Nursing Programs Continue Growth, Train Top-Notch Health Care Professionals

Benedictine’s Nursing programs have undergone several significant changes in recent years to meet rising demands for highly educated health care professionals in Illinois, across the country and abroad. These changes necessitated the significant expansion of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.S.N.) program from 2009 to 2012 through an Illinois Board of Higher Education grant, the launch of several Registered Nurse (RN) to BSN partnerships with community colleges and the Master of Science in Nursing (M.S.N.) program to prepare more nurses to advance their careers as leaders in a complex and constantly evolving health care system. Both the RN to BSN and M.S.N. programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

Nursing Program Highlights:

2007 Partnerships developed with the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn and Triton College in River Grove to offer the RN to BSN program on their campuses, making the program accessible to a greater number of students.

2009 Benedictine University at Springfield extended the program to students in rural Illinois through a partnership with Memorial Medical Center in Springfield.

2009 M.S.N. online program launched.

2012 Two concentrations added to the M.S.N. program. The Nurse Educator concentration (to prepare educators in clinical and academic settings through application of knowledge in instructional design, teaching and learning theory, curriculum development and evaluation of learning) and the Nurse Executive Leader concentration (to develop nursing leaders to influence, design, transform and evaluate health systems and services).

2013 Partnerships developed at Morton College in Cicero and Richland Community College in Decatur and M.S.N. and Master of Business faculty collaborate to launch the dual M.S.N./M.B.A. program for roles in nursing that require advanced expertise in finance, economics, operations, marketing and management.

2014 In span of seven years, Benedictine graduates landmark 1,000 students in both B.S.N. and M.S.N. programs.

Providing an affordable and attainable education:

“I am so excited about learning how to manage the accreditation process and growing into my new role. I plan to pursue certification as a Joint Commission professional once I meet the requirements of two years in the role of accreditation manager.”

Rosanne Tombrello, C14, M.S.N.
Manager of accreditation and patient safety
Brookwood Medical Center
Birmingham, Ala.

“I believe nurses deserve leaders that have the knowledge and capability to lead them to greatness. That’s why I earned my M.S.N. to help nurses become leaders in their own practice so they can improve patient care.”

Gretchen Pacholek, C14, M.S.N.
Director of surgical services
University of Chicago Medicine
Chicago, Ill.

“The M.S.N. program was a great fit for me because it allowed me to continue my full-time work schedule and give 100 percent in my academic studies. The courses are extremely engaging and the web format you will be using throughout the program is easy to navigate and visually appealing.”

Tasia Porter, C13, M.S.N.
Nurse, West Palm Beach VA Medical Center
West Palm Beach, Fla.

“I cherished my entire experience at Benedictine because it gave me a broader knowledge base and a broader sense of who I am as a person. The instructors not only gave constructive criticism that I put to use in my daily life, but the courage to reach for greater things, which is astounding.”

Amy Seratt, C13, B.S.N.
Clinical informatics nurse, Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital
Downers Grove, Ill.

“The program was very convenient and affordable, and the support and assistance from staff and professional faculty made starting the program and continuing through possible.”

Anne Lipira, C13, B.S.N.
Cardiac rehabilitation nurse, Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital
Downers Grove, Ill.
Former U.S. Attorney General Gonzales Examines Legal Ethics, Career

Former U.S. Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales gave lawyers and community members a crash course in protecting client interests in times of organizational crisis in July on the second floor of the Krasa Center at Benedictine University.

Gonzales, who served as White House counsel under President George W. Bush from 2001-2005 and became the first Hispanic U.S. Attorney General, serving from 2005-2007, was invited to speak at Benedictine by the nonpartisan Center for Civic Leadership (CCL). Established in 2005 under the direction of former Illinois Attorney General Jim Ryan, a 1969 Benedictine graduate and Distinguished Fellow, the CCL seeks to shape a new generation of public leaders and responsible citizens.

During his presentation, Gonzales drew on several high-profile inquiries and accusations that put the reputation of the White House on the line during his tenure.

“I know how difficult and frustrating it can be to work in Washington, where success is rare, and every little misstep or stumble is magnified,” Gonzales said. “Contributing to this theory that often envelopes our nation’s capital is the reaction generated by even a whiff of a scandal or wrongdoing. Right or wrong, this has become the regular order of business these days.”

Gonzales discussed some of the decisions that went on behind the scenes, citing a probe into the White House’s role in the collapse of Enron, an investigation by the Department of Justice into the unauthorized leak of CIA operative Valerie Plame, and the 9/11 Commission’s evaluation of the government’s response before and after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. He also discussed the role of both White House chief of staff and White House counsel to protect the president by limiting his knowledge of certain issues and gossip in order to keep him from getting caught up in an unsubstantiated allegation.

At the beginning of his job as White House counsel, Gonzales issued a series of protocols to White House staff. The protocols outlined permissible ethical behaviors and practices, and were designed to instill “the highest culture of ethical behavior expected by the president.”

“By providing clear guidance as lawyers, having employers train their employees and senior management in advance of a complaint or investigation, and by cooperating with investigators and regulators, companies and organizations can limit their financial liability and damage to their reputation,” Gonzales said.
Benedictine University is joining the Chicago Park District, the Midwest Pesticide Action Center, Sierra Club and other environmental groups advocating for the use of natural lawn care techniques in place of pesticides.

Lawn chemicals have been cited by the American Academy of Pediatrics as contributors to rising rates of various cancers, asthma and neurological problems among children in the United States.

As part of the University’s “Healthy Lawns at Benedictine” initiative, signs will be placed around campus to inform visitors and the public that the presence of dandelions means the University’s lawns are healthy and pesticide-free for the safety and enjoyment of all.

This initiative is another example of the ripple effect Years for the Environment, a three-year sustainability and environmental effort that grew organically from the Benedictine value of stewardship, has created on campus. The project increased the presence of sustainability in the curriculum, highlighted the importance of sustainability in the surrounding community and encouraged the University to reduce its carbon footprint.

Sustainability initiatives currently in effect include the Food Scrap Composting and Revitalization Program, which diverts in excess of 105,000 pounds of food scraps from area landfills, a community garden, energy efficient lighting, a trayless cafeteria system to reduce water consumption and a cooking oil recycling program.

Plans for the Daniel L. Goodwin Hall of Business, currently under construction, include many green building elements such as recycled construction materials, low-flow water fixtures, energy-efficient lighting and occupancy sensors that automatically turn off when rooms are vacant or adjust when receiving adequate natural light, and a chilled beam cooling and heating system, which utilizes non-ozone-depleting refrigerants to help protect the environment.

The Healthy Lawns at Benedictine initiative is supported by the Center for Mission and Identity’s Stewardship and Sustainability Implementation Team, Campus Services, the Faculty Assembly, Students for Ecological and Environmental Development, the Student Senate and University administration.

To further communicate the goals of this initiative and educate the public on the hazards of lawn chemicals, the University will hold a free, all-day seminar on the issue of pesticides and pest control on October 31.

Several other community forums will also be held throughout the year to provide the community with tips and alternatives for growing healthy lawns. Visit ben.edu/CMI for more information.
New Insights into Values-Driven Approaches to Leadership

When Lee DeRemer graduated this May, the celebration was the culmination of a journey that went well beyond three years of doctoral study. As he prepared to retire after 26 years with the Air Force, he began looking for resources to help him with the transition into the next stage of life. “I couldn’t find any,” Lee DeRemer recalled.

So through Benedictine’s Ph.D. in Values-Driven Leadership program, DeRemer set out to identify a process for making successful midlife transitions as part of his dissertation research.

DeRemer earned his degree along with 16 other students who also conducted research as part of the first cohort to graduate from the program, which began in 2011. All of their dissertations offered new insights into values-driven approaches to leadership, according to James Ludema, Ph.D., director of Benedictine’s Center for Values-Driven Leadership (CVDL).

“The breadth of topics was staggering,” Ludema said. “Students explored the impact of bipolar disorder on leadership, the role of humility in empowering others and how truly loving your team leads to effective leadership.”

The following includes a brief synopsis of four dissertations:

How Social Media is Changing Emergency Response

When Hurricane Haiyan struck the Philippines in 2013, volunteers mobilized to map roads that were still intact, damaged infrastructure and location-specific needs. The volunteers weren’t only located in the Philippines—they were spread across the globe.

Using satellite imagery and photos reported on social media, these “digital humanitarians” created a real-time crisis map that local first responders and international aid organizations used to help determine the most efficient methods for getting support where it was most needed.

“Social media isn’t usually changing organizational response in a crisis situation,” said Kerrie Carfagno, who researched this phenomenon as part of her dissertation. “It just makes it happen faster. But, in an emergency situation, that can save lives.”

Carfagno’s dissertation explored the social media usage of eight “digital superheroes,” humanitarians on the front lines of response in 53 emergency situations, such as the Boston Marathon bombing, Hurricane Sandy and other natural disasters across the globe.

Learn more at cvdl.org/emergencyresponse.

What’s the Executive’s Role in Combining Culture and Profitability?

Dave Smith’s coursework made him curious to understand how executives lead companies that combine profitability with great cultures. “What’s behind the curtain?” he asked.

Smith joined the CVDL’s Return on Values research project, a three-year partnership with the Inc. Small Giants Community to explore his question by going inside profitable companies with strong, positive cultures.

In the five companies he studied, Smith found what he calls a “mental model” of developing a positive culture that nurtures employees and equips them with the tools to delight customers. The executives believe this model yields positive financial returns for the companies.

“In these successful companies,” Smith says, “I’m tempted to say the culture ‘is’ the business.”

Learn more at cvdl.org/mentalmodel.

What the World’s Top Peace Builders Can Teach Us about Conflict Resolution

The diplomats, ambassador, advisors, mediators and educators Carolyn Maraist interviewed for her dissertation are some of the most highly regarded negotiators and peace builders in the United States and the People’s Republic of China. Their work puts them face-to-face with warring factions and hostile parties, but the advice they have to offer is applicable whether the conflict you need to resolve is in the workplace or at home. To move closer to resolution, you must:

• Do the work on yourself first. Without empathy for both parties in the negotiation, you’ll be unable to resolve the conflict.
• Make a safe space where the concerns of each party can be heard.
• Make ongoing communication possible, starting with good listening.

Find out more about Maraist’s research at cvdl.org/conflictresolution.

The Center for Values-Driven Leadership is currently recruiting for Cohort 3 of the doctoral program. Learn more at cvdl.org/doctorate or call (630) 829-6225.
Christine Fletcher (Theology) gave a lecture, “Vatican II and the Secular Vocation of the Laity,” at St. Augustine’s Seminary, the diocesan seminary for the Archdiocese of Toronto, in March. Fletcher also presented a paper, “From Gaudy Night to Lean In: Dorothy L. Sayers’ Concept of Women’s Vocation,” at the International Conference on Women and Vocation held in June at Lille Catholic University in Lille, France.

Allan D. Gozum (Business and Finance Services) was selected as a 2014 honoree in the Daily Herald Business Ledger’s third annual “CFO of the Year” awards program. Gozum was honored at a reception and awards presentation in July at the Stonegate Conference and Banquet Centre in Hoffman Estates. He was also profiled in the August 18 edition of the Business Ledger.

Joyce R. Jeeweek (Education) presented a session at the Illinois Reading Council Conference in March in Springfield. Her presentation, “Illinois Authors + A Basket of Books = Mentor Texts for the 6 Traits of Writing,” was developed from a paper published earlier and was part of this year’s conference theme, “Building Bridges to Literacy.” Jeeweek was also invited by the president-elect of the International Reading Association (IRA) to serve as a member of the group’s 2014-15 Jerry Johns Outstanding Teacher Educator in Reading and the Arbuthnot Award Committee. Members are invited based on their expertise and experience in the areas of teaching and learning, curriculum development and assessment. The appointment began at the 58th Annual IRA Convention in April.

Vicki Jobst (Undergraduate Business) was interviewed about college students and financial literacy in the personal finance blog Money BasicsU. To read her comments, go to http://moneybasicsu.com/financial-literacy-is-one-person-at-a-time-dr-vicki-jobst-interview/.

Tim Marin (Chemistry/Biochemistry) was asked by the American Chemical Society to create a PowerPoint presentation to accompany his publication, “Charge Trapping in Photovoltaically Active Perovskites and Related Halogenoplumbate Compounds,” co-written by Ilya A. Shkrob, that appeared in the Journal of Physical Chemistry Letters, 2014, 5, 1066-1071. The slide presentation can be found at http://pubs.acs.org/iapps/liveslides/pages/index.htm?mscNo=jz5004022. The work is part of Marin’s ongoing collaboration with Argonne National Laboratory and has applications for new solar energy conversion materials.

David Marcet (Fine Arts) had a drawing featured in the “Plus+Plus+Plus” show at the Fr. Michael E. Komechak, O.S.B., Art Gallery on the fifth floor of Kindlon Hall.

Robert McCarthy (Biological Sciences) presented a poster titled “Acoustic characteristics of Neanderthal vowel-like sounds: A comparison with American English speakers” at the 83rd annual meeting of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists in Calgary, Canada. The research described in this poster was supported by the College of Science Summer Research Program and conducted by three students majoring in Health Science—Sarah Mustaly, Katherine Partyka and Mir Zulqarnai—and Nicole Blumenstein, a student at Hinsdale South High School. All four students were co-authors on the poster. McCarthy also presented a paper titled “New approaches to Neanderthal upper respiratory morphology and vocalization” at an international symposium held in Galway, Ireland celebrating the naming of Homo neanderthalensis by William King. Mustaly, Partyka and Zulqarnai—were co-authors on the paper. He also published a paper, “A morphometric re-assessment of BOU-VP-16/1 from Herto, Ethiopia,” in the Journal of Human Evolution. In the paper, McCarthy and co-author Lynn Lucas (University of Arizona College of Medicine) questioned whether an important early human fossil from Ethiopia should be placed into a new subspecies of Homo sapiens.

Joaquin Montero (Foreign Languages) published a book of poetry titled “Soledads, Ausencias y Añoranzas. Peomas de un alma errante,” which translated in English is “Solitudes, Absences and Nostalgias: Poems of a Wandering Soul.” The collection of 124 poems is a reflection of all types of life experiences, including missing the homeland, faith, excitement and disappointments that love can bring, the importance of living in the moment, happiness and sorrows, nostalgia and melancholy for what life takes away, hope, and salvation through art, inspirations and poetry. The book is Montero’s second, following his novel on Alexander the Great which was published in Spain. This latest book was published by the University Press of the South and includes 12 illustrations, all by Montero, who also did the oil painting that appears on the cover. “Soledads, Ausencias y Añoranzas. Peomas de un alma errante” can be found on Amazon.com and in some book stores.

Teresa J. Parker (Fine Arts) opened a solo exhibition in June at La Alianza Francesa de San Salvador. The exhibit, “Battered Madonnas,” included recent prints and drawings from her series on domestic violence. She also had one of her prints acquired by the Cristiano Varella Memorial Foundation, the Cancer Hospital of Muriaé, Minas Gerais, Brazil.

James Pelech (Education) is the author of several books and numerous journal articles and was a featured author at a Library Faculty Authors book chat. He led an informal discussion titled “Research in Education: Watch Out for the Curveball” at the April Library Faculty Authors event.

Heidi Roebber Rice, M.D. (Master of Public Health), who is board-certified in Occupational and Environmental Medicine through the American Board of Preventive Medicine and a staff physician with HealthPartners Clinics in Minneapolis, Minn., in addition to teaching in Benedictine’s online M.P.H. program, published two articles...
that exhibit her expertise in the areas of women in the workplace and in underserved populations. In the article, “Fertility goal-based counseling increases contraceptive implant and IUD use in HIV-discordant couples in Rwanda and Zambia,” (Contraception, Volume 88, Issue 1, July 2013), Rice was one of several researchers examining the uptake of two long-acting reversible contraceptive (LARC) methods— intrauterine devices (IUD) and hormonal implants—among HIV-discordant couples in Rwanda and Zambia. She also co-authored “Workplace Hazards to Women’s Reproductive Health,” (Minnesota Medicine, September 2007) with Beth A. Baker, M.D., in which they discuss the impact of commonplace workplace hazards such as chemicals, physical exertion and activities, and infectious agents on the reproductive health of the female labor force.

Niina J. Ronkainen (Chemistry/Biochemistry) co-authored a book chapter with Stanley Okon, M.D., in “Advanced Health Care Materials” (ISBN: 978-1-118-77359-8, publication date May 2014). The book, edited by Ashutosh Tiwari, Ph.D., is a part of the Advance Materials Series by Wiley Scrivener Publishing. The title of the chapter is “The Role of Immunoassays in Urine Drug Screening” (Chapter 14, pp. 485-516). The book is written for readers from diverse backgrounds across chemistry, physics, materials science and engineering, medical science, pharmacy, biotechnology and biomedical engineering. It offers a comprehensive view of cutting-edge research on advanced materials for health care technology and applications. She also published an article titled “Nanomaterial-Based Electrochemical Immunosensors for Clinically Significant Biomarkers” with Stanley Okon, M.D., in the journal Materials 2014, 7(6), 4669-4709; doi:10.3390/ma7064669. The article appeared in a special issue titled “Advanced Nanomaterials for Biosensors” and may be accessed at http://www.mdpi.com/1996-1944/7/6/4669. Ronkainen was also invited to serve as a member of the American Chemical Society (ACS) Examinations Institute’s 2015 First Term General Chemistry Committee. The committee writes and evaluates new assessment materials and reviews essential content for a General Chemistry I course. These ACS exams are used as assessment tools and as final exams by many private and public universities nationwide. The appointment began at the 247th American Chemical Society National Meeting in March in Dallas, Texas.

Robin Pals Rylaarsdam (Biological Sciences) published a paper, “Three intragenic suppressors of a GTPase-deficient allele of GNAS associated with McCune-Albright syndrome,” in the Journal of Molecular Endocrinology. Co-authors included current or former Benedictine students Kyle Turcic, Raquel Tobar-Rubin, Daniela Janevská, Julie Carroll, Enej Din, Rebecca Alvarez and Jennifer Haick.

Ovid Wong (Education) made a teacher assessment rubric report to Master of Arts in Education faculty and students at Shenyang Normal University in Shenyang, China in June. He also published an article titled “The Wonder of Water” in the Herald Monthly (Volume 27, No. 4, April 2014). The article describes the physical properties of water such as boiling, freezing and density to reveal the connection between the physical law affecting the behaviors of water molecules and the spiritual law of design and creation.

Jan Writer (Education) was selected to give a peer-reviewed presentation and paper at the Illinois Council for Exceptional Children Fall 2014 Convention. Her interactive session, “A Member of the Class! Overcoming Barriers to Inclusion for Students with Low Incidence Disabilities,” provides parents and educators with information and skills pertinent to diverse strategies and tactics for promoting the public school membership, affiliation and active participation of students with autism, intellectual disabilities, orthopedic impairments and multiple disabilities. Writer was also chosen to chair a roundtable discussion group on “Evidence-Based Practices in the Education of Students with Autism” at the convention.

Julie Wroblewski (Library) earned her Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) certificate from the Society of American Archivists in April. The DAS certificate program was developed by experts in the field of digital archives and provides archivists with the information and tools needed to manage the demands of born-digital records such as email accounts, electronic documents and digital media. In addition to specialized coursework, recipients must pass a comprehensive exam. A total of 90 people worldwide have earned DAS certificates since the program began in October 2011.

Elsie Yuan (International Programs and Services) participated in the fifth annual EducationUSA Forum in Washington, D.C. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the EducationUSA Forum brings together 550 university representatives with more than 60 EducationUSA regional educational experts and advisors from around the world to discuss strategies for helping international students obtain the opportunity to study in the United States and for promoting U.S. study abroad.