

# Fay Whitney Gives \$50,000 for Endowed Lectureship

**Fay Whitney, PhD, RN, FAAN**, a national leader and advocate for advanced nursing practice, and her husband Roy, have given \$50,000 – the largest contribution in the history of the Upstate Medical University College of Nursing – to establish **The Whitney Lectureship Endowment for the College of Nursing at Upstate Medical University**.

“Dr. Whitney’s generous gift enables the College to invite nationally recognized speakers to campus, which will expose our students to important national trends that are essential to health care,” Dean Joyce Griffin-Sobel commented. “The lectures will ensure our students at Upstate and the surrounding community will hear directly from the most innovative and influential thought leaders across the country, and thereby have similar student experiences to those at Penn, Vanderbilt or Harvard.”

Whitney describes the Lectureship as “an exciting adventure into the future” and invites alumni to join her. The Alumni Association has pledged to match her gift to bring the endowment total to \$100,000. Working with the Upstate Foundation, the Nursing Alumni Office reports that about 60 percent of the goal has been secured.

## Deep Ties with Upstate

After raising their three children, Fay restarted her nursing career in the 1970s, earning her master’s degree at Syracuse University (SU) and working as an NP at University Hospital. She was named director of Upstate’s four-track NP program where she developed a rich collaboration

between the hospital and health sciences colleges, encouraging interprofessional education before it was even known by that name. She served until 1983 when the program closed due to loss of funding. The program graduated more than 300 NPs for primary and critical care practice.

In the next decade, Fay earned a Doctorate at SU and was named by the nation’s largest health-related philanthropic organization to its first class of Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Nurse Scholars. She was awarded more than \$3 million in grants to support the beginning of the Nurse Practitioner movement and worked to pass laws in New York so NP graduates could practice.

At the University of Pennsylvania, Whitney helped build Adult, Gerontology, Pediatric, Psychiatric, Occupational Health and Acute Care NP programs that graduated about 500 NPs. She conducted gerontology and stroke research and helped start many NP managed clinics in the Philadelphia area. She has held the prestigious title of Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing (FAAN) for 26 years.

Relocating to Wyoming in 1992, Whitney distinguished herself as a clinical practitioner, nurse educator, researcher and leader. She founded the Whitney Health and Wellness Center



for elderly patients in Laramie and is Professor Emeritus at the University of Wyoming’s Fay W. Whitney School of Nursing.

In 2011, Upstate’s College of Nursing awarded Whitney the Honorary Doctorate of Science in recognition of her work to lay the foundation for today’s Nurse Practitioner program.

“Upstate is, and always has been, part of my professional integrity,” Whitney commented. “I hold strong memories of that formative time which became the basic platform of my practice and my career. The Upstate nursing program helped shape the new movement in Advanced Nursing Care in the east,” she continued. “Upstate has been pivotal in bringing nurses and programs together to change the landscape of practice in rural, underserved areas across this city and state.”

The Whitney Lectureship  
ENDOWMENT

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# Convocation: Charting your Path in Nursing

College of Nursing Dean Joyce Griffin-Sobel, PhD, RN, University Interim President Gregory L. Eastwood, MD, and invited speakers welcomed 88 new nursing students at a Convocation in September.

A survey noted that most of the incoming class was balancing concerns involving family, work and school, with 44 percent continuing to work full-time, reported Griffin-Sobel. In a televised clip, Dr. Diana Mason, president of the American Academy of Nursing, emphasized the essential value of nurses to health care. Asking students to articulate this importance to everyone, including legislators, Griffin-Sobel also urged them to become involved in the College to develop mentoring relationships with faculty and other students.

Stephen Fournier, president, Central New York Market at KeyBank – a long-time Upstate sponsor – told students, “Through your nursing studies, you are not only changing your lives, but you’re charting a path through which you can change the lives of others as well.”

“Every one of you possesses the ability to impact the profession you have chosen,” said Alumni President Barbara Kane, MSN,



*Master's students (center l-r) Stephanie Bizzair (FPMHNP) and Marianne Dyer (FNP) and their new portable battery chargers are pictured with Stephen Fournier of KeyBank and Alumni President Barbara Kane.*

RN, FNP-BC (BS'98/MS'99). “While each day will be a challenge, do not give up. You are not here by coincidence. You have worked hard and persevered. Be proud of what you are about to accomplish!”

Kane reminded students that the Nursing Alumni Association is there for them, through scholarships, educational events, and more. During the event, sponsored by KeyBank, the Association gave incoming students portable battery chargers to use with their mobile devices – technology they will rely on in their professional lives.

## New Course Focuses on Effective Interprofessional Care

Upstate Medical University is actively engaged in interprofessional education with a new course that deals with the life-and-death issue of effective collaborative care, thanks to the leadership of Dean Joyce Griffin-Sobel, PhD, RN, and support of Interim President Gregory Eastwood, MD.

“It is absolutely essential that we prepare our students for the reality of current health care – that is, team-based care,” commented Griffin-Sobel. “Since I can remember, we have been educating our students in silos, with the result that many physicians and nurses did not speak to each other until they arrived at the workplace. Students need to understand the role that each profession plays in achieving good outcomes for the patient.”

Well-functioning interprofessional teams lead to better outcomes, and it is well established that poor communication among health professionals has led to medical errors and poor patient outcomes, according to Griffin-Sobel. Therefore, an elective course for nursing and other medical students was developed to focus on effective team functioning and communication skills. One of the learning activities in the course is centered on a powerful film documentary about a boy who had elective surgery and died three days later, primarily due to poor communications among his health care team members. The course, developed by nursing, health professions and medicine faculty, will run every semester and is being offered free this year as a pilot program.

# Continuing Education Leader Retires

Always a positive and energetic force in the College of Nursing, Barbara Black retired this October. Barb has made significant contributions to both the professional development of thousands of New York nurses and to the overall development of the College into one of the finest in the state. She joined the CON in 1996 as a consultant, then completed her ANP post-master's certificate and was appointed clinical assistant professor in 1999. She was promoted to associate professor and became full time in 2007. Barb was named assistant dean for Continuing Nursing Education and External Affairs in 2013. She received the 2007 President's Award for Excellence in Teaching and, this year, the faculty Gold Standard Award.

"I have really enjoyed getting to



*Upstate Pediatric NP Mary MacBlane (left) and retired CON staff assistant Nancy Lyon (right) wish Barb (center) well at her retirement reception*

know and work with different groups of nurses throughout Central New York as I've helped them to provide continuing nursing education programs that meet the needs and interests of various specialty groups, and ultimately improved care for their patients,"

Barb said. "I will miss working with them along with my colleagues and friends on campus whose excellent skills and knowledge I relied on every day. It's an exciting time at the College," she added, "with a new dean who is an inspiring and engaging leader, and several new faculty members and exciting initiatives underway. I will miss being a part of all these efforts!"

"Barbara has been such a vital part of our leadership team at the College, always with terrific insights and fun to work with," commented Dean Joyce Griffin-Sobel. "I will miss her, but I have already pulled her back into service for our new advisory board and other functions. She is not getting away from us!"

## ALUMNI PROFILE

### Trauma Manager Better Prepared with MS Degree

In August, **Jolene Kittle, MS/CNS '14, RN**, was named Trauma Program Manager for the Trauma Service at Upstate's University Hospital. Jolene has worked in several areas, including med surg, intensive care and the Emergency Department at Upstate since 2004. Her new job reflects her recent achievement of an advanced degree.

"Although I have a strong clinical background in the care of trauma patients, I was lacking work experience in leadership and program management for which the College's CNS curriculum gave me a great foundation," she said.

Certified in critical care, emer-

gency nursing and as a flight nurse, Jolene is committed to trauma care, driven by her interest "in ensuring the highest quality care possible for patients during their worst moments, which often come unexpectedly."

Her five-year stint as a flight nurse was "a great experience in which I learned to make quick decisions with minimal resources as well as how to get comfortable with being uncomfortable. I really gained a lot of confidence."

Jolene also instructs the Trauma Nursing Core Course through the CNY Chapter of the Emergency Nurses Association. She finds it

especially rewarding teaching in outlying areas like Massena and Watertown: "There is a real opportunity for growth in the knowledge of care for the trauma patient in these rural areas, and the nurses are so excited to learn."

"A passion for life-long learning," Jolene adds, "along with critical thinking skills, patience and compassion, are all needed by anyone who enters the trauma care field."





## Nursing Alumni Association News

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## ALUMNI CLASS NOTES

Two alumni earned awards at the Upstate Fall Faculty Convocation:



**Joanne (Jody) Coppola, MS, RN, FNP-BC, MS/FNP '06**, earned the President's Award for Excellence in Teaching as an assistant clinical professor. Jody has

demonstrated distinction in teaching through innovative strategies, clinical expertise and mentoring. She is known as a multi-faceted faculty member and valued colleague, and an academic resource and role model for students.

**Maria Lumbrazo, MS, FNP-C, MS/FNP '09**, earned the President's

Award for Outstanding Voluntary Faculty. An FNP at the Community Campus in General Surgery and Bariatrics, and at the Syracuse Community Health Center in Adult Medicine and Urgent Care, Maria donates her time, skills and experience with professional distinction and dedication as a teacher/NP role model for students.

**Michael Allain, RN/MS '09, CEN,**



**CCRN**, who practices at Crouse Hospital in Syracuse, was given the Clinical Nurse Specialist Award by the Emergency Nurses Association this July as an exceptional nurse leader and practitioner.

**Ray Muldoon, MS/FNP '01, FPMHNP-BC, RN**, with over 28 years at Upstate's University Hospital, began a new position, Assistant Director of Nursing for Advanced

Practice Services. Ray also is an Upstate DNP student who was designated the CON's first Jonas Scholar (read more in the next edition).



## Have you presented, been promoted or published?

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