



SUMMER 2021 | VOLUME 30, NUMBER 1

# GUSTAVUS NURSING DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

## GREETINGS FROM THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR



Dear Alumni and Friends, Warmest summer greetings from the hill! While this year was faced with many challenges, the Gustavus nursing program persevered and is excited for all that the future holds for professional nursing education. Dare I say that the pandemic maybe even

provided a bit of fuel for the Gustavus nursing program to progress in moving forward?

A successful reaccreditation virtual on-site visit in September by CCNE launched the memorable 2020-2021 academic year. What a way to start! The process, while stressful, was a beneficial exercise in taking a deeper look into the program to not only identify aspects that the program is doing well, but where the program can continue to pursue excellence. The revised Nursing Advisory Board, now called Nursing Leadership Council (LC), has been instrumental this past year in assisting the program to reflect on its current successes while strategizing how to move forward to implement a high-caliber, competitive nursing program. The main goal for the LC work this upcoming year is program growth, which not only includes size and diversity and inclusion, but physical resources as well. This work is timely, as there was a significant increase in qualified applicants for the 2023 cohort. With the constraints of the program that only allow 30 students to be admitted, thoughtful planning for growth is important for the continuation of a high-quality nursing program.

It's easy to get hung up on the challenges the program faced this past year; but the reality is that the challenges brought on by the pandemic required flexibility and

innovation, which ultimately has led to new avenues for implementing a dynamic and engaging curriculum to develop Gustie nurses. The continued need for modifications afforded the program the ability to implement creative teaching and learning activities in the classroom and virtually, including using the high-fidelity mannequins to provide a high-quality simulation rotation for the juniors for partial clinical replacement. This fall, we will welcome Apollo to our simulation family, made possible from generous donations from nursing alumni. Additionally, the newly established Nursing Equipment and Maintenance Endowment Fund will also support the department in not only maintaining the simulators, but provide opportunities for faculty and students to participate in training to enhance the overall educational experience. It is the generosity of our alumni that has propelled these funding opportunities to support program growth and development. And we are so grateful for the continued support!

We are very proud of all our alumni and graduates. A special shout-out to this year's 2021 graduates—thank you for your dedication and commitment with your preparations as a professional nurse during this past year. What a ride it was!

Sincerely,

Heidi Meyer PhD, RN, PHN  
*Director, Chair of Nursing*

# NURSING DEPARTMENT NEWS/UPDATES



**Barbara Zust, PhD, RN | Professor**

Hello, everyone! The Covid Pandemic has given me:

- A deep appreciation for the people I know and long to visit.
- How to zoom with students, conferences, and cousins in Sweden.
- How to cook, from a book my older brother wrote for me in 1976 called: “How to Survive in the Wilderness of your own Kitchen”

And this coming fall I will be on sabbatical. I received an invitation from Pernilla Hillerås RN, PhD to work with the faculty and students at Röda Korsets Högskola (Red Cross University College of Nursing) particularly regarding nursing research. Röda Korsets Högskola is outside of Stockholm. I will be back for Christmas and then head out with 14 students and co-leader (Todd Mattson) on a J-Term trip to Madagascar. This trip was cancelled last January due to Covid. We're hopeful that the trip goes through this January. I wish all of you all the best!!



**Jessica Stadick, PhD, RN | Associate Professor**

Greetings Alumni! Although, this past year has been filled with many challenges throughout the academic year, we certainly celebrated many successes! The following are highlights from the 2020-2021 academic year:

- I completed my first sabbatical during the fall of 2020. During my sabbatical I practiced professionally as a RN in the Emergency Department. It was an honor to care for patients throughout this past year as we have navigated the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Resumed in-person classes full time throughout the spring 2021. Being able to be with the students in person this past spring vs online was extremely rewarding for me. While the online platform is suitable for education, the ability to complete high fidelity simulations and patient discussion in person was invaluable after the past year we have had.
- As a department, we completed another successful accreditation visit. These accreditation visits are extremely rigorous as we prepare, plan, and host them, but receiving the stamp of approval from our accrediting bodies is an essential step to continue to educate future nurses!
- Gave my first COVID-19 vaccination to students! Gustavus hosted a few COVID-19 clinics and the nursing faculty collaborated with Health Service to vaccinate students.



**Lynnea Myers, PhD, PhD, RN, PHN | Assistant Professor**

- We were successful in our request for a Mansergh-Stuessy College Innovation grant to support both elements of a course re-design, along with a research study, aimed at increasing NCLEX pass rates. I really enjoyed working with my colleagues on integrating more NCLEX prep activities into the curriculum, as well as working with two nursing students to analyze our study data.
- I continued to partner with my colleagues in Sweden at the Center of Neurodevelopmental Disorders at the Karolinska Institute where I recently led a systematic review on biological and behavioral phenotypes in monozygotic twins discordant for autism spectrum disorder. The review was recently accepted for publication in JCPP Advances and will be available soon!
- I really enjoyed teaching our nursing major and public health minor students this past year. Thank you to all the alumni who served as guest speakers and offered support for the courses. It was especially fun to have Kayla (Warner) Hubley return to Gustavus this fall as a clinical instructor in public health. Kayla was part of one of the first classes I taught at Gustavus and is an incredible nurse with great enthusiasm and passion for teaching!



**Jessica Helget, RN, BAN | Lab Simulation, NCLEX Prep Coordinator**

- Jessica successfully completed her masters in Nursing Education from St. Catherine University this spring!
- “Apollo,” a new high-fidelity manikin will be installed this summer, made possible by donated funds.

## REFLECTION OF PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The Department of Nursing fosters the development of nursing professionals who demonstrate the values of excellence, community, justice, service, and faith through cognitive practice, integration of learning, ethical reflection and intercultural understanding. Graduates of the program are distinguished by:

- synthesis and application of a liberal arts education to provide holistic care;
- ethical and reflective practice to promote a just and peaceful world;
- the ability to advocate for the health and wellbeing of all people; and
- a commitment to lifelong learning, leadership, and service to others.

At the end of the program, seniors reflect on how the Gustavus Nursing Program has prepared them for success as a professional nurse by writing a response with select examples to each one of the four outcomes. The reflection below provides a glimpse into the curricular experiences that shape Gustie nurses.



Kayla Weiers,  
Nursing, Class of 2021

### Program Outcome 1 *Synthesis and application of a liberal arts education to provide holistic care*

I have had a variety of opportunities to meet the objective of “*synthesis and application of a liberal arts education to provide holistic care*” throughout my time in the nursing program. The nursing profession requires much critical thinking, communication, and the ability to work with others. Gustavus’s liberal arts curriculum builds a foundation of knowledge in a variety of topics including classes in the arts, theology, literary studies, history and philosophy, math, science, history, global perspectives, and fitness. These classes often have a heavy emphasis on student participation and collaboration. Having knowledge in a variety of subjects has encouraged me to think in a variety of ways and to consider a variety of perspectives. When I am at clinical, I continually find ways to incorporate other classes into my work.

For example, I took General Psychology and learned about the brain and its functions and their effects on behavior and bodily functions. When I have a patient with a blood pressure that is a little higher than usual, I could immediately attribute this to a medical reason, however, I can also put myself in the patient’s shoes and recognize that the hospital can be an anxiety inducing environment and realize that their anxiousness is contributing to their physical symptom. As a result, I can better understand the patient and work to meet their emotional needs.

In addition, I realize that many nursing actions and hospital policies relate to statistics and risk reduction is a goal to reduce the risk of disease, falls, and other injuries. For example, many patients are on fall precautions. As a nurse, I stage interventions to reduce the risk of a fall such a turning on bed and chair alarms and making sure that my patients’ call lights are in reach. Additionally, when I see that I have a patient on isolation precautions, I don the proper PPE to reduce the risk of spreading disease.

Additionally, I took Faith, Religion, and Culture (FRC) for my theology and ethics class. This class has provided me with an interesting perspective on spirituality as well as death and dying. In FRC, one of the main themes was “finitude.” As earthly beings, we have limits to our existence. One of the topics we discussed the morality of medical treatments extending life and ending life. I feel this is relevant in patient care because I can recognize that medical treatments extending life do not necessarily improve quality of life and the importance of understanding patients’ wishes, living wills, and DNR/DNI.

In FRC, we also talked about how spirituality appeals to us as humans because believing in Heaven or an afterlife means death is not final. With spirituality, we are no longer finite beings which can bring some comfort. A couple of weeks ago I had a patient that had a couple of toes amputated after a diabetic foot ulcer along with a myriad of other underlying conditions including diabetes, peripheral vascular disease, a-fib, heart failure, and acute renal failure. This patient was 86 years old and kept alluding to death and asking about Heaven. I used this knowledge to improve this patient’s care by bringing the chaplain in. I also bring this into practice by assessing my patients’ spiritual needs and coping mechanisms to be able to best serve them. Incorporating various team members including chaplains is something we frequently discuss in NUR 395 Advanced MedSurg III.

## COVID-19 VACCINE CLINIC

Gustavus nursing faculty and students assisted at the COVID vaccination clinics in April and May, hosted by Gustavus Health Services.



Front row: Heather Dale, Jessica Helget '11, Heidi Meyer '98, Barbara Züst '76.  
Back row: Laura Doherty, Nissa Fell '00, Rebecca Welp, Kelli Miller, Jessica Braun '96, Jessica Stadick



Pictured: Seniors Jen Hang and Sarah Patrick



Pictured: Jessica Braun and Junior Dalton Dahle



## FAYE M. HERSHEY PRIZE IN NURSING

Brittany Peterson,  
Class of 2022



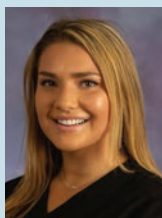
Established in 1992 by Barbara Knight Kaiser to honor the memory of her grandmother, Faye M. Hershey, a dedicated

volunteer worker in nursing throughout her lifetime.

This is an annual award made to a junior in nursing who show promise as a prospective nurse and whose activities include volunteer work.

## 2021 ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Vanessa Dimick  
Class of 2021



Each year nursing presents an award to the student with the highest grade point average.

While all

students who are admitted to the Gustavus nursing program have excellent academic records, achieving this academic feat is a notable accomplishment.

Congratulations, Vanessa!

## Program Outcome 2

### *Ethical and reflective practice to promote a just and peaceful world*

I also believe that I have achieved the outcome of using “*ethical and reflective practice to promote a just and peaceful world.*” Throughout my time in the nursing program, I have learned about holistic nursing care. This is an ethical and reflective practice to promote a just and peaceful world as it considers all aspects of a client and accounts for diversity. Holistic nursing care includes not only focusing on the patient’s ailment, but also considers their beliefs, values, living environment, and resources that are available and how these factors may affect treatment. These are things that I try to consider when doing case studies in class as well as caring for patients at clinical so I can appropriately assess and respond to factors that may impact health/well-being. For example, as I previously mentioned, assessing if a spiritual leader could improve a patient’s care.

I have also been made aware of and tried to educate myself on cultural differences so that I can be well received and build rapport with my patients and provide culturally competent care. In class, we have taken time to learn about Jehovah’s Witnesses and their beliefs related to blood products. The patient can be counselled about the risks of not accepting blood, but it is their right to refuse. I as a nurse have to set my judgements aside and respect the value of autonomy as it is the patient’s right. Depending on the situation, there may be alternative treatment options such as nonblood fluid expanders, iron supplements, and administering high concentration oxygen.

With most case studies and simulations, we have incorporated reflective practice which promotes a just and peaceful world because by reflecting on our actions and patient situations, we can evaluate what went well and what we would do differently next time to try to improve patient and/or community health. After simulation, we reflect on what additional team members would be beneficial for our patient’s care. This helps us take cultural, emotional, social, and physical considerations into practice and recognize that each patient has individualized needs and there is no cookie cutter care. This demonstrates ethical and reflective practices to justly serve our patients.

## Program Outcome 3

### *The ability to advocate for the health and wellbeing of all people*

I believe that I have gained “*the ability to advocate for the health and wellbeing of all people.*” Advocacy is a skill/value that has been heavily reinforced in the nursing program. For example, we are encouraged to speak up in class because if we don’t, our faculty worry that we won’t be able to speak up in our profession. The quality improvement project in NUR 398 Transition to Professional Practice was an example of advocacy because we each identified issues that were patient safety risks in our places of employment or clinical sites and laid out an argument as to why this practice no longer served the organization and created a plan as to how best implement change. As nurses, we see the safety issues firsthand, so it is important that we speak up when we notice a patient safety concern so injury can be prevented.

Additionally, I have learned to be a patient advocate through my clinical experiences. For example, I had a patient after a laminectomy that was so incredibly nauseas taking Oxycodone that he was miserable but continued to take it because the pain was even worse for him. As nurses, we interact firsthand with patients and notice these things long before the doctor. My preceptor and I had a conversation with this patient’s physician and she was able to prescribe IV Toradol as a new analgesic and reduce the side effect of nausea by bypassing the GI system.

Finally, in our Mental Health class, we had an “Advocacy Now” project that instructed us to identify a population at risk for mental health issues and implement a project of our choosing at the scale of our choosing. I choose to research the impact of COVID-19 on the elderly and identified that this population was at the greatest risk of social isolation, depression, and anxiety. I used this knowledge to put together a 35-minute video of friends and relatives giving my grandpa various greetings as well as including various throwback photos of our family for my grandpa. He lives alone, has COPD, and is very COVID-19 cautious, so has basically been homebound since March of 2020. I have learned that everyone needs to have a little sunshine in each day and that little things can have big results. Some of the causes we dedicate ourselves to will positively affect one person and sometimes our dedication will directly affect many. Either way, it will make a difference.

#### Program Outcome 4

##### *A commitment to lifelong learning, leadership, and service to others*

Finally, I acquired “a commitment to lifelong learning, leadership, and service to others.” Throughout my whole life, I have continually been described as a “quiet leader.” For me, leadership may include setting a good example for my peers or taking an official leadership position and gently guiding a group to work together towards a goal. My peers have recognized my ability to achieve a high level of thinking and high quality of work, so throughout my time in the nursing program, I have been sought out as a group member as my peers know I will step up and perform as a lead on group projects and tests. In the nursing program, I have been fortunate to have peers that are also capable of being stellar leaders and thinkers which makes me proud to know I am still respected among these other very capable students.

I think that a good example of this is I was asked to be in a group with two of my classmates for the final performance exam. While assessing the patient with the spinal cord injury, I allowed one of my peers to take the lead because we had discussed that he would be her patient. However, when it was identified that the patient was experiencing autonomic dysreflexia, I immediately started performing an environmental scan for triggers. I identified that the sequential compression devices on the patient’s legs could be a potential cause and asked my peer to help me to remove them. She said she wasn’t sure if it we should because they were in place to prevent DVTs. I was able to explain that although that’s true, the autonomic dysreflexia/hypertension was our priority concern at the moment and the cause needed to be identified and removed so the benefit outweighed the risk, and she agreed with me. I think this was a good example of leadership because I didn’t want to be overbearing and take over her patient care, I stepped up and provided rationale as to why it was a necessary intervention.

Additionally, being a Gustavus Student Nursing Association (GSNA) co-president has helped me develop my commitment to lifelong learning, leadership, and service to others. I am very excited to become a nurse and try to take in every opportunity that will prepare me to be the best nurse possible. I felt that running for an office would give me the opportunity to strengthen my leadership skills and be part of decision making and activities at a higher level than strictly being an active member. It has been a continual learning process for me accepting the role as co-president and learning what was expected of me. The learning process continued as COVID-19 hit and we had to learn how to alter our activities and regularly scheduled events to fit COVID-19 guidelines. During my time on the GSNA board, I have used my leadership skills to help plan and make decisions regarding apparel orders, the blood drive, fundraising, scholarships, and other nursing activities. Additionally, the board has tried to foster all group members’ “commitment to others” by planning events that serve others in our community. These have included blood drives, working at the soup kitchen, and making cards for children with cancer.

My commitment to service was further developed in the nursing program through our involvement with the Ecumen “Awakenings” program. Through this program, we had the opportunity to visit patients with dementia multiple times to visit and do crafts and activities as these actions can often lead to a reduction of the use of antipsychotics as well as a decrease in behavioral symptoms. Additionally, I had the opportunity to participate in contact tracing for the state of Minnesota for our public health course which was an act of service as it helped identify people that may have been exposed to COVID-19, track outbreak patterns, and provided instructions to people on how to isolate if infected or how to quarantine if they were a contact. All of these actions help slow the spread of COVID-19.





## GUSTAVUS STUDENT NURSES ASSOCIATION (GSNA)

This was the second academic year that GSNA was fully recognized as an official Gustavus student organization. With the student senate funding, we were able to give away some transport money to the senior nursing students to pay for the gas expenses that clinical transportation costs. This year, we had put on our creative caps and utilized Zoom and online meetings to help facilitate events. We continued with our mentorship program between the senior and junior nursing students, connected with The Pediatric Outreach Crew to make cards for children in the hospital, made some fun nursing apparel, and did a Q&A for upcoming nursing students, with Blood Drives beginning again in the Fall. COVID-19 brought its own challenges with online learning, but clinicals and capstone experiences were still on their way. It was another spectacular year for GSNA and we have been honored to lead this organization. Good luck to the next Co-Presidents and congratulations to the nursing Class of 2021, WE DID IT!

Allie Luecke and Kayla Weiers, *GSNA Co-Presidents*

### 2020-2021 Senior Board Members

Allie Luecke & Kayla Weiers (Co-Presidents)  
Julia Jacobs (Treasurer), Jen Hang (Historian)  
Hannah Boese (Secretary)

### 2020-2021 Junior Board Members

Emma Doherty-Bohn & Vincent Nguyen (Co-Presidents)  
Martina Rhoten (Treasurer), Tarin Michaelis (Historian)  
Megan Karrow (Secretary)

## NURSING LAB TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Nursing department teaching assistants serve as helpers in the lab setting for junior nursing students. Responsibilities include preparing the lab each week, opening the lab to hold weekly study sessions to practice hands on skills and serving as mentors and leaders. The four lab TAs this past year provided valuable assistance, both in-person and virtually, to give tips and tricks to help junior students increase their confidence in basic nursing skills, head-to-toe assessments, IV administration, Foley insertion, and much more to better prepare students for clinicals, and furthermore, the real life of nurses! They ensured an accepting, fun, and friendly environment that helped juniors feel accepted and confident to ask questions to better their nursing skills.



**Ruth Chuah**

*"As a TA and tutor, it was such a great experience being able to assist the junior nursing students with their academic learning in the nursing program. I am grateful for this opportunity and being able to share my knowledge and skills with others."*



**Julia Jacobs**

*"I am so glad that I had the opportunity to be a nursing lab TA this year! I always looked forward to lab as a junior, and it was super exciting to be able to experience it once again. I also loved getting to know all the junior nursing students and having the opportunity to further refine nursing skills through teaching."*



**Maya Gerads**

*"Being a nursing lab TA was an incredible experience and I am so grateful that I got to be a part of it! Although nursing school looked quite different this year than in the past, it was amazing to be able to connect with the junior class and help them build on the lifelong nursing skills that they will use throughout their future careers!"*



**Allie Luecke**

*"Helping the junior nursing students while they begin their journey in the nursing program was one of the most rewarding and enjoyable experiences I had. It is overwhelming to begin the nursing major, (especially in a pandemic!), and I am very happy to say that these junior students are going to be amazing nurses. Being a TA brought lots of laughter, happiness, and thoughtfulness, but I am so glad I got the opportunity to be a TA."*





*Congratulations!*  
NURSING CLASS OF  
**2021**

BEST WISHES AS YOU TRANSITION INTO  
YOUR PROFESSIONAL NURSING ROLE!



### SIGMA INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY OF NURSING

Twenty-one members of the Class of 2021 were inducted into Sigma International Honor Society, the Chi at-Large Chapter. The ceremony was held as a virtual event on October 31, 2020. The following academic nursing programs make up the Chi at-Large Chapter: Bethel University, Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Catherine University, and St. Olaf College. The following students were inducted from the Gustavus Nursing Class of 2021:

- |                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Hannah Boese     | Kaitlyn Brey       |
| Ruth Chuah       | Vanessa Dimick     |
| Mallorie Gehloff | Maya Gerads        |
| Julia Jacobs     | Samantha Jorgenson |
| Hailey Kennedy   | Brooklyn Koetke    |
| Adam Kunkel      | Cheyenne Kunkel    |
| Alyssa Luecke    | Mackenzie Mazhari  |
| Sara Moen        | Doris Mor          |
| Hunter O'Bert    | Sofia Ramos        |
| Olivia Sundeen   | Nicole Urbaniak    |
| Kayla Weiers     |                    |

Sigma Theta Tau International was founded in 1922 by six nursing students from the University of Indiana. Students who are inducted into Sigma represent the top third of their class in academics, leadership, and service. Sigma has opportunities and responsibilities to make definite contributions to schools of nursing, to the profession of nursing, and to the public.



### SMALL WORLD!

After four years at Gustavus, with the last two in the nursing program, 2021 classmates Kaitlyn Brey and Brooklyn Koetke found out (after graduation!) that they used to be childhood friends. Both attended the same daycare in St. Peter - Brooklyn's family moved when she was six. The two then were reunited as Gusties!



Brooklyn and Kaitlyn





## ALUMNI NOTES

### Class of 1969

**Donna (Sjoding) Amidon** retired in 2009 but has kept her RN license active. She continues to give flu shots each fall for MN Visiting Nursing Agency which is part of Hennepin Health Care System. When the Covid 19 vaccines became available in December 2020, she agreed to help give that vaccine to health care workers and then to the public as the priority lists rolled out.

### Class of 1971

**Marjorie (Aasness) Schaffer** developed a website that features the stories of family members who support a relative living with a mental illness. Find the stories at [familybipolarstories.com](http://familybipolarstories.com). She has also published two articles based on research that focused on family member experiences with the healthcare system and advocacy. Look for her forthcoming book on Amazon this summer. The book, *Journey Through the Mental Illness Maze: How Families Find Hope and Acceptance*, features themes of family experiences.

### Class of 1972

**Dr. Jamesetta (Alexander) Newland** retired January 1, 2020 from her full-time faculty/practice position and entered “preferment” as a clinical professor emerita. She is still as busy as ever because she did not stop any of her professional activities, including being a member of the GAC Nursing Leadership Council. She continues as editor-in-chief of The Nurse Practitioner journal, which she enjoys immensely. Her goal is to keep her mind stimulated.

### Class of 1973

**Sondra (Maruska) Weinzierl** is loving the field of Faith Community Nursing (Parish Nursing) and is currently coordinating the training program for RN’s who wish to practice in this ministry area through the Faith Community Nurse Network.

### Class of 1979

**Bonnie Brueshoff** retired after 42 years working in nursing. She dedicated 31 years of service to Dakota County Public Health, serving as the Public Health Director since 2008. Her directorship was bookended by pandemics - the H1N1 and COVID-19. Her department has/does employ many Gustavus nursing graduates and hosts Gustie nursing students for clinicals each fall.

**Linda (August) Carlyon** completed a sabbatical project that measured required nursing competencies for the students in the nursing program where she teaches (North Hennepin Community College). She has been utilizing a hybrid method (in class labs and clinicals and Zoom lectures) to deliver nursing courses to her students. She also works part time for Promise Care Home Health.

### Class of 1981

**Diane Nelson** retired after 40 ½ years of working at St. Paul Children’s Hospital.

### Class of 1982

**Autumn Hilger** semi-retired from hospital administration in 2018 and moved out of California to Idaho. She began working in the fall of 2019 part-time from home as a nursing administrator with a home care agency. She uses her administrative experience to assist the agency in compliance with the state of Idaho.

### Class of 1985

**Ruth Nelson Lau** shared that the pandemic certainly brought challenges, both personally and professionally, to 2020 and beyond. She learned how to use technology to carry out her daily work, and wore more PPE equipment this past year than she has worn in her entire career! The hospice program where she works received many referrals from the hospitals to care for COVID patients at home so their family members could spend their last days together.

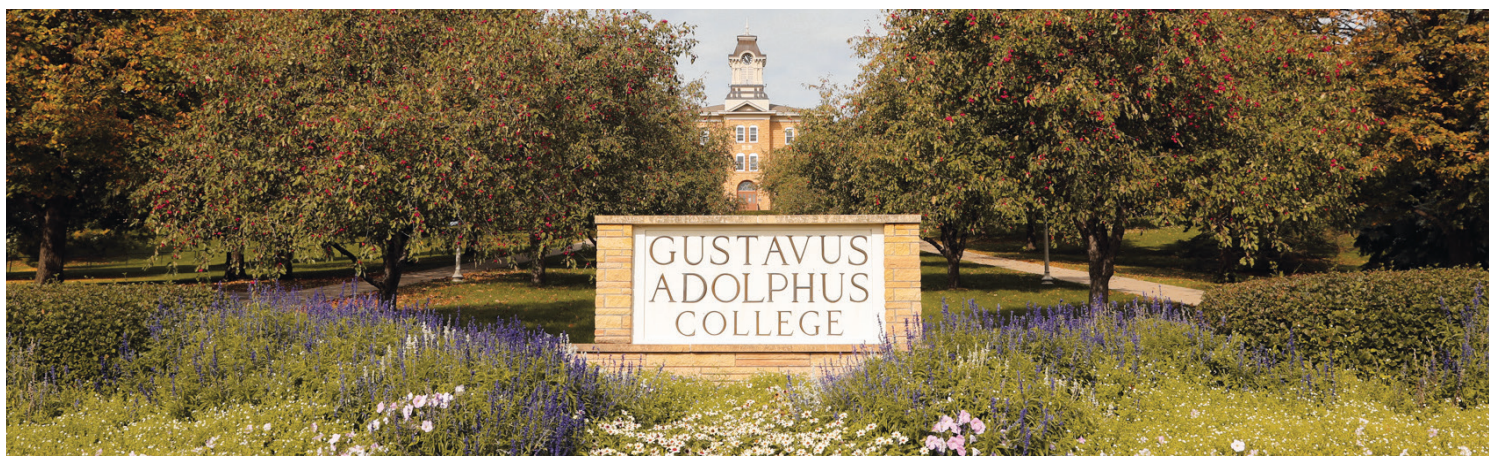
### Class of 1994

**Kristina (Angell) Haug** is a nurse practitioner at Carleton College’s Student Health and Counseling. She is also a preceptor and lead nurse practitioner at a non-profit adolescent and teen clinic in Hopkins.

**Lisa Hogan** has worked her entire career at Mayo Clinic and received her Master’s in Nursing from Augsburg in 2013. Her current role is a Senior Value Analysis Portfolio Advisor within the department of Supply Chain. She works on a team of RN’s who are responsible for facilitating the clinical review of all products purchased by Mayo Clinic, as well as a large aggregation group of over 95 healthcare systems across the US.

### Class of 1997

**Tami (Brown) McQuoid** is currently working in a faculty/admin role at Simpson College in Redding, California in the Nursing Department. She worked as an adjunct instructor since 2014 for Simpson and started full-time last June. Before that, she did inpatient labor and delivery for 22 years (and traveled around the US as a travel nurse). Now she finds real joy in passing what she knows down to students.







### Class of 2003

**Erin Peterson** wjust celebrated her 10-year anniversary as a nurse practitioner at MN Lung Center & MN Sleep Institute. She also provides care by telemedicine, and obtained her NP license in Alaska where she sees patients for the Alaska Sleep Clinic in Soldotna once a week. This year was challenging, learning how to manage acute and “long-hauler” patients with COVID-19 both inpatient at Abbott Northwestern and outpatient in her clinic. She has also has had the opportunity to do some consulting work for pharmaceutical companies by educating nurses, physicians, respiratory therapists, and other health care providers about pulmonary fibrosis and pharmacologic treatment options.

### Class of 2004

**Ann (Humburg) Crofton** has been working as the Licensed School Nurse at Blue Earth Area Schools since the fall of 2013. Prior to that, she worked full-time at Mayo Clinic, St. Mary’s Hospital for nine years and continues to work “supplemental”, which allows her to still care for patients at the bedside. The pandemic shifted the way she works and the work she does as an LSN. She has spent so much time this year educating students, staff and families on signs/symptoms of Covid, how to “do” quarantine or isolation, and sharing factual information on Covid and Covid vaccines.

### Class of 2014

**Maddie Randall** has been working as an RN Care Coordinator at a family medicine residency clinic within MHealth Fairview in Minneapolis, specializing in OB care and postpartum management. She has also had the opportunity to give COVID vaccines.

### Class of 2015

**Krista Brockberg** has spent six years at Methodist Hospital in the Family Birth Center. She loves working with so many other Gustie graduates.

**McCartney Renn** recently graduated with her Masters of Nursing from Vanderbilt University and has successfully passed her boards for Neonatal Nurse Practitioner. She will start in the NICU at the University of Minnesota Masonic Hospital as one of their Advanced Practice Providers. She spent a few years in the adult ICU, but realized that babies were her passion. On a personal note, McCartney will be getting married this summer.

### Class of 2016

**Heidi (Ide) Bussler** is working at Ridgeview Medical Center in their med/surg unit. Last fall she completed her CRNI certification and will practice in the infusion center attached to the med/surg unit.

### Class of 2017

**Emily Sands** will be starting her fourth year as an RN on a medical and inpatient hospice floor at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. She has been precepting new nurses for about two years and is also involved in a fall prevention quality improvement project (with hopes of presenting the project this summer!)., where we will (hopefully) be presenting a quality improvement project this summer.

**Cassie Severson** is currently working as a postpartum nurse at Methodist Hospital in the Family Birth Center after finishing up three years working on a General Medicine floor. She has been there for a little over a year and is absolutely loving it. She is going to train into the labor department this summer, which she is very excited about as well!

### Class of 2018

**Annika Walter** recently transitioned to Accent Care-Fairview hospice, which has been a great fit. She graduated in May with her DNP in Adult-Gerontological Primary Care at the University of Minnesota and will start her MPH at the University of Minnesota this summer.

### Class of 2020

**Hanna Mutschelknaus** is working in the Intensive Care Unit at Sanford Health in Sioux Falls, SD. Hanna also serves on the Gustavus Nursing Leadership Council.



## DEPARTMENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Continuing Faculty,  
Jessica Helget



Jessica Helget '11 completed her Master of Science in Nursing: Nurse Educator at St. Catherine's University in St. Paul, MN. Jessie will transition into her new title, Continuing Instructor and Clinical Coordinator here in the Department of Nursing. In addition to lab instruction responsibilities, Jessie will also manage the simulation equipment and experiences across the curriculum. Congratulations on this accomplishment!

## GAC NURSING MENTORS ON FACEBOOK

Our mentorship program for nursing students and grads is on Facebook: GAC Nursing Mentors.

This site allows for students and alumni to connect, foster relationships, and engage in meaningful discussions.

You can request to join the group at the web address: [facebook.com/groups/624999747648862](https://www.facebook.com/groups/624999747648862)

## STUDENT RESEARCH

Maya Gerads '21

*Fatigue in Undergraduate College Students During a Pandemic*

Accepted for poster presentation at Midwest Nursing Research Society (MNRS) Annual Conference, April, 2020.

Faculty Advisor: Heidi Meyer

**Purpose and Background:** The purpose of this study was to understand college student fatigue and its relationship to overall wellbeing and academic performance during a pandemic. The global pandemic has negatively impacted people's lives across the world. Previous studies in fatigue, particularly during a pandemic, are limited. The impact of fatigue and exhaustion on student success and wellbeing is important to understand to facilitate a supportive learning environment.

**Methods:** A descriptive correlation study design guided this study. The Fatigue Symptom Inventory (FSI) was used to measure fatigue. Academic performance was measured by self-report of GPA and satisfaction of exam, quiz, and assignment scores. Wellbeing indicators measured included sleep, diet, water, activity, and substance use. A convenience sample of 329 undergraduate students, ages 18-22, participated in this study.

**Results:** The mean level of fatigue when students felt the most fatigued was 7.47. The mean level of fatigue when students felt least fatigued was a 2.95. A weak, negative correlation was found between GPA and four FSI indicators. Student satisfaction with exam/quiz and assignment scores were found to have a weak negative correlation with the majority of FSI indicators. Sleep was found to have a weak negative correlation with the majority of the FSI indicators.

**Conclusions:** College students are experiencing clinically meaningful fatigue that interferes with daily activities. The findings from this study provide information for college campuses to create interventions to combat feelings of fatigue, specifically related to sleep and promotion of physical activity.

Taylor Kline '21 and Sara Moen '21

*Understanding the Experience of Accessing Health Care for Low Income Individuals and Families*

Accepted for presentation at Creative Inquiry, Gustavus, May 1, 2021

Faculty Advisor: Jessica Stadick

**Background:** Despite expanded health care coverage in the United States, numerous individuals experience inequities accessing care (Riley, 2012). Receiving affordable and quality health care is a concern for low-income individuals due to barriers they face (Sarathy et al., 2020). The purpose of this study was to better understand the perceived barriers to receiving health care among individuals living at or below the federal poverty level in rural and urban areas of MN.

**Methods:** The descriptive content analysis method described by Elo and Kyngäs (2008) was completed to analyze the data from the narrative texts.

**Results:** The qualitative findings revealed three categories: (1) Access to Health Care, (2) Needs-Based Care, and (3) Health Promotion. Access to health care, as described by the participants, was impacted by the cost of care, type of insurance, personal availability, and geographic location. Needs-based care meant that many participants sought care only when necessary. Health promotion was described by an individual's exercise, self-care, medication use, and diet.

**Conclusions:** The findings suggest that disparities in accessing and receiving affordable and quality health care in Minnesota continues to exist for low income individuals and families. As reported by the participants, the main reason individuals sought health care was needs-based. Despite an individual's access to health care, most participants reported using several measures to maintain health and prevent illness. Improving access and affordability to health care for all individuals is an essential component of achieving health equity. Future research is needed to further examine access to health care, specifically health insurance coverage issues.



**Allie Luecke '21, and Brooke Merila '22**

*Nursing Student NCLEX Preparation*

Accepted for presentation at Creative Inquiry, Gustavus, May 1, 2021

Faculty Advisor: Lynnea Myers

The purpose of this study is to analyze the strategies for student success on the first-attempt of the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX) in the Gustavus Nursing Program. Students who graduated from the Gustavus Nursing Program have consistently had a pass rate near 90% on the first attempt. However, for the students who graduated in May 2020 (and experienced a rapid transition to online learning), the first-time pass rate fell to 62.5%. This study aims to identify strategies students used to achieve success on NCLEX, both prior to the pandemic and those who graduated in the midst of the pandemic. The hypothesis of this study is that participants who thoroughly engage in preparation for the NCLEX are the most successful in passing on first-attempt. A Qualtrics survey was administered to 2018, 2019, and 2020 graduates of the Gustavus Nursing program and included both qualitative and quantitative questions to explore what students found most helpful in preparation for the NCLEX. Forty-one alumni responded to the survey, with the majority (90%) of respondents reporting they passed the NCLEX on the first-attempt. When asked about strategies used to study and prepare for the NCLEX, respondents identified ways to decrease anxiety and stress, including the use of study breaks, rest periods, breaking up studying, use of a study schedule, exercise, and positive thinking. The most beneficial resources to prepare for the NCLEX were ATI and U-World. Alumni listed simulations, clinicals, curriculum, and ATI as the most useful components of the nursing program for preparation for the NCLEX. Lastly, the overall theme was that studying, and studying a lot, is key to success. In the future, the Gustavus Nursing program could consider use of various NCLEX prep resources, emphasize the importance of studying and helping students achieve balance, continue the use of individualized study plans, and promote positive thinking as these were themes identified as helping students achieve success on the NCLEX.

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## EXCELLENCE IN NURSING AWARD

**Diane Kvols Schweizer, RN, BSN, MSN, ANP, GNP, Class of 1964**



Diane has a good understanding of how essential education is to being successful in the medical field. After graduating from the Gustavus Nursing Program in 1964, Diane earned her Master of Science degree in Medical-Surgical Nursing from the University of Colorado, Boulder in 1966.

The value of education she knew helped her strive to accomplish everything she set out to do. One of those plans being to become an adult nurse practitioner before programs were available. She audaciously approached the Director of Nursing (DON) at Bethesda Lutheran Hospital about her plan. The DON helped Diane with her plan by creating pathways and opening doors for her to succeed in this innovative position. This caught the attention of a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO). One of the founders of this HMO, a physician in the Minneapolis and St. Paul area, recruited Diane to their team of nurse practitioners. She was a Nurse Practitioner for 30 years with a focus on chronic diseases emphasizing diabetes, and served on the faculties of Metropolitan State and St. Catherine's College. Diane is also an independent educator who has also volunteered her time and knowledge for many professional healthcare organizations and has also maintained a consistent respect for education by staying current with her knowledge.

Diane has never stopped contributing to the health care community and even after retirement she continued to work as a geriatric nurse practitioner, member of the Living at Home Block Nursing Program and as its Chair for five years. She was also active within the program aiming her focus towards dementia.

We are proud to have Diane as our recipient of the Excellence in Nursing award for 2021.





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