Discovering Our Unique Passions

As nurses, we enjoy an abundance of career paths, educational choices, specialty areas and settings through which we can help make a difference in the lives of others.

Whether we are focused on research, patient care, education, administration or mentoring others (inside or outside of nursing), we have numerous opportunities to discover our unique passions, help others to pursue theirs, and honor what is important to us.

In this issue, we are featuring stories about our faculty, students and alumni who realized new aspirations through leadership, giving back and self-discovery. We want to hear your stories too, whether it’s during Homecoming this Oct. 23 & 24 (more on page 3), or in an email to us at news@nursing.arizona.edu.

Have comments, questions or suggestions? Please don’t hesitate to email me: jshaver@email.arizona.edu.

Joan L. Shaver
Professor and Dean

New Nursing Alumni Council President

Jane Carrington (PhD ’08) may have nursing degrees from several universities around the country, but if you ask her which school she considers her home, the answer is loud and clear: the Wildcat College of Nursing.

As both an alumna and current faculty member, Jane’s pride in being a Wildcat Nurse and her dedication to our College and our students have led to an exciting opportunity - serving as the new president of the College of Nursing Alumni Council.

Jane looks forward to planning a variety of fun events to help alumni connect, network and give back to the community, including hosting Wildcat Nurses and their families during Homecoming this October. The council members also plan to offer activities throughout the year, and they hope that you will join them!

To receive the latest information about upcoming events, meetings and more, join the Alumni Council listserv by sending Jane an email at janec@email.arizona.edu.

If you’re interested in attending a meeting, the Alumni Council meets the last Thursday of the month at 3:30 p.m. in College of Nursing Room 349. If you live outside of Tucson, you are welcome to attend via video-conferencing.

“On behalf of the Alumni Council, we look forward to reuniting with old friends and making new ones,” says Jane. “Although we may live across the country, or even the world, and have embarked on diverse nursing journeys, we all share one thing in common: once a Wildcat Nurse, always a Wildcat Nurse!”
Alumna Honors Late Mother’s Wishes

After earning her bachelor’s degree from the UA College of Nursing in 1968, Carol Brown embarked on a diverse and successful nursing career that brought great joy to her mother, Myrtle Hairfield.

“My mother was very proud of me for being a nurse,” says Carol, who resides in South Carolina. “She was very supportive of me throughout my entire life.”

While Carol pursued her nursing career in a variety of roles that included cancer care/research, AHEC nursing education, patient education and technical writing, her mother diligently saved and invested to fund her retirement years. Myrtle spoke often with Carol about her wishes for the money when she no longer needed it.

“She wanted me to give it to causes/recipients who represented our interests,” says Carol. “The University of Arizona was first on our list.”

In January, when her mother passed away at the age of 91, it was up to Carol to carry out her wishes. In May, she donated funds to the UA College of Nursing and the Arizona Health Sciences Library (AHSL), where Carol says she spent many hours as a nursing student.

Support to the UA College of Nursing was divided among the Nursing Endowed Scholarship to support students, the Excellence in Nursing Science Endowment to fund novel research, and the Dean’s Discretionary Fund to support innovative, new initiatives and projects. Support to AHSL will help provide critical resources, such as current materials, technology and simulation labs.

“It is a gift from me, but I give it in loving memory of my mother,” says Carol. “She is the one whose foresight and generosity made this possible. Through this gift, I really want to make a difference in the world and reward excellence. I want to pay the College back for the outstanding education I received, and as a past scholarship recipient, pay it forward to help other nursing students pursue their careers.”

Carol has not visited the UA since 1970—when nursing students still wore pink dresses with white pinafores as their uniforms—but hopes to visit soon, possibly this spring to attend the annual Scholarship Donor Appreciation Tea. If and when she does, she plans to bring some special mementos with her: her pleated, white nursing cap from 1968 and a Navajo basket from her clinical rotation with a local tribe.

Wildcat Faculty Member Runs Marathon for Charity

For Clinical Instructor Lisa Kiser (BSN ’03), her passion for nursing, her love of running and her commitment to gun violence prevention have culminated in a new goal this fall.

On Nov. 1, she will run the New York City Marathon on behalf of Dylan’s Wings for Change, a foundation named for Dylan Hockley, a 6-year-old boy with autism who was a victim of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting. By signing up to run, Lisa has committed to raising $3,000 for the foundation, which is committed to helping children with autism and other related conditions achieve their full potential.

“We are all well or not well in the context of our communities and our environment and our society,” says Lisa. “Autism is an emerging health issue, and helping support the children and families impacted by it feels right to me.”

As a gun violence prevention advocate, Lisa says Sandy Hook was a turning point for her.

“On top of everything else, for this child with autism to go through this horrible experience, there are not even words to describe it for me,” says Lisa. “And the fact that his personal caregiver lost her life trying to save his, there’s a huge part of me that wants to honor that.”

Although many consider gun violence a political issue, as a nurse, Lisa believes it has become a public health issue.

“It truly is an epidemic like other epidemics,” says Lisa. “Almost as many Americans die every day from gun violence as from car accidents now. No one should have their life taken from them, and not in this way, not when it’s preventable.”

For Lisa, a dedicated runner of 35 years, it will be her first marathon. She began training in June, running five days a week. In July, she began lengthening her runs and in August, adding hills, even though Tucson temperatures are in the triple digits. But despite the challenge, Kiser knows the people she’s running for have endured much, much more.

“Running the marathon is not going to be easy,” says Lisa, “but it’s not the hard thing.”
Homecoming
October 23 & 24

Come celebrate the 101st University of Arizona Homecoming with us! We’re planning an outstanding lineup of College of Nursing events just for you:

Friday, Oct. 23

- Leadership Intensive: Taming the Chaos of Change
  12:30 to 5 p.m.
  Chaos can accompany change and change is inevitable. Learn how to tame the chaos of change by reconnecting with your core values, achieving balance and leading from your strengths. (4.25 contact hours)

- Wildcat Nurse Alumni BBQ
  5:30 to 8 p.m.
  Join us for a fun barbeque dinner with live music while you catch up with old friends and make new ones. Families are welcome!

Saturday, Oct. 24

- Wildcat Nurse Alumni Awards Breakfast
  8 to 10:30 a.m.
  Rise and shine with your classmates, meet our Alumnus of the Year, Becky Kuhn, celebrate our awardees and salute the 50th anniversary class of 1965.

- For more information:
  www.nursing.arizona.edu
  alumni@nursing.arizona.edu
  (520) 626-6152

Nursing Professor Discovers Her Own Power through Taekwondo

When Professor and Division Director Ki Moore opened a Christmas gift from her colleagues in 2002, she had no idea what the neatly folded, white garment was. Her fellow faculty members explained it was a dobok, the uniform for taekwondo. Several of them had started training in the Korean martial art and they wanted her to join them.

“I worked out in a lot of different ways, but I’d never tried martial arts,” says Ki, who took her first class in January 2003. “What I liked about taekwondo from the beginning, and still find really valuable, is that it’s great for balance and focus.”

Taekwondo, which means “the art of smashing with the hands and feet,” is similar to karate and a form of self-defense. Benefits of taekwondo include increased self-control, flexibility, balance and stamina. Ki describes it as a “fast tai chi.”

In May – 12 years after taking her first class – Ki, who is in her 60s, earned her fourth-degree black belt. She is only the third woman in the history of her martial arts school to do so.

“Some people ask, ‘How long does it take to get a black belt for the average person?’ and the answer is, the average person doesn’t get a black belt,” says Brian Malm, an eighth-degree black belt and Ki’s instructor. “The old statistic is that 2 percent of people who start a martial arts program get a black belt. It’s a testament to Ki’s tenacity, perseverance and how hard she works to be able to do what she does.”

Testing for a fourth-degree black belt is rigorous. Ki had to perform five takedowns, four of which involved throwing her male partner, who is 6’1. She also had to disarm simulated attackers in one-on-one, two-on-one, and three-on-one staged scenarios, as well as break 1-inch boards in three different ways.

Ki plans to test for her fifth-degree black belt in four years, the required amount of time she must wait. Until then, she’ll continue her weekly, two-hour private lessons, and one-hour group classes on Saturdays with students of all levels.

In addition to improving her conditioning and awareness, Ki says the lessons learned in taekwondo have positively impacted both her professional and personal life.

“In taekwondo, we have six tenets: courtesy, respect, integrity, perseverance, self-control and indomitable spirit,” says Ki. “I hope that I’ve always been a respectful and kind person, but I think taekwondo has helped me to approach situations, whether I’m with a student or a colleague, in a very respectful way. I try to role model resolution in a way that is thoughtful of others. It’s helped me be the kind of person I would like to be in every part of my life.”

Ki Moore breaks a board held by her teacher, Brian Malm (right), and her training partner, Michael Williams.
Meet Dr. Usha Menon, our new associate dean for research and global advances. She is passionate about reducing health disparities in cancer prevention through research, particularly among aging and vulnerable populations. Born and raised in India, Dr. Menon is also a published fiction writer with a degree in English literature. She credits her funding success to her love of writing and storytelling.

“I’m hoping to work on an Oncology unit, and further into the future, become an Oncology Certified Nurse.”

Melissa graduated from our Master’s Entry to the Profession of Nursing program on Aug. 13. Prior to pursuing nursing as her second career, she had earned her BA in German Studies and Music.