, 22 nursing students arrived in Jamaica – thousands of miles out of our comfort zone and unprepared for such a life-changing experience. As we disembarked in our sweatshirts and boots, the heat felt unbearable.

During the first few days we stayed at Eltham training center outside of Ocho Rios. During our stay at Eltham, we attended classes, watched films, and became more prepared for working in the communities of St. Thomas Parish. We explored downtown Ocho Rios and gained knowledge in the classroom about what we would find. Initially, we found it hard not having the luxuries we are accustomed to; later, we came to appreciate even the simplest of pleasures like food, running water, screened windows, locks on doors, electricity, or the availability of the Internet.

As we moved through the experience we worked in the communities with people who live everyday in this warm climate without running water, a steady supply of food, basic sanitation, adequate shelter, and, sometimes, clothing. We learned that education is a privilege and that what constitutes healthcare often depends on your place in society. In the face of poverty, nothing is easy and even simple things can be difficult to access. People work long and hard to earn what they have, and often even that is not enough.

Our group had the unique experience of being in Jamaica when catastrophe, in the form of an earthquake, struck the neighboring island of Haiti. The aftershocks, quite honestly, were both physical and emotional. It was scary to be so close to the suffering and ... Tsunami warnings? Who would ever have thought about such a thing, but we survived and had quite the story to tell! As the days

and weeks passed by we also witnessed the generous spirit of the Jamaicans as they raised money for the Haitian relief efforts.

Along with the kindness of the people, the food was unique, and we sampled a lot of dishes unfamiliar in our own culture. We all indulged in the sweetness of the sugar cane and jack fruit, along with many other exotic native fruits such as nesberrys, papaya, and Jamaican apples. "Rice and peas," otherwise known as rice and kidney beans, became a staple of our diet as did chicken and fish in a plethora of forms – grilled, jerked, curried, fried, barbecued, you name it, we ate it. We even sampled liver and onions (for breakfast), curried goat, acki and saltfish, and spice bun with cheese.

We learned about the impact that reggae legend Bob Marley had on modern Jamaican culture. His music was often blasting in the streets and his face could be seen plastered on shirts, posters, paintings, figurines, and much more. As well, we saw how the Rastafarian colors – red, black, and green – melded culturally and symbolically with the national colors of green, black, and yellow.

We also learned how "soon come," a widely used phrase in the Jamaican lexicon, could easily mean five minutes or five hours. However, we were lucky to find two bus drivers, Peat and Melvin, who understand that time is not a culturally relative concept for Americans, particularly American nurses.

Through the hard work we enjoyed our fair share of laughs, tears, sunburns, and episodes of running belly! We grew closer and more comfortable as classmates and friends. We learned to counter each other's weaknesses and depend on each other in a more personal way.



When we weren't doing the required work such as journals, reading for post conferences, putting together our case study, or preparing for our next day with our families, we enjoyed the cliff jumping at the Blue Hole, swimming in the Glistening Waters, hiking Dunn's River and Reich Falls, bartering in the markets, searching for shells, swimming in the waves, making sand castles, and soaking up the sun.

With the guidance and support of four nursing professors, **Sharon Dettenrieder**, **Penny Boyer**, **Jeanne-Marie Havener** (and husband Jim), and student-teacher and alum **Shelley Polinsky Lynch '00**, we learned and experienced a great deal. We also are thankful to **Nanette Root**, an RN in the Bassett Partnership Program with Hartwick, who completed her clinical experience in Jamaica; she was a great addition to the group.

The experience of going to Jamaica benefitted not only our personal, but also our professional lives. We are so thankful that Hartwick offers the opportunities to study abroad. It is one of the things that truly sets our program apart from others.

ALUMNI NEWS

Laura Palada '88 was awarded the Lisa Hunter Memorial Nurse of Excellence Award from A.O. Fox Memorial Hospital during National Nurses Week 2010.

Shelley Polinsky Lynch '00 recently graduated with a master of science degree in nursing from Grand Canyon University in the nurse-educator track; Shelley will begin a nurse practitioner program this fall.

Amy Witherell '00 was awarded the 2010 Nursing Excellence Award by Beth Israel-Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, MA during the Nurses Week celebration. Congratulations, Amy!

Laura Nestor '05 has been accepted to Michigan State University's FNP program and plans to start in the fall.

Caitlin Niedzialkowski '07 has been accepted to CRNA School at University of New England in Portland, Maine.

Amelia Feller '09 was accepted at Russell Sage College, where she will continue her education.

Jennie Walker '09 is working and enjoying her new lab mix dog, Sadie. She's thinking of travel nursing to expand on experiences before returning to school.

Melissa (Missy) Worthington '09

went on a medical mission trip representing the NYSNA to Haiti. She reports that "It was hard to see the devastation but rewarding to know that we were able to help by setting up a field hospital, which had an OR, inpatient unit, OB, and ER!" Missy recently was accepted to the Kaiser School of Anesthesia.



Wick Nurses Blog

Check out www.hartwick.edu to read the Wick Nurses Blog. **Christina Evans '10**, **Catherine Bell '11**, and **Rebecca Martt '11** are answering questions and writing about their activities in the Nursing program.

Casey Smith '94, RN

Operations Manager at Memorial Hermann, Houston, Texas

I entered Hartwick in the fall of 1990 and had thought that my career in nursing would be pretty straightforward. Go to Hartwick, graduate with my B.S. in Nursing, pursue a master's degree, and enjoy my nursing career. I had no idea at the time how Hartwick's nursing program would give me the skills I would need to ensure a successful nursing career, in paths that have been far from ordinary. These skills have allowed me to rise to the position of lead Operations Administrator for the busiest trauma center in the country, Memorial Hermann-TMC in Houston, Texas.

In this role I have had the opportunity to work with the national media on stories and events that affect us all. Just this past summer, I worked closely with *Nightline* as they did a story about Hermann and the impact of the current healthcare crisis on the volume and type of care seen in emergency and trauma settings. It was quite exhilarating to watch the *Nightline* team as they realized the magnitude of patients that we receive, the stories – both happy and sad – that trauma leaves in its wake, and the pace at which we are able to operate, and operate smoothly; this was not lost on them. Helping to coordinate the shoots and the patients for them to see, as well as maintaining the regular operations of the Trauma Center, was very hectic. Their visit led to a very positive portrayal of the hard work that nurses do every day.

