



# Nursing gems



Marcia C. Maurer, Ph.D., RN - Dean, SIUE School of Nursing

*Welcome to the inaugural issue of the SIUE School of Nursing's Nursing Gems. This bi-annual newsletter, along with the annual Dean's Report, are part of the School's concerted effort to stay connected with our alumni, friends, agency partners, and donors.*

This year is particularly memorable for the School as it marks the 40th anniversary of the SON's founding at SIUE. Our celebration will culminate on April 22 with the Jewels of Nursing Excellence Gala and Awards. I look forward to seeing many alumni at this event!

The 2005-06 academic year has been marked by a number of new initiatives. Our refurbished Simulated Learning Center for Health Sciences, which is now one of the most contemporary and technologically sophisticated learning labs in the region, was dedicated on January 23. The incoming sophomore class is fully immersed in the revised undergraduate curriculum. Part of the revision requires all nursing students to be involved in community service. Many students participated in outreach to Hurricane Katrina victims who were displaced to Alton, Illinois. In January, 16 students began their fifteen-month journey in the new accelerated BSN program.

The Graduate Program is working on the development of the Doctor of Nursing Practice, and the Clinical Nurse Leader curriculum is being reviewed by the University. The

Certified Nurse Anesthesia program is held in high regard nationally. CRNA faculty are engaged in continuous quality improvement, positioning the School on the cutting edge of nurse anesthesia preparation.

Our growth this year has been nothing less than phenomenal. The undergraduate and graduate nursing enrollment beginning in Fall 2005 was 668, as compared to 462 in the 2004-05 academic year. Our newly admitted class of nursing students boasts an average GPA of 3.40.

This growth has led to an increase in the number of faculty and staff, as well. Our new Director of Development, Noël Schiber, has a strong development background and boundless energy and enthusiasm.

The School of Nursing faculty are gaining in stature in the area and regionally. Drs. Boyd and Perry have authored books that are used nationally and have been reprinted in a number of foreign languages. Dr. Boyd's book, *Movies and Mental Illness*, is the basis for a new course in the University honors program.

A community advisory board is being formed. These business

and health care leaders will keep us apprised of what community needs the School can address. Thank you to the School of Nursing Alumni Advisory Board, whose members continue to contribute their expertise.

The School of Nursing is on the move, and as the song lyrics go, "we have only just begun!" Our goal is to become a nationally recognized nursing program. With the energy our faculty and students bring to the School, I have no doubt that within the next five years that goal will be realized.

Marcia C. Maurer, Ph.D., RN  
 Dean, SIUE School of Nursing  
 RWJ Nurse Executive Fellow

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## New! SON Offers Accelerated BSN Option



Some of us know from the time we are little that we want to serve others through nursing. For others, the calling comes much later down the road of life. Now, students who have earned a bachelor's degree or higher in another field can work to join the nursing profession through the SON's Accelerated BSN option.

Our intensive four semester, 69 semester hour, 15-month Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program is the only program of its kind offered by a public university in Illinois south of Springfield. It further demonstrates our commitment to Southern Illinois and the nursing shortage we face, as the State of Illinois estimates that between 2001 and 2012, each year 600 nurses will need to be added to the work force from Springfield southward.

While some schools across the Mississippi River offer similar programs, ours stands out as the most affordable choice. Our students will receive a quality education in all core nursing courses, including a senior assignment, at a great value.

Applicants must meet specific requirements and prerequisites for admission to our Accelerated BSN program. We welcomed 16 students in our first cohort in January 2006 from a pool of more than 600 inquiries, and hope to enroll up to 40 Accelerated BSN students a year. For more information on this new option, please call (618) 650-3956 or email [nursing@siue.edu](mailto:nursing@siue.edu).

## Grant for PDAs Improves Access to Nursing Knowledge

Remember the bag of books you had to lug around during clinicals? A new program at the SON is lightening the load of nursing students via modern technology and putting reams of essential information in their pockets.

In January 2006, second semester sophomores, first semester ABS students and faculty received PDAs acquired through a Library Services and Technology Act grant awarded to SIUE's Lovejoy Library and the SON. The Palm T/X PDAs are loaded with software, including information on diseases, assessment procedures, diagnostic tests, nursing skills, drugs, and even a medical dictionary. Students will access the PubMed database wirelessly in classrooms in Alumni and Founders Hall using free MD on Tap software.



"Students should access a variety of data and use critical thinking skills to provide safe, effective nursing care," said Dr. Kathy Ketchum, SON faculty and co-investigator on the project. "With the PDAs, they will be able to look up unknown nursing skills, identify diseases and terms, confirm knowledge regarding drugs, and calculate drug and IV dosages. Pulling the latest research from the Internet will inform their decisions and facilitate evidence-based care. By testing the effectiveness of wireless PDAs with the students, we are furthering our mission to encourage life-long learning and advance the nursing profession."



## New Scholarship Endowed Through 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Nursing Scholarship Walk



The sun was bright, the birds were chirping, and the breeze was cool as SON students, alumni, and faculty walked through campus on September 17, 2005 as part of the SON's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Nursing Scholarship Walk. The glorious day was crowned by raising more than \$10,000—enough to endow a brand new scholarship for SON students to be called the Nursing Alumni Heritage Award.

“We are grateful for the support of our students, alumni, friends, health care partners, and faculty that has allowed us to create a permanent source of financial support for our hard-working students,” said Dean Marcia Maurer. “That we more than doubled the amount raised in only the second year of this event is a testament to our incredible student body and the renewed pride and energy with which we are embracing our school.”

“I'd also like to thank the student and faculty volunteers who helped the day run smoothly,” added Maurer.

Walkers also enjoyed tours of the newly-renovated

Simulated Learning Center for Health Sciences, informational displays by hospitals (Anderson; St. Elizabeth's—Belleville; BJC; Veterans Affairs Medical Center; Memorial Hospital—Springfield; St. Alexius, and Red Bud Regional), beverages donated by Pepsi through SIUE, and a picnic lunch sponsored by **Illinois Oncology Ltd.** and its founder/senior partner Dr. William Popovic and practice administrator Marleen Popovic, '71, '74.

Other organizations that supported the Walk were: **Diamond Sponsors**—Anderson Hospital, BJC, Christian Hospital, Memorial Hospital—Springfield, and St. John's Mercy Medical Center;

**Sapphire Sponsors**—Alton Memorial Hospital, Heartland Regional Hospital, and St. Luke's Hospital;

**Ruby Sponsors**—Belleville Memorial Hospital, St. Alexius Hospital, St. Anthony's Hospital, and St. John's Hospital.

*“...this event is a testament to our incredible student body and the renewed pride and energy with which we are embracing our school.”*



## Beaman Honored with SAGE Award

In October 2005, Faculty Emeritus Margaret L. Beaman, PhD, APRN, BC, received the prestigious SAGE Award from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) College of Nursing during its 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Power of Nursing Leadership event. Created by UIC to “spotlight nurses who mentor and support nursing leadership of today while always looking for ways to mentor the nurse leaders of tomorrow,” the award recognizes those who “Significantly impact other lives and careers, act as Advisors that influence and shape the careers of others through sharing of wisdom and offering opportunities, Guide others through choices toward leader development, and Enlighten and challenge others to grow and take risks acting as a role model.” Beaman was one of five nurses so honored in 2005.

“Dr. Beaman has been a leader in public health nursing on a regional, state and national level, holding top leadership positions in such organizations as the American Public Health Association—the nation's largest public health

association,” said Assistant Professor Rita Arras, PhD, RN. “Her can-do approach to life is contagious. If and when students couldn't see the path to success, she helped them solve problems and really believe in themselves. I owe much of my professional career to Dr. Beaman's influence.”

Beaman served as a faculty member in Public Health Nursing for 18 years, and as Director and Associate Dean for Research for 9 years. She retired from SIUE in May 2005.



*Dr. Joan L. Shaver, Dean, UIC College of Nursing, presents SAGE Award to Dr. Margaret L. Beaman*



# SON STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

STEVE NOLAN



**Steve Nolan**

**Hometown:** Alton, Illinois

**Class:** BSN May 2006

**What inspired you to study nursing?** I've always been naturally drawn to caring for others. As I

was earning my first bachelor's degree in management (from SIUE), I joined the Air Force Reserve to help pay for college and served as a medic. After taking early retirement from AmerenUE, I decided to pursue nursing as a career.

**What drew you to the SIUE SON?** My oldest daughter wanted to be a nurse. When we were researching colleges for her, I discovered SIUE. Although I was accepted to another accelerated program at a private university, I chose SIUE because you can't beat the value for the money you pay. The faculty are great, and the

Dean is such a people person. I knew right away that SIUE was for me.

**What do you like most about the SIUE SON?** There is a real "family feeling" here. The faculty are always open to talk. You don't get that at other schools.

**Goals:** I eventually want to earn my doctorate and teach someday. I'll be entering the MSN program at SIUE next fall, but I'm still thinking about my focus. Right now, I enjoy my work in the ICU at St. Anthony's Hospital in Alton. There's an energy and excitement about this type of healthcare that appeals to me—maybe it speaks to my sense of adventure that goes back to my early days of climbing utility poles!

**Family:** Wife Debbie; daughters Jordan, 9, Ashley, 17 and Chelsea, 20.

**Other Interests:** Coaches girl's volleyball at Marquette Catholic High School, indoor/outdoor soccer, and softball.

## Attention Alumni! Nursing pins

To honor the School of Nursing's 40th Anniversary at SIUE, we will unveil a re-designed nursing pin at the 2006 Jewels of Nursing Excellence Gala and Awards. This pin will first be awarded to our students at the May 2006 Convocation.

The SIUE Bookstore has less than two dozen pins of the previous design on sale for \$57 each. To purchase a remaining pin representing our School's first 40 years, visit the Bookstore at the Morris University Center, call (618) 650-2132, or email [palbert@siue.edu](mailto:palbert@siue.edu). Pins can be mailed to the purchaser.

## Fall 2005 "Gem"orable Moments



### Dedication to the Profession

Dr. Ann Perry recites the Nightingale Pledge with Semester 5 students at the Fall 2005 Dedication to the Profession ceremony, an event recognizing their entrance into clinicals and their commitment to excellence to patient care.



### Finals Week

Nursing students refreshed themselves (and rejoiced for completed exams!) in the Nursing Student Lounge during a busy Finals Week in December 2005. Snacks and drinks were provided by SON faculty and staff.

# SON ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

MICHELE BROWN, RN, MSN '90



**Michele Brown, RN, MSN '90**

**Occupation:** Associate Director of Patient and Nursing Services at the St. Louis Veterans Affairs Medical Center in St. Louis.

**What do you love most about the nursing profession?** Every day as a nurse is different. Nursing is a dynamic profession, requiring ongoing learning and the development of new skills. Every patient/family is unique with varying needs and expectations. Even though I have many years of nursing experience, I have never considered another profession.

**What do you love most about your job?** I love the veteran patients. They are so appreciative of the care that we provide. I feel honored to be able to provide leadership in the care of those who have given so much for our country. Occasionally, I have the opportunity to listen to one of our patients tell stories about the military experience and I know that I would not want to work anywhere else.

**How did the SIUE SON prepare you for your work?** My graduate focus was the Med/Surg Clinical Nurse Specialist track. It was a well rounded program, building clinical, education, research and consultant skills. I have used the knowledge from my graduate program in all of the positions that I have had since completion of the program. Also, in the graduate

program we were expected to develop a contract for our clinical experience and to seek clinical experiences at agencies that were not our employer. This was very difficult for me at first since the only agency where I really knew anyone was the VAMC. However, by the completion of the program I had developed networking skills that have continued to use throughout my career.

**What would you like the world to know about your employer?** Frequently a nurse new to the VAMC tells me, "the VA is the best kept secret." I want the world to know that the image of the VA depicted in movies of the 80's is not today's VA. We are recognized nationally for providing the best care of chronic diseases, such as diabetes and congestive heart failure. We have led the nation in the use of technology, including the electronic medical record and the administration of medications by bar code. The VA also provides the opportunity for nurses to grow professionally. Nurses have major roles in the multitude of services provided at the St. Louis VAMC. It is possible to succeed in planning an entire career within the VA system.

**Family:** One son, Brian, 27.

**Interests/Hobbies:** I took golf lessons last summer and I now take every opportunity to hit the "little white ball." Golfing fits well with my other interest, which is traveling.



## Convocation

December 16, 2005 Convocation—On the day before Commencement, an audience of more than 700 joined our Fall 2005 graduates in the Meridian Ballroom of the Morris University Center as they received hoods or pins marking the completion of their degrees. Both graduates and Registered Nurses in attendance closed the ceremony by reciting together the Nightingale Pledge by candlelight. CONGRATULATIONS!



## Cookies to Macek

He has great taste! In December 2005, Assistant Dean Jackie Clement delivered Dean Maurer's homemade cookies to Paul Macek, President, Christian Hospital Northeast. Mr. Macek made the winning bid for the cookies at the 2005 Jewels of Nursing Excellence Gala and Awards.



# The Simulated Learning Center for Health Sciences Dedication: Celebrating Advances in Nursing Education



**A**n nursing student confronts a patient having difficulty breathing and an irregular heart beat. The 45-year-old man, who stands 5-foot-11-inches tall and weighs 167 pounds, has a known heart

condition, and suffers from chronic asthma. The patient’s heart rate plummets and stops. Despite resuscitation attempts, the patient dies. The student and her teacher calmly discuss how such a situation could be handled in the future. This learning time can occur because the “patient” is a human-patient simulator.

Nursing students at SIUE have the advantage of practicing life saving skills in the Simulated Learning Center for Health Sciences (SLCHS), a state-of-the-art laboratory that helps them become knowledgeable and less anxious by practicing realistic patient care scenarios before they must make split-second, critical decisions in the real

world. On January 23, 2006, Dean Marcia Maurer and the faculty and staff

*The future of medical care is right here in this School ...*

of the SON welcomed SIU President Glenn Poshard and 80 alumni, students, community partners and donors to a dedication ceremony celebrating the laboratory’s complete refurbishment.

“We are challenged to incorporate massive amounts of material into a three-and-a-half year curriculum that includes about 200 hours per semester, or 900 hours by graduation, of clinical learning,” said Dean Maurer. “The Simulated Learning Center is a setting in which the student can learn in a guided environment where constructive critique by other students and faculty is the expectation.”

Added Maurer, “Perhaps anatomy and physiology students will also use the lab in the future. The lab is open to the community as well, specifically to our agency partners for use in JCAHO testing for nursing personnel or for learning and testing new skills.”

Poshard expressed his enthusiasm for the SLCHS and the School, remarking on its importance when all of downstate Illinois is considered medically underserved compared to the rest of the state. “The future of medical care is right here in this School because it will take more baccalaureate nurses to fill the void,” said Poshard. “The School of Nursing is important throughout the university system. We are committed to it.”

Along with human-patient simulators – including one that gives birth - the SLCHS features mannequins on which students conduct health assessments; wireless communication; fully equipped exam and operating rooms; an obstetrics suite; an intravenous simulator; computers for lab exercises; and two testing rooms in which students can videotape and critique their performance. Nursing and eventually pharmacy students also have the ability to work with a Pyxis machine, which all nurses use in the hospital setting to ensure accuracy in the dispensing of medication. The SIUE SON is the only school of nursing in this region to offer training on a Pyxis MedStation.

“Our refurbished Simulated Learning Center for Health Sciences is one of many strides our School has made to provide the best possible education to women and men who dream of a future in which they can give and grow as nursing professionals,” said Noël Schiber, director of development. “These strides would be impossible, though, without the alumni, friends, and community partners who have given their time, enthusiasm, and financial support to the School of Nursing. We cannot thank them enough for that.”





## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

New Job? New Degree? New Adventures in life? Questions about the School of Nursing or the nursing profession? Interested in our research and resources? Have an idea for programming or events?

Please let us know. We are eager to know how our alumni are doing and how we can continue to best serve you.

All alumni news received by March 15 of each year will be published in the annual Dean's Report.

To contact us, please detach and submit the form below to SIUE School of Nursing, Attn: Diana Peters, Box 1066, Alumni Hall, Room 2118, Edwardsville, IL 62026-1066, or visit the Alumni page of our web site (<http://www.siu.edu/NURSING/alumni/index.html>).

Name		Name while attending SIUE	
Address	City/State/ZIP	County	
Home Phone	Work Phone	Cell Phone	
Email		Job Title and Company Name	
Your News/Question/Opinion:			

**Please join us** as we celebrate 40 years of preparing nursing professionals to make a difference in people's lives. Enjoy special memories with alumni, faculty, and our healthcare partners.

All proceeds to benefit scholarships for  
SIUE School of Nursing students.

**Saturday, April 22, 2006**

*Sunset Hills Country Club  
2525 S. Highway 157  
Edwardsville, Illinois*

*5:30 p.m.: Social Hour (cash bar) and  
Silent Auction*

*6:30 p.m.: Dinner and Jewels of Nursing  
Excellence Awards Presentation*

*8:30 p.m.: Live Auction*



Jewels  
of Nursing  
Excellence

Tickets: \$50 per person

Tables of Eight: \$500 sponsorship (receives recognition as Sapphire Sponsor in the Gala program)

ADVANCE TICKET SALES ONLY (Please respond by April, 17)—Tickets held at the door

Payments can be made by cash, check (made payable to SIUE Foundation) or credit card (MC, Visa)

Mail payments to: SIUE School of Nursing, Jewels of Nursing Excellence Gala, Campus Box 1066, Edwardsville, IL 62026-1066 or contact Diana Peters at (618) 650-2551 or [dpeters@siue.edu](mailto:dpeters@siue.edu).

Alumni Hall, Room 2117  
Edwardsville, IL 62026-1066

*compassion* to care *courage* to serve *excellence* in action *curiosity* to learn *creativity* to teach *life-long* learning



## Upcoming Events



***Jewels of Nursing  
Excellence Gala***  
April 22

***Convocation***  
May 5

***Commencement***  
May 6

***Summer Classes Begin***  
May 22

## Contact the SON

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