July 2003

TouchPOINTS

UBC School of Nursing

PUTTING SCHOLARSHIP INTO PRACTICE

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Building Our Future

Dr. Sally Thorne

These are busy times at the UBC School of Nursing. Over recent months and years we have been expanding our reach and exploring new ways to accomplish our two-fold mission of preparing outstanding nurses who are committed to excellence and innovation at the same time as we develop and transmit knowledge regarding nursing practice and the human experience of health, illness and healing. Internationally, we have been extending our activities into new dimensions of partnership and development, especially in the rural Punjab. Nationally, we have engaged in significantly expanded programs of research and scholarship, linking our intellectual work with that of our colleagues across the country. And locally, we have been building the foundation upon which will emerge new forms of clinical nursing practice in primary health care in this province.

Over the next several years, we will experience considerable faculty turnover as one generation retires and the next generation makes its own mark on the history of the School. We will have challenges with supporting a large cadre of early-career teachers and researchers, and building the kind of academic environment within which they can all contribute, thrive, and achieve excellence in the full range of activities inherent in an academic nursing role. During times like these, we will draw strongly on our larger community to guide and support us. Our many faculty affiliates, our clinical and professional partners, our community of retired faculty members, and our wider circle of "Friends of the School of Nursing" will all be especially important to us during these changing times ahead.

Sally Thorne, Director of the School of Nursing, with a group of recent retirees (L-R: Sally Thorne, Tere Rostworowski, Janet Ericksen, Linda Leonard, and Ray Thompson).

In times of rapid change, it is critically important to reflect on those things that have stayed constant and will remain our "core business." Our recent Congregation showcased this spring's contribution to a very long line of graduates who have earned degrees in nursing from UBC. The pomp and ceremony that characterizes graduation always bring to mind the remarkable history of the School of Nursing. We are in awe of the many brilliant nurses whose careers began here, or who passed through our halls in order to expand their repertoire of skills and take on new professional challenges. Although they represent very large shoes to fill, we know that this year's crop of graduates will do a very fine job of filling them. And we know that the same will be true a year from now. What characterizes graduates of the UBC School of Nursing is and always has been a passion for nursing and a love of nursing knowledge. It is abiding values such as these that will nurture, protect and sustain us all during these times of turmoil and transition.

Raising the Bar

Walking through open doors

Joan Anderson is committed to pursuing excellence in research and scholarship.

Joan Anderson, PhD, one of this year's UBC Peter Wall Institute Distinguished Scholars, has a laugh that lights up her face and rings with a slight accent remaining from her years growing up in Jamaica. She enjoys gardening and gets away from it all by hiking in the North Shore mountains. To hear this, one might think of her as a laid-back person who compartmentalizes her work and personal life—you couldn't be more wrong.

"I absolutely love what I do," says Joan emphatically. "My work isn't work to me at all. It is part of who I am and is with me no matter where I am or what I am doing." Joan pursues everything she undertakes with passion, commitment and honesty—all qualities which have helped make her one of the leading thinkers of the day.

Joan has made significant contributions to nursing and social sciences research throughout her career. With a BN and Master's in Nursing, Joan's interest in a research career really began while completing her PhD in Sociology at UBC. "Roy Turner was my supervisor and he really opened an intellectual door for me. It was so exciting to bring the fields of nursing and social sciences together, and to have that door opened and walk through it was quite amazing," reflects Joan thoughtfully.

Her research has taken an interesting path that has informed her thoughts on many topics today. Beginning with chronic illness and women who care for children with chronic illness, Joan became aware of the role of women in health care and the cultural nuances of that role. She then did additional research on women's health and how they make health care decisions, and the social/cultural meanings and definitions of illness. Following that, the work progressed naturally to a program of research looking at the continuum of care.

In extending her research to gender issues, Joan now includes men and women in her studies and, with a team of colleagues from the university and health care settings, is looking at the discharge planning process, and what happens to people when they leave the hospital. She is deeply committed to collaborative research with clinicians and administrators in clinical practice, and in translating research into practice.

Her recent work on postcolonial thought has been very influential in academic circles. Julianne Cheek, a researcher at the University of Southern Australia, became familiar with Joan's work on postcolonialism and nursing before getting to know her personally. One of the things that struck Julianne is Joan's commitment to excellence in scholarship, but not in an exclusive or elitist way.

Julianne's respect for Joan runs deep. She says, "Joan demonstrates interest in developments in her field and often is at the forefront of constructing them! I find her a warm, thoughtful and excellent scholar. She has had major influence in the field of postcolonial thought especially in nursing and health-related areas. She has modelled good scholarship and has been a trail blazer in her field."

Having walked through many intellectual doors herself to achieve career satisfaction, Joan is deeply committed to educating the researchers of tomorrow and opening doors for them. "I think it's so important to feel deep joy in whatever you do," explains Joan. "Having a sense of direction and commitment to the path you have taken is imperative. Helping students find their passion and direct it in valuable pursuits is so rewarding."

This year as a Peter Wall Scholar has opened another door for Joan. It is important to Joan not to stay in one place intellectually. "I haven't yet found my intellectual home. I always feel that I am in the process of becoming and right now I am on the threshold of the door that will take me to the next place. There is such joy and challenge in that, and I am enjoying the opportunity here to explore many intellectual avenues."

Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies

Supported by a generous endowment by Vancouver businessman, Peter Wall, this Institute has enabled the university to create a virtual interdisciplinary college of intellectual development, innovation, and networking. Nominees from all disciplines are rigorously reviewed and selected on the basis of demonstrated and recognized research excellence and scholarship. For the duration of their one-year term, each is provided with an office in the University Centre (the old "Faculty Club" building), office support, and a personal infrastructure budget. The 2003 holders of the Peter Wall Distinguished Scholars Award are Joan Anderson (Nursing), Kenneth Craig (Psychology), Sherrill Grace (English) and David Ley (Geography).

Clinical Practice Innovation

Caring for children with diabetes

Doreen Hatton's career path as a nurse was formed by the time she was eighteen months old, when her grandmother nicknamed her Florence Nightingale for refusing to leave her sick brother's side.

Doreen's grandmother would have been proud many years later to see her caring granddaughter retire from a distinguished nursing career. Doreen was the driving force behind the creation of the Diabetes Day Care Program at B.C.'s Children's and Women's Hospital, where staff have dedicated the main teaching room in the program's new facility in Doreen's honour. She also pioneered research into juvenile diabetes—most notably, she conducted one of the first nursing studies on diabetes in infants and toddlers while completing her Master's degree at UBC. That paper was recently quoted in research conducted at Yale University, and Doreen was invited to present her research findings to Harvard University students and staff at the Joslin Diabetes Institute in Boston, Massachusetts. She has also travelled internationally to teach about paediatric diabetes care in countries such as China and Mongolia.

She is best known in Vancouver, though, for her work at B.C.'s Children's Hospital and her unwavering commitment to the hundreds of children and families she has supported over the years. "I was convinced that giving children newly diagnosed with diabetes and their families the ability to come to the hospital, as outpatients instead of inpatients, would be so much better for them," says Doreen, explaining what compelled her to initiate research in this direction and then develop the outpatient program.

In 1993 the medical staff at Children's Hospital recognized Doreen with the B.C.'s Children's Hospital's Medical Staff Award for Excellence in Nursing Practice; she used it to study outpatient diabetes day care programs in the United States and England. What she learned was that the benefits to patients and families were enormous. Long, frightening hospital stays were reduced, parent anxiety over having a child in the hospital dissipated, and families were provided some semblance of normalcy. The disadvantages were for the health care staff—longer hours, little professional back-up and the need for doctors to be on-call at all times. The biggest advantage for the hospital, however, was that Doreen was able to show that by creating an outpatient program for children newly diagnosed with diabetes, the hospital would save over one million dollars a year.

Heather Mass, Chief of Nursing for Children's and Women's Health Centre of B.C. says, "Doreen's willingness to go the extra mile with children and families as they faced a diagnosis that is both challenging and frightening was remarkable. This is best exemplified in advocacy on their behalf, and in her work to develop creative family and child-centred programs designed to meet the needs of these people as they faced diabetes and learned how to manage it in order to live completely healthy lives. Her ability to understand issues and pose good questions led her into a research career, which she was able to fit into her already very busy work life with seeming ease. As a result of her research, the way we understand how to manage diabetes in kids and how we need to deliver services to kids with a new diagnosis as well as those who are living with diabetes has changed dramatically."

By 1996, Doreen had convinced key decision-makers at the hospital that the diabetes outpatient program could work. Conveniently, a new medical day care unit opened which had space for the humble beginnings of a diabetes day care program. The children and their parents would come to the Diabetes Day Care Program from all over B.C. for three to five days a week. While there, they would follow a well-paced program of diabetes care and education that Doreen developed along with her colleagues. This highly successful program continues today.

Last May, as Doreen was retiring, she was able to see the fruits of her labour realized even further. "It was so exciting to see the new Medical Day Care and Diabetes Unit open its doors. We now see about 176 newly-diagnosed children each year and needed the dedicated space this new facility offers," enthuses Doreen. "I have felt so honoured to be able to share so many wonderful moments with children and their families over the years. I will carry those memories with me always."

During her career, Doreen was honoured with many awards and recognition for her research and dedication to her patients. However, upon her retirement one of the highest tributes came from a girl who Doreen started working with at age two. That young child is now ready for university and plans to be a nurse specializing in juvenile diabetes just like her hero Doreen.

Even in retirement, Doreen Hatton continues to contribute to understanding juvenile diabetes and to nursing. She lectures at the UBC School of Nursing on a regular basis, is continuing the research that launched her career in diabetes nursing by following up with the children who were toddlers when she first met them, and contributes time to the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation and the Canadian Diabetes Association..

Doreen received both her BSN and MSN degrees from the UBC School of Nursing.

Graduate Profiles

The School of Nursing is extremely proud of all of its graduates. Each year, the staff and faculty enjoy the privilege of seeing new degree recipients leave their programs armed with new knowledge, confidence and skills to tackle the challenges and opportunities ahead. On the next two pages, we'd like to share the stories of two of our new grads with you.

Undergraduate — Turning caring into action

"The hands that turn caring into action
The smiles that turn love into healing
The touch that turns compassion into comfort
This is the art of nursing" ~ Anonymous

For Dara Spears, a recent BSN graduate and recipient of several scholarships and awards, this poem from one of her graduation cards embodies what she hopes to achieve as a nurse. "I think that just sums it all up for me," says Dara emphatically. "It really speaks to what I hope I can do as a nurse and how the profession really is about making a difference in the lives of others," she explains.

Dara entered the UBC School of Nursing right after graduating from Argyle Senior Secondary in North Vancouver. "I always knew that I wanted to work in health care," says Dara. "When I was in grade twelve, I went to a health conference at Capilano College as part of the Career and Personal Planning program at my school. When I saw the nursing presentation, I just fell in love with it; I knew right then that I was going to be a nurse." She was still planning on starting in general sciences first and then transferring though. However a timely conversation with the mother of a schoolmate, who is an instructor at the School of Nursing, convinced her to go right into the nursing program.

Maintaining a high grade point average was important for Dara. "Part of what allowed me to focus on my studies was the scholarships I earned," she says. Dara received several scholarships after high school as well as many from the university. These included the Beth McCann Memorial Scholarship and the Flora Musgrave Scholarship awarded by the nursing faculty for excellent academic standing.

"Many of the faculty at UBC were so encouraging and supportive; they really made it an enjoyable experience," says Dara. Some of those on her list of favourites are Marion Clauson, Elsie Tan, Marg Osborne and Barbara Paterson.

Right after graduation in May, Dara started full-time work on the acute medical ward at UBC Hospital, where she puts into practice all she learned during school. "The medical terminology, pathophysiology, and pharmacology courses I took in particular really rounded out my education. After taking those, I felt totally prepared for other courses and for working in the hospital," she says.

Throughout her studies, Dara made some lasting friendships and learned many valuable lessons. "I don't think I went into this expecting to meet some of my closest friends or learn so much other than the curriculum," she says reflectively. Dara and several classmates, who all work in different places and different nursing specialties, meet regularly to share the challenges of being new nurses and to stay in touch.

Some of the key things that Dara would recommend for students entering the nursing program are to: develop good time management skills, leave time for yourself no matter what else is going on (Dara makes time to play the piano, paint, and spend time with family and friends), develop a strong support network and use it, and devote as much time as you can to learning all you can about nursing. "There is so much to learn that you need to take advantage of as many of the opportunities that come your way as possible," states Dara. "You can't ever let a lack of confidence hold you back."

Dara doesn't plan to let anything hold her back. She is keen to learn as much as she can about medical nursing over the next few years before obtaining a master's degree. Ultimately, she plans to become a university professor where she can really turn caring into action.

Right: Basic BSN Program Coordinator Marion Clauson congratulates Dara Spears at the May graduation banquet.

Graduate—Strength through adversity

Catherine Kamau-Ali has a passion for improving the conditions for nursing practice.

One only has to listen to Catherine Kamau-Ali tell the story of her journey to Canada from Kenya in 1989, leaving a husband and two young children behind for almost two years, to understand her commitment to education and to nursing. "I am passionate about education. In fact, that was behind our reason for coming to Canada—for both our children and us," she explains emphatically.

It was a long road to Vancouver, via the United States and Alberta, but Catherine and her family were reunited when she started working in the operating rooms at Vancouver General Hospital. While there and when she was in Alberta, she saw first-hand the effects of health care restructuring and became interested in learning about its impacts on nurses.

As a result, her master's paper focused on conducting a literature review of research looking at the ways in which health care restructuring affects nurses. "I learned many things through this work and discovered that I have many more questions that still need answers," explains Catherine.

Some of the key findings from her master's project involved the disempowering effect health care restructuring has on nurses. With increasing lack of autonomy due to increased overtime expectations, little input into decisions which directly affect them, and decreasing resources for staff, nurses feel an incredible amount of stress in a restructuring environment. Not only that, but the fragmentation of nursing functions (by creating or expanding other roles such as LPNs and scrub technologists in the operating room) can dilute the care that patients receive.

"This isn't to say that health care restructuring is bad," explains Catherine. "What it does say, though, is that any changes to nursing roles and the operational aspects that affect nurses must be planned carefully and with nursing involvement. The end goal of my work was to look at questions such as 'Are we providing the best care we really can?', 'How are decisions being made?' and 'Are they the best choices for our patients and staff?'".

Helping Catherine formulate her thoughts while completing her program were several inspirational faculty members. "There were so many people that helped me along the way," says Catherine. "I think Pam Ratner, Sally Thorne, Lynne Esson and Ann Hilton really made the most difference for me." She is also grateful for the support her family provided throughout her education, and for the support from the nursing community through both making time available for education and the provision of scholarships.

Part of any educational program is the learning that occurs outside the curriculum—the meta-knowledge that forms such an integral part of the educational experience. For Catherine, that included learning that despite challenges (she and her husband have faced many since moving to Canada), it is possible to make it all work—as a wife, mother, student and employee, Catherine had a lot to juggle to complete her education. She also loved being exposed to different perspectives and viewpoints.

"I always think of education as a spider web. You see each strand of the web as it is spun, but don't necessarily know where it is going. It can take us in so many directions," reflects Catherine. "Education is so precious to me. My father used to say that your education is the one thing that no one can take away from you."

Nursing Alumni Reunion Luncheon

Alumni & Friends Welcome

Saturday, September 20, 2003 @ 12:30
UBC Botanical Garden

Speaker: Nora Whyte BSN'73 MSN'88
International Health Care Consultant

More information visit www.nursing.ubc.ca then click on alumni (http://www.nursing.ubc.ca/alumni).

Cost $15 for Members/$20 General
Includes Lunch, Speaker, Door Prizes, free afternoon in the Gardens

Need help with organizing year reunions or any questions contact:

Jane Merling
604.822-8918, 1.800.883.3088 or
email merling@alumni.ubc.ca
or
Cathy Ebbehoj, Alumni president
604.822-7468 or ebbehoj@nursing.ubc.ca

Development

Helen Shore Endowment Fund supports chronic illness research

Helen Shore is continuing the longstanding tradition of putting scholarship into practice.

In Canada, chronic illness is one of the leading reasons for reduced quality of life, long absences from work, and costly acute care. Health care organizations and all levels of government are now recognizing the significant impact that chronic illness has on society as a whole, and are beginning to devote attention and resources towards greater understanding of it. Now, thanks to an endowment from retired School of Nursing faculty member Helen Shore, nurse researchers at UBC will have the opportunity to develop new programs of research in this field and contribute to that growing body of knowledge.

"I have a chronic illness myself, as do many people of my age, and I know professional nurses as members of the health team, along with the medical specialists, are most well-prepared to help," says Helen while explaining why she established the endowment. "I hope that these funds will help encourage more nursing research into chronic illness especially the identification of nursing strategies that will make a real difference to people living with chronic illness."

Helen worked in community health both before and after she joined the faculty of the School of Nursing, where she served from 1964 to 1990. It became apparent to her quite early in her career that one family member with a chronic condition had an impact on the whole family. "I also saw that the role of nurses could make a difference in the whole dynamics of the situation, not only helping one person to manage better, but to help the functioning of the whole family," says Helen.

The first recipient of the Helen Shore Endowment Fund is Margaret Cunningham. "The focus of my research is on understanding the issues of people who live with fibromyalgia," says Margaret. "There is much that we need to know in order to help them cope with this difficult disease. This award will go a long way towards covering many of the costs of my research. I am very thankful for this funding."

"I'm so happy to see both faculty and student interest in chronic illness," enthuses Helen. "It really feels good to be able to contribute to that."

New Faces in Research

Lynda Balneaves, RN, PhD

As a recent doctoral graduate from UBC, Lynda's dissertation focused on breast cancer treatment decision-making, particularly related to complementary and alternative medicine. Drawing upon the Health Belief Model, Lynda conducted an extensive survey to assess the alternative treatment choices that women make while dealing with cancer. Her ongoing research in this field contributes to the growing body of knowledge related to what alternative therapies Canadians are actually using, and how they make decisions about the use of such therapies when faced with a health challenge such as cancer.

Having spent the last seven years in B.C., Lynda is happy to call it home now. "I was attracted to the UBC because of its commitment to research, not just in Nursing but throughout the institution," explains Lynda. "Also, this province is really the most open to alternative and complementary therapy, which is my field of interest. There is so much potential here." She is currently the president of the B.C. Oncology Nurses Group, conducts research with the Nursing and Health Behaviour Research Unit, and teaches research methods to undergraduate nursing students.

Teaching Excellence

Clinical teaching institute aims to educate educators

Think about how exciting it is when you get to do what you love, and then think how exciting and motivating it would be to spend two days with 40 other people who share your passion. That's what the second annual UBC School of Nursing Institute was like for Kathy O'Flynn-Magee last September.

As coordinator for this event, Kathy represents the upcoming generation of enthusiastic and creative nurse educators. Working with a collaborative and eager group of faculty members to bring the scholarship of nursing education to their clinical counterparts, she found it wonderful "to have a place where people can come and talk about what we love, and to learn from each other."

A group of faculty members from the School of Nursing started offering this two-day program for clinical and nurse educators in 2001. "We really wanted to do something for our community partners," explains Kathy. Focusing on "evidence- based best practice" in teaching and learning nursing, they created a workshop format that would allow small groups of faculty members to work together and share their knowledge and expertise with participants on a range of topics. "We do it on a small budget, and keep the cost of it to participants low—it's not meant to be a profitable venture for us," she says. For the first offering, the response was so great that they had to turn people away. Naturally, those left on the waiting list were the first to be invited to last year's Institute.

Participants in the Institute came from all over the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island, and worked in a variety of environments. The common denominator was that all were educators, either in hospitals or other institutions, or in the community.

Everyone participated in four three-hour sessions over two days. The topics for these sessions included Evidence-based Teaching Practice, Assessment and Evaluation, Meeting Diverse Learning Needs, and Creative Teaching. "The information presented at the workshop was extremely valuable and pertinent. The sessions were engaging and interactive, and provided me with effective teaching techniques and strategies to use in my practice," says institute participant Sandy Alexander.

"We varied the structure of each session, but there was generally a presentation of some sort coupled with application and interaction. We're not necessarily the only experts just because we work in the School of Nursing. The whole group has a valuable body of knowledge so it's very important that there was ample opportunity for people to interact and learn from one another," explains Kathy. That included such activities as working in groups to develop a teaching plan using some unusual teaching aids during the creative teaching session.

Plans are underway to develop another two-day Institute for this fall. Details will be available on the School's website (www.school.nursing.ubc.ca). For Kathy and other faculty at the School of Nursing, this institute is a way of giving back to the nursing community that so steadfastly supports our students and nurtures our new graduates. We look for new and exciting ways to extend the "Scholarship of Education" to our community.

Kathy O'Flynn-Magee (left) believes strongly in lifelong learning.

Teaching Institute Faculty

Marion Clauson
Anne Dewar
Cathy Ebbehoj
Clarissa Green
Wendy Hall
Cathryn Jackson
Carol Jillings
Kathy O'Flynn-Magee
Margaret Osborne
Barbara Paterson
Elsie Tan

John Oliffe, RN, PhD(C)

A transplanted Australian, John spent twenty years as a clinician and ten as a nurse educator before pursuing further education. His main research focus is on men's health, particularly related to prostate cancer. Current avenues of research for John include smoking and prostate cancer, health promotion and prostate cancer support groups, and cancer care communication. He is in the final stages of finishing his dissertation, an ethnography that investigates the interconnections of Anglo-Australian masculinities and prostate cancer.

Before moving to Vancouver, John had visited a few times and targeted UBC as the ideal place for his own scholarship to thrive. He says that "UBC is what Australians call a "sandstone" university; that is, an established university with the ability and commitment to support staff and students with their career aspirations and development." Eventually, John plans to extend his research from the cancer focus into other critically important aspects of men's health.

Donation Form

I would like to support the UBC School of Nursing through the following funds:

☐ Endowment Fund for Student Support (E682) ☐ School of Nursing "Putting Scholarship into Practice" Fund (P249)

☐ Guru Nanak Partnership Fund (0724)

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Address _____

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☐ My cheque is enclosed (please make cheques payable to the University of British Columbia and send to the attention of the: Development Officer—School of Nursing, Faculty of Applied Science, 2006–2324 Main Mall, Vancouver B.C. V6T 1Z4)

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Name on Card _____ Account # _____

Signature _____

Thank you!

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