



2024 | VOLUME 33, NUMBER 1

GUSTAVUS NURSING DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

GREETINGS FROM THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Dear Gustavus Nursing Alumni and Friends,

Warm fall greetings to each and every one of you! While this newsletter reflects on the past academic year, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the beautiful fall colors that are currently peppered around campus. Arriving on campus and traveling around Ring Road is definitely a highlight! While the campus is vibrant right now, we all know that change will be upon us soon here in the Midwest as we prepare for the upcoming winter months.

And as I reflect on the 2023-24 year, change seems to be the overarching theme. (When is change ever not the overarching theme?!) Major changes that were approved in 2023-24 for implementation in 2024-25:

- Academic calendar: Removal of January term / addition of optional May term
- General education curricula: Transition to credit hours
- Degree: Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)

While change can be challenging, the Department is excited for the positive impact these changes at the College will have on the nursing program. Moving forward, our students will finish the year the end of April and graduate the first weekend in May. This will allow our Nursing students to begin internship and job opportunities after the spring semester is officially over. In addition, the Department looks forward to being able to offer experiential opportunities for all students through future May term courses. The transition to credit hours allows students to receive separate course credit for each of their clinical experiences. And the conferral of the BSN degree allows for the integration of the liberal arts while also providing clarity to the inquiries from prospective students and employers.

As always, change is constant. However, one thing remains steady: the guidance of the Gustavus Nursing Program Goals (see p. 8). As we navigate these changes, the program's commitment to excellence and to our goals remains unwavering.

MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY!

We are continually grateful for the generous donations from our alumni and friends. These donations strengthen the opportunities Gustavus nursing students have, leading to significant impact in patient care for individuals, families, and communities.



With gratitude,

Heidi Meyer PhD, RN, PHN
Associate Professor of Nursing, Department Chair

To directly support the Department of Nursing, please give online at [Gustavus.edu/giving](https://gustavus.edu/giving), designating your gift to Nursing.

For more information about additional philanthropic opportunities please contact Steve Bennett, Gift Planner in Advancement at sbennett@gustavus.edu.



NURSING DEPARTMENT FACULTY NEWS/UPDATES



Jessica Stadick, PhD, RN, PHN | Associate Professor

Greetings alumni and friends! The 2023–24 academic year was filled with many positives, but the following few are my favorite highlights:

- Expansion of the Nursing program continues to be the most exciting news that has emerged over the past few years! We have added a clinical coordinator to our team!
- I continue to serve on the leadership team for inclusive teaching excellence. Gustavus is part of a multi-year, multi-institution initiative funded by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute focused on inclusive pedagogy. I am honored to be a part of this initiative as we strive for inclusive teaching. I am part of the group that focuses on helping students become agents of inclusion. Inclusivity is so important, and I am honored Gustavus is helping move this forward.
- Lastly, again, a HUGE thank you to our alumni for such generous donations. Through these donations, we have added invaluable equipment to our lab and simulation suites. We have added another new simulator to our lab, critical care medications, and more IV pumps that match the hospitals we do clinical in, just to name a few! Thank you!



Brittany Otto, MSN, RN, PHN, CLC | Professor

As I reflect on my inaugural year at Gustavus, I am filled with gratitude for the warm welcome and the enriching experiences that have defined my journey thus far. From the moment I set foot on campus, I was drawn to Gustavus by its reputation for academic excellence and its vibrant community spirit. Now, having spent a year immersed in this dynamic environment, I can confidently say that my expectations have been surpassed in every way.

One of my favorite things about Gustavus is the liberal arts curriculum offered to our students that provides them with not only specialized knowledge in nursing, but also the critical thinking skills and interdisciplinary perspectives necessary to promote positive change. It is truly inspiring to witness the intellectual curiosity and passion for learning that permeate our program and campus. Equally significant is the support and collaboration that characterizes the Gustavus Nursing faculty. The sense of camaraderie among faculty members I have experienced fosters a culture of innovation and excellence, enabling us to continually push the boundaries of teaching and scholarship.

All that to say, if I were to pinpoint my absolute favorite aspect of Gustavus, it would undoubtedly be the STUDENTS. Gusties are more than just scholars; they are compassionate, driven, and empathetic individuals who constantly strive to make a difference in the world. Whether it is through academic achievements, extracurricular involvement, or community service, our students exemplify what it means to be well-rounded human beings.

I am immensely proud to be a part of the Gustavus community and look forward to many more years of growth and shared success!



Hannah Drea, RN, PHN | Clinical Coordinator

Warm Greetings from our growing Nursing Department! Reflecting on the past school year, I've appreciated numerous opportunities for growth and moments of joy and success.

- I'm the new Clinical Coordinator for the Nursing program! June 1, 2024, marked the beginning of my position to facilitate our mission and program outcomes in the clinical setting. I am excited to be a part of a growing program dedicated to student success.
- How time flies! I cannot believe that I have been teaching in both the clinical and classroom here at GAC for the past 10 years. It is such a joy to run into alumni and hear how "Gusties are Shining" and impacting the community as nurses.
- Summer 2024 I obtained my Public Health License
- Recently, I have participated in a few Continuing Education workshops focusing on AI and its applications in higher education. These workshops have given insights and tools to innovate and adapt to the evolving landscape of education and technology.

GUSTAVUS NURSING FACULTY COMINGS & GOINGS

Please join the Gustavus Nursing community in welcoming
Kylie Krause, Visiting Instructor in Nursing

Please join the Gustavus Nursing community in congratulating:

- **Brittany Otto, Tenure Track Faculty in Nursing**
- **Hannah Drea, Clinical Coordinator in Nursing**

Please join the Gustavus Nursing community in saying Thank You to the 2023-2024 Clinical Faculty: Lexie Billins ('19), Wendy Breeden, Beth Davis ('83), Hannah Drea, Katrina Hannemann, Kayla Hubley ('14), McCartney Leduc ('15), Vincent Nguyen ('21), Becca Schneider, Suzanne Shane ('06), Lisa Shedlov-Mesick, and Kim Smisek.



NEWS/UPDATES FROM SIMULATION AND LAB

Greetings from Gustavus' Nursing Department Simulation Lab! Another year has come and gone up here on the Hill! Many great things have happened on campus this year. A few to highlight from the Simulation Lab are:

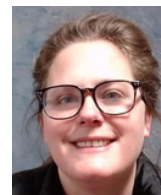
- We have continued to update and expand our fleet of simulators. This year, we were able to add another medium fidelity mannikin to enhance student learning in both the lab and simulation settings.
- With simulations, we have started to utilize more standardized patients (real-life people who play the role of the patient) to add realism to the scenarios presented to the students. We are always looking for friends and alumni of the College to add to our standardized patient list! Please reach out to Abbie McCabe if interested!
- We attended a Simulation Conference at St. Catherine University. Conferences like this one help us continue to learn and advance our technology, apply best practice standards to nursing education, and build rapport with the simulation community.

It has been a wonderful year here at Gustavus and, as always, we look forward to the next academic year with great excitement!

Jessica Helget
MSN, RN, PHN
*Continuing Faculty
Simulation*



Abigail McCabe
MSN, RN, PHN
*Continuing Faculty
Simulation
Lab Coordinator*



GUSTAVUS NURSING LEADERSHIP COUNCIL UPDATE

The Nursing Leadership Council is dedicated to supporting the mission and values of the nursing program. From curriculum changes, to student and faculty support, this think-tank of healthcare leaders provides invaluable advice grounded in years of experience to program faculty. This year marks a change in the structure of the group as it moves under the guidance of the Advancement Office and looks to grow membership to include all areas of nursing/healthcare expertise. If you'd like to learn more about serving on this council, please complete the [Nursing Leadership Council Interest Survey](#) so we can reach out to you with more information!



2023-24 AT-A-GLANCE



9

prerequisite courses in the arts and sciences

10

nursing core courses

1

supporting course



up to
40

students admitted annually using a holistic admission process



Mattson Hall

3 simulation suites

2 classrooms

1 contextual skills lab

2

full-time PhD prepared tenured faculty

2

full-time Master's prepared continuing faculty

2

full-time Master's prepared visiting instructors

~ 15

part-time adjunct and clinical faculty instructors



GUSTAVUS STUDENT NURSES ASSOCIATION (GSNA)

This was the fifth academic year that GSNA was recognized as an official Gustavus student organization. With funding from the Student Senate, we were able to purchase NCLEX and nursing school study books for students to rent out in the following years. We partnered with the American Red Cross in hosting four blood drives, collecting a total of 174 pints of life-saving blood. We created new nursing apparel for students and their families to purchase, hosted a food drive for the Saint Peter Food Shelf, partnered with the Pre-PA organization for a panel of healthcare workers, and hosted a pizza and yard game event in the spring. We also were extremely fortunate to work with Sanford Health in hosting a resumé-builder workshop and mock interviews to build students' confidence going into their internships and careers next year. This year has been a great time to work on the future of this organization and our place in the Nursing program and the community. Thank you to our faculty, and CONGRATULATIONS to the senior Nursing Class of 2024, and best of luck in your future endeavors!

Whitney Fink & Kasie Tweet, GSNA Co-Presidents

2023-2024 Senior Board Members

Kasie Tweet & Whitney Fink (Co-Presidents)
Kelsie Knaggs (Treasurer), Sophia Hillmann (Historian)
Trang Nguyen (Secretary)

2023-2024 Junior Board Members

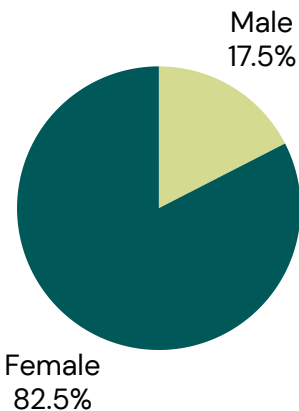
Mayssa Tweet & Luke Larkoski (Co-Presidents)
Tyler Stursa (Treasurer), Chloe Kuehl (Historian)
Grace Thompson (Secretary)
Josh Christensen (Student Events Coordinator)



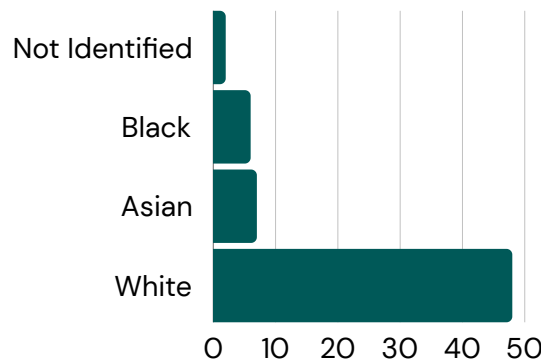
Nursing Program Spring Wellbeing Event

2023-24 STUDENTS

3.61 average cumulative GPA



Race and Ethnicity



96.88%

2023
NCLEX pass rate

83.76%

three year average
NCLEX pass rate

100%

employed within 6
months of graduation

Follow [Gustavus.nursing](https://www.instagram.com/gustavus.nursing) on Instagram!

The official Instagram of the Gustavus Nursing Department, featuring updates from students, faculty and alumni!





Yuleima Aguilar Garcia, Bailey Alberts, Payton Belt, Ella Carlson, Lauren Caywood, Hannah Ewer, Whitney Fink, Sydney Hauger, Claire Hemstock, Sophia Hillmann



Madeleine Johnson, Dickson Kengwerere, Kelsie Knaggs



Gustavus Nursing Class of 2024



Grace Lawbeerjour, Mackenzie Maki, Madeline McCleary



Suraya Morrison, Madelyn Mueller, Nicole Nelson



Trang Nguyen, Katherine Olsen, Kendra Petersohn



Brooke Remington, Kaylee Robrahn, Lezly Rosas Marcial, Michaela Strom, Kasie Tweet, Alex Virasy, Xeanna Willaert, Bao Xiong, Roselyn Yeboah

NURSING TUTORS

2023-24 was the inaugural year of the Gustavus Nursing Tutoring Program. Tutoring sessions were offered on Wednesday and Sunday evenings in Mattson Hall. Thank you to Trang, Kelsie, and Mackenzie for sharing knowledge and insight with your fellow Gustie Nursing students!



Trang Nguyễn



Kelsie Knaggs

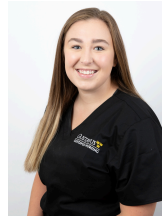


Mackenzie Maki

NURSING LAB TEACHING ASSISTANTS



Yuleima Aguilar Garcia



Payton Belt



Ella Carlson



Maddie Johnson



Lezly Rosas Marcial

Being a TA for the juniors this year has provided me with the opportunity to become a mentor for them and be another resource available for when they're feeling stuck. It also has given me the chance to better my own skills as well as remind me of things I may have forgotten from my junior year! It's been a privilege seeing how much they have grown from the beginning of fall semester to now, knowing that they'll just grow even more.

— Yuleima Aguilar Garcia

Being a lab TA for the juniors this year was an amazing experience as I was able to be a part of their Nursing journey! It provided me with opportunities for growth personally and professionally while I was able to make a positive impact on the juniors' education and development. I was able to see personal growth and development for all students, and build relationships with them along with my faculty members.

— Payton Belt

I felt privileged to have had the opportunity to mentor junior Nursing students throughout the past semester in my role as a Nursing TA. Beyond rehearsing knowledge and facilitating skill development, I found myself growing from this experience. Interacting with the junior class not only allowed me to share insights, but also provided me with valuable leadership lessons, which I am eager to incorporate into my nursing practice. Serving as a Nursing TA has been a standout experience for me this year. Witnessing the transformation of timid junior Nursing students into confident Nursing students has been immensely rewarding. I am grateful for the chance to have played a part in their journey toward professional growth and success.

— Ella Carlson

My experience as a TA has been so rewarding and filled with learning. I've had the opportunity to work alongside students and professors to facilitate both classroom learning and hands-on practice. It has been exciting to be able to see the juniors' transformation as they progressed through the program and continued to gain confidence in their clinical skills. Being a TA has shown me the importance of patience, empathy, and communication. I am very grateful for the continuous growth and learning that my experience as a TA has given me.

— Maddie Johnson

Being a Nursing TA this year has been an exciting experience! In addition to helping juniors with their assignments, my role as a Nursing TA is to support their growth into professional and caring nurses. It also provided me a chance to strengthen my own knowledge while also expanding my understanding of nursing ideas by teaching others in them. Being able to guide the juniors' Nursing class made me content because I contribute to the growth of the next generation of nurses. Overall, being a TA was a great experience.

— Lezly Rosas Marcial



FAYE M. HERSHEY PRIZE IN NURSING

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 shows promise as a prospective nurse and whose activities include volunteer work.



Lakesha Carter
Class of 2025



Emily Ahrens
Class of 2025

2024 ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

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 feat is a notable accomplishment. Congratulations, Trang!



Trang Nguyễn
Class of 2024

SANFORD NURSING SCHOLARSHIP WINNER



Kasie Tweet
Class of 2024

Sanford Health's scholarship program for nursing students garnered an impressive response this year, with over 4,200 applicants from 49 states and 300 universities nationwide. Among these talented candidates, Sanford Health proudly selected 56 recipients, recognizing their exceptional dedication and potential in the field of nursing.

We are delighted to announce that Kasie Tweet has been chosen as one of year's scholarship winners. Her outstanding achievements and commitment to nursing education have truly stood out among their peers.

SIGMA INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY OF NURSING

Two members of the Gustavus Class of 2024 were inducted into Sigma International Honor Society, the Chi at-Large Chapter:

Madeline L. McCleary

Nicole L. Nelson

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.



EXCELLENCE IN NURSING AWARD Elizabeth Eden '03

Elizabeth Eden is a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner who has spent her 22-year nursing career fighting to "give back childhood." She currently works at the Mayo Clinic in Arizona caring for pediatric oncology patients receiving radiation.

After graduating from Gustavus, Elizabeth moved to Arizona to work at Phoenix Children's Hospital. She continued her education at Arizona State University and graduated with a Master's in Pediatric Nursing and obtained certification as a Nurse Educator.

Elizabeth has used her passion to improve the lives of patients and their caregivers. She spearheaded the start of two projects for patients at Phoenix Children's Hospital and The Mayo Clinic. First, two separate BOOK NOOKs, where patients receive a new book at every visit to take home which then create at-home libraries for the family to enjoy together. Second, the GO GOLD shoe initiative, where new custom-made shoes are given to patients at the end of their radiation treatment celebration. Her goal with these projects is to encourage reading over screen time, and the GOLD shoes provide a wearable symbol of our solidarity while also simultaneously increasing the visibility of childhood cancer and the need for more research to fund a cure.

Elizabeth currently lives in Queen Creek with her husband (a former Gustie), her amazing mom, two daughters, and a son. She enjoys photography, camping, raising English Bulldogs, and watching her kids thrive in the activities they choose.



Elizabeth Eden '03



ALUMNI NOTES

Class of 1971

Marjorie Schaffer is a dedicated mental health advocate, volunteering with organizations like Mental Health Connect at All Saints Lutheran Church in Minnetonka and serving on the planning committee for the October 2024 Mental Health Education Conference at Temple Israel in Minneapolis, while also working on a writing project that highlights the stories of public health nurses from the past.

Class of 1974

Linda Strand served in the Army Nurse Corps, delivering babies for refugees while rising to the rank of Captain, before working in various roles, including Labor and Delivery, Newborn Intensive Care, and Hospice, ultimately specializing in OB Home Care, where she passionately taught new mothers about caring for their infants.

Class of 1976

Pamela Herder is a dedicated nurse practitioner, educator, and lobbyist. Motivated by her frustration with inadequate access to quality care, she pursued a law degree to advocate for healthcare improvements.

Class of 1981

Debra (Hauge) Long a dedicated caregiver for over 25 years, has navigated her daughter's complex health needs while supporting multiple family members through serious illnesses and end-of-life care, all while maintaining her role as a self-described "family nurse."

Class of 1988

Amy J. Noer is a nursing professional with a passion for home health, psychiatry, and newborn care, and she holds a Master of Nursing degree from the University of Washington, specializing in children with special health care needs.

Class of 1996

Faith Wagner is a Family Nurse Practitioner at Premise Health, where she provides primary care to the families and employees of Kwik Trip, and has also contributed to medical mission work in the Dominican Republic with Medical Ministry International.

Class of 1997

Sara (Williams) Balster is the Director of Clinical Informatics and Education at UW Health in Madison, WI, where she combines her eight years of experience as an Army Nurse and 18 years in health informatics to enhance the effectiveness and safety of technology in patient care delivery.

Alissa Midthune Maloney is an RN Care Coordinator in Primary Care at Olmsted Medical Center in Rochester, MN.

Class of 2000

Kati Pownell began a CRNA role in January 2024 at The Remedy MN Mental Health clinic, providing ketamine therapy services, while continuing as adjunct faculty for Saint Mary's University of Minnesota's Nurse Anesthesia Program.

Class of 2001

Julie (Fossell) Sorell is a Senior Epic Analyst at Hennepin Healthcare in Minneapolis.

Class of 2003

Beth (Jorgenson) Gissibl earned her Nationally Certified School Nurse certificate in July 2023, completed her MSN with an emphasis on leadership from Grand Canyon University in October 2023, and currently works as a Licensed School Nurse for Edina High School.

Class of 2009

Gretchen (Libbey) Jayawardena works as a district-wide substitute school nurse for Edina Public Schools.

Class of 2013

Sarah Strand is a Nurse Clinician at the Allina Health Minneapolis Heart Institute at Abbott Northwestern Hospital on the Valve/Structural and Interventional Cardiology team. The Minneapolis Heart Institute recently implanted the first TriClip in the U.S.; a newly approved transcatheter therapy for tricuspid valve regurgitation, available to patients who are too at risk to have open-heart surgery.

Class of 2015

Kailee Carlson graduated as a Doctor of Chinese Medicine with a Sports Emphasis in August 2022 from Northwestern Health Sciences University and now runs her own business, Dr. Kailee Acupuncture, practicing as a Licensed Acupuncturist at Performance Running Gym in St. Louis Park, MN.

Class of 2017

Cassie (Severson) Fritze is the M Health Fairview Rheumatology RN Care Coordinator.

Class of 2021

Taylor Kline works as a rescue nurse at Sanford Hospital in Fargo, ND, responding to emergency situations like code blue and rapid response, with specialized training in difficult IV and IO access, and has recently been certified as a medical-surgical nurse, focusing on patient advocacy.

Class of 2022

Brooke Merila works in Labor & Delivery at Methodist Hospital.



If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please send your email address to g-nursing-chair@gustavus.edu

GAC NURSING MENTORS ON FACEBOOK

GAC Nursing Mentors, our mentorship program for Nursing students and grads is on Facebook. This site allows for students and alumni to connect, foster relationships, and engage in meaningful discussions. Scan the QR code to join the group!





Gustavus Nursing program Goals

- Develop and update mission, goals, and expected program outcomes that are congruent with the institutional mission and relevant professional nursing standards and guidelines utilizing an effective governance structure (CCNE Baccalaureate Standards for Accreditation, Standard I);
- Obtain and allocate appropriate fiscal, physical, faculty, preceptor, clinical, and academic support resources to achieve the mission, goals, and expected outcomes of the program (CCNE Baccalaureate Standards for Accreditation, Standard II);
- Present a dynamic, engaging, logically structured curriculum that is developed, implemented, evaluated, and revised by faculty on an ongoing basis to reflect student learning outcomes (congruent with program goals) and relevant professional nursing standards and guidelines, aligns with the needs of program-identified community of interest, and builds upon previous courses in the arts, sciences, and humanities (CCNE Baccalaureate Standards for Accreditation, Standard III);
- Conduct ongoing assessments using data analysis to assess program effectiveness through review of completion rates, licensure and certification pass rates, employment rates, program outcomes, faculty outcomes, and formal complaints (CCNE Baccalaureate Standards for Accreditation, Standard IV).
- Recruit, retain, and support qualified and diverse Nursing students currently underrepresented in healthcare and committed to academic excellence, professional development, and service. (Gustavus Acts, Goal 1)
- Facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration to address problems through innovative approaches, diverse applications, and global perspectives. (Gustavus Acts, Goal 2)
- Recruit and retain qualified and diverse Nursing faculty in a culture and system conducive to personal and professional growth. (Gustavus Acts, Goal 3)



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