



UPSTATE
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

Nursing *InTouch*

Nursing Alumni Association News

Spring 2011

Celebrating 50 Years — Shining Moment for Nursing Education at Upstate

This is a shining moment for College of Nursing (CON) alumni and students,” CON’s Barbara Black (ANP ’98) said of the 50th Celebration of Nursing Education at Upstate, held March 26th. Nurse alumni came from all over the region and beyond to reunite with friends, faculty and fond remembrances.

“It was the event of the season!” commented Nursing Dean, Elvira Szigeti, PhD, RN. “Alumni were thrilled to be here and had plenty of opportunities to interact. It was wonderful for the College and I hope we can plan more events like this to bring us together in the future!”

“It was a great tribute to our past, present and future!” said Nursing



Dean Elvira Szigeti, PhD, RN, with first College of Nursing Dean, M. Janice Nelson, EdD, RN, greeted alumni at the 50th Celebration Awards Dinner.

Alumni Association President Barb Kane (BS ’98/MS ’99).

“Catching up with classmates and professors, looking through yearbooks and viewing the fantastic retrospective video, you could see everyone was touched in some way. Events, such as tours of the Golisano Children’s Hospital and the Setnor Academic Building and lunch at the Institute of Human Performance, were

50th Means Coming a Long Way — in Miles Too!



Nurse educator and 1976 PNP graduate, Catherine (Cate) Critz, PhD, CPNP, APRN (2nd from left) traveled all the way from Kaneohe, Hawaii! “Fifty years is quite a landmark and since the program launched quite a career for me, I thought it was

important to attend. My cherished friend and colleague Maureen O’Hara (PNP ’97) (far left) was also being honored, another important reason I wanted to come.” Joining in the fun are O’Hara’s colleagues, Nancy Mitchell, CPNP, and Victoria Meguid, MD, of the University’s Pediatric and Adolescent Center.

reminders of how far nursing and the College have advanced over the past 50 years. I want to thank everyone who worked so diligently to bring this memorable event together!”

“The College has grown tremendously in 50 years, and we find that our students just keep coming back for more education,” commented Upstate President David R. Smith, MD. “I’m proud to be a part of a university where 95 percent of its nursing students name this college as their first choice for education.”

Read more about alumni with full event coverage INSIDE!

Nursing In Touch

The SUNY Upstate Medical University Nursing Alumni Association publishes *Nursing In Touch* quarterly. Distribution is free to College alumni, faculty, staff, students and friends.

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50-Year Timeline — We've Come a Long Way!



1961 first class of nurse AAS graduates



Nurse capping in 1977



Modern day classroom



Some MS students after 2010 White Coat Ceremony

- 1961** First Commencement for the SUNY Upstate Medical Center School of Nursing, graduating seven students with associate in applied science degrees. Founding Director is Maja Anderson.
- 1962** Joint program begins with Cazenovia College for the AAS in nursing.
- 1974** Nurse Practitioner Certificate program begins. Dr. Margaret Sovie becomes director, with faculty member Fay Whitney, PhD, as co-director. Dr. Whitney conducts original feasibility study to support development of graduate education for advanced practice nurses.
- 1975** Maja Anderson retires. Upstate President Richard Schmidt decides to close the School of Nursing with intent to reopen with an upper-division degree program in nursing.
- 1977** Dr. Fay Whitney becomes Director of Nurse Practitioner Program, holding position until 1983. In May, last class of 76 AAS nursing degree students graduates.
- 1984** NP Certificate Program closes. In August, first classes for combined BS/MS Program for Clinical Nurse Specialists begin. Co-directors are M. Janice Nelson, EdD, RN, and Judy L. House, MS, ANP.
- 1986** College of Nursing established with Dr. Nelson as dean.
- 1991** BS completion program and BS/MS program accredited by National League for Nursing.
- 1992** Nursing Alumni Association of the College of Nursing is chartered.
- 1996** Accreditation approved again for maximum 8 years. Dean Nelson retires, and Jorge Grimes, EdD, RN, serves as interim dean.
- 1998** Elvira Szigeti, PhD, RN, becomes new dean.
- 2004** Accreditation approved for 10 years (maximum) by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.
- Today** Dr. Szigeti continues as dean and College offers the following programs:
- RN-Bachelor of Science in Nursing
 - Master of Science Degree: CNS, PNP, FNP, Family Psychiatric Mental Health NP
 - RN-MS Program
 - Post-Master's Advanced Certificate Program
 - Outreach programs are expanding in Ithaca and Watertown; and the proposed Doctorate in Nursing Practice degree program is undergoing SUNY approval process.

1976 Grad Grows Professionally, Inspired by Program

Catherine (Cate) Critz, a Syracuse native who relocated to Hawaii in 2000, found inspirational role models at the College of Nursing and University Hospital early in her career that pushed her professional goals skyward.

"I attended the PNP (certificate) program when Alice Chico taught, and she was a wonderful, inspirational role model. I was working at Upstate in pediatrics at the time when Dr. Frank Oski, chairman of Pediatrics, had encouraged me to attend the program. Truly, graduating from Upstate was a life changing experience from which I moved on to complete my MSN and PhD."

Associate professor at Hawaii Pacific University's College of

Nursing and Health Sciences, Critz teaches undergraduate and graduate pediatrics, lifespan development, health assessment and health education. Prior to teaching, she worked as the developmentalist for Kaiser Permanente.

"Teaching had always been a part of my work, but never full-time. After 30 years-plus of clinical pediatrics and developmental pediatrics, I wanted a change. The academic lifestyle with summers off suits my love of travel and the work itself is exceptionally rewarding. And, who can beat surfing before class?"

In addition to teaching, Critz



**Cate Critz, PhD, CPNP, APRN
PNP Program, Class of 1976**

maintains a small private practice in developmental pediatrics with a focus on learning and autism. "I see children from the different islands and assist their families in obtaining appropriate services. Through the years I have always remained in

pediatrics, including my time at Upstate as a PNP in child neurology, and now as an associate professor in child development."

At the 50th, Critz was impressed with the new Golisano Children's Hospital, particularly having worked in the former pediatric clinic.

Post-Master's Grad Honored for Community Work

Maureen O'Hara of Syracuse works for ENHANCE, a program that provides primary health care for foster children in Onondaga County. With ENHANCE since its inception in 1991, she performed primary health care in her PNP role, and currently does developmental testing on children under the age of two.

O'Hara's career has spanned various areas of health care, including a Navajo Indian Hospital through Project Hope, the inner city in New Orleans, public health in Onondaga County, and in pediatrics at Upstate in both the

inpatient setting and ambulatory care.

Regarding her Award for Distinction in Community Service, Dean Elvira Szigeti, PhD, RN, said: "Maureen's nursing career has focused on improving circumstances

for abused and neglected children. She practices at the pediatric and adolescent center at Upstate as both a CNS and an NP. She coordinates services for

abused children, for those in foster care, teaches the medical and nursing staff, and acts as a consultant and researcher in the area of child development."

"I feel blessed to have had the opportunities to work in different areas of nursing and to have always enjoyed the jobs I've had," commented O'Hara. "It is the patients, families and colleagues I've worked with that have helped me to grow in all these different experiences. To receive this award is an honor and also humbling, as they also deserve a part of this award."

About Cate Critz, long-time mentor and friend: "Cate shared her developmental skills and expertise which I've carried over into my time with the children I see. I'm honored she came to this event!"



**Maureen O'Hara, RNC, MS, PNP
PNP Post-Master's Advanced Certificate,
Class of 1997 with President David R.
Smith, MD**

50th Celebration — A Great Event for Recognition



Away we go! A morning tour of campus begins.



Those touring saw the new Golisano Children's "Treehouse" Hospital and the new Setnor Academic Building.



"People see a good nurse and they ask, where did you go to school? They say Upstate. Our nursing program is special because we have dealt with what the needs are. And, our graduates not only stand out, they give back — appreciative of everything that has been done for them."

— Dean Elvira Szigeti, PhD, RN



Alumni President Barb Kane (l), with fellow board members, Ellen Crehan, Gayle Bero, Denise Dann and Paulette Gorman; and faculty, Louise Pernisi and Meega Wells.



Virginia Fiscoe, Class of 1966 (ctr., standing) gathers with other alums and friends at the luncheon.



Student research posters displayed at the Genesee Grande Hotel. Tree Carter, BS '11, discusses with alum Polly Gorman, MS/NP '98 (l).

"Former Upstate President Gregory Eastwood once commented of nurse alumni: 'I have never seen such loyalty to a particular school as I have witnessed with the College of Nursing.'"

— Dean Emeritus M. Janice Nelson, EdD, RN (Dean, 1986-1996)



Continuing education presenters, Michael Bleich, PhD, RN, FAAN and Carol Anne Kozik, MS, CNS, FNP.



FNP students Colleen Bud, BS '11, and Katie McDonnell, BS '11, at SACON display fundraiser with College memorabilia.



First Dean of Nursing, Janice Nelson, chats with first Alumni Association President, Kathy Harmand, BS/MS '89



Alum Kathy Spaman takes a moment to look through yearbooks.

"Even as the college has gotten larger, we still have those values of working closely with our students."

—Carol Gavan, EdD, RN, Associate Professor/ Associate Dean of Nursing

See more photos online!

Initiation and Catching Up!

Spring 2011

InTouch



Alums, students and friends connect during a fabulous dinner event.



Greeting friends, posing for snapshots.

"The alumni association has grown from giving out one single scholarship in 1995, and now we give out multiple scholarships and have developed a white coat ceremony to welcome students into their new fields."

— Archie McEvers ('74 AAS/BS '95/ MS '97), Alumni Board VP



Archie McEvers, VP of Alumni Board



Long-time CON professional staffer, Nancy Lyon, chats with Elvira Szigeti.



Dean Elvira Szigeti, PhD, with alum and Director of Center for Continuing Nursing Education, Barbara Black, RN, ANP '98, MA.



Outstanding Alumni Award goes to Bonnie Miner! (See page 6 for all awards)

"We are offered a very solid knowledge base and benefit from being partnered with a medical school. Most important are the relationships that are built with our professors and fellow students. We continue to grow together and everybody's there to help each other along."

— Katie McDonnell (BS '11/MS '12), Master's student



Arlene Bolton (ctr.) views a photo memory with Don and Ginny Byers.



John McCabe, MD, CEO of Upstate University Hospital, visits with Dean Emeritus Janice Nelson, EdD (right) and former faculty, Virginia Byers, PhD.

"Teachers are the ones who really give you support here."

— Elijah Dut, BS '11, MS degree student



Enjoying the company: Roxanne Taylor, '06, Katie Mooney, UH Nursing Administration and Theresa Gagnon, '74.

"Once we see each other it's like we've never not seen each other — we reconnect easily because of the camaraderie we've built together as students. I also truly believe the College of Nursing has got the big picture, and is where it needs to be to lead the next generation of nurses."

— Theresa Gagnon (AAS '74) BSN, RN, Director of Risk Management, Upstate University Hospital

College and Alumni Recognize Excellence in Nursing

The following individuals were recognized for their contributions to the nursing profession during the 50th Celebration Awards Dinner.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Bess Buser, MS, NP '76

(in Memoriam), former PNP program faculty member

Lifetime Achievement Award

Sue Spaulding-Gehrke, PhD, NP '78

(in Memoriam), former Alumni Association President and NP for Finger Lakes Center for Living

Award for Distinction in Nursing Practice

Patricia L. Donnelly, MS, PNP '97,

partner in private practice, Donnelly and Oot, Family Nurse Practitioners, LLC

Award for Distinction in Nursing Leadership

Connie Jastremski, RN, MS, MBA,

ANP-BC '98, Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President of Patient Services, Bassett Healthcare Network

Award for Distinction in Nursing Education

Carol Anne Kozik, MS, CNS, FNP

'96, Clinical Informatics Coordinator, Cortland Regional Medical Center

Honorary Alumni Award

Nancy Lyon, Assistant to the Dean

(retired)/part-time CON special projects assistant

Award for Outstanding Alumni

Bonnie Miner, RN, MS, CNS, BS '94, MS '96, PMAC '02

Alumni Association immediate past president and CNS for Nursing Quality and Patient Safety/Pediatric Patient Safety Officer, Upstate University Hospital

Award for Distinction in Community Service

Maureen O'Hara, RNC, MS, PNP '97,

CNS and NP for the ENHANCE Program, Pediatric and Adolescent Center, Upstate University Hospital

Honorary Alumni Award

Fay Whitney, PhD, RN, NP, FAAN,

distinguished nurse educator/leader and the former Director of Upstate's NP Program

Award for Distinction in Regional Support of Nursing

Wegmans, represented by Paul Lilly, Customer Service Trainer

Award for Distinction in Local Support of Nursing

KeyBank, represented by Steven Fournier, District President

Award for Distinction in Local Support of Nursing

Indi Shelby, RN, BSN, MS, President and CEO of the Visiting Nurse Association of CNY, Inc.



Upstate President Dr. David Smith (left) and Dean Elvira Szigeti (2nd from right), with the 50th Celebration Award recipients (l-r): Maureen O'Hara, Bonnie Miner, Patricia Donnelly, Connie Jastremski, Nancy Lyon, Carol Anne Kozik, Indi Shelby, Paul Lilly and Steven Fournier.

PROFILE:

Carol Anne Kozik, MS, CNS, FNP
MS Degree, Class of 1996

Nursing Leader/Educator Expert in Informatics

As the informatics coordinator at Cortland Regional Medical Center, Carol Anne Kozik leads projects in clinical systems implementation, including patient care documentation, medication bar-coding and scanning, and physician order entry. In this position four years, she's worked in informatics overall for 12.

"I maintain our systems so that they reflect the latest clinical recommendations, build in decision-making tools such as pressure ulcer and vaccine screening, create tools for monitoring care and patient alerts, as well as provide education."

Central to her nursing practice is her role as an educator. She has been teaching at Upstate as an adjunct and a full-time assistant clinical professor for six years. She has taught Community Health, Nurse as Educator, Conceptual Bases for Nursing and Consulting.

Kozik was one of two presenters for the afternoon programs on continuing education during the 50th event. Her topic, "Genomics Game Show," is a result of her initiative developing a game show format to help the review of genomic concepts. Last year, she worked through a National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant on a project to integrate genomics (data involving genes and their relation to human

health conditions) into the baccalaureate curriculum.

"What I hope that participants walked away with (from my presentation) is an awareness of the newest challenges and concepts in nursing curriculum as well as to experience some of the latest technology available for teaching strategies."

Kozik recognizes the importance of a nurse practitioner and clinical nurse specialist in a clinical informatics position because advanced nurses, "bring evidence-based practice to the bedside, improve the safety of patient care, bring disciplines together and serve as a voice for patient care in the technology world."

"I see a great value in the clinical nurse specialist role and teach the terminal course in the Clinical Nurse Specialist program, which focuses on the CNS in the organizational sphere. I see education as a partnership between teacher and student. I love to teach because I learn so much from students as we explore ideas as a learning community."

"My real passion is in nursing leadership," added Kozik, "or how nurses lead within the organization and transform the profession — a focus in my nursing doctorate studies at Sage College. My particular focus is on empowerment of the student."

"I believe that the faculty at



Kozik presents the topic, Genomics, using a game format to those attending her continuing education workshop during the 50th event.

Upstate is very committed to providing our community with caring, skillful and committed advance practice nurses. I also see a huge commitment on the part of students. Most of our students have jobs and families, yet never miss a class or an assignment and go above and beyond in the clinical settings."

Kozik was recognized at the 50th event with the College's Award for Distinction in Nursing Education. "I'm absolutely delighted!," she said. "There are so many very accomplished alumni that I look up to, I am honored to be a part of them."

Previously, Kozik has been the student's choice for a Distinguished Faculty Award to honor her professional role modeling, student advocacy and excellence in teaching.

"William Butler Yeats said that education is, 'not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire,'" Kozik noted. "I enjoy lighting the fire and seeing students explore their own interests and skills."

Kozik lives in South Onondaga, NY with her husband, Peter, and their five children.

"I chose Upstate for my master's degree because I wanted to learn from faculty who were clinically as well as academically excellent. I was fortunate to work with a number of very skilled nurse practitioners and clinical nurse specialists both in the classroom and at clinical sites. It was a great blend of what we know, what we believe and what we do. I am even more fortunate to be able to teach with some of that faculty now." —Carol Anne Kozik

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Award to College's Front Office Star: Cheri Allen

Cheryl (Cheri) Allen has always gone above and beyond in her front office job at the College of Nursing. Faculty and staff so value Allen, they nominated her for a Chancellor's Award for Classified Service and surprised her with the award on March 25.

With the college for more than three years, Allen has far exceeded the expectations of her position as keyboard specialist. Allen greets all those entering the college with a smile and cheerfully helps with faculty and student requests, all to their full satisfaction. Her technology

and computer skills are outstanding, along with her event planning abilities, including planning the new student pre-enrollment sessions. Additionally, Allen serves as the recording secretary for the Nursing Alumni Association Board, represents the college on Team Upstate and the Sustainability Committee and established the college's recycling program.

She lives in Camden with husband Mike. They have five children and seven grandchildren.



College of Nursing's Cheri Allen, recipient of Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Classified Service.

Be sure also to check the Nursing Alumni website for 50th Anniversary Event photos and ongoing alumni news: www.foundationforupstate.org/nursingalumni.