

Nurse Anesthesia

Creativity to Teach Curiosity to Learn Courage to Serve Compassion to Care In a Diverse and Complex World SIUE Nursing: Excellence in Action!

Message from the Director



Greetings to friends and alumni of SIUE's Nurse Anesthesia Program! We have just graduated another class and are looking forward to following their successes as they pass boards and move into their first nurse anesthesia jobs.

As we reflect on 2011, the SIUE Nurse Anesthesia Program is proud of our continued strides towards excellence and would characterize it as a "catch-your-breath" year. After completing a self-study in 2009 and going through the reaccreditation process in 2010 (a full 10 years!), it was nice to have a year where we could focus solely on advancing our program.

Our clinical sites continue to expand. We added Carbondale Memorial Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital in Highland to our list of 22 approved clinical sites. Carbondale offers a wide variety of experiences including cardiac and neuro, while Highland will serve as another rural anesthesia designation. We also

added our first dental clinic to the accredited list. In conjunction with a CRNA, students will now be providing sedation anesthesia services for Troy Family Dentistry in Troy, Ill. This will not be an everyday site for students, but will be an assignment made on a rotating basis to students who are at our critical access facility in Staunton, Ill.

Other highlights from last year include the addition of new faculty, a 95 percent first time pass rate on national boards for our December 2010 graduates, the highest average SEE exam scores to date and the introduction of the Typhon clinical tracking system for clinical sites and current students. We also welcomed our first CRNA DNP completion students in the Fall 2011. Many of these milestones will be addressed later in the newsletter.

We know our alumni continue to be busy in hospitals and surgery centers throughout the Midwest and beyond. We are very interested in your accomplishments. Please give us a call or drop us a note or email to let us know how things are going with your work and play. We would love to highlight more of our alumni in future newsletters. And remember, if we can assist you in any way, please let us know.

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Message from Dean Marcia Maurer

Great news for the School of Nursing! In September, Chancellor Vaughn Vandegrift announced that a new Health Sciences Building will be erected on campus, with the first wing dedicated to the School of Nursing. To say we are all ecstatic is an understatement. Architectural planning began in October, making it all seem very real.

A special wing of the new simulated lab will be devoted to Nurse Anesthesia learning through simulation. If you have any ideas regarding what this should look like or contain, please feel free to email Chris Durbin, design team chair, at cdurbin@siue.edu. We will keep you apprised of the building efforts in future communications. We are a premier nursing school, and this new facility will assist in further exemplifying Excellence in Action!

Strong SEE Scores

Once again, SIUE CRNA seniors achieved strong scores in the Self-Evaluation Examination (SEE). SIUE CRNA students began taking the SEE in 2005 and have consistently continued to improve their scores since that first year. The overall average student score has risen approximately 45 percent over the past six years, and we look forward to the continued progression toward 600.

Success in Employment

The SIUE School of Nursing proudly boasts the 100 percent employment rate for all Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist alumni who pursued full-time employment after graduation. Their service varies widely, as our alumni are employed in both urban and rural settings across the U.S. Many of our graduates have also secured positions in facilities which serve as clinical sites for our nurse anesthesia program. Fortunately, this continues to foster extraordinary success for SIUE School of Nursing graduates.

Welcome to the Cohort

The Fall 2011 admission process brought an increase in applications, continuing to prove that SIUE offers a high-quality and competitive Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist program. A total of 118 applications were received. Twenty-five students, hailing from six states, were accepted into the program and began their studies on May 25, 2011. Welcome to the SIUE CRNA program! We are proud to have you as part of this exceptional group.



Community Outreach

Local involvement on behalf of the nurse anesthesia students and faculty continues to be an important aspect of the CRNA program. In addition to high school visits, our students and faculty have implemented hospital in-service activities throughout the year. Pictured is CRNA Director **Andy Griffin** and three CRNA students preparing for an in-service at Heartland Regional Medical Center in Marion, Ill.



State of Illinois Student Involvement

Diana Schuler, SIUE nurse anesthesia senior class student representative, presented at the 2011 IANA Fall Conference on the Northwestern Memorial Hospital campus in Chicago on Sept. 18. Diana, who also serves on the Illinois CRNA Political Action Committee, was one of three student speakers to address IANA members.

National Student Involvement

The SIUE CRNA program continues to encourage national involvement from its students, and again, our students have exceeded our expectations. In 2011, we had various students attend three national meetings: Assembly of School Faculty, Orlando, Fla; Mid-Year Assembly, Washington, D.C.; American Association of Nurse Anesthetists 78th Annual Meeting, Boston. We are proud of our CRNA students for understanding and relishing in the fact that they are a part of a national professional group.



American Association of Nurse Anesthetists 78th Annual Meeting, Boston
National College Bowl sponsored by U.S. Army
CRNA student

Matt Conwell participated in the National College Bowl while at the AANA Annual Meeting in Boston. Along with six other CRNA students from across the U.S., Matt's team received the runner-up award. Nominated by CRNA Director Andy Griffin, Matt was the first SIUE representative chosen for the Bowl. Congratulations, Matt!



American Association of Nurse Anesthetist Alumni Reception at Cheers Restaurant

On Aug. 7, approximately 30 CRNA alumni, students and friends joined CRNA Director **Andy Griffin** at the original Cheers Restaurant in Boston for an alumni reception. The SIUE School of Nursing hosted the event in conjunction with the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists Annual Meeting. The evening offered an opportunity for alumni to reconnect with friends and meet new colleagues. Equally as important, the reception allowed current students to meet those who have walked in their shoes in previous years. The School of Nursing offers a special thank you to those who attended. It was great seeing you!

Join us!

For those that are interested in attending the alumni reception at the 2012 American Association of Nurse Anesthetists Annual Meeting in San Francisco, please contact Angie Peters, director of development, at (618) 650-3906 or angpet@siue.edu for more information

Global Involvement

On a Medical Mission - Honduras

Each February, **Paul Darr**, assistant director of the SIUE CRNA program, travels to the capital city of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, as the team leader of a medical mission group called Starfish Enterprises. Since 1998, Paul has visited 17 times and has been the team leader for 15 of those visits. During the one-week mission, a team of nurses, doctors, dentists, optometrists and other volunteers treat approximately 3,000 patients in temporary clinics set up in local churches.

The approximately 1.2 million people living in Tegucigalpa have little to no access to doctors or health care. Starfish Enterprises partners with the World Gospel Outreach to bring valuable medical care and support to the people of Honduras.

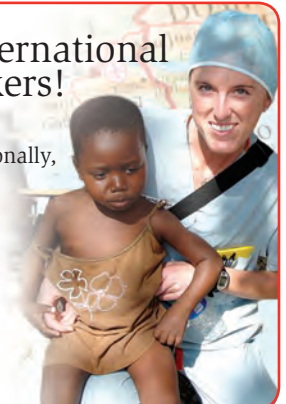
The SIUE School of Nursing is proud of the work that Paul is doing close to home, but equally proud of his commitment to global health. For more information on Starfish Enterprises, visit <http://star-fish-enterprises.org/>.



Paul Darr, assistant director of the SIUE CRNA program, his wife and son, visit with two Honduran youth with whom they have become very close with over the years.

Attention International Service Workers!

If you are involved in service work internationally, please let us know! We would love to hear stories of your invaluable medical mission adventures. Contact Angie Peters at angpet@siue.edu.



Emily Zimmerman ('09)



Faculty Educates with AANA

Paul Darr, assistant director of the CRNA program, provided on-site instruction for the AANA Jack

Neary Advanced Pain Management Workshop in October 2011. Paul represented the SIUE CRNA program, which was one of only three schools to have an expert faculty member providing instruction during the workshop.

Hosted by the Orthopaedic Learning Center in Rosemont, Ill., the AANA Jack Neary Advanced Pain Management Workshop provides an intensive educational experience for CRNA practitioners involved with or preparing to become involved with providing pain management services for their patients. Through lecture and hands-on instruction, attendees were offered the opportunity to learn and practice pain management techniques on human cadavers and state-of-the-art pain procedure simulators.



CRNA Alumni to Earn DNP

Four graduates from the CRNA program were accepted into the inaugural cohort of the SIUE post-master's Doctor of Nursing Practice program in August 2011. **Rebecca Collier** ('95, '03), **Amanda Jordan** ('10), **Don Smith** ('00), and **TJ Smith** ('06, '10) are currently completing practicum hours in their specialty area while developing, implementing and evaluating a scholarly, evidence-based practice project that improves patient care. Please join us in congratulating our CRNA alumni on beginning their transformational journey toward obtaining a doctoral degree.

Nurse Anesthesia Difficult Airway Day



On November 28, junior and senior nurse anesthesia students participated in SIUE's Difficult Airway Day. The students rotated between vendors and high-fidelity simulators to enhance their airway management skills.

Welcome New Faculty

A special welcome to three new CRNA faculty members who are esteemed alumni of our program:

Kyle Griffith ('05)

Kevin Stein ('08)

Megan Hamilton ('08)

Welcome to the School of Nursing family, and thank you for sharing your knowledge with our current and future students!

Alumni Spotlight

Megan Hamilton first arrived at SIUE in 1999 as an undergraduate student pursuing her BS in nursing. Fast forward nine years, and Megan became a double SIUE School of Nursing (SON) alumna with a BS in nursing ('03) and a graduate degree in nurse anesthesia ('08).

After becoming a CRNA, Megan began working for Western Anesthesia at Mercy St. Louis. Her clinical experience is extensive and includes management of anesthesia for general surgery, pediatrics, radiology and the GI Lab. Megan remains with the same group, but has recently added a new avenue to her career.

In August 2011, Megan became a faculty member with the SIUE School of Nursing.

*"I've always enjoyed precepting students in the hospital setting," Megan said. "I felt that this opportunity would allow me to give back to my *alma mater*."*

Megan is currently teaching physiology and will add orientation to nurse anesthesia practicum in the spring semester. "I was a student not too long ago, so I feel like I can relate," Megan said. "My teaching style reflects ways in which I learned the material most effectively."

In addition to her full-time responsibilities with Western Anesthesia and the School of Nursing, Megan enjoys spending time with her husband and their dog, traveling, gardening and playing the piano.



Megan Hamilton pictured with her husband, G.W. Hamilton.