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VCU Nursing Connections is the official magazine of the VCU School of Nursing and is published twice yearly. Comments and letters may be directed to the editors.
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VCU School of Nursing Spring Class of 2012
The date of Sept. 12, 2012 marked a significant event in the history of our school – the 50th anniversary of the closing of the St. Philip School of Nursing. Founded in 1920 as a segregated nursing school for African American women at MCV, St. Philip provided a quality nursing education to more than 800 graduates who came to obtain diplomas, bachelor’s degrees and certificates in public health.

The School of Nursing recently hosted the Jackie Denise Jackson Memorial Cultural Diversity Lectureship to commemorate this anniversary. The lectureship consisted of a panel discussion on segregation and desegregation in higher education, starting with the daughter of an alumnus of St. Philip to shape a candid conversation. We were pleased there was such a strong turnout of faculty, students, staff, alumni and members of the community, many of whom shared a connection to either St. Philip alumnae or the St. Philip Hospital.

Our cover story on pages 3-6 offers an overview of the panel discussion and describes other aspects of how St. Philip alumnae persevered and succeeded despite the unjust laws and social practices during segregation. I want to thank our keynote speaker, moderator and all of the panelists for sharing stories that enlightened and inspired us all. I also want to thank the audience for being active participants in the dialogue. The result was an engaging forum of diverse experiences and perspectives, shaped by cultural, societal and legal dynamics. In essence, this exchange of ideas reflects the School of Nursing’s commitment to the VCU Quest for Distinction Themes I and II, respectively – high-quality learning/living experiences, and preeminence in research, scholarship, creative expression and clinical practice.

Another School of Nursing historic milestone is quickly approaching and we are encouraging your participation to make it a success. As part of celebrating the School’s 120th anniversary in 2013, we are planning to recognize 120 outstanding alumni and faculty (both living and deceased) as Visionary Leaders at a gala this spring. An article on page 13 offers alumni perspectives on our school’s tradition of leadership. We invite you to visit our website at www.nursing.vcu.edu to nominate alumni and faculty as Visionary Leaders based on their leadership, innovation and/or entrepreneurship.

While the gala will provide the opportunity to honor those selected for this honor, it will also celebrate an event that represents a culmination of my 22 years of leading the School of Nursing. As many of you may already know, I announced my retirement last spring and a search is underway. You’ll hear more details about the gala and a new dean as plans progress. In the meantime, until I can officially transfer leadership of this great school to a new dean, I will continue to serve and raise the bar of nursing excellence to ensure that the School of Nursing’s future remains full of promise and ingenuity. Let’s focus on another great year of accomplishments as we prepare the next generation of nursing leaders.

Nancy F. Langston, Ph.D., R.N., FAAN
Dean and Professor, VCU School of Nursing
Executive Director for Academic Nursing,
VCU Health System
In 1920, The St. Philip School of Nursing was established as a separate nursing school for African American women at the Medical College of Virginia during racial segregation. The school operated until 1962, when the last of its 688 diploma candidates graduated. In September, the Jackie Denise Jackson Memorial Cultural Diversity Lectureship marked the 50th anniversary of the closing of the St. Philip School of Nursing with a panel discussion, Segregation and Desegregation in Higher Education: Confronting Our Past, Facing Our Future featuring several of the graduates and moderated by Richmond Times-Dispatch columnist Michael Paul Williams.

They stepped into the room, these seasoned women, with a palpable pride. They came together for a panel discussion to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the closing of their beloved alma mater, so it is understood that each one looked impeccable. They greeted one another with burnished warmth, born of long familiarity and shared experiences. Still engaged in their 70s and 80s, these women are certain of their place in history. The VCU School of Nursing’s Younger Auditorium was full to overflowing. They were here to tell some stories.

The panel discussion was completely engaging, with each of the three St. Philip
alumnae who were panelists recounting both painful and treasured memories of their experiences as students of the segregated nursing school. “In order to be admitted to St. Philip you had to be in the top third of your class,” said Arlethia Vaughn Rogers, RN (Diploma ’60/St.P, B.S. ‘96/N), the outspoken and fervent president of the Richmond chapter of the St. Philip School Alumnae Association.

“You had to be good, had to be. Your attention to detail had to be infallible and you had to be creative. We often had to improvise because we worked with leftovers from the MCV nurses. We put in extremely long hours in the clinic and in the classroom, but we came out very well prepared as nurses. There was, and still is, a special bond between us.”

As for segregation and the attitudes that nurtured it, Rogers offered what seemed like an anthem for the time “No one can make you feel inferior without your permission and I have to say that inferiority was not a trait of the average St. Philip nurse. We were confident and self assured because we were good, and we knew it.” Jesse Spencer, Ed.D, Ph.D. (Diploma ’54/N; B.S.’55/N; M.Ed.’79/E) agreed. “My time as a night duty emergency nurse developed my leadership skills,” she said. “But for all the adversity I faced, I know for a fact I did not face a challenge that I could not resolve...because of my training.”

Panelist Edward H. Peeples, Jr., Ph.D., (B.S. ’57/E) VCU professor emeritus and civil rights advocate, wryly noted that at the time, “There was a whole lot of separate, and not much equal.” Despite that, Lillian Epps-Johnson, R.N. (Diploma ’51/N) reminded the audience that St. Philip graduates achieved extraordinary accomplishments, including her own Congressional Award for Exemplary Service.

Keynote speaker Pia Marie Winters Jordan – daughter of St. Philip alumna Louise Lomax Winters (Diploma ’42/St.P) and a lecturer in the Communications Studies Department at Morgan State University – shared stories and images of the nurses who worked with the Tuskegee Airmen as part of the Army Air Corps during the 1940s. “During WWII, the Army recruited 5000 nurses, but just five hundred of those were African American,” she said. Of the twenty-nine who served with her mother at Tuskegee during those pivotal years, two others, Della Bassette (Diploma ’41/St.P) and Mencie Trotter (Diploma ’40/St.P), were also St. Philip alumnae.

Panel moderator Michael Paul Williams darted quickly from one audience member to the next with a microphone to capture their thought-provoking questions and comments. There were plenty of poignant moments, especially once Pia Jordan asked audience members about their connections to St. Philip. Several were graduates and others were relatives of nurses who graduated from the program. Quite a few were born at St. Philip Hospital, including one VCU Health System nurse who proudly announced she was the last baby born at the hospital before it closed. A local physician was also among the audience members who felt compelled to share their connection.

“I was a young doctor, green as the grass of West Virginia back then,” said Dr. Robert E. Petres, recalling his days as an obstetrics resident at MCV Hospital. “I had the opportunity to work with many of the nurses who graduated from St. Philip. I just wanted...” he paused a moment, wiped his eye, steadied his voice. “I wanted to be here to express my gratitude to those nurses because they were more important to my education and development as a doctor than any of my professors.”

VCU School of Nursing Dean and Professor Nancy Langston, Ph.D., RN, FAAN – also one of the evening’s panelists – has a strong connection with many of the St. Philip nurses. She worked tirelessly to persuade the graduates to consider coming into the VCU fold. Several of the nurses were not interested in becoming a part of the larger alumni association. “The response at first was ‘absolutely not,’” she recalled. “‘You didn’t want us back then. Why should we be a part of you now, just because you want it?’ It was an understandable response and it’s been a learning experience, but at least we’re in the conversation.”

As a panel participant, Langston shared her own experiences growing up in North Little Rock when President Eisenhower sent troops to integrate the schools. The heightened and raw emotions, the national media attention and the sheer enormity of the shifting worldview shaped her own views on race. “Racism... comes from fear of the unknown, bigotry and ignorance,” Langston said. “The issues that have divided us can be faced as long as we talk. In good faith we have to try and soften the edges. What happened; happened. We can’t take away the sharp edges. But I truly believe we can create a future that softens the edges. It is not our differences that divide us, it is the fear of our differences.”

Some time after the panel discussion, Dean Langston reflected on the event and her desire to continue the dialogue.

“I’m pleased with the positive feedback from audience members and participants but I think we need to convene another lecture because I don’t think we spent enough time addressing an important
part of the panel’s intended focus.” She says the discussion barely touched on the present and the future and that the dialogue should be ongoing. Diversity is ever on her mind, she says, and while 23 percent of VCU’s School of Nursing’s students are minorities, nearly 11 percent are African American. “There is a wonderful opportunity for continuing conversations about the future of our profession as we continue to build on, and sustain, the St. Philip legacy.”

Just off the lobby of VCU’s School of Nursing is the Heritage Room, which houses the school’s archives. In one corner is a vintage wheelchair occupied by an ancient, but well-loved lab mannequin. Behind antique glass cabinets are nursing caps, pins and uniforms from bygone decades; old photographs and portraits of former deans give the walls a weighty dignity. The room is also the temporary home of the St. Philip School of Nursing exhibit, a collection of images, items and information lovingly compiled by Virginia Roane, who graduated in 1961, along with assistance from Jodi Koste, archivist and head of resources and operations at VCU’s Tompkins-McCaw Library.

The exhibit features black and white photographs of St. Philip students, graduates and instructors and each is accompanied by a short but impressive list of career highlights. So many of them fanned across the country in a flurry of “firsts,” despite prevailing attitudes against blacks.

“It was the time,” said Roane. “Well trained black nurses were needed to care for black patients in hospitals built for black people and a St. Philip graduate nurse was more than prepared to do an outstanding job in any hospital … and eventually they did.” In fact, when St. Philip opened its doors to qualified young African American women in 1920, the new students were being trained to staff the new 176-bed, segregated St. Philip Hospital.

From the beginning until its doors closed in 1962, the nursing program at St. Philip was as academically and clinically rigorous as the program for white students at MCV. That rigor – along with the pressures of launching careers...
and achieving nursing excellence in an era of overt racism— forged bonds between these women that have lasted 50 years and longer.

“Our parents prepared us for what we would face in the outside world,” Roane said, noting that the world outside of the familiar circle of black families, black churches, black schools and the various community uplift organizations could crush your spirit, if you let it. “My parents always told me ‘you just have to know who you are … don’t worry about who they think you are.’ Black parents told us we had to be twice as good to get half as far. The young kids today aren’t prepared for the barriers they might face. The barriers are still there, they’re just more subtle.”

VCU School of Nursing’s current and future African American students are one reason the group of alumnae stay engaged. They understand that the difficulty some students experience is not about intelligence or program rigor. Senior nursing student Ashley Jones – recipient of the 2012 St. Philip Scholarship and a 2012 Who’s Who Among American Colleges and Universities honoree – gives regular tours of the St. Philip exhibit. She says she is so grateful for the example and legacy the nurses have given to students. Like many students of her academic caliber who express an interest in nursing, she dealt with people advising her to go to medical school instead – telling her that being black, and a woman, is challenge enough. Why become a nurse when she could be in the driver’s seat as a doctor? Because…nursing is what she wants to do.

“While I don’t feel that I’ve experienced racism in the same ways they have, I’m so thankful to have them, and their legacy, to learn from,” Jones said. “I look at all their faces in the photographs and realize that most of these women lived committed, rewarding lives and they made a difference in the lives of others.”

Since St. Philip graduated its final class in 1962, the remaining nurses come together every other year to fellowship and remember. Mostly, they remember all the good times, catch up on families and memorialize those who’ve passed on. Most are quite comfortable thinking of themselves as part of VCU/MCV, especially when it comes to supporting and encouraging young nursing students like Ashley. But each one treasures her identity as a St. Philip alumna.

“We have made a commitment to maintain the fellowship among the alumnae until the last person stands,” said Vivian Harris Bagby (Diploma ’60/St.P; B.S. ’82/N; M.S. ’90/AHP). “We are very proud of our legacy.”

— Ashley Jones, Class of 2013

“While I don’t feel that I’ve experienced racism in the same ways they have, I’m so thankful to have them, and their legacy, to learn from.”

— Ashley Jones, Class of 2013
Kristin Filler Earns Highly Competitive Research Awards

Virginia Commonwealth University alumna and Ph.D. candidate Kristin Filler, (B.S. ’09/N), RN, is proving that a commitment to nursing excellence reaps big rewards. Within three consecutive months, she won three prestigious nursing awards that will help realize her career goal of becoming a nurse scientist.

Filler won awards from the American Cancer Society (ACS), the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) and the Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence. With a research focus in symptom management and fatigue in women with advanced breast cancer, she has earned national recognition for her leadership skills and potential to make a difference in nursing education and research.

“Kristin Filler is a prototype for a successful BS to PhD student in nursing. Her personal qualities of maturity, conscientiousness and a strong work ethic have propelled her towards a promising future as a nursing scientist,” said Debra Lyon, RN, FNP-BC, FNAP, FAAN (B.S. ’84/N, M.S. ’94/N, NP ’96, Ph.D. ’97/N), the Judith B. Collins and Joseph M. Teefey Distinguished Professor and chair of the Family and Community Health Nursing Department, who serves as Filler’s advisor and mentor.

Filler started at the VCU School of Nursing in the fall of 2005 as a bachelor’s degree candidate. After realizing she had a strong interest in both nursing education and research,
she worked as a teaching assistant for Dean Nancy Langston, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, during her junior and senior years and also worked in the Center for Biobehavioral Clinical Research as a senior. Filler said Dean Langston encouraged her to obtain a Ph.D. degree in nursing, so she applied after she graduated with her B.S. and was accepted into VCU’s Ph.D. program.

While pursuing her doctorate, Filler has worked on cancer research with Lyon’s grant team and has worked as an oncology RN at the VCU Health System. ACS awarded her a Doctoral Degree Scholarship that will aid in her cancer nursing research. This scholarship is awarded to graduate students pursuing doctoral study in the field of cancer nursing research, and preparing for careers as nurse scientists. Filler was also accepted into the highly competitive National Institute of Nursing Research’s Graduate Partnerships Program, a doctoral fellowship training program that coordinates training and funding for doctoral students attending a school of nursing. She is currently at NINR for the Fall 2012 semester.

“Being accepted was a mix of emotions; it’s exciting but also kind of nerve racking because NINR is among the ‘big wigs’ of nursing,” Filler said. “I’m honored and very humbled at the same time. I know it will be an outstanding once in a lifetime research opportunity for me.”

Filler has also won another very competitive honor – she is one of 142 nursing doctoral candidates nationwide selected for the Jonas Nurse Leaders Scholar program of the Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence. The program provides financial assistance, leadership development and mentoring support to expand the pipeline of future nurse faculty into research-focused and practice-focused doctoral nursing programs.

“We are excited and proud to have Kristin represent VCU Nursing in this prestigious leadership development program,” Lyon said. “This opportunity is consistent with our efforts to remain one of the nation’s best schools for educating nursing leaders.” In addition to her busy research and classroom schedule, Filler has been very involved in other School of Nursing activities. She is the past president of Sigma Theta Tau, the honor society of nursing, and served as the secretary of the local chapter of the Oncology Nursing Society, an organization that works on educating nurses on cancer and symptom management. A student representative on the school’s Doctoral Program Committee, where she advocates for her fellow classmates and students, Filler is also involved in fundraising campaigns for the school.

“The School of Nursing has done so much for me over the past seven years that I just feel like anything I can do to help them in return, I try to do through service,” she said. “The faculty have been very supportive and have inspired me to focus on nursing research and education.”

Kenneth White Inducted as American Academy of Nursing Fellow

Kenneth R. White, Ph.D., RN, FACHE (B.S. ’95/N, M.S. ’95/N), who holds joint appointments as the Sentara Professor in VCU’s Department of Health Administration and professor in the VCU School of Nursing, was one of 176 nurse leaders from across the nation inducted as fellows during the American Academy of Nursing’s 39th annual meeting and conference held recently in Washington, D.C. Composed of the nation’s top nurse researchers, policy makers, scholars, executives, educators, and practitioners, the 2012 cohort is the largest class of inductees yet.

“Selection for membership in the Academy is one of the most prestigious honors in the field of nursing,” said Academy President Joanne Disch, Ph.D., RN, FAAN.

White is one of more than 1,800 nurse leaders in education, management, practice, policy, and research nationwide that have earned the FAAN distinction based on their contributions to nursing and health care. An award-winning author, teacher, and leader in health administration and nursing, he has nearly 40 years of experience in health care organizations in clinical, administrative, governance, and consulting capacities. His experience includes serving as a senior executive in marketing, operations and international healthcare consulting at Mercy Health Services and as the associate director of the MHA and MSHA Programs and later as the director of the MHA Program at VCU. He also served as the first Charles P. Cardwell, Jr., Professor of Health Administration, from 2006 - 2009.

A fellow and former member of the Board of Governors of the American College of Healthcare Executives, White is currently an acute care NP student at the University of Virginia, set to graduate in 2013.
Outstanding Nurse Service Award
Cynthia M. Fagan (B.S. ’97/N; M.S. ’99/N), nurse practitioner at McGuire Veterans Affairs Medical Center, has worked at the state level to promote the scope of practice for advanced practice nurses, resulting in an examination of current regulatory practice to include collaborative care models. She has served as a nurse practitioner preceptor for nearly a decade and received the VCU School of Nursing Outstanding Preceptor Award in 2011. She also is the past president of the Virginia Council of Nurse Practitioners, has received several leadership-focused fellowships and has participated in various research studies as a sub-investigator.

Outstanding Nurse Practice Award
Teresa K. James (B.F.A. ’99/A; B.S. ’07/N), clinical coordinator at the VCU Massey Cancer Center at Stony Point, has worked to launch the Daisy Award, a national program honoring extraordinary nurses, at the VCU Health System and serves as the chair of the Daisy Subcommittee of the health system’s Recruitment and Retention Council. She is currently pursing a master’s degree at the School of Nursing and is the first recipient of the Carol Crosby Scholarship in Nursing, which is awarded to a graduate student who is focusing on leadership.

Outstanding Nurse Alumnus Award
Leslie G. Wyatt (B.S. ’72/N; M.S. ’76/N), vice president of children’s services and executive director of the Children’s Hospital of Richmond at VCU, has devoted 40 years to the field of nursing. Wyatt helped establish a dually licensed medical and psychiatric hospital for children and adolescents and spearheaded the establishment of the first neonatal transport vehicle in Virginia. Her background includes a wide range of roles and experiences in clinical nursing, nursing administration and hospital administration, concentrating in pediatric health care. She is a member of numerous local and national organizations, including the American College of Healthcare Executives, the Pediatric Society of Richmond, the Richmond Academy of Medicine and the National Association of Children’s Hospitals and Related Institutions.

Outstanding Alumnus Award
Shirley J. Thompson, Ph.D. (B.S. ’60/N), a retired associate professor of epidemiology, the University of South Carolina, has worked on local, national and international projects in the field of epidemiology. Many of her activities have focused on teaching and research in community health nursing, reproductive health, the surveillance of health/disease in populations and non-auditory health effects of long-term noise exposure. After earning a bachelor’s in nursing from VCU, Thompson earned master’s and doctoral degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
Alumnus of the Year – School of Allied Health Professions

Tracy Kemp Stallings (B.S. ’85/N; M.S.H.A. ’95/AHP), chief operating officer at CJW Medical Center’s Johnston-Willis Hospital in Chesterfield, Va., started her career as an RN working in critical care at HCA more than 28 years ago before moving into a variety of leadership roles in clinical and ancillary services. She is a member of numerous industry organizations, including the American College of Healthcare Executives, Central Virginia Health Executive Group, Richmond Academy of Medicine, Virginians Improving Patient Care and Safety, and Watkins Centre Community Development Authority. She also has served on various boards, including most recently as the 2011-12 chair of the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce, and as a member and president of the Alumni Executive Committee of the Department of Health Administration.

Sarah Farrell Named Apple Executive

Sarah Farrell, RN, PMHCNS-BC, CNL, (Ph.D. ’95), has moved from higher education to the consumer electronics industry to continue her focus on teaching with technology. Farrell was recently named a higher education development executive at Apple.

Farrell has more than 20 years of experience in higher education administration, leadership, informatics, health policy, teaching, service and research. Her most recent position was associate professor at the University of Virginia, where her research and teaching focused on using technology to improve health outcomes, emphasizing access to care in global rural areas and among underserved populations. Farrell also served as the UVA School of Nursing’s first chief technology officer, helping to connect faculty with new technologies in their research and teaching.

She was recently selected as a social media expert for NASA and given special seating to tweet the last manned space launch, STS-135.

Farrell earned her B.S.N and M.S.N. from the University of Virginia. She also received a postgraduate certificate in management and leadership from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education. She is a member of several professional and honor organizations including Sigma Theta Tau International where she served as President of the Beta Kappa Chapter. She also served two years as the President of the Virginia Association of Colleges of Nursing.

Candace Johnson Wins National Research Service Award

Candace C. Johnson, RN (B.S. ’07/N, M.P.H. ’07), a full-time Ph.D. candidate at the University of Virginia, was selected to receive a National Research Service Award from the National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Nursing Research. Johnson is the principal investigator of a study, titled “Dance/Modified Yoga: A Health Strategy for African American Women at Risk for Chronic Diseases.”

She is also a pre-doctoral trainee at UVA’s Center for the Study of Complementary and Alternative Therapies (CSCAT). Johnson’s research interests include access and utilization of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) in African American female childbearing communities.

Lauren Goodloe Receives Excellence in Teaching Award

Lauren Goodloe, RN (B.S. ’83/N, M.S. ’88/N, Ph.D. ’00/N), assistant dean for clinical operations at the School of Nursing and director of nursing at VCU Health System, received the Excellence in Teaching award at VCU Health System’s Nurses Week Awards. Goodloe was recognized for working tirelessly on behalf of nursing students to create possibilities, resolve challenges and explore how clinical situations and opportunities can contribute to student learning.
The St. Philip School of Nursing reunion

The Class of 1962 reunion

The Class of 2007 reunion

Nursing alumni and faculty with Dr. Nancy Langston in the School of Nursing lobby (left to right) Ann White King, (B.S. ’72/N; M.S. ’77/N), Leslie Wyatt, (B.S. ’72/N; M.S. ’76/N), Nancy Langston, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, dean of the School of Nursing, Diane Hanna, (M.S. ’83/N), Mimi Bennett, (B.S. ’72/N; M.S. ’06/N) and Jo Robins, Ph.D., RN, ANP-BC, AHN-C, CHTP, assistant professor.
A Letter from The Alumni Chair

Dear Alumni and Friends,

As I write this letter a crispness is in the air that tells us fall is finally around the corner. For me, fall serves as a time of reflection and as a proud alumnus of the VCU School of Nursing there is much I can reflect on – lectures, clinicals, classmates who would become friends for life, mentoring by favorite professors and preceptors, and that final dry-run in the Sim Lab – that has prepared me for where I am today. But while reminiscing is a component of reflection, reflection itself is not about looking back but what lies ahead.

For the VCU School of Nursing what lies ahead are opportunities. Opportunities to recognize our outstanding preparation for real-world nursing by supporting the Cabaniss Leadership Challenge, which is well on its way to raising $4 million for scholarships and faculty enhancements. In addition to investing in the future of nursing this fundraising challenge will also recognize our beloved Dean Nancy Langston when she retires and support naming our nursing building after our founder, Sadie Heath Cabaniss. There are also opportunities to recognize our favorite professors like Mary Jo Grap, Anne Boyle, and many others by supporting endowments in their honor.

For the Nursing Division of the Medical College of Virginia Alumni Association of VCU some remodeling is underway to develop a leadership board representative of the nursing alumni, which will re-engage with the school’s graduates and our “alumni-in-training.” As our nursing division reconnects with you we want you to feel free to engage, share, support, and network. Working with Kelly Gotschalk, our director of annual giving and alumni engagement, we want to hear about your accomplishments, suggestions, professional and educational offerings, and to hopefully provide our alumni with opportunities that support career and clinical ladder advancement.

As you look ahead to your next patient encounter, class, or meeting, please take a moment to reflect on how the School of Nursing prepared you for your role and think about how you might be able to honor your school as it continues its work to prepare the next generation of nurses for what lies ahead.

Best Wishes,
James L. Jenkins, Jr., RN, BS/N
Vice-President for Nursing, MCVAA
Chair, Nursing Division
Class of 2007

Deja' Vu All Over Again

2012 reunion panel - Professor Emeriti Judith (Judy) Collins, RNC., M.S., WHNP, FAAN (NP ’75), and Janet Younger, Ph.D., RN, CPNP (B.S. ’67/N, M.S. ’72/N, NP ’73) along with former faculty member Barbara (Barbie) Dunn, M.S.N., RN, CPNP (B.S. ’70/N, Ph.D. ’84/SW), led a discussion, titled “Deja’ Vu All Over Again – what we’ve learned in 100 years of nursing education, practice, policy, and regulation,” in Younger Auditorium. The panelists, who collectively have more than 100 years of experience as nurse practitioners (NPs), discussed nurses and health care reform, anticipated shortages, increasing nursing supply, and removing barriers to care.

Drs. Collins, Younger and Dunn authored an article that appeared in the summer 2011 edition of Ramifications, the professional journal of the Richmond Academy of Medicine. The article discussed their support of redesigning the health care system to use interdisciplinary teams of health professionals to meet the expected shortages among both physicians and nurses.

This year, the collective advocacy efforts within Virginia’s nursing and physician communities made a difference. The General Assembly approved a law to allow nurse practitioners to consult and collaborate with physicians, with the physician as the leader of the health care team.

Best Wishes,
James L. Jenkins, Jr., RN, BS/N
Vice-President for Nursing, MCVAA
Chair, Nursing Division
Class of 2007
From our beginnings in 1893 as a series of intertwined hospital schools and throughout the years as the MCV, St. Philip and RPI Schools of Nursing, to the current VCU School of Nursing, this school has a strong tradition of educating visionary leaders.

What is a visionary leader? To quote the Center for Visionary Leadership:

“Visionary leaders are the builders of a new dawn, working with imagination, insight, and boldness. They present a challenge that calls forth the best in people and brings them together around a shared sense of purpose. They work with the power of intentionality and alignment with a higher purpose. Their eyes are on the horizon, not just on the near at hand. They are social innovators and change agents, seeing the big picture and thinking strategically.”

Through the years our school has produced countless leaders in nursing. Many of the earliest went unrecognized in their lifetime, as nursing and nurses weren’t yet held in high esteem. In later years, some attempt was made to capture the early history and many of those leaders are now represented in such entities as the Virginia Nursing Hall of Fame. More modern leaders are recognized through programs like the Virginia Nursing Association’s Nancy Vance Award, the March of Dimes Nurse of the Year program and the YWCA Outstanding Women Awards, to name a few. The VCU School of Nursing recognizes its notable alumni through the VCU and MCV Alumni Association Reunion Awards and the Alumni Star Award.
It is interesting to note that some classes appear to create clusters of leaders. One example is the Class of 1970. There are many different theories as to what, if anything in particular, is behind this phenomenon. Trisha Cushnie, chief operating officer of Mature Options, thought some of the drive of her classmates could be traced to a change in nursing curriculum encouraging the path toward leadership as the Class of 1970 began their studies, and the influence of Dr. Gloria Francis. She also cited that her class was one of the first to benefit from the women’s movement and the opening of the job market to women in fields besides nursing, teaching and secretarial work. Linda Pearson, senior vice president of finance at VCU Health System, felt that the increased emphasis on psychiatric nursing in their education was helpful in their development as leaders. Dr. Wilsie Bishop, vice president and chief operating officer of East Tennessee State University, said she believed her class members were “women on the cusp of change.”

“We entered college just after the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and before the Title IX legislation in 1972,” Bishop said. “We were high achieving women with limited career and college choices. We chose a traditional female dominant career and then, using our abilities, achieved significant leadership roles in health care and other fields.”

The Class of 1958 also prepared a lot of leaders: Dr. Clementine Pollok was director of the Southside Regional Medical Center School of Nursing for many years, Nancy Durrett served as executive director of the Virginia Board of Nursing, and Dr. Beauty Crummette was a professor in the VCU School of Nursing for 27 years, a specialist in pediatric nursing and a prolific author. She also designed the master’s program in Maternal Child Nursing.

It’s not only the traditional classes that produce such results. The RN to B.S. classes, though they aren’t always so tightly bound by graduation year, also produced substantial numbers of leaders, too. Particularly around the year 1983, something was pushing RNs toward earning their B.S. and many that studied at VCU in those years have gone on to significant achievement: Dr. Lauren Goodloe, nursing director at VCUHS and assistant dean for clinical operations at the VCU School of Nursing; Marilyn Tavenner, former secretary of Health and Human Resources for the State of Virginia and now acting administrator for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and Margaret Lewis, president of HCA’s Capital Division. Though she graduated a couple of years later in 1983, Dr. Susan Bodin, dean of the Bon Secours School of Nursing, was also in this RN to B.S. cohort.

More recently, members of the Class of 2007 exhibited great promise for future leadership at their Recognition Ceremony when Dean Nancy Langston asked for a show of hands as to who would be returning for their master’s degree. Fully 50% of the class raised their hands. Indeed some of the class members have already earned their M.S. degrees and are already stepping into teaching and leadership roles.

So what is it that sometimes creates such circles of success within a particular class? Is it the work of greater forces in the air, pulling together events of the day to inspire change, or the power of a particular teacher, inspiring and motivating students? Or perhaps could it be that age old adage of great minds think alike, or that one good student inspires and energizes another and the cycle repeats throughout certain classes, leading to a graduating class full of future leaders?

One thing is clear – over the past three decades, the VCU School of Nursing has built a strong Nursing Administration and Leadership concentration. This program has gained a national reputation for educating top nursing leaders and prepares nurses to play an essential systems-level role in promoting and sustaining high quality and safe patient care. Students learn advanced knowledge and skills in the areas of leadership, administration, management, health care finance, budgeting, outcomes management, and evidence-based organizational practices in health care. They graduate ready to put into practice what they have learned to become the next generation of visionary leaders.

Are you a visionary leader, or do you know one? Tell us! Please see our VCU Nursing Visionary Leader Nomination Form online at www.nursing.vcu.edu. ◆
Jennifer (Parks) Babish (B.S. ’10/N), is an RN with the Surgical Center of Greensboro in North Carolina. She got married in June!

Eris Bill, RN, ACNS-BC, CCRN (B.S. ’00/N, M.S. ’11/N), is director of the Heart Failure Program at CJW Medical Center - Chippenham Campus.

Col. Yolanda Bledsoe, USAF (B.S. ’89/N), is the 56th Medical Group Commander at The Luke Air Force Base in Arizona. She was recently profiled in The Luke Air Force Base Thunderbolt.

Cindy Fagan (B.S. ’97/N, M.S. ’99/N), recently ended her term as president of the Virginia Council of Nurse Practitioners, where she worked to bring legislation forward that will change NP practice (the first significant changes since 1973!).

Capt. Elizabeth Hoettels, USAF (B.S. ’06/N), was recently published in the book The Art and Science of Telephone Triage: How to Practice Nursing Over the Phone by Carol Rutenberg, RN – BC C-TNP, MNSc and M. Elizabeth Greenberg, RN-BC, C-TNP, Ph.D.

Dr. Brenda (Smith) Jackson (B.S. ’70/N), is the director of the M.S.N. program at the University of Texas Health Science Center School of Nursing in San Antonio. She and her husband welcomed their first grandchild, Charlotte Harper Jackson, on April 11, 2012.

Constance Lewis (B.S. ’05/N), is an RNC, M.S.N., CBC at Sarasota Memorial Hospital in Florida.

Tammy (McEndree) Long (B.S. ’03/N), is an RN at The Ohio State University Medical Center.

Charity Storm (B.S. ’10/N), is a night shift nurse on a general surgery floor at Virginia Hospital Center in Arlington.

Randy Thompson (B.S. ’94/N, NP ’10), is a nurse practitioner with Physician Services at CJW – Chippenham Hospital. He recently began the DNP program at Radford University, where he is a member of the International Honor Society.

In Memory

April 2012
Mrs. Jeanette B. Brown (Diploma ’44/St.P)
Mrs. Jessie L. Ellis (Diploma ’35/St.P)
Ms. Queen Williams Pearson (Diploma ’52/St.P)

May 2012
Mr. Daniel S. Plant (B.S. ’09/N)
Ms. Yetta E. Price (B.S. ’93/N)
Mrs. Margaret L. Ryland (B.S. ’76/N)

June 2012
Ms. Joan E. Eanes (Diploma ’44/N)
Mrs. Idell M. McElrath (B.S. ’41/N)
Ms. Alyson H. Lawson (B.S. ’72/N)
Mrs. Maureen T. Miles (B.S. ’09/N)
Ms. Dorothy Mac Thomas (Diploma ’61/St.P)

July 2012
Mrs. Ruby B. Johnson-Spiegel (B.S. ’43/N)
Mrs. Elizabeth C. Sully (Diploma ’39/St.P)
Mrs. Denise C. Thornby (M.S. ’88/N)

August 2012
Ms. Katie Geneva Lea (Diploma ’38/St.P)

September 2012
Mrs. Evelyn F. Moore (B.S. ’48/N)
Mrs. Blanche A. Stephens (B.S. ’42/N)
Another School of Nursing historic milestone is quickly approaching and we are encouraging your participation to make it a success. As part of celebrating the School's 120th anniversary in 2013, we are planning to recognize 120 outstanding alumni and faculty (both living and deceased) as Visionary Leaders at a gala this spring. We invite you to visit our website at www.nursing.vcu.edu to nominate alumni and faculty as Visionary Leaders based on their leadership, innovation and/or entrepreneurship. Those selected will be honored, along with retiring dean Dr. Nancy F. Langston, at the VCU School of Nursing’s 120th Anniversary Gala on May 30, 2013.

Leadership gifts for our Cabaniss Leadership Challenge, an effort to raise $4 million for endowed scholarships and professorships between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2013, were the primary reason the school raised more than $1.5 million last year. To date, we've raised more than $3 million. However, we need your help if we are going to reach our goal by next June.

This academic year, we invite you to join us in an act of goodwill and generosity by making a special gift commitment for the Cabaniss Leadership Challenge. Your gift for endowed scholarships and professorships (to any existing funds or to create new funds) provide the margin of excellence to recruit and retain the best and brightest students and faculty, helping the VCU School of Nursing carry out its mission to improve health and the human condition through leadership in nursing research, education and service.

P.S. Oh, and if that isn’t enough … by reaching our $4 million goal, we will be able to name the VCU School of Nursing building for our founding director and nursing pioneer, Sadie Health Cabaniss, returning her name to a building dedicated to nursing.
Why I Give to the VCU School of Nursing

The Gouldins Establish Scholarships in Physical Therapy and Nursing

T. Winston Gouldin (M.D. ’54), and Eleanor Gouldin (B.S. ’53/N), of Norfolk, Va., have established a commitment to VCU that will provide opportunities for future students, while preserving a memory close to their hearts. The Gouldins recently established a charitable gift annuity through the MCV Foundation, enabling them to provide scholarships that will benefit students in both the School of Allied Health Professions and the School of Nursing. As a result, they will add $100,000 to the existing Cindy Gouldin Scholarship for Physical Therapy in the School of Allied Health Professions and give $50,000 to establish the Eleanor Leach Gouldin Scholarship at the School of Nursing.
“Their commitment to VCU is commendable and demonstrates a very meaningful way that alumni can make a difference at their alma mater.”

— Nancy F. Langston

The physical therapy scholarship is named in memory of the couple’s daughter Cindy (B.S. ’87/P.T.), who died at the age of 39 from brain tumor complications. She was a physical therapist and a prolific volunteer known for having a spirit of giving and compassion, as well as being passionate about her work.

“When you lose a loved one, it leaves a hole in your heart,” T. Winston Gouldin says. “I think that’s especially true when it comes to children. We were searching, ever since she died, for ways to honor her.”

“The Gouldins’ scholarship in memory of Cindy keeps her spirit an active part of our Department of Physical Therapy,” said Cecil B. Drain, Ph.D., CRNA, FAAN, FASAHP, dean of the School of Allied Health Professions. “As with all our wonderful scholarships, our faculty continue to assure that the students, especially the recipient students become completely aware of the person the scholarship was donated in behalf of. In this case, Cindy Gouldin and her great work as a Physical Therapist and as a person will always live on in the hearts of our students. This scholarship, will allow opportunities for these students that they might otherwise not have been given.”

The nursing scholarship is named in honor of Eleanor Gouldin, who graduated from the School of Nursing in 1953. She taught surgical nursing at MCV for a year and also spent a year teaching at the University of Alabama Medical Center. After the ‘nest’ became empty, Eleanor worked as a nurse at Ocean View Family Practice in Norfolk.

“We are honored that the Gouldins have chosen to invest in our school,” said Nancy F. Langston, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, professor and dean of the School of Nursing. “Their commitment to VCU is commendable and demonstrates a very meaningful way that alumni can make a difference at their alma mater. The Eleanor Leach Gouldin Scholarship will benefit future generations of nursing students and serve as a legacy for the Gouldin family.”

The Gouldins have more than 10 family members who can claim VCU as their alma mater. In addition to their late daughter Cindy, their other four children all graduated from MCV with degrees in health care. They are Jane Brown (B.S. ’77/N), Winston M. Gouldin (Pharm.D. ’98), Catherine Gouldin (M.D. ’85), and Susan Pearson (B.S. ’79/P). In addition, Susan’s husband, Barry (B.S. ’79/P), is an alumnus, as is Dr. Gouldin’s oldest brother, the late John Milton Gouldin III (M.D. ’44), and another brother, Edmund Gouldin (M.D. ’49). In addition, Dr. Gouldin’s father, John Milton Gouldin II (M.D. ’1904), is also an alumnus.

Why I Give to the VCU School of Nursing

Harriet Buss (B.S. ’69/N) paid out-of-state tuition not just once, but twice: first to attend the MCV School of Nursing and later to earn a master’s in health administration from the VCU School of Allied Health Professions. She is proud of her education, which she credits for her wonderful career.

In 2008, Harriet retired as chief nursing officer at Nash Health Care in Rocky Mount, N.C. She was with Nash for 28 years. Her career also included roles as a medical/surgical and critical care nurse, nursing educator, assistant vice president of nursing and military service. Most recently she was with the American Heart Association. Harriet enlisted in the Army during her senior year at MCV, along with 12 of her classmates. Graduating during the Vietnam War, she cared for soldiers as they returned stateside. She remained in the Army Reserve and served on active duty during Desert Storm. Her final Army Reserve assignment was as chief nurse of the 3274th USAR Hospital in Durham, NC.

When asked why she gives back to the VCU School of Nursing, Buss cites the quality of the education received. She remembers attending the school during the program’s transition to a more conceptual-based curriculum model. Buss is from a family of nurses (her mother, daughter and son-in-law are nurses). Through her regular support of the VCU School of Nursing, she demonstrates understanding of the importance of a good, strong school of nursing to educate the next generation of nurses, and for that the school is forever grateful.
Dean Nancy Langston Named NLN Academy of Nursing Education Fellow

Nancy Langston, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, dean and professor of the VCU School of Nursing, is one of 32 distinguished nurse educators nationwide selected as an Academy of Nursing Education Fellow by the National League for Nursing. She was inducted as a fellow at the 2012 NLN Education Summit this fall in Anaheim, California. The NLN established the Academy of Nursing Education to foster excellence in nursing education by recognizing and capitalizing on the wisdom of outstanding nurse educators. Fellows support the mission and core values of the NLN, assist in the work required to prepare graduates from all types of nursing programs, and serve as resources for new educators and those in clinical practice who hope to someday enter the ranks of nurse faculty.

Lana Sargent and Team Members Win Community Engagement Grant

Lana Sargent, M.S.N., RN, FNP-C, GNP-BC, assistant professor in the Department of Adult Health and Nursing Systems, is part of a team that won a Community Engagement grant for a Community Health and Wellness Program for older adults. Members of the team include Dominion Resident Service Coordinator Greg Ford, Pamela Parsons Ph.D., RN, GNP-BC (PI) of the School of Medicine, Patricia W. Slattum, Pharm D, Ph.D. of the School of Pharmacy, Melanie Bean, Ph.D., of the School of Medicine, and Pam Kovacs, Ph.D., of the School of Social Work. The collaboration with Dominion Place provides an ongoing venue for service learning in an interdisciplinary model for professional students at VCU and benefits residents. Students will have the opportunity to experience what it means for older adults to "age in place" and will have an increased understanding of culture and factors that influence health disparities within the context of the living environment.

Jeanne Walter Wins Presidential Research Incentive Program Award

Jeanné Walter, RN, FAAMA, (Ph.D. ’05), assistant professor in the Department of Family and Community Health Nursing, was selected to receive a VCU Presidential Research Incentive Program (PRIP) award. Walter is co-investigator on a study along with Sarah Wilson McKay, Ph.D., associate professor and chair of the Department of Art Education in the VCU School of the Arts. Their research consists of an inter-professional education (IPE) grant to evaluate a model of IPE on observational and clinical reasoning skills with nursing students. This exciting program highlights the research connections and interdisciplinary scholarly potential between the School of the Arts and the School of Nursing.

Candace Burton Attends NINR Summer Genetics Institute

Candace Burton, Ph.D., R.N., assistant professor in the Department of Family and Community Health Nursing, was selected to attend the NINR Summer Genetics Institute at NIH, a one-month intensive research training program at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland. Sponsored by the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR), the SGI provides participants with a foundation in molecular genetics appropriate for use in research and clinical practice.
This fall the School of Nursing held its first orientation for the new Ph.D. Hybrid program, which gives working nurses the flexibility of pursuing their doctorate through online classes with limited on-campus requirements. The nursing Ph.D. hybrid program is the first based in Virginia and will place VCU among only a few schools in the Mid-Atlantic region to offer this degree option. In addition to online courses, the hybrid format consists of an on-campus schedule of five days during the fall, three days during the spring and two days during the summer semester for the first two years. When students are on campus, they will attend classes and participate in activities that may include biobehavioral research, advisory meetings, presentations, manuscript development, technology and library skill development and socialization activities to foster group cohesiveness. Following the initial two years, the hybrid format will require periodic on-campus experiences and continuous enrollment in the Ph.D. program until the dissertation is successfully completed.

The VCU School of Nursing welcomed sophomore nursing students at the school’s first Lamplighting Ceremony in Younger Auditorium. The students are entering the school’s bachelor’s degree program, which students start during their sophomore year. The ceremony provided an overview of the nursing program and profession for students.

Dean Nancy Langston, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, explained the history and significance of the lamp in nursing. The symbol is traced to modern nursing founder Florence Nightingale, whose steadfastness treating British soldiers during the Crimean War earned her the moniker “the lady with the lamp.” Langston also tied the candles to the flame of knowledge. Students learned about the school’s heritage, the Connector Program, which matches nursing students with alumni, and various other opportunities to get involved and navigate their first year in nursing.

The event concluded with Shannon Storey, the senior class leader, inviting sophomores to the front of the auditorium to light a candle. Langston encouraged students to take their lights forward into the world to guide them in pursuit of a successful nursing career.

Ph.D. Hybrid Candidates Attend First Orientation

This fall the School of Nursing held its first orientation for the new Ph.D. Hybrid program, which gives working nurses the flexibility of pursuing their doctorate through online classes with limited on-campus requirements. The nursing Ph.D. hybrid program is the first based in Virginia and will place VCU among only a few schools in the Mid-Atlantic region to offer this degree option. In addition to online courses, the hybrid format consists of an on-campus schedule of five days during the fall, three days during the spring and two days during the summer semester for the first two years. When students are on campus, they will attend classes and participate in activities that may include biobehavioral research, advisory meetings, presentations, manuscript development, technology and library skill development and socialization activities to foster group cohesiveness. Following the initial two years, the hybrid format will require periodic on-campus experiences and continuous enrollment in the Ph.D. program until the dissertation is successfully completed.
New VCU School of Nursing Faculty

Patricia A. Kinser, Ph.D., WHNP-BC, RN, is an assistant professor in the Department of Family and Community Health Nursing. Kinser most recently served as an assistant professor at the Bon Secours Memorial College of Nursing. She earned a bachelor’s degree in nursing and a master’s degree with a concentration in women’s health from the VCU School of Nursing. Kinser obtained a Ph.D. in nursing from the University of Virginia.

Shelly Orr, M.S.N., B.S., RN, is a collateral clinical instructor in the Department of Adult Health and Nursing Systems. Orr most recently served as an associate professor at the Southside Regional School of Nursing in Petersburg. She earned a B.S. in nursing from VCU and an M.S.N. with a concentration in nursing education from Old Dominion University.

Judy Parker-Falzoi, M.S., FNP-BC, B.S.N., B.S., is a collateral clinical assistant professor in the Department of Family and Community Health Nursing. She most recently served as a family nurse practitioner at the Appomattox Area Health & Wellness Center in Petersburg, VA. Parker-Falzoi is the project director for the Schools of Nursing and Dentistry Practice Model to enhance oral and physical health outcomes. She earned a bachelor’s degree in zoology/chemistry from the College of William and Mary and earned both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in nursing from VCU.

Debra Shockey, D.N.P., RN, CPNP, is an assistant professor in a shared position between the Department of Family and Community Health Nursing and the MCVP Division of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. Shockey has many years of pediatric experience at the PNP level and recently finished the D.N.P. program at the University of Virginia. Her focus will be the master’s program, in the pediatric specialty courses and practica. Shockey earned both bachelor’s and master’s degrees in nursing at VCU.

Thomas Brunner, RN, M.S., FNP, has joined the Department of Family and Community Health Nursing in a shared position with the VCU Health System. He has been teaching at J. Sargeant Reynolds as an assistant professor for many years, and has worked on one of the pediatric units at VCUHS. Brunner received a B.S. in psychology from William and Mary, as well as a bachelor’s degree and a master’s with a family health concentration from the VCU School of Nursing.
New VCU School of Nursing Staff

Tedra Baskerville is an administrative professional for the Department of Family and Community Health Nursing. She most recently worked at the Children’s Hospital at VCUHS and brings more than 12 years of health care administration experience. Baskerville earned a B.S. in business administration from Averett University and is currently pursuing a M.S. in executive leadership from Liberty University.

LaToya Davis is the new pre-admission academic advisor in the Office of Enrollment and Student Services, where she is responsible for academic advising to all prospective applicants to the bachelor’s and master’s degree programs. Davis earned both a B.A. in English and M.Ed. from VCU.

Linda Escobar is executive assistant in the Office of the Dean. Before relocating to Virginia, she served as manager in the Office of the Chair and Clinical Services in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at UCLA and then as the executive assistant to the dean of Social Sciences in the College of Letters and Science at UCLA.

Stacey Garnett is the director of research administration. She most recently served at the Virginia Institute for Psychiatric and Behavioral Genetics, where she was responsible for providing administrative, fiscal and grants management support to the principal investigators. Garnett earned a B.S. in mass communications and an M.S. in public administration, both from VCU.

Ethan Scott is the development assistant in the Development/Advancement Office. He most recently served as a computer technician at the School of Nursing. He obtained a B.A. in English from the University of Virginia.

Teri Smith is the administrative professional for the Clinical Learning Center and the Office of Academic Programs. Smith is responsible for managing daily operations of the CLC and assisting with program evaluation for academic programs. She mostly recently served as an account manager at Safeware, Inc.
Upcoming VCU Nursing Events

Dec. 7, 6 p.m.
VCU School of Nursing Recognition Ceremony
Richmond Convention and Visitors Bureau

Dec. 8, 10 a.m.
VCU Commencement
Stuart C. Siegel Center

Jan. 9
VCU Nursing Night - VCU vs. Dayton
Verizon Wireless Arena at the Stuart C. Siegel Center

April 19 - 21
Reunion Weekend 2013

May 30, 2013
VCU Nursing Gala: 120 Years, 120 Visionary Leaders
The Jefferson Hotel