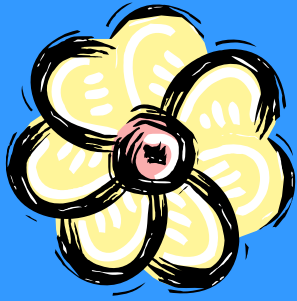


May 2006

CSB / SJU NURSING DEPARTMENT



# Spring Newsletter 2006

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## Innovations in Nursing Education

A new partnership between the nursing department and a community program was developed during the 05-06 academic year. Through LuAnn Reif's membership on the Advisory Committee for the Health Care Academy, students in NRSG 326 Global Health were able to participate in a unique learning opportunity. The Health Care Academy is a grant-funded program that aims to assist recent immigrants in their transition to health care system job opportunities. The class was composed of 13 women who had recently immigrated to Central Minnesota from Italy, Mexico, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. Throughout fall term, small groups of senior nursing students implemented a series of nine class sessions dealing with [navigating the US health care system, hygiene, germs and terms, professional boundaries, infection control, health care opportunities, health care culture, and communication]. This past spring some of these same women then enrolled in a

CNA class that was taught by a St. Cloud Technical College faculty in our nursing classroom and lab space. Again the nursing students—this time juniors—helped facilitate the related health care language and laboratory learning for the 6 class members.

This partnership provided many unique opportunities for the health care academy students and the nursing students. The Health Care Academy students were aided in the language development and had strong assistance/mentoring in learning the technical aspects of each CNA skill. The nursing students had the advantage of interacting with persons from diverse cultures and strengthening their teaching skills, particularly under complex communication situations. Five of the six Academy students passed the CNA exam on the first try. The sixth student will be repeating the written portion of the exam. The plan is to further develop this model and expand it across Minnesota as time and funds permit.

Another interesting innovation—this time between faculty and students at two different levels of the nursing curriculum—is expected to be trialed in fall 2006. LuAnn Reif and Carie Braun will be partnering senior public health students (NRSG 326) with junior maternal-child health students (NRSG 325) in community-based maternal child health learning experiences. We hope this model will enhance the learning of both groups of students and contribute to closer, more lasting relationships across the “junior-senior divide”. If all goes well in the Fall, Carie Braun and Carrie Hoover expect to test the model in spring term with sophomores in their basic nursing competencies course (NRSG 218) and juniors in the adult nursing course (NRSG 322) with learning experiences in the acute care setting.

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### Important Dates to Remember:

- **May 12, 2006** Nurses Pinning Ceremony at CSB's Petters Auditorium **6:00pm** All are welcome.
- **May 13, 2006** CSB Commencement at CSB's HCC **2:00pm**
- **May 14, 2006** SJU Commencement at St. John's Abbey Church **2:00pm**

## Innovations in Nursing Education, Continued

New developments in simulation are also afoot in the nursing lab. Julie Strelow is developing a series of patient case studies that can be used in multiple courses/levels of the nursing curriculum. These cases are designed in the CHAMP software that uses the Omaha System electronic record. Cases are “whole people” with families, communities and histories outside of the current time and place. They can vary from simple to complex and will eventually lend themselves to other simulations such as quality assurance activities and report generation.



## Announcements, Awards and Department News

Kathleen Ohman was awarded the Star of Excellence by Kappa Phi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International in April 2006. This award is given to a Kappa Phi member who has demonstrated superior professional leadership and/or marked achievement in nursing. The accomplishments have impact beyond the local agency in the community, region, national or international arena.

Carie Braun received two awards this spring; the CSB/SJU *Linda Mealey Faculty/Student Collaborative Research and Creativity Award* for her contributions to student faculty collaborative research and the St. Cloud Hospital (SCH) *Outstanding Achievement in Nursing Research Education*.

These awards recognize Carie’s commitment to advancing undergraduate research by designing and implementing clinical research projects in partnership with students. She and her team of students have completed a study on the accuracy of pacifier thermometers and are in the data collection phase of a study on Animal Assisted Therapy on the Children’s Unit at SCH.

LuAnn Reif received the Kappa Phi Graduate Scholarship Award and the Research Award for her doctoral research. 2006 Blazer Athletic 2006 Breaking Barriers Award on January 12, 2006, the 20th Anniversary of National Girls and Women in Sports Day. She was given this award in rec-

ognition of her 21 years as the Faculty Representative to the MIAC. LuAnn has also served as MIAC president and in other Board of Director positions throughout her time representing CSB.

Judy Knutson was named Professor Emerita of Nursing at the CSB/SJU Faculty Awards and Recognition Day, May 9, 2006. Judy retires from CSB/SJU at the end of this academic year but will continue to be active in the community---most notably Anna Marie’s House, the area shelter for women and children experiencing domestic abuse. In her honor, the nursing department donated a framed print to Anna Marie’s.

## Research Projects

### **Pet Therapy Research:**

The increased emphasis on undergraduate research at CSB/SJU has sparked a number of student-led projects on and off campus. Jennifer Stoffel, Class of 2006 and **Carie Braun**, Assistant Professor of Nursing recently completed a qualitative analysis of testimonials from 65 St. Cloud Hospital patients who had undergone animal-assisted therapy (AAT). AAT is considered an intentional and distinct healing modality (Devi, 2000) and involves a patient, a trained animal as therapist, and the human owner or handler with a goal of facilitating the patient success in achieving therapeutic goals (Barker & Dawson, 1998). Patient testimonials can be a powerful method of providing insight into the direct psychological and physical reactions of the patient in relation to animal-assisted therapy. The objective of this study was to analyze patient, family, and caregiver testimonials (n=65 [40 children, 25 adult patients/family members]) using Atlas TI, a computer program which codes qualitative data. Atlas TI determines which codes, or phrases, were repeated throughout the numerous patient testimonials. A total of 43 codes were identified. These were further collapsed into 16 major categories. The most prevalent theme

was related to the induction of relaxation, calmness, peace, stillness, and quiet (85%). Thirty-two patients (49%) reported a reduction of pain during the animal-assisted therapy session. In addition, 19 patients indicated a positive change in attitude (29%) and 18 patients (28%) reported that they became sleepy. Other predominant codes, or themes, included the experience of slowed breathing or matched breathing and heart rate pattern between the therapy dog and the patient (34%), as well as feeling a sense of warmth (14%), arousal/energy (11%), or a decrease in temperature or coolness (8%) during the therapy. There was not a difference in reported sensations between adults and children. The analysis of patient testimonials contributes to the growing evidence that animal-assisted therapy improves the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of individuals (Barba, 1995).

#### References:

- Barba, B. (1995). The positive influence of animals: Animal-assisted therapy in acute care. *Clinical Nurse Specialist*, 9, 199-202.
- Barker, S. & Dawson, K. (1998). The effects of animal-assisted therapy on anxiety ratings of hospitalized psychiatric patients. *Psychiatric Services*, 49, 797-801.
- Devi, S. (2000). Beyond words:

Animals as healers. *Alternative Medicine*, 38, 31-39.

### **Research Abroad:**

Early this summer, **Dr. Laura Rodgers**, nursing faculty member, along with Dr. Linda Tennison, CSB/SJU Psychology Professor will travel to Khabarovsk (a city in the Russian Far East). They will be collecting data for a research project that will allow them to explore physical and psychological risk factors for mortality, especially in men, in the Russian Far East. The research is in response to the disturbing increase in adult male mortality, causing a gender gap in the mortality rate. They have plans to administer surveys to Russian college students that will include measures of life stress, health and well-being, depression, health-related behaviors, and attitudes towards traditionally-defined gender roles. There will also be analysis of cortisol and testosterone, two hormones connected to stress-induced depression in males. This data will then be compared to American college students that will be collected in the upcoming academic year. Other plans in Russia include

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## Research Projects, Continued

finalizing an “intercultural” survey assessment tool to measure perception, memory and cognition among Russian and US students which will be used to compare the cognitive structure of American and Russian students. Rodgers and Tennison are also to give two professional presentations at an international conference. Both professors received internal grant support for the project. They received a Rooney research grant, which allows two students to travel with them to Russia and aid in the research.

### **Adjustment Disorder Research**

Nursing Faculty member **Laura Rodgers** along with nursing students Gregory Trobec ('07), Shelley Boser('06), and Jennifer Stoffel ('06) have been conducting a research project on the potential stress that may occur from having to adjust to different or new environments. Adjustment Disorder (AD) is characterized as feeling overwhelmed by stress. Symptoms impair social life and academic/job performance or the person's distress symptoms seem out of proportion to the apparent degree of the stress that has caused it. Dr. Rodgers and the student co-investigators sur-

veyed CSB/SJU first year college students' to assess emotional and behavioral experiences related to adjusting to college during their first semester. They also surveyed FYS faculty to assess their perceptions of adjustment among first-year students. Rodgers received response rate 44.7% from faculty and 46% from students. The surveys revealed that 65% of faculty described students potentially meeting AD criteria. Ultimately, the goals of the research project are to see if Adjustment disorder is a problem and what interventions could be offered to ease adjustment to college. FYS faculty may benefit from additional information on how to identify first-year college students who are encountering difficulty adjusting to the stress of college life and refer them for proper assistance.

### **Family Presence Research**

In conjunction with the nursing South Africa Study Abroad program in fall 2006, **Kathy Ohman** will be extending her previous study on health care providers' views on family presence during resuscitation and invasive procedures. She and her MN research team are in the process of analyz-

ing data from the first study conducted at St. Cloud Hospital this past year. It is hoped that the findings from the replication in South Africa can uncover cross-cultural perspectives on this issue. Kathy has a senior student, Erin McGowan, who will be partnering with her in South Africa. They hope to complete proposal approval and collect data in the fall for analysis upon return to campus next spring.

### **WEL Research**

The WEL research team (**Rachelle Parsons**, **Mary Neisen**, Linda Shepherd (dietetics), Janna LaFountaine (physical education), Mike Ewing (Counseling and Health Education) and **Kathy Twohy** are finalizing one manuscript on the Wellness behaviors of 1000 first-year college students. The study used the Wellness Evaluation of Lifestyle (WEL) to gather data on first-year students' perceptions of their own wellness. A follow-up study with these same students was launched in spring 2006 to determine whether self-reported wellness changed between the first year and senior year.

## Alums in the Spotlight

**Theresa Guentzel** ('05) recently returned home from a 5-month stay in India. From July 2005 to December 2005, Theresa lived and worked in Kolkata, West Bengal, India. Her time was spent pursuing nursing volunteer work at a clinic operated by the Calcutta Station Mission. During this time, Theresa kept an online blog of her journeys and experiences. From a blog written in early Oc-

tober Theresa writes, "In addition to my work at Sister Cyril's school, I have also been working with another charity, Calcutta Station Mission. In the mornings, I assist an Australian nurse (Rod, the founder of Calcutta Station Mission) in caring for the Rainbow children and other students. After the morning clinic, we follow a rotating schedule of visits to a neighboring village and the

nearby Sealdah train station (home to many impoverished families). My work with Rod has given me access to the needs of a diverse population and also keeps me busy with an exciting, un-technological type of nursing work." To view Theresa's journeys in India and learn more about her experiences you may visit her blog at <http://briandtheresainindia.blogspot.com>.

## Nursing Club Shamrock Wall

This spring the Nursing club helped a local program give to those a lot less "lucky". The project was to help 'Hands Across the World', a St. Cloud program that offers ESL classes to newly arrived immigrants and provides daycare for children while the parents are in class at the Southside Boys and Girls Club in St. Cloud. During the week of St. Patrick's Day, the club placed about 30 shamrock cutouts on the Main Building 4th Floor wall each with a description of something the program needs (i.e. a pack of computer paper). Anyone who chose to participate would take the clover off the wall, buy the item, and return it to a collection

box. Nursing students collected juice boxes, Kleenexes, and art supplies for the daycare throughout the month of March. Club member Mal-larie Scherer stated that response to the project was very good and the donations were well-received by the participants. In the fall, the nursing club plans to host another giving wall, this one for a medical supplies donation drive for Casa Guadalupe in Cold Spring. For more informa-



tion on the CSB/SJU Nursing club visit their website at <http://www.csbsju.edu/nursingclub> or e-mail them at [nursingclub@csbsju.edu](mailto:nursingclub@csbsju.edu).

# South Africa May Term 2006

14 CSB/SJU students have signed on for a 2-credit course to travel to South Africa this May in order to be immersed in it's culture while also learning about it's history and cultural issues. Nursing faculty member, **Denise Meijer** will be leading the trip and has planned an itinerary that is sure to keep them busy. The students will leave the U.S. on May 17th and make their first stop in South Africa at Cape town. It is here they will visit the waterfront, Table Mountain, the historic old town, museums, National Parks, and learn about the wine indus-

try. Other visits include an ostrich farm where the students will learn about the importance of ostrich meat and feathers to the South African culture, and a trip into the underground world of the Cango caves. The group will then head to the coast where they are to learn about forestry and will stay in cabins and walk the trails of the Old indigenous forest. They will also learn about eco-systems and natural reserves at the Tsitsi-Kanna National Park. They will then go to Port Elizabeth to experience displacement of people and township living.

After Port Elizabeth they will go to the Wild Coast for a three night cultural immersion experience with the Xhosa people. They will then return to Port Elizabeth for a few days before returning home on June 5th. In preparation for the trip the students will do required readings, a research project and conduct a presentation in small groups. During the trip, the students are required to keep a journal of their experiences and upon returning home they will write a reflection paper. The students will also be contributing two to three pages in a memory book which each student will then have to keep.

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**We have not been as diligent as we planned in keeping our Alum web pages up to date. If you have ideas, suggestions, etc. that you would like to see incorporated, please e-mail the department.**

**We're on the Web!**

<http://www.csbsju.edu/nursing>

