



# C A R I T A S CORRESPONDERE

*Caring Together with Each Other*

## DEAN'S MESSAGE: MISSION DRIVEN

By Kathleen. Z. Wisser, Ph.D., R.N., C.N.E., C.P.H.Q.



It is my honor and privilege to be a member of the Notre Dame of Maryland University community. I will have been at NDMU for just over four months at the time of this publication. Students and faculty requested

that I provide information about myself, but rather than give readers a litany of my accomplishments, I will take this opportunity to reflect on the University's mission statement and School of Nursing's philosophy and their impact on me as the Dean.

When I began my search for a Dean of Nursing position, I thoroughly reviewed and examined mission statements for all the universities in which I was interested.

Above all other available information on the website or documents sent to me, the mission statement was the window by which I viewed the organization. I was looking for a mission

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statement that simultaneously described an organization's heart and soul while serving as an inspirational beacon for all who entered the university. At the time, I was unfamiliar with NDMU so it was crucial that the mission statement created vibrant mental visuals that inspired action. The very first statement, "Educates leaders to transform the world" clearly hits the mark.

The phrase, "educates leaders to transform the world," voices the advancement of self-knowledge, curiosity, and desire for truth using a platform grounded in the arts, humanities, and sciences. I embrace the inference that NDMU faculty and staff must create spaces for students to learn and then practice ways to make the world a better place. In these spaces, students, through interactions with faculty, staff, and the community-at-

large, develop a compassionate self and the ability to be sensitive and respectful towards oneself. For me, compassion towards self contributes to a compassionate approach towards others. The School of Nursing philosophy alludes to this compassionate approach when asserting "Healing practice is possible in partnership relationships; nursing creates safe welcoming places, encouraging growth, seeking to understand, and knowing each other's hearts."

I chose NDMU because my qualities and values as a leader are a good fit to fully embrace and live the mission statement. In this and previous roles, I have learned to listen to a person's story and engage her/him in a meaningful dialogue. Inclusive communities

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## SELF-CARE

### PRACTICING MINDFULNESS

By Gianna Marchini

*"With mindfulness, you can establish yourself in the present in order to touch the wonders of life that are available in that moment." -Nhat Hanh*

Many do not take into account mindfulness when they think of ways to care for themselves. Mindfulness is being completely aware of our thoughts, emotions, sensations, and surroundings. Mindfulness combines acceptance, compassion, and altruism, or selflessness. Practicing mindfulness helps us to look at life in a non-judgmental way and foster gratitude. Our inner-peace increases as stress, anxiety, and thoughts of negativity decreases. In regards to healthcare professionals, practicing mindfulness can help improve quality of life and increase positivity while promoting feelings of compassion. It is crucial to let go of the negativity and stress to allow feelings of joy to enter. So, tune into your body, focus on your breathing, and embrace a positive outlook on life! ☘

are built when stories are shared. I am on a path to build caring, authentic presence within relationships. Support in words must be followed by support in actions to garner trust within the spirit of collegiality and collaboration. I want always to encourage audacious and bold thought, while creating sound and reasonable goals. This quest for fulfillment is gratifying only when people are well served, which is reflected in two distinct phrases “promoting social responsibility” and “engaging in service to others.”

As a leader, I possess the acumen to be a positive influence to affirm and promote talents and gifts among faculty, staff, and students to ensure a quality and rigorous academic setting. I recognize and honor all facets of diversity, which make higher education settings unique. In the words of the mission statement I am engaging others in “building inclusive communities.” My determination is fuelled by playing an integral role in a transformational leadership team to ensure a promising future. In essence,

leadership team members unite to “educate leaders to transform the world.” Several times since my arrival at NDMU, I have been asked to articulate my vision for the School of Nursing. My answer is always the same; my vision reflects NDMU’s mission

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statement and the philosophy of the School of Nursing—crafting unique spaces for faculty, staff, and students to transform the world. This I know for sure: creating spaces to transform the world is not a sole endeavor. Instead, the future of the School of Nursing is imagined and known through multiple ways of knowing that will necessitate ongoing and unending collaboration with faculty, staff,

students, and the University community.

In summary, it is a privilege to be in an academic leadership position and with this privilege carries the responsibility to do right with integrity, trustworthiness, compassion, and caring all of which are articulated in the university’s mission statement with the phrase “strive for intellectual and professional excellence.” I am truly blessed to have found a work environment in which I can, without compromise, embrace the University’s mission and School of Nursing’s philosophy and become a change agent to “transform the world.” ☞



## ADVOCACY

### THE VOICE OF THE PATIENT

By Rebecca Vietri

Provision 3 of the Code of Ethics for Nurses states “the nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient” (ANA, 2001). At Notre Dame of Maryland University, entry-level BSN students are taught to be advocates for their patient and to fulfill the standards set before them by the governing body, the American Nurses Association.

As a current senior in the program, I have learned that advocacy is a very fulfilling skill. I’ve had the opportunity to speak with my patients concerning their care and given them the opportunity to understand. It is shocking how many patients are unaware that they have a say in their treatment or that their cultural beliefs can be incorporated into their plan of care.

American Nurses Association. (2001). Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements. Silver Springs, MD.: American Nurses Association.

***In nursing, we are called to be the voice that relays our patient’s wishes to the team even in the case of disagreement.***

In nursing, we are called to be the voice that relays our patient’s wishes to the team even in the case of disagreement. We are responsible for helping our patient understand their diagnosis and how to be active participants in the healing process.

Advocacy is grown in the classroom and then implemented in the clinical setting. The biggest obstacle nursing students face is the confidence to advocate. For a new student it can seem a daunting task to speak up in defense of their patient’s wishes, but without us who will?

Within the classroom setting, the NDMU School of Nursing professors stress the need for nurses to learn from their patient, to read their patient, and to ask the simple question, “Do you understand?” Sometimes we need to involve other caregivers on the team such as social workers, occupational therapists or doctors. We have been taught communication techniques for working with teams and our patients. We are constantly pushed to be professional, empathetic, and caring towards our patients. Ultimately, the biggest gift we can give our patients is having someone in their corner. ☞

## PRESENCE

### STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: GABRIELLE “GABBY” REHMEYER ‘15

By Elizabeth Bond ’16 in collaboration with Gabrielle Rehmeier ’15



Gabrielle “Gabby” Rehmeier, a new graduate from the first class of our entry-level, four-year Bachelor’s of Science in Nursing program, is getting the opportunity to work as a Registered Nurse with Baltimore City’s homeless population. She provides one-on-one care for homeless men and women through her job at Health Care for the Homeless.

Before moving to Baltimore in 2011 to attend nursing school at NDMU, Gabby lived in Swaziland with her family since the age of twelve. There, she witnessed firsthand what it was

like to make a difference in a community. Her parents, the founders of an organization specializing in diagnosing HIV/AIDS, malaria, diabetes and hypertension in rural communities of Swaziland and transporting them to the more urban areas for care, made sure she was immersed in the culture of caring for a community at a young age. She says witnessing her mother and father take care of these people on the mobile healthcare unit they founded is when she developed her passion for making a difference in vulnerable populations.

Specifically, Gabby is able to recall witnessing and admiring her mother’s

ability to speak to and take care of people with compassion and love. She remembers her mother never becoming numb to the emotional accounts of her patients, solely being present and connecting with them as people, even though she did not speak their language. Through these many moments and experiences, Gabby eventually found herself pursuing a degree in nursing.

Once in Baltimore, the original plan was for Gabby to return to her family in Swaziland after graduating. She never saw herself functioning as a floor nurse. Even during nursing school and through her student nurse position on a medical surgical unit, she could not see herself working there, or at least not long-term. Working in the community was always her passion. So, when the time came along for her to complete her senior practicum, it only seemed fitting to accept the opportunity to do so at Health Care for the Homeless in Baltimore City, Maryland. Since then, the company has hired her as a Registered Nurse.

Gabby says she “feels humbled to work with these men and women, in seemingly all of our backyards. It’s eye opening, really. Most people believe they need to go to some far off country to provide their volunteer services—which there is a need for—but in reality, that necessity is happening right in front of us too, and it goes unrecognized.” As a strong follower of Christ, Gabby plans on staying in Baltimore until “He says it is time to move.”

To contact Gabby and learn more of her amazing background and career, you can reach her at [grehmeier1@live.ndm.edu](mailto:grehmeier1@live.ndm.edu). ☞

## LEADERSHIP

### WHAT MAKES A NURSE LEADER

By Jennifer Wiley

The Merriam-Webster definition of a leader is a person of authority or influence, with the power or ability to lead others, a group, or an organization. When applied to the profession of caring, a nurse leader is the person responsible for setting an example and directing staff to reach their potential in order to provide the best care for patients. The ideal nurse leader would

make sure that each member of the staff is an efficient part of a smoothly-running unit. Ultimately, an effective healthcare team is essential in order to provide the best healing environment and outcome for patients.

I began this article wondering what qualities my fellow nursing students would want in

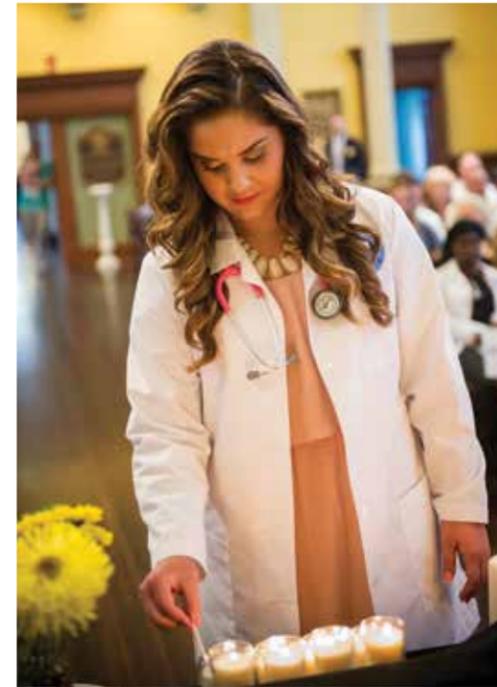
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a leader, as we ourselves learn to one day become the next generation of nurse leaders. After querying friends and new graduates,

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## LIGHTING OF THE LAMP

The Lighting of the Lamp Ceremony was held on Friday, September 18 at 4:30 p.m. in the Marikle Chapel. This ceremony is held each year for the junior class of entry-level BSN nursing students. This milestone event marks the beginning of the students' journeys through the School of Nursing and is meant to welcome them all into our nursing community. During the ceremony, students receive a pin from their nursing big sisters signifying NDMU. This pin is meant to be worn on their lab coats as a symbol for being on their nursing journeys. Students "light the lamp" by lighting a votive candle during the ceremony, symbolizing the beginning of what's to come. The ceremony concludes with faculty, staff and students all reciting the School of Nursing's Philosophy statement. Family, friends, nursing faculty, staff and members of the campus community were there to witness this beautiful ceremony.



# SCHOLARSHIP

In 1990, Ernest Boyer challenged every discipline to support the full scope of academic work, going beyond an exclusive focus on traditional and narrowly defined research as the only legitimate path to enhance the knowledge of the discipline, and to acquire rewards for professorial performance.

He suggested that scholarship involves four areas that are imperative to academic work including:

- discovery, where new and unique knowledge is generated;
- teaching, where the teacher creatively

builds bridges between his or her own understanding and the students' learning;

- application, where the emphasis is on the use of new knowledge in solving society's problems; and
- integration, where new relationships among disciplines are discovered"

These four aspects of scholarship are salient to academic nursing, where each specified area supports the values of a profession committed to both social relevance and scientific advancement (American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2015).

Retrieved from American Association of Colleges of Nursing Advancing Higher Education in Nursing (AACN, 2015); <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/>

## THE FOLLOWING NURSING FACULTY HAVE PUBLISHED OR PRESENTED THEIR SCHOLARLY WORK:

Assistant Professor Fairuz Lutz presented her poster, *A Social Ecological View of Risk and Protective Factors for Domestic Violence Affecting Hispanic Women: An Integrative Review*, at the International Conference on Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Campus Responses April 7–9, 2015 in New Orleans.

On July 9, 2015, she presented as a speaker at Research Day, Bayhealth Medical Center in Dover, Delaware: *Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking: What do We Know and Why We Should Care*.

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# PRAXIS



Notre Dame of Maryland University and Université Notre Dame d'Haiti nursing students celebrate a week of collaborative reflective nursing practice in Jacmel Haiti.



School of Nursing students present research during Nancy Kreiter Student Research Day.



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Additionally, in September 2015, Professor Lutz accepted an appointment as an Advisory Board Member to End Violence Against Women International.

Dr. Mary O'Connor attended the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) from April 14–18 in Phoenix Arizona and the Massachusetts Organization of Nurse Executives (MONE) on April 28, 2015.

Dr. Deborah Naccarini published two chapters in the following maternal and pediatric textbooks:

- Naccarini, D. (2015). Caring for the developing child. In S. Ward and S. Hisley (Eds.), *Maternal-child nursing: Mothers, children and families across care settings*. Philadelphia, PA: FA Davis Company.
- Naccarini, D. (2015). Caring for the child across care settings. In S. Ward and

S. Hisley (Eds.), *Maternal-child nursing: Mothers, children and families across care settings*. Philadelphia, PA: FA Davis Company.

Dr. Roxanne Moran presented her research study, *Keeping Graduate Nurses in the Workforce – Developing Resilience*, at The Institute for Educators at the University of Maryland School of Nursing in June 2015.

Also, Assistant Professor Hanna Murphy Buc presented the following at The Institute for Educators at the University of Maryland School of Nursing in June 2015:

- Buc, H.M., Burgess, A., & Brinkley, E.. (2015) *Peer-Editing: Building Research and Writing Skills for Professional Nursing Practice*.
- Buc, H.M., Burgess, A., & Brinkley, E. (2015) *NCLEX Action Plan: Student and*

*Faculty Collaboration to Promote Self-Motivation for NCLEX Preparation*.

Dr. Ronna Schrum presented her research, *Nursing Student Retention in an Associate Degree Nursing Program Utilizing a Retention Specialist*, during a poster presentation at the Maryland Nurses Association 112th Annual Convention — “Nurses: The Critical Pieces” on October 22, 2015 in Linthicum, Maryland.

Additionally, Dr. Mary Packard and Jenna Hoffman published the following: Packard, M., & Hoffman, J. (2016). Calling the Hermeneutic Circle: A Place of Belonging with Pre-Nursing Students. *International Association of Human Caring*, 20(1).



***A leader should recognize that empathy and understanding are vital to our profession, because at the end of the day, “nursing is a job of the heart.”***

I received feedback from Taylor, a 2015 graduate, Carrie, an experienced student in our RN-BSN program, and Kate, an experienced RN whom is now a case manager, to determine what they think makes the best nurse leader.

Taylor, a NDMU class of 2015 graduate living in Delaware, believes a nurse leader should be willing to “get onto the unit” and support the nursing staff, taking a patient assignment when necessary.

Carrie, a RN-BSN student living in Baltimore, believes that leadership is a part of each of us that needs to be nurtured. She states, “Notre Dame provides us with the best educators in our field to help develop and grow that part of our professional practice.” Carrie, as an experienced RN, wants a nurse leader that is “experienced, makes sound

judgments, follows through with decisions, and helps initiate those plans.”

Kate, a case manager and veteran RN living in California, believes that a great nurse leader should possess certain qualities that are essential to any nurse, but especially in a leader, such as patience, compassion, organization, and critical thinking. A leader should recognize that empathy and understanding are vital to our profession, because at the end of the day, “nursing is a job of the heart” that enables us to “make someone’s day a little better,” and where “there is no other profession that a human must put their total trust in another human being within a 12 hour period.” One of the most important qualities a nurse leader should possess is advocacy for patients. As well as for staff to facilitate their professional growth. A great nurse leader should strive “to be the best nurse by continuing to learn new theories, who is transparent and is seen by others as being a role model, and lives by example of what a caring and compassionate nurse is.”

A common thread among all comments is caring. Caring for individuals who can’t care for themselves by following the example of other leaders before us. In doing so, we are thereby lighting the legacy of the lamp that they left, and leaving a beacon for individuals behind us to follow. ✨

