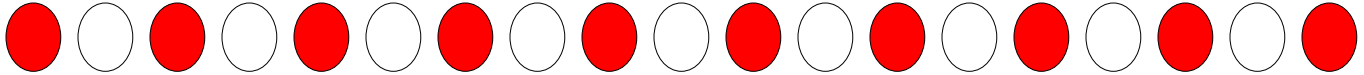




# CSB/SJU Nursing Department

## Winter 2011 Newsletter



### Join Us on Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup>— Conference and Alum Reunion!

Submitted by Carie Braun, Nursing Dept. Chair

Did you get your “Save the Date” postcard? We are really getting excited as April 1, 2011 approaches. This is the day that we will be hosting a healthcare conference on sustainability. The day will be filled with new approaches to improving the quality of healthcare by becoming more environmentally sound. The conference will award 4.2 contact hours. The speakers have fantastic experience in the area of sus-

tainability. You will come away with practical knowledge that you can immediately apply to your home and work setting. We are hoping for over 300 attendees. Brochures have been mailed. If your address has changed or you did not receive a brochure, please contact Carie Braun ([cbraun@csbsju.edu](mailto:cbraun@csbsju.edu)) so we can get you everything you will need.

The afternoon of April 1 will be a social gathering of alums and friends in the Main Building. We

will share our ideas for transforming the department and you may be lucky enough to participate in a nursing simulation experience! Many, many more surprises await you. To register for the conference and to find more information on our transformation, check out the department website at: [www.csbsju.edu/nursing](http://www.csbsju.edu/nursing).

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## Kristi Merten (1975-2010) Class of 2000 Tribute

Submitted by Carie Braun, Nursing Dept. Chair

A few months ago, we received the unfortunate news that Kristi Merten was killed in a tragic automobile accident on October 21, 2010. She has left behind husband Steve and five children (Brooke, Luke, Rachel, Paige & Jackie). Her parents, Howard and Terri Bahn, and all of her family were so incredibly proud of Kristi's accomplishments as a graduate of the CSB/SJU nursing class of 2000.

We remember her as a fun-loving person and dedicated nurse who worked hard and enjoyed life. She was passionate about advocating for children and their families. As a skilled pediatric critical care nurse at the St. Cloud Hospital, she was adored by her patients and families. One mother writes about Kristi, "In 2008, my 8 year old son, Josh was hospitalized. Josh had a severe anaphylactic reaction from allergy shots. Josh also has Type 1 diabetes, so this made me especially anxious in the treatment of his diabetes while in the hospital. Josh was placed under Kristi's care in the pediatric unit of the St. Cloud Hospital. I remember Kristi walking into the hospital room for the first time. Kristi's big smile, bright eyes and zest of energy, instantly com-

forted Josh. Kristi had such a positive attitude and genuine concern for him. As long as Kristi was in the room, it didn't seem to bother Josh that he was hooked up to wires, monitors and IV's! During Josh's hospital stay, Kristi and I adamantly disagreed with the doctor's orders related to Josh's diabetes. Kristi took it upon herself to confront the doctor on the issue. (Kristi came back and said they got into a little spat!) After Kristi's discussion with the doctor, the orders were immediately changed. Josh's hospitalization went smooth and he was able to come home healthier and quicker. Kristi had a tremendous passion for the well being of her patients. I will be forever grateful to Kristi for her compassionate nursing skills as well as being an amazing person."

She, like us, was educated in the Main Building 4<sup>th</sup> floor. This was a place where we learned how to be the best nurses possible and to exude evidence-based practice, even before that phrase existed. The Main 4<sup>th</sup> floor looks very much today like it did in 2000 and the nursing department is working diligently to change that. New plans are in the works for the long-awaited simulation laboratory

along with state-of-the art collaborative classrooms, a functional home care space, and nurses' station. This will definitely be a space we can be proud of and this is an opportunity that we will not let pass us by.

To honor her, we have decided to dedicate the pediatric critical care and family nursing simulation laboratory to Kristi. Her name will continue to live through and among us. Her children and family will be ever-reminded how important she was to us as a colleague and friend.

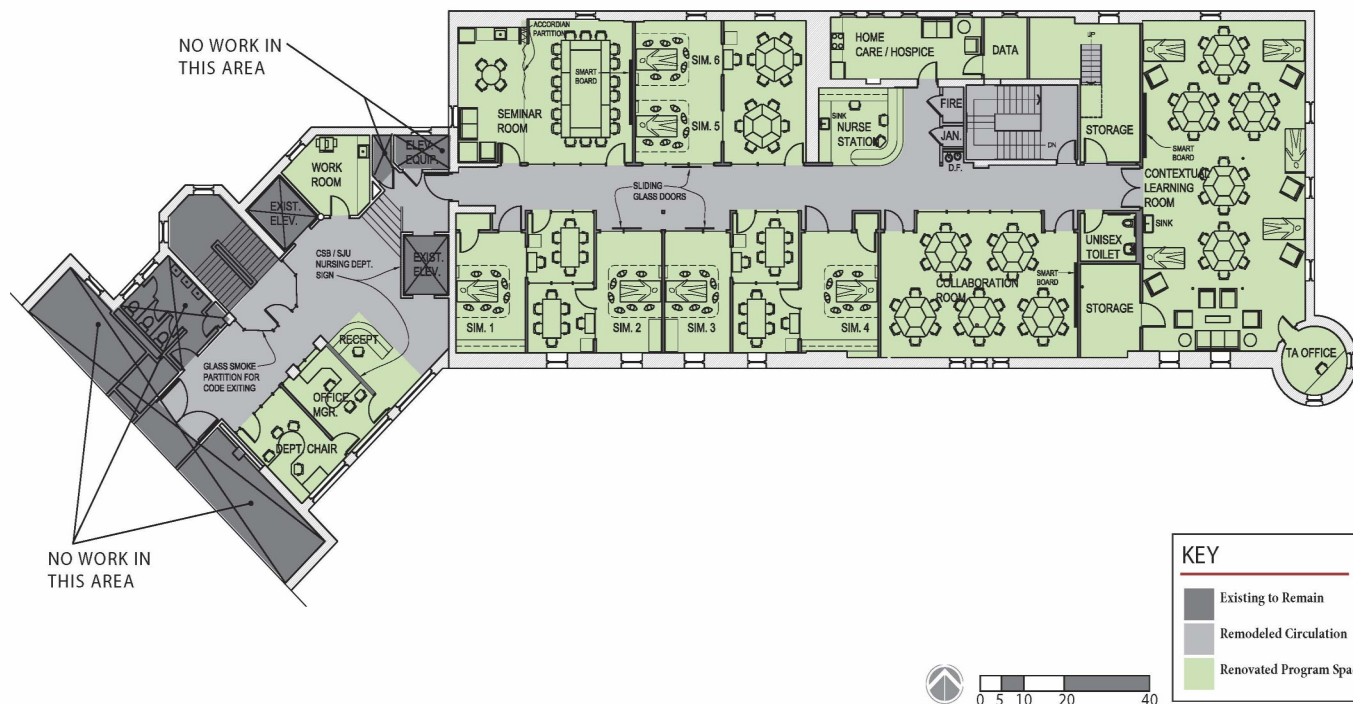
Please help us to make this a reality. In total, we will raise \$125,000 to build and equip Kristi's room. Anyone who knew Kristi is invited to give at whatever level they wish. Any contribution (big or small... whatever is meaningful to you) sent by those in our class or other friends of hers will be earmarked for Kristi's room. THANK YOU!!!

Please check our progress on the nursing department website starting: [www.csbsju.edu/nursing](http://www.csbsju.edu/nursing). You can also contact Carie Braun, Chair of the Nursing Department at 320-363-5223 if you have any questions.



*In memory of  
Kristi Merten*

## Plans for our new space on 4th floor Main



### PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN

COLLEGE OF SAINT BENEDICT - SAINT JOHN'S UNIVERSITY | Nursing Department Renovation

SEPTEMBER 2010

BENTZ / THOMPSON / RIETOW, INC.

## Nursing Department Transformation

Submitted by Carie Braun, Nursing Dept. Chair

*When will CSB/SJU have a spectacular facility to match our amazing nursing program?*

By 2012 we hope to have raised \$3 million to complete construction of the renovated facility. As you can see above, this will include five simulation rooms, a home care apartment, a fully func-

tional nurses station, and two state-of-the-art classrooms.

Thanks to everyone who has already contributed to our project to transform nursing education at CSB/SJU! We are at \$550,000 of our \$3 million goal and progressing steadily. We will be putting the project out for bids probably late this summer and hope to

begin construction one year from now. We continue to seek donations of any amount...we definitely need everyone's help to make this happen! Click [here](#) to contribute online. Make sure to write "Nursing Renovation" in the comment box so that your gift is designated for this purpose. WE NEED YOU!!

## Volunteering in Kenya ~ Emily Paul '10

Submitted by Matt Byrne, CSB/SJU Nursing Faculty

Emily Paul is a 2010 graduate of the nursing program and is involved in volunteer work in Karunga, Kenya. She has been sharing her experiences there with the department and wanted to pass these experiences on, in her own words, to our alums.

"I am working at St. Camillus Mission Hospital in Karungu, Kenya. There are three wards: children's ward, medical 2 (an adult medical ward) and the theatre/surgical ward/maternity ward. The bed number is around 120 but soon to be more with the new wing almost complete. Other parts of the hospital include the pharmacy, dressing changes, outpatient department, HIV/AIDS counseling, outreach programs and then what is known as the "last ward," the mortuary.

I have spent one week on each ward for orientation and now am faced with the decision of where to go from here - my ultimate plan is to spend a few months on each ward before leaving.

The first couple of days were especially difficult because many things that you are taught NEVER to do happen on a daily basis here. For example not swabbing anything, not flushing IVs, not wearing gloves, hanging blood for way more than four hours, not monitoring the blood transfusions, pushing medications in less than five seconds, and

more... Then there are things that are happening all of the time which aren't necessary, for example wearing sterile gloves to insert an NG tube. My solution to all of this has been to meet in the middle. There aren't the resources to swab everything so I try to be especially careful drawing up and giving medications and I go through more gloves than the average nurse here. I stay with patients when they are getting blood transfusions for at least 15 minutes and take vitals more in that time than the whole week put together. A few weeks in doctors, nurses, and patients are starting to trust me more so I try to make suggestions and hope to have a few good habits set in place around here with in the year!

My attitude about death is different. There is a saying around here of "life is short." Yes, life goes by fast, but the 8 month old should not have died because of extensive burns and lack of sterility, Millicent should not have died because she had a reaction to the blood transfusion. Anton should not be on his deathbed because he couldn't have what is a routine test in the States. I watched a black baby turn blue immediately after delivery because the suction didn't work in the operating room. Of course we see death at home but not in the same way - this attitude is most likely a coping mechanism. I have to do it as well to tell you the truth- take a deep breath and



Emily Paul volunteering in Kenya.

keep going. You are far more useful that way.

A few last thoughts and then I will let you go. Communication is interesting because Luo is the local language and Kiswahili and English are the official Kenyan languages. Often a doctor speaks to a patient in Kiswahili who translates to Luo for the patient that we are actually assessing and then it bounces back ending with the doctor talking to me in English. I am working on Kiswahili. Most of the staff speaks English, which is nice but I am most grateful that smiles, laughs and tears are universal!

I am continually learning and always trying to teach. I am getting good at starting IV's and have even scrubbed in for a few surgeries! My nights are spent with books to better understand tropical diseases and the cases I see during the day.

## Nursing Club Happenings

Submitted by Lindsay Anderson, CSB/SJU Nursing Faculty

The Nursing Club has been busy around campus already this semester. Nursing Club President, Alisha Thill, has collaborated with other club leaders to increase participation in the club and promote awareness of Nursing around campus. In mid October members of the Nursing Club participated in the annual fall highway cleanup. Also in October, club members organized a Breast Cancer Awareness Week around campus. During the week the Nursing Club sold t-

shirts, bracelets, had guests from the American Cancer Society, promoted breast health and capped the week off with a bingo event. In addition to raising awareness, the week's events raised over \$1300 to be donated to the American Cancer Society. In November the Nursing Club provided over 30 volunteers to assist with SJU Campus Ministry's Fall Blood Drive. The Nursing Club also organized their annual "Giving Tree" event that provides gifts for families in need over the holidays.



Nursing students participating in the Nursing Club bingo activity.

## Katy Torchia ~ 2009-10 Scholar Athlete of the Year Award

Submitted by LuAnn Reif, CSB/SJU Nursing Faculty

Nursing is a demanding major. The prerequisite courses are rigorous and the competition to get admitted is fierce. Once admitted, the courses in the major are rigorous and the clinical rotations demand significant amounts of time for preparation and the delivery of safe and quality nursing care. Given these realities, it is amazing to witness a nursing student that excels, not only in the major, but also is able to successfully compete on two athletic teams. This is the story of Katy Torchia....

Katy came to CSB following a successful career as an athlete in high school. Upon her arrival, she decided to participate on both the Cross Country team as well as the Track and Field team. By the end of her first year at CSB, she had already surpassed her high school accomplishments. During her sophomore year, she continued to excel and contribute to the team. At the end of her sophomore year, her teammates acknowledged her leadership capabilities voting her captain of the Cross

Country team for the 2009 season. Unfortunately, she suffered an injury during the summer of 09 and was not able to compete or function as captain. Nonetheless, she was completely supportive the entire season focusing on what gifts she could bring to the team. Katy participated on the Track and Field team during the spring of 2010. She returned to the Cross Country team during the fall of 2010.

But Katy is not only a talented athlete; she has been noteworthy in her academic pursuits as well. At the 2010 CSB Athletic Awards Program, Katy received the 2010 Scholar Athlete of the Year award for her cumulative GPA of 4.0, the first nursing major to receive this award. Katy is also a Regents/Trustee scholar, has been on the Dean's list for six semesters, was an ILCP Emerging Leader Award Nominee (2 years), and received the Service Learning Outstanding Work in the Community Recognition. She also participated in VISTO in a child swimming program, and has been a tutor in chemistry, English/Writing/Literature.

Katy believes in balance. She has stated in

her Delta Epsilon Sigma application, "A true intellectual pursues academic success via many pathways, and thus cultivates a balanced lifestyle that will serve him/her well in the future." This philosophy will serve Katy well in both her professional and personal life.

NEWS ALERT!!!!!! Katy has been recently invited to join the Delta Epsilon Sigma Honor Society.

Congratulations, Katy!



From L to R: LuAnn Reif, Katy Torchia, and Robin Balder-Lanoué

## New Distinction In Major Program

Submitted by Denise Meijer and Kathy Twohy CSB/SJU Nursing Faculty

In August of 2009, Denise Meijer and Kathy Twohy attended an institute at the University of Minnesota under the auspices of the Hartford Center for Geriatric Excellence in Nursing. This week-long institute, (Faculty Learning about Geriatrics, FLAG) is designed to enhance senior faculty preparation in the care of older adults. The FLAG program includes mentorship for a full year after the institute as a major project is completed. Denise and Kathy received the *Star of Excellence Award* in May 2010 during the Upper Midwest Geriatric Nursing Education Alliance Conference for their unique distinction in the major program. The award and program introduction were celebrated at a reception on November 2 in the nursing department at the College of St. Benedict.

The project Denise and Kathy designed,

and implemented in fall 2010, combines the colleges' existing distinction in the major program with a clinical component. Distinction in the major at the colleges requires students to engage in research and prepare and present their thesis in an area of their interest. Unique design features include flexible scheduling and variable credit (0-4 per term). A topics course with seminars and coaching sessions facilitates a transcript entry each semester that emphasizes the geriatrics focus.

Four juniors are enrolled in the program: Cassie Cabor, Adam Cronin, Jessamy Lyons and Katy Torchia; their thesis interests focus on mental health issues (depression and alcohol use) and falls in community-living older adults.

The practice aspect of the program engages students in a long-term relationship (4 semesters) with an older adult couple living in the community; the couples are recruited in the nearby area. The students

are in the relationship initiating stage and feedback indicates they find the experience interesting and rewarding.

The future holds great promise as we continue working with the enrolled students on their research proposals and thesis development. Recruitment of incoming sophomores is scheduled for late spring term with a fall 2011 enrollment.



From L to R: Denise Meijer, Cassie Cabor, Kathy Twohy, Katy Torchia, Jessamy Lyons, and Adam Cronin

## Excellence in Evidence-Based Practice

The use of evidence-based practice (EBP), which includes the application of research findings, is a major force in attaining positive patient outcomes and expanding the body of nursing knowledge. Evidence-based practice integrates the best available research evidence, with clinical expertise and patient values to provide optimum care (AACN Essentials, 2008). Using EBP in nursing has been associated with achieving higher quality care for patients and healthier work and learning environments for those engaged in the nursing profession.

Within the department of nursing, every nursing faculty member is engaged in using and applying EBP in his or her teaching and nursing practice. The majority of faculty are actively involved in completing nursing research studies, many with students, or in using the research literature and EBP practice resources in various writing projects for publication. The department values the importance of nursing research and EBP to our profession!

Nursing research and using EBP is also integral to the nursing role and responsibilities at St. Cloud Hospital, one of the clinical sites where students gain clinical experience. Annually, the

St. Cloud Hospital Nursing Research Committee, whose members also comprise nursing faculty from area colleges, recognizes individuals for their accomplishments in nursing research and evidence-based practice. This year, two recipients from the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University were recognized. Kathleen Ohman, EdD, RN, CCRN, professor of nursing, and Mandy Libbesmeier, former nursing student (now RN!) were two of 11 recipients who received awards at the fifth annual Nursing Research and Scholarly Activity Awards Ceremony at St. Cloud Hospital. Both were selected from nominees who were current St. Cloud Hospital nursing employees or affiliated students and faculty members who met specific award criteria.



Kathy Ohman

Kathy received the *Lifetime Achievement Award in Evidence-Based Practice or Nursing Research*. Kathy's scholarly work includes more than 25 publications in research, evidence-based practice, and education. Her expertise has been recognized in multiple grants, awards, and

professional presentations nationally and internationally. She has been a principle investigator in 4 research projects and is completing collaborative research with faculty from four other nursing programs within the state on "*Student Nurses' Reported Thinking during Medication Administration*". She has incorporated evidence-based practice into her recently published book *Davis's Q&A for the NCLEX-RN Examination* (2010).



Mandy Libbesmeier

Mandy received the *Outstanding Nursing Student in Evidence Based Practice Award*. During Mandy's capstone experience she was the group leader within her team of nursing students working on the project. The students surveyed staff and evaluated evidence on the barriers to safe

patient handling. As group leader, Mandy coordinated the student work. She developed a power point presentation which the group then used to present the results to two hospital committees. Mandy offered thoughtful, innovative and cost-effective suggestions for a practice change to promote safer patient handling.

## MSNA ~ Nursing Students Get Involved!

Submitted by Nursing Student Stephanie Revermann

Hello! My name is Stephanie Revermann. I am a senior nursing student and also the president of the Minnesota Student Nurses' Association (MSNA). MSNA is a pre-professional organization for the state and connected with the National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA). There are three executive board members from CSB/SJU including myself, Hailey Pearson, and Mona Shirazi.

Since becoming involved on the MSNA board we have had the opportunity to travel to NSNA conventions in Florida and Cincinnati where we met nursing student from all over the

United States and learned ways to improve not only ourselves as nurses but also ways to improve and better run our state organization. We were also able to participate in the Minnesota Nurses' Association convention in October.

Our next big event is our annual MSNA convention that will be held at St. Paul College on February 19, 2011. This full day event will feature keynote speakers Janet Izzo, an inspirational speaker and author of *Hotel Hennepin*, and Barbara Fedors who will speak about self-care. We will also be having an exhibit hall, resume review, a professional nursing panel, an NCLEX review, and more. We are very excited about this event and are

looking forward to a great turn out. Registration is done online through our website and we encourage all nursing students to attend regardless of their year in school.

MSNA is a great way for nursing students to be involved in a professional organization. There are many opportunities for networking, leadership, volunteering, attending conventions, and much more. All CSB students are automatically members of MSNA and we hope to further educate students about MSNA and the opportunities available to them. Do not hesitate to visit our website to sign up for convention or learn more about our awesome organization.

[www.minnesotasna.org](http://www.minnesotasna.org)

## Laura (Angell) Ashbach '08 ~ Making a Difference

Submitted by Carie Braun, Nursing Dept. Chair

Every day CSB/SJU nursing alums provide excellent care to patients and their families. Once in a while, one of those alums is recognized in a visible way. Laura Angell Ashbach ('08) is one such alum. Laura went above and beyond in providing care for a patient in ICU and was seated at the head table at the Abbott Northwestern Medicine Ball-Gala to recognize the care she provided. Laura writes, "I took care of a patient back in January while she was critically ill battling COPD. I remember spending lots of

time educating the family and the patient about various treatments and how this was going to affect her life. We held a care conference with about 4-5 family members involved. She passed away a few days later. She was one patient that I will always remember because we just had a special connection and worked very well together. Her family and I got along quite well too. After she passed her husband kindly sent me her memorial information and letter saying that having me as a nurse really helped get them through a few of the tough days. They said it was nice to have someone to ask questions to and to be

there just to listen. I was invited, along with an ICU nurse and the ICU doctor, to attend the Medicine Ball-Gala on behalf of her family. There were about 600 people who attended this and a large part of the night was a tribute to this patient's life. Her husband kindly recognized the three of us during the dinner. It was a great evening that I will never forget!" We would love to hear your stories of recognition. We are very proud of our alums.

## New Degrees Awarded for Nursing Faculty

Submitted by Ally Brandt, Student Employee

Recently three faculty members have graduated from various colleges.

Lindsay Anderson graduated in May 2010 with a Master of Science Degree from the University of MN. She majored in nursing with a focus in child/adolescent psychiatric nursing. In November 2010 she passed the Child/Adolescent Psychiatric-Mental Health Clinical Nurse Specialist certification exam. In the future she plans on taking the GRE and applying for a PhD

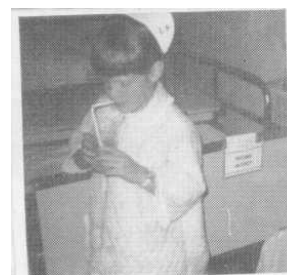
program. She is currently applying to the University of Minnesota and the University of California, San Francisco.

Jodi Berndt graduated in August 2010 from Walden University with a Master of Science Degree in Nursing. Jodi's future plans include completing a PhD program within the next 5-7 years. Jodi is glad to be done with that portion of her education; however, she is excited for her future endeavors.

Julie Strelow recently received her PhD in Adult Postsecondary Educa-

tion from Capella University. Julie said it has been a long journey and she is glad that it has come to a conclusion! Her graduation is scheduled for February in New Orleans.

**Congratulations to Lindsay, Jodi, and Julie!!!**



Julie Strelow ... living her childhood dream of being a nurse!

## MSNA Elects Hailey Pearson to Board

Submitted by Ally Brandt, Student Employee

Recently, Hailey Pearson was elected to serve on the Minnesota Student Nurses Association (MSNA) board. Hailey Pearson is a senior nursing student at the College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University. She also is currently the lead TA for the nursing department as well as the Mentor-

ship Coordinator for the Nursing Club. Hailey also participated in the NSNA annual convention, in Orlando, this past April and the NASNA Mid-Year Convention, in Cincinnati, this past October. During the 2010 MSNA convention, she was elected as the North Regional Director on the MSNA executive board. Part of the responsibilities of the North Regional Director include initiating, and main-

tain contact with half of the nursing schools in the state of Minnesota.



Hailey Pearson

**CSB/SJU**

**Current CSB/SJU Nursing Faculty**

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Lindsay Anderson Jodi Berndt Carie Braun Matt Byrne Gary Gillitzer Sigrid Hedman-Dennis Ron Hemmesch Carrie Hoover Rachelle Larsen	Kathleen Lehn Denise Meijer Mary Neisen Janet Neuwirth Kathy Ohman LuAnn Reif Julie Strelow Erica Timko Olson Kathy Twohy
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Deb Baloun - Office Manager  
Ally Brandt - Student Employee  
Courtney Kimball - Student Employee

WE ARE ON THE WEB!

[www.csbsju.edu/nursing.htm](http://www.csbsju.edu/nursing.htm)

OR

FIND US ON FACEBOOK:

CSBSJU NURSING ALUMS

**Volunteering in Honduras ~ Laura Schulte '10**

Submitted by Nursing Alum Laura Schulte '10

Going into college, I knew I wanted to be a nurse, but had no idea where I wanted to end up; heck, I still don't know where I want to end up. What I do know, though, is what I want to accomplish in the process of finding where my true calling is. While attending CSB/SJU I had multiple opportunities to volunteer and went abroad a couple times as well, both to Spain and South Africa. It was partly because of these experiences that I decided I wanted to volunteer abroad for a year, but it was also because of a want to experience nursing in a whole different light from what it is in the states. Therefore, I began my search for a volunteer organization that would fit my needs; in the end, I was accepted as part of the Medical Volunteer Program through Catholic Medical Mission Board. For one year, starting last September, I am volunteering at Clinica Esperanza as the nurse. I work with two Honduran doctors and numerous other volunteer doctors, nurses, residents, and students doing anything and everything. I am a resource for the vol-

unteers, I run EKG's, place IV's, clean and dress wounds, assist in minor surgeries, triage, operate the pharmacy, and distribute and educate about medications (just to name a smattering of my responsibilities!). Clinic finishes early in the



Laura Schulte helping a patient at Clinica Esperanza.

afternoon to allow the doctors a break before going to their private practice; so many times, I get the afternoon to enjoy the sun and water. Other afternoons, we do health fairs in some of the poorest areas on the island to reach those that do not come into the clinic, we do health education classes, and I tutor a child at

the bilingual school. While living on a Caribbean island is not what most people think of when volunteering, I am fulfilling a great need here and that is what I love. Don't get me wrong, some days get to be quite long and there have been many times that I miss home and the familiarities of it all, but the people living here really have nothing, yet many are the happiest, most content people you will ever meet. Therefore, the lessons that are learned and the compassion that is shared make it all worth it in the end. I strongly encourage each and every person, at some point in their life, to provide their services to others without regard for what you will get in return; trust me, it will be worth it! To read more, check out my blog at <http://healthcareconesperanza.blogspot.com>. Also, visit my tribute page at <http://support.cmmb.org/goto/Laura.Schulte-Honduras>.