

Alumni in the News

Class of '16 DNP alumna Florence Mandebvu honored with Distinguished Gerontological Nurse Educator Award



Dr. Florence Mandebvu

[Florence Mandebvu, DNP '16, RN, GCNS-BC](#), DNP program coordinator and assistant professor at Upstate Medical University's College of Nursing, received the 2022 Distinguished Educator in Gerontological Nursing Award from the National Hartford Center of Gerontological Nursing Excellence (NHCGNE). This award recognizes nurse educators who have skills and expertise in the care of older adults and contribute to the preparation of the future nursing workforce in caring for an aging population. Mandebvu was honored at NHCGNE's leadership conference in October.

The NHCGNE is a collaboration of national and international schools and institutions committed to enhancing the capacity and competency of nurses to provide quality care for older adults. Their mission is accomplished through advancing gerontological nursing science, providing faculty development, facilitating adoption of best practices, fostering leadership, and designing and shaping policy.

Mandebvu, a board certified gerontological clinical nurse specialist (GCNS-BC), has been a registered nurse for over 14 years and teaches undergraduate and graduate programs at the College of Nursing. After participating on the Acute Care of Elderly (ACE) Team and focusing on evidence-based practice for people with dementia, Mandebvu's devotion grew. "I realized how precious they are. I realized that isolated, older patients with dementia have so much to teach me by their behaviors and patience that I was drawn to them, becoming enriched in their presence," Mandebvu said.

Mandebvu was instrumental in implementing best practices for the care of older adults through the Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders (NICHE) program at Upstate University Hospital and began initiatives that focus on preventing and reducing delirium.

"Elderly patients are often misunderstood simply because people are not taking the time to listen to them. Ageism, or bias toward the elderly, clearly exists and is increasing," Mandebvu said. "The aging baby boomer population is now. We have come a long way in geriatric education, but it is not where it should be. The silver tsunami is on the rise and will continue well into our future."

Tammy Austin-Ketch, PhD, FNP, FAANP, dean of the College of Nursing, said, "Dr. Mandebvu has proven every day that she is an amazing educator and clinician. Her support of students and passionate presentation of geriatric clinical topics make her an outstanding educator."

To better educate staff, Mandebvu developed and implemented a dementia care training program for staff in a long-term care setting after recognizing and extensively documenting the lack of knowledge and training for dementia care among nursing staff. Her conviction is that all staff who provide care for older adults with dementia should be competent in the skills they need in order to provide the best care for those suffering from dementia. She included evidence-based strategies that help staff to manage behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia.

"Dr. Mandebvu exemplifies the qualities that are inherent in receiving the Distinguished Educator in Gerontological Nursing Award from the National Hartford Center of Gerontological Nursing Excellence. All of us at the College of Nursing wish her the most heartfelt congratulations on receiving this prestigious national award," Dr. Austin-Ketch added.

Expanding the definition of 'researcher'; encouraging nurse researchers at Upstate



Dr. Jolene Kittle

From [Upstate News](#)

Who asks the questions in medical and healthcare research? Who examines hospital processes and patient care practices? To **Jolene Kittle, PhD, RN '14**, breaking down barriers to include a wider variety of medical professionals in research is the goal. Kittle has recently filled the position at

Upstate Medical University as a research scientist nurse; working to help Upstate's nursing staff through the process of creating scientific studies, conducting research, publishing academic writings, and presenting at conferences. The first barrier? Changing the mindset about who has the ability to conduct research. [Read full article](#)

College of Nursing alumna, faculty member, shares reason for obtaining DNP



Dr. Kathryn Holliday

In celebration of National Nurse Practitioner week, [Kathryn Holliday, DNP, CPNP, CNE \(MS '13\)](#), assistant professor at the college, shares why she chose to further her education and obtain her Doctor in Nursing Practice degree.

Dr. Holliday said, "I chose to become a DNP because I never wanted to be limited by my education. I wanted every possible opportunity and I thought that the best path for that was getting my DNP. I think it is most important for nurse practitioners to have kindness and compassion; empathy is a tremendous gift we can give to patients and families."

Dr. Holliday added, "NP's bring a wealth of experience working as an RN and as an NP. NP's are excellent at collaboration as we have worked with many other healthcare professions. NP's also excel at patient/family education which is imperative for exceptional patient outcomes."

Class of '00 alumna receives 2021 APNA Excellence in Leadership Award



Bambi Carkey, DNP, PMHNP-BC, NPP (MS '00), Grant Staff, College of Nursing, Upstate Medical University was the 2021 recipient of the [**APNA Award for Excellence in Leadership – APRN**](#). This award recognizes outstanding achievement in the field of psychiatric-mental health nursing, and we are thrilled to celebrate her accomplishments. Barbara (Bambi) Carkey, will receive the Award for Excellence in Leadership – APRN, for forging partnerships with mental health agencies and clinicians to expand educational experiences. All award recipients will be honored for their work at the APNA 35th Annual Conference in Louisville, Kentucky.

Congratulations, Bambi!

Melnyk receives highest recognition at SUNY Upstate Medical University Commencement



Dr. Bernadette Melnyk

Bernadette Melnyk PhD, APRN-CNP, FAANP, FNAP, FAAN is vice president for Health Promotion, chief wellness officer, professor and dean of the College of Nursing at The Ohio State University, and a professor of pediatrics and psychiatry at Ohio State's College of Medicine. She received an Honorary Doctor of Science degree last month during Commencement ceremonies at Upstate Medical University. The honorary doctorate degree is the highest form of recognition offered by the Board of Trustees of The State University of New York to individuals of exceptional distinction.

Her research interests and advocacy work span evidence-based practice, intervention research, child and adolescent mental health, and health and wellness. Dr. Melnyk is the Editor of the journal, 'Worldviews on Evidence-based Nursing.'

Read more about Dr. Bernadette Melnyk at her Ohio State University [profile page](#).

Upstate alumni receive prestigious award



Martinez, right, pictured with Norris in April

Congratulations to **Ingrid Martinez, DNP ('21)** for receiving the 2022 SUNY Chancellor Award for Student Excellence! Also receiving the award is **Matthew Norris, DPT ('22)** graduating this year from the Upstate College of Health Professions. Congratulations to both Dr. Martinez and Dr. Norris!