



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

# College of Nursing

*THE FRONT OF HEALTH CARE*



*COMMUNITY ORIENTED.  
TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED.  
FOCUSED ON INTEGRATIVE HEALTH.*





THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

College of Nursing

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# A Letter From



***Dean Brian Ahn***

Dear University of Arizona College of Nursing Community,

I am honored to present the 2023 University of Arizona College of Nursing Annual Magazine, “The Front of Healthcare”. In the 2023 Edition, it is with pride to share the outstanding accomplishments of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni. We will continue to make significant impacts and grow our footprint in the state of Arizona.

Our work is far from done however and we will continue to make progress to accomplishing our mission of developing highly skilled nurses. We are broadening the development of healthcare knowledge, increasing the impact of our work and research, and creating lasting relationships with alumni, community partners and organizations.

As your new Dean, I am committed to our mission and the future vision of our college. Our primary goal is to prepare succeeding generations to become highly qualified and compassionate nurses who will make a beneficially strong and lasting impact in healthcare. With my background in computer engineering, I visualize the near future of working with artificial intelligence and unlocking the power of AI technology to ensure the advancements in education delivery, research, improved quality impact, practice, and enhanced patient care.

As our world finds itself in the early stages of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, in a reality filled with exceptionally advanced technology, it's imperative that we position our institution, our college, and most importantly our students to be the best equipped and the most qualified to lead this transformation of the coming age.

Sincerely,  
Hyochol Brian Ahn, Dean  
University of Arizona, College of Nursing



# UArizona College of Nursing Celebrates **OPENING OF MEPN PROGRAM** in Gilbert

On Wednesday, November 2, a ribbon-cutting ceremony officially marked the opening of the University of Arizona College of Nursing's new fourth floor facilities in Gilbert, Arizona.

The Town of Gilbert Mayor Brigette Peterson oversaw the event as the master of ceremonies. Remarks from University of Arizona President Robert C. Robbins, MD; University of Arizona Health Sciences Senior Vice President Michael D. Dake, MD; Kathleen Insel, PhD, Interim Dean of the UArizona College of Nursing; and Representatives Andy Biggs preceded the ceremony.

The University of Arizona College of Nursing's new fourth floor facilities in Gilbert, Arizona. Since 2019, the college's Bachelor of Science in Nursing Integrative Health (BSN-IH) pathway has occupied the entire third floor of the University Building in downtown Gilbert. The expansion, approved by the Town of Gilbert in December 2021, accommodates the College of Nursing's Master of Science in Nursing – Entry to the Profession (MS-MEPN) program.



Gilbert Chamber

Gilbert Chamber

**“We are thrilled the MEPN program has the opportunity to join the Gilbert campus and our University of Arizona BSN-IH students and colleagues. The classroom and experiential learning capabilities are exceptional and provide students with an outstanding, well-rounded nursing education.”**

*~ Kelley Miller Wilson, DNP, MSN, CMSRN*

The MEPN program, which is moved to Gilbert from the Phoenix Bioscience Core, occupies an entire floor, and gave the college new classroom space overlooking the downtown Heritage District. This space will house two accelerated nursing programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

“We are thrilled the MEPN program had the opportunity to join the Gilbert campus and our University of Arizona BSN-IH students and colleagues,” said Kelley Miller Wilson, DNP, MSN, CMSRN, director of the MEPN program. “The classroom and experiential learning capabilities are exceptional and provide students with an outstanding, well-rounded nursing education.”

The University Building is equipped with an eight-bed skills lab and a nursing simulation suite designed to replicate a hospital patient care setting, which was a major factor in the College of Nursing’s decision to expand in Gilbert. The College of Nursing has invested more than \$300,000 to update the third floor of the University Building with speaker systems, technical infrastructure and state-of-the-art simulation equipment.

The MEPN program retrains students with university degrees in other fields to become nurses, while simultaneously earning a master’s degree with the goal of becoming registered nurses. The melding of the BSN-IH and MEPN programs in the same building help educate and train new generations of Wildcat nurses who are desperately needed to fill an anticipated nursing shortage of almost 1 million nurses by 2030.



# New UArizona **NURSING DEAN BRIAN AHN** Has Big Plans for the College's Bright Future

When Hyochol Brian Ahn, PhD, MSN, MS-CTS, MS-ECE, APRN, ANP-BC, FAAN began his tenure as dean, University of Arizona College of Nursing on May 22, he brought with him a rich professional background, a wealth of experience, and a commitment to making the college the best it can be.

Previously, Dean Ahn was a professor and associate dean for research at the Florida State University College of Nursing and founding director of the FSU Brain Science and Symptom Management Center. He has received continuous funding as a principal investigator for the last 12 years and has delivered more than 80 peer-reviewed publications and more than 90 presentations related to areas including biobehavioral neuroscience, health equity and population health and wellness.

"As dean, I hope to work with our faculty, staff, students, and community partners to expand our education and research to the next level of excellence," ~ said Dean Brian Ahn.

Dean Ahn initially trained as a computer engineer, and earned his bachelor's degree in computer engineering at the University of Seoul, South Korea. After coming to the United States in 2002 to complete his master's degree and then PhD in engineering, he became fascinated by the various engineering needs and approaches that could be applied to nursing science. He decided to pursue a career in nursing when he realized the great potential for combining computer technology with nursing science to directly impact patient health.

Dean Ahn is thrilled about his new role at UArizona Nursing. "We have spectacular faculty, staff, students as well as hospital and community partners," he says, noting the college's research impact and recognition on the national stage of nursing education. "I'm very excited about this role, and as dean I would like to expand our education portfolio, increase research impact and recognition, increase community partnerships, expand our hospital partnerships, as well as building relationships with alumni and our community organizations."





Asked about his hopes for UA Arizona Nursing's future, Dean Ahn says he wants to elevate the college to the maximum level of excellence in education, research, and practice.

**With the American Nurses Association forecasting that one million new nurses will be needed in the U.S. by 2030, Dean Ahn wants to increase the clinical nursing workforce through the college's Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program.**

He also sees a need for more advanced degrees in nursing – especially within the nurse practitioner field, as well as other levels of nursing leadership – and he hopes to create a focus on nursing engineering. “With my engineering background, I would like to create a nursing engineering program focused on using technological solutions,” he says. “Artificial Intelligence changes almost all of the processes for our education and research. My vision is to incorporate these technologies to better nursing education research, practice and service.”

Thanks to a \$9.2M share of grants awarded by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) to five Arizona nursing programs, UA Arizona Nursing is poised to expand its education portfolios in the ways Dean Ahn sees as game-changing. Pointing to several recent National Institute of Health (NIH) and Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grants that college faculty have been awarded, Dean Ahn says that our faculty are already operating at a high level.

# ADHS AWARDED \$9.2M

## that Accelerated Nursing Degrees for UArizona College of Nursing Master's Students

Nearly 160 students at the University of Arizona College of Nursing are accelerating completion of their studies thanks to a share of \$43.1 million in grants awarded by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) to five Arizona nursing programs.

The UArizona College of Nursing is using the funding, which was designed to address the state's nursing shortage, to create 158 scholarships to cover the cost of tuition and fees incurred by students while completing the college's graduate-level Master of Science in Nursing – Entry to the Profession of Nursing (MS-MEPN) program. The MS-MEPN program will help educate and train new Wildcat nurses who are desperately needed to fill an anticipated nursing shortage of almost 1 million nurses by 2030.

"We are thrilled at the additional support we are receiving from the State of Arizona," said UArizona College of Nursing interim dean Kathleen Insel, PhD, RN.

**"These scholarships to our MS-MEPN program students will not only help address the ongoing nursing shortage, but also allow bachelor prepared students in other fields to re-career as nurses, starting an exciting new career in a highly rewarding and in-demand field. It really is a win-win for the state, the students and the citizens of Arizona."**

The ADHS provided the grant for scholarships to be used in programs designed to allow students to complete entry-level nursing degrees in 12 to 18 months. Both in-state and out-of-state residents are eligible for a full scholarship. Recipients must agree to practice nursing in Arizona for at least four years upon completion of their degrees. The funding is made possible by HB 2863, approved by the Arizona State Legislature in 2022.

The MS-MEPN program is a four-semester, highly accelerated generalist master's program tailor-made for students holding university degrees in other fields who want to become registered nurses.

"For the ADHS grant and the division chair responsible for all prelicensure programs at the College of Nursing. "Master's level education strengthens the workforce by enabling nurses to lead health care teams to improve patient and population health outcomes in the state of Arizona. These nurse leaders will provide excellent, evidence-based nursing care and potentially use their graduate education as future faculty members to teach the next generation of nurses," said Connie Miller, DNP, RNC-OB, CNE, principal investigator.

The MS-MEPN program launched in 2011 as Arizona's first accelerated master's entry program and has since graduated 1,105 students. The college will offer 96 MS-MEPN seats each semester – fall, spring and summer – 48 in Tucson and 48 in Gilbert, Arizona. Previously, a total of 130 students were admitted once a year. The next cohort starts in May, and applications are opening soon for those interested in starting in August.

The College of Nursing has been preparing to increase enrollments due to the current shortage of nurses to meet the needs of Arizona residents and the anticipated increased need for nurses in the state. The college's Gilbert location recently doubled in size from 17,500 square feet to a total of 35,000 square feet of space in the University Building. This space will accommodate the increased number of MEPN students who will be enrolled every semester.

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Thank you to each one of you who makes giving to the College a priority. Private philanthropy provides the financial assistance needed to prepare our graduates, leaders, research scientists and nursing faculty to advance healthcare in our community, state, and around the world.

# ARIZONA NURSING ALUMNA ADVANCES HEALTH EQUITY

as Cone Health's Executive Director of Primary Care and the MedCenter for Women in Greensboro, NC

Walidah Karim-Rhoades, DNP, CNM, began her college career at the University of Arizona as an engineering major, but she quickly discovered that ensuring that healthcare was accessible and equitable for all was her true calling. After realizing that building structures and machines wasn't for her, she dipped into her first nursing courses and never looked back. "I fell in love," she says, the enthusiasm about her profession still evident in her voice. "I loved child development and all the human-related courses."

That passion has led Dr. Karim-Rhoades on a nursing journey that has focused on putting women and family first and making a difference in the overall community. Currently, she is Executive Director of Cone Health's Primary Care & Women's Health in North Carolina, where she oversees 29 primary care practices and 11 OBGYN practices in three counties. Her women's health work consistently addresses disparities in health care, such as maternal and infant mortality.



"My first rotation was labor and delivery at University Medical Center, which made me realize how much I loved women's health, loved everything about birth. I still remember standing outside the door. At that time, students could just look through the window...and I thought, 'This is what I want to do,'" ~ Walidah Karim-Rhoades, DNP, CNM

Born and raised in Phoenix, Dr. Karim-Rhoades had strong nurse role models in the form of her grandmother and sister, making nursing a natural choice. As an undergraduate in UArizona Nursing's Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) programs, she appreciated her instructors and the robust support she got from the College. Her community health courses got her to thinking globally about the importance of health care. "Those classes really led me to all the work that I'm doing now," she says. "My community health nursing rotation showed me how nursing can influence community health and population health."

But it was her passion for maternal/infant care that drove her further in her academic career. "My first rotation was labor and delivery at University Medical Center (UMC), which made me realize how much I loved women's health, loved everything about birth," she says. "I still remember standing outside the door. At that time, students could just look through the window. I remember seeing that birth and crying, and I thought, 'This is what I want to do.' I fell in love with everything birth-related."

While working at UMC as a labor nurse, Dr. Karim-Rhoades noticed that the babies that were dying were predominantly Black. Concerned about the numbers she saw, she discovered that the statistics for Black births were severely lacking. That formative experience led directly to her desire to learn everything she could about infant mortality disparities across the nation.

After receiving her graduate degree, she worked as director of an infant mortality program in her native South Phoenix, and eventually earned her Certified Nurse Midwife credentials, before moving east to North Carolina. There she also became involved with an infant mortality reduction program, currently serving as board president. "My work is framed by looking at community health and social determinants of health," she explains. "Looking at how we provide that within the system of care that we provide now, so it's more holistic versus external to the practice."

As Executive Director of Cone Health's Primary Care & Women's Health, Dr. Karim-Rhodes led a team that created a two-story MedCenter for Women. The Center is a sort of one-stop health facility for women, including high-risk obstetrics and a variety of different medical services, as well as a food market to help patients with food needs. "Providers or staff members are able to put a referral in, and the person can get groceries and learn about healthy food choices," she says. "All of that is in this one comprehensive space, which is like a dream."

Above all, Dr. Karim-Rhoades treasures her ability to innovate the ways we provide care. "I have the ability to take what I've done in women's health and ask, 'How do we apply this lens to primary care?'" she says. "So now it's pulling on that Family Nurse Practitioner experience and asking questions about how we address social determinants of health, and how we recreate health care to better support families. That's what I love: The ability to be creative about how we deliver health care."

Asked if she has any advice for nursing student seeking to follow in her footsteps, Dr. Karim-Rhoades encourages them to believe anything is possible. "Nursing is really a gateway for you to be able to affect change in a lot of different ways," she says. "It's not one set way for nursing, which I think is beautiful. I truly believe that my nursing degree is what helped me be a better leader, because I'm viewing things in a different, more holistic way."

# UArizona Nursing Hosts Fifth Graders from **ANNA LAWRENCE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL** for Interprofessional Community Engagement Event

On March 17, the University of Arizona College of Nursing hosted 30 fifth graders from Anna Lawrence Intermediate School for an engaging session of learning and fun. This was achieved thanks to the planning and coordination of UArizona Native American Initiative Office and the collaboration of UArizona Health Sciences colleges. Assistant Clinical Professor Timian Godfrey, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, and José Muñoz, Ed.D, Former UArizona Nursing's Senior Professional, Diversity Equity and Inclusion jumped on this opportunity after Dr. Godfrey received feedback at a conference asking for more community involvement from UArizona College of Nursing.

"It really got us thinking about what we're doing across our community in terms of getting involved in K-12 outreach," Dr. Muñoz says. "We want to educate and inspire our future students about what the nursing field has to offer and introduce them to the many possibilities that are available in this profession."

The event was success and are planning on doing more outreach and engagement within our community and would ideally like to do something were UArizona Nursing will engage in every semester.

## **What kinds of activities did the students engage in?**

Each Health Sciences college had its own activities. Here within the College of Nursing, we had five activities. They got to put on gowns and gloves and take pictures in front of the nursing backdrop. They had hands-on experience with the baby mannequins, learning how to put a diaper on and how to swaddle the baby. They also got to learn how to use a stethoscope, which the students got to keep. We had an eye exam station, which was a lot of fun. They also received a tour of the Steele Innovative Learning Center (SILC), where they learned from nursing students from our Community Health class how to become a nurse that goes above and beyond.

## **What kinds of reactions did you see from the students?**

They loved each activity! It was really cool to see the students putting on gowns and gloves. They were so into it, maybe because they got to see the possibilities of what it might feel like to be a nurse. Our nursing students did an amazing job of facilitating these activities and without them, these activities wouldn't have been a possibility.

### What was your biggest takeaway from this event?

The importance of community engagement and of outreach in nursing education, which plays a critical role in how we address the nursing workforce shortage. Although these are fifth graders, we can continue to inspire future generations about this profession. It's so important for us to work with local communities and help them see themselves inside spaces like UArizona Nursing. It's a small step toward a common goal, which is to create different pathways and access to education at our college.

### You do many events with college-age and high-school students. What was it like working with a much younger audience?

I was reminded of how much energy these fifth graders have. They have so many questions! They're in an age of exploration, so they really want to try everything. It's a reminder of how important it is to start early as far as building those pathways and exposing them to opportunities like this.

### What's most important about doing this kind of work in the community?

As we look toward the future of health care, it's increasingly clear to me that we need a more diverse and inclusive nursing workforce to meet the needs of our diverse communities. By partnering with local schools and community organizations, we can introduce young people to the many pathways and opportunities available within the nursing and healthcare professions.

As a college, and as part of UArizona Health Sciences, we need to collaborate to break down barriers and mental models that may be preventing some of these students from pursuing these careers. Inviting them to our campuses to see themselves in these roles is just one piece of the puzzle when it comes to building the future nursing workforce that we desperately need. It's important that we engage with young people and inspire them to pursue nursing as a career because we can help create a brighter future for both the nursing profession and the communities that we serve. Together we can make a real difference in the lives of these young people and the future of healthcare.



# New Faculty Profile: Get to know **LATEEFAH COLLINGWOOD PHD, NNP**

Meet University of Arizona College of Nursing Assistant Clinical Professor Lateefah Collingwood, PhD, NNP, who joined the college last semester. Originally from the U.S. Virgin Islands, Dr. Collingwood earned her nursing degree at the University of the Virgin Islands School of Nursing before getting her master's in education from Florida State University, her master's in nursing at Northern Arizona University and her PhD from the University of Phoenix. She moved to Tucson in 1993 to join a neonatal practice as a Nurse Practitioner (NP) and has called the Old Pueblo home ever since. A dual passion for education and nursing has fueled her career journey, leading to years of experience both at the bedside and in the classroom – and a unique perspective on the importance of compassionate care.

## **What drew you to a career in nursing?**

I always knew that I was going to work in the health care field. At first wanted to be a doctor, but I ended up going to nursing school and then nurse practitioner school. My draw was always to help people. I always feel like a nurturer in some way and so that was the field that aligned with my way of being.



## **What led you to your work in higher education?**

In college I did a dual major because I always liked education. I did a nursing major, but I took education classes from the beginning all the way through grad school. When I worked as a nurse and then an NP, I did a lot of training within the hospital and moved my way up to work as the hospital's education director.

## **Tell us about your passion for teaching.**

I really like to bring students to the 'Aha' moment. Working in nursing, it's so important to be passionate about developing new nurses, especially with the nursing shortage that we continually face. We need people who are interested in developing the workforce of the future. I tell my college students in the hospital, 'One day, I'm going to be on the other side of the bedrail, and I want to make sure that the person that I'm looking up at knows what they're doing. When I look up I want to be able to just exhale.'



### **What is your teaching philosophy?**

My teaching/learning philosophy is centered around experiential learning, and it's based on the fact that it's a relationship that's born between the teacher and the learner. I believe that learning has to be active for it to stick. I love creating learning environments where students get engaged and where you can take them from total confusion to 'Oh, wow.'

### **How do you approach your role as a mentor?**

It depends on the student, of course, because you would like to meet the student where they are. I try to be the person that can meet the needs that the students have at the time and help them think a little bit more broadly. Sometimes it's just about being an ear that will listen to them and give them sound advice.

### **What are your research interests?**

I'm really interested in the transition of new nurses into the workforce. I'm also interested in patient safety. My dissertation was all about the perspectives of nursing leaders at all levels and their responsibility for keeping patients safe, but I want to spread that research out to nurses as well.

### **Can you tell us more about your dissertation?**

Working in a hospital setting for over 30 years, I was always baffled by the fact that we have so many strategies in place to keep patients safe and yet they still get injured. When it came time to engage in research, I wanted to find out what's happening at an initial level and then dig deeper later to find out what's really happening. I started with the people that were responsible for the unit just to get a sense of how they think about things. Who do they think owns safety?

I expected to find that the leaders would say it's the responsibility of nurses at the bedside, but I did a qualitative study and what I found was that there was mutuality. They thought that every person that encounters a patient has some responsibility for keeping that patient safe. As leaders, they acknowledged that they believe we all share responsibility. However, we work in a very complex system with a lot of variables. While we're all in agreement about patient safety, there are a lot of other factors that prevent us from being successful. The next phase of my research will be to discover whether nurses feel the same way that the leaders do. I want to know how nurses view their responsibilities for nursing for keeping patients safe in their care environment.

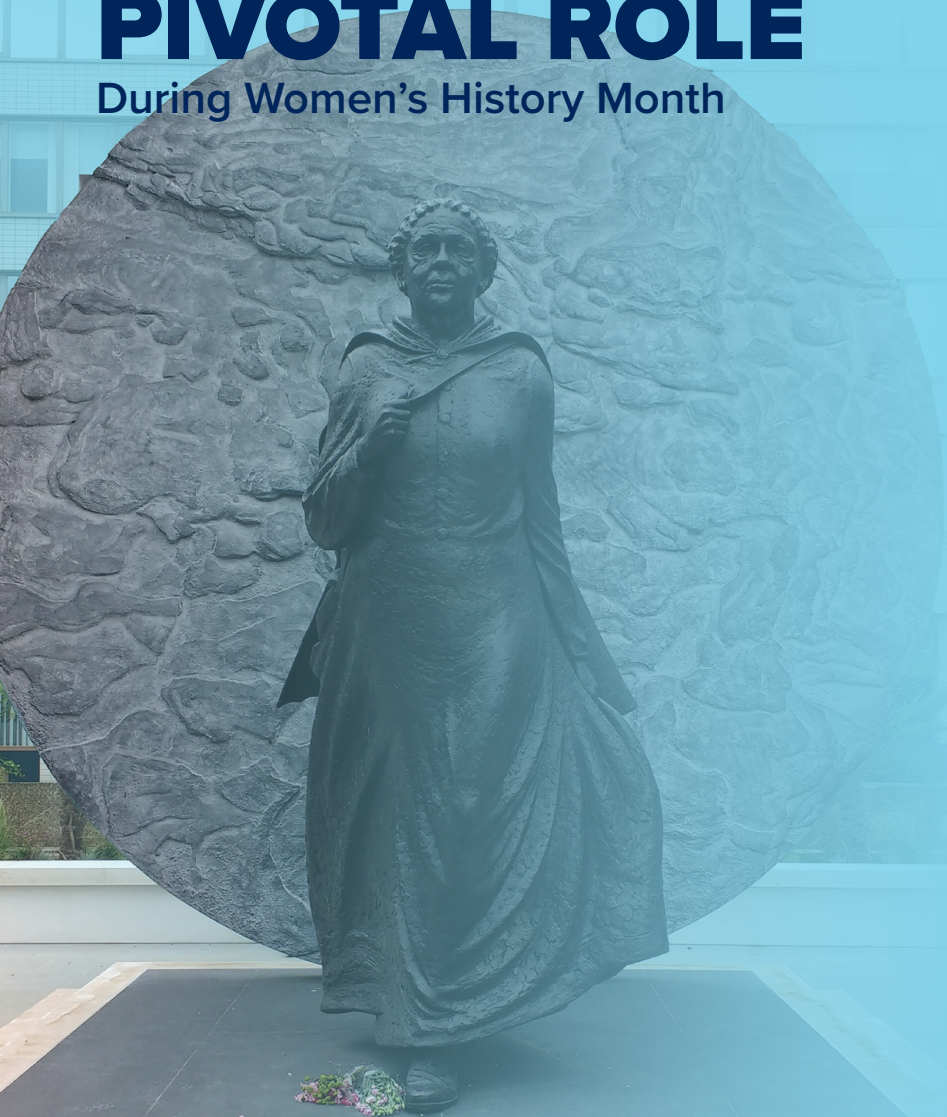
### **What advice do you have for students considering entering the nursing field?**

When I encounter new students, I always talk to them about their purpose. I tell them that number one, you have to like people. Because you're caring for people in their most vulnerable state. They don't feel well. They're coming into a hospital setting with strangers, so you're going to do things for them that they used to be able to do for themselves. We must approach nursing and healthcare in general from a place of empathy. You have to be able to meet them where they are and help them feel special because your job is to help them heal. I tell students 'We're not dealing with things; we're dealing with people.' There's a human being on the other side of every decision we make, every short cut we take. When we excel, there's a human being on the other side of that excellent care that we give. Everything we do impacts a human being. We may not know them. They might be just Mr. Jones in Bed Two to us but there might be a sister, a child, a grandchild, a wife that's very worried about them, so we need to look at the whole patient and do things for the patient as a whole being and not just give a shot or change a dressing.

UArizona Nursing Professors Reflect on

# NURSES PIVOTAL ROLE

During Women's History Month



MARY SEACOLE  
Nurse of the Crimean War  
1805-1881

...and nurses  
on whatever distant shore  
task no higher or greater privilege

When it was established in 1978, Women's History Week had modest ambitions: highlight women's contributions to American history, culture, and society during the days surrounding March 8, Women's History Day. In the years since, a week deservedly grew to a full month commemorating and encouraging the study, observance, and celebration of the vital role of women in American history.

The contributions of women to the field of nursing – which stretches back well before the creation of nurse education programs in the mid-1800s – is one facet of women's history that warrants celebration. In that spirit we reached out to several of our faculty members to hear their thoughts on this important celebration regarding the field of nursing.

"As we celebrate Women's History Month, I reflect on the women who worked diligently to advance the nursing profession through the years, and I celebrate the journey of nursing as a profession," ~ Lateefah Collingwood, PhD, NNP, Assistant Clinical Professor

**Lateefah Collingwood, PhD, NNP, Assistant Clinical Professor:**

Historically the practice of nursing was primarily conducted by women. As we celebrate Women's History Month, I reflect on the women who worked diligently to advance the nursing profession through the years, and I celebrate the journey of nursing as a profession. During this month, I look retrospectively with gratitude to Florence Nightingale for being the nursing pioneer that she was, and for her contributions which include but are not limited to sanitation and infection prevention measures and the advancement of formalized nursing education.

As a person of color and in this era of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, I celebrate the nurses of color who may not be widely known in history and who may have been less celebrated. Mary Seacole, a British-Jamaican nurse of the 1800s who started "The British Hotel" in Crimea to care for wounded and sick soldiers. Harriet Tubman who served as a nurse during the Civil War and who later started a care home for elderly and indigent people of color in the early 1900s. Susie Walking Bear Yellowtail, who was the first Indigenous person in the U.S. to earn a nursing degree. Marcella LeBeau, who was a volunteer in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps during World War II and a founding member of the North American Indian Women's Association. Ildaura Murillo-Rohde, who founded the National Association of Hispanic Nurses. Mary Mahoney, who was the first black woman to earn a professional nursing license in the U.S. and who was an advocate for increased access to nursing education. Virginia Sneed Dixon, who was the first Cherokee nurse to serve overseas. Adah Belle Thoms, who lobbied for black nurses to serve in the American Red Cross and the Army Nurse Corps during the first world war. Hazel Johnson-Brown, who was the first black chief of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps and the first black female Brigadier General. There are so many more, too numerous to mention.

As a nurse, I celebrate Nurse Scientists for the practice knowledge that they provide, Nurse Theorists for providing our theoretical foundations and frameworks, nursing professors and instructors for continually educating and developing the nursing workforce, through Nurse Leaders who guide and lead nurses, and all the nurses who have cared and who continue to care for patients in hospitals and in a variety of settings.

Nursing through the years has been transformed in many ways. As we celebrate Women's History Month and the numerous female nurses in history, it is important to recognize that the nursing profession has become a multi gendered, multi racial, multiethnic, and multi cultured profession. The profession today is made up not only of women but of a collection of diverse nurses who are committed to caring for the sick, to promoting wellness, developing knowledge, sharing knowledge, teaching, leading, growing, innovating, standing against inequities, and blazing the trail forward.



**Elise Erickson, PhD, MSN, BSN**  
**Assistant Professor:**

As a scientist, this month is about standing on the shoulders of giants who had to work twice as hard to just have a seat at the table. For example, as a researcher who uses genetic tools in my work, I was struck by the omission of the mention of Rosalind Franklin by a recent NPR report on the anniversary of the discovery of the double helix DNA structure -- initially credited to James Watson & Francis Crick, Nobel Prize in 1962. Franklin's discoveries informed the work that make my work possible today. Given that Franklin died at only at 37 from ovarian cancer also gives me pause, knowing that this aggressive disease remains a mystery to treat in early stages decades later. It makes me think about UArizona's own Bio 5 Director Dr. Jennifer Barton, who is innovating the early treatment of ovarian cancer with advanced endoscopic technology. I have no doubt Dr. Barton will one day join the ranks of science giants guiding future researchers in solving female health issues and helping to keep the future Rosalind Franklin's of the world alive to see their work change the world.



**Jessica Rainbow, PhD, RN  
Assistant Professor:**

Nursing has long been thought of as a female profession and provided professional opportunities for many to advance their educations and livelihoods. As nursing moves to be a more inclusive profession that reflects the communities we serve and improves health outcomes for all, we must continue to invest in and empower nurses. During women's history month, I am reflecting on my role as a mentor. As a mentor at the University of Arizona College of Nursing, I have had the great privilege of mentoring 27 students over the last five years. Most of these students have been women. My goal as a mentor is to help students identify their future professional and personal goals and support them in getting the experiences they will need to be successful in achieving those goals. Mentoring the next generation of nurse scientists and clinicians is my favorite part of my work, and I am continuously impressed by the impact these former students are making in patient care, education, and research.



**Meghan Skiba, PhD, MPH, MS, BS  
Assistant Professor:**

As an assistant professor in the College of Nursing, during this Women's History Month, I acknowledge the legacies of women before me who blazed the trail I now walk. Nurses are innovators in healthcare and are leaders that inspire the next generation of women and challenge the status quo. Highlighting the work of women in the nursing profession, through research and practice, is promoting population health.

# UArizona Nursing ANCAT Students Share College's Unique Approach to **STUDENT DIVERSITY** at 2022 GlobalMindED Conference

In June, when the annual GlobalMindED Conference was held in Denver, CO, 11 students and five faculty from the UArizona College of Nursing's HRSA-funded Arizona Nursing Career Apex Transitions (ANCAT) program were there to share their success building a pathway toward a more diversified nursing workforce.

Geared toward improving access to education, employment, and economic mobility for first generation college students, poverty-affected, and minoritized students hardest hit by COVID, GlobalMindED was the perfect forum for UArizona Nursing to share its success story.

"It was a transformative experience, both for the faculty involved and for the students," says Assistant Clinical Professor Timian Godfrey, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, one of the faculty members who accompanied the students. "The GlobalMindED Conference is unique because it looks at health equity through a broader lens that includes the commercial space, K-12, as well as policy."





Diversity is a core value of UArizona Nursing, exemplified by the ANCAT program, which supports students with backgrounds that include American Indian/Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian, Hispanic/Latino, first generation college and/or graduate students, and students raised in a rural area and/or along the Mexican-American border. Additionally, the College's Indians in Nursing: Career Advancement and Transition Scholars (INCATS) program is a five-year project aimed at increasing the number of BSN and advanced practice Native American nurses who will practice in tribal facilities. It creates new pathways for Associate Degree nurses to advance their careers and build new tribal-academic-practice collaborations that expand the Native American nursing workforce prepared to improve care of Native populations.

UArizona Nursing's participation in the GlobalMindED Conference was part of this year's summer intensive, a six-week program geared toward helping students develop an academic identity as well as strengthen their professional identity.

Dr. Godfrey and her colleagues were thrilled to provide the students with their very first academic conference. "I did not have the opportunity to attend my first academic conference until I was a doctoral student," she says. "It was in that arena that I got to network and meet people from other areas and other backgrounds, which broadened my perspective of what I could do and the impact it could have. To be able to provide the chance for pre-licensure and undergrad students to participate in an academic conference was a unique opportunity to help them envision themselves and what their potential could be, and hopefully cultivate and strengthen those identities."

Students from the ANCAT program participate year-round in professional development and support activities, which makes them eligible to attend Summer Intensive. At GlobalMindED, they were able to disseminate their experiences to a wider audience, sharing interventions and strategies championed by UArizona Nursing such as holistic admissions, holistic retention, proactive mentoring, and cohort building. "We've found these strategies effective in our college and any time we present at national conferences there's a lot of interest that arises from that," Dr. Godfrey says. "It's motivation for us to continue to improve and build upon what we've already done. What we see is that we are forerunners in nursing education when it comes to supporting and cultivating a more diverse workforce."

Dr. Godfrey and her colleagues see it as vital that the College shares its experience. "UArizona Nursing is one institution out of hundreds of schools," she says. "If we really want to make an impact on the representation of the diversity of our nursing workforce then we must disseminate, we have to publish, and we have to present. But what was also great about this presentation is that we involved students in it. We were able to share what we're doing and hopefully collaborate and learn to improve our efforts but also give students an opportunity to engage and be a part of that process."

Angela Acuna, a Tucson Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) student, served as a panelist on UArizona Nursing's presentation. A member of the Tohono O'odham Nation, Acuna was introduced to the ANCAT and INCATS programming in her first semester. She feels that the program – which she likens to a close-knit family – has allowed her to network with her peers and has introduced her to a variety of opportunities to provide care for underserved populations. Her number one goal is to work in her community post-graduation. "At GlobalMindED, I was part of a panel with UArizona faculty that looked at the minority aspects in the health care setting for being a health care professional," she says. "As a student nurse, I was able to share my story of resiliency, as well as the challenges and struggles I've been through, and what I've learned from it."

For Acuna, participating in the conference was also a transformative experience. "To me, it was taking a step forward in the right direction in seeing the positive things we as minorities can do," she says, noting that she hoped to guide younger generations of Native American nursing students away from the kinds of problems she encountered during her nursing journey. "I don't want them to struggle like I did. I want to see where a curriculum could be tailored to address more of the minority experience."

ANCAT scholar Kayla Cooper, a first-generation college student from Phoenix, was also wowed by her time at the GlobalMindED conference. "It was inspiring how like-minded and how progressive all of the individuals were who were sitting at the table," she says. "It was really cool to sit in a room with such a diverse audience."

Cooper learned about issues of health equity surrounding mental health care and gained a new perspective about her path in the nursing field. She found it eye-opening to learn more about the kinds of patients she would be working with post-graduation and was inspired for the future. "Being able to take all this information away, confident about my ability to apply it in a clinical setting, is the most invaluable thing I'm going to take away from college. The conference really supported that and was able to help me see a lot of new things I hadn't been able to see before, especially in Arizona."



Aware of the valuable developmental experiences academic conferences give to students like Acuna and Cooper, Dr. Godfrey hopes to continue offering such opportunities in the future. When the Western Institute of Nursing (WIN) holds its annual conference in Tucson next year, she plans to bring a new crop of undergrads. For her, it's all about getting the word out about what health care, as a system, can do to help decrease barriers, to increase support systems, and to make the links between the University, the community, and public policy stronger.

“Working in nursing education and knowing that we have a profession and workforce in crisis exacerbated by COVID-19, it’s easy to get discouraged,” she says. “But seeing the light in these students’ eyes and watching their thought processes shift toward a bigger purpose, is motivating. It’s inspiring for me to continue to do what I can to help with various issues plaguing our nation’s health care system.”



*The ANCAT project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$2,219,204 with 0% financed with non-governmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government.*

*For more information, please visit [HRSA.gov](https://www.hrsa.gov)*

# Alumni Spotlight: **NICOLE VIENNEAU MSN, RN, NC-BC**



***Tell us where you are originally from and what brought you to the UArizona College of Nursing?***

I was born in Canada and am a proud naturalized American citizen now. About 15 years ago my husband and I lived in Tucson and we loved it! We had to move to Texas, and since I've always felt connected to this amazing city, I kept tabs on it and the University of Arizona. When I was looking to pursue my master's in nursing, it was a no-brainer to do it with the UofA College of Nursing!

***What did you think of your experience at the College of Nursing?***

I enjoyed my online education. There were many modalities for learning and even as a remote student, I always felt connected since we had many group learnings, group assignments and ways to stay engaged. I even traveled from Texas to attend my graduation in person! THAT was a blast- to connect face to face and heart to heart with Nurses from all over the country that I'd only met online was magical!

***Do you remember your favorite classes or faculty members?***

I remember Cheri Lacasse always being willing and open to answering all my questions. She was kind and caring, and I appreciated her willingness to help.

***What did you do in your career right after UArizona?***

I'm a Nurse Entrepreneur, so I use my MSN to give me more street credentials and to give myself more confidence. The courses in the program applied to real-life scenarios and support my work as an Integrative Nurse Coach in my COMMUNITY.

***What are you doing today?***

I feel blessed, because I wake up and do exactly what I want to do each day!

I'm the Owner of Restoration Room, PLLC in Tucson, AZ! Restoration Room is a sanctuary for Tucson's midlife women and Nurses, offering a holistic approach to self-discovery, well-being, and health. Through a supportive community, we embark on a journey of self-awareness, embracing self-care, self-responsibility, and spirituality. A diverse range of modalities, including group and private coaching, Reiki, Healing Touch, sound healing, and movement classes, empower women to nurture their minds, bodies, and spirits. Restoration Room fosters a transformative environment where women can learn, grow, and rediscover their inner vitality.

I host a podcast called Integrative Nurse Coaches in ACTION! Which shares inspirational stories from Nurses who are shifting the paradigm of disease care to HEALTH care through the art and science of Nurse Coaching.

I'm co-author of the book Letters to a Future Nurse which shares raw and real stories by Nurses to bring hope to new and seasoned Nurses across the globe.

I also get to lead wellness initiatives and use my Integrative Nurse Coaching skills with Nurses and New Nurse Residency Nurses at a few different hospital systems in Tucson, AZ.

I love to speak at conferences and share tips, tools and concepts to enhance wellness and self-care.

***What is your greatest passion?***

I LOVE supporting women to find their personal success, vitality, and strength (mentally, spiritually, and physically). I have been blessed with enough energy to love on many women through my life, and I plan to continue to do that all the days of my life. Oh! And cats too. Ha-ha!

***What advice do you have for current students?***

You know more than you think! It's OK to pause and ask your inner voice to help you- this is your intuition and the unique wisdom that only you know because of your life experiences coupled with your education. It's also OK to ask for help. We are so much stronger when we're together!

***What advice do you have for nurses?***

Stop giving of yourself till you have nothing left. You must give as freely to yourself with love, compassion, and kindness, just as you do to your patients. No one will care for you, except yourself. Stop waiting and wishing someone will do that thing, say those words, or give you something... you've got to stand up and go for what you need right now! I believe in you and all you are capable of. You are brilliant, wise, and wonderful.

***Knowing what you know now, what would you tell your younger self?***

Stay filled with joy. Be yourself always. Say no more often. Say yes to things that scare you. Tell your family and friends you love them every chance you get. Quit the job that is not fulfilling your soul. Create the things you wish existed because you can!

***If you could talk with anyone (living or deceased), whom would it be and why?***

I would like to spend more time with my grandmother, my Memere. My Memere had over 10 strokes in her life, which left her with left sided paralysis and aphasia. She couldn't speak. I spent many summers with her helping her as a young girl, and although she couldn't speak, we found our own special way of communicating with each other. It was filled with love. She passed into heaven when I was young, so I would like to hear what her voice sounded like and listen to all her wisdom and teachings. I do know she's with me in my heart and spirit now because I feel her presence in and around me every day!



# Wildcat Nurse Spotlight: **ENOCH FAITH GIDEON,** Tucson BSN Student



As a high school student in Hyderabad, India, Enoch Faith Gideon developed a keen interest in anatomy and physiology. He spent his summers volunteering in medical camps, working primarily with elderly patients dealing with diabetes and hypertension.

“This experience fueled my passion for health sciences,” Enoch says. “I observed a lot of nurses and saw that, compared to other health care professionals, they spend the most time with their patients.” He saw the career as a great way to have a direct impact on patients in difficult times.

When he graduates during spring convocation on May 11, Enoch will enter the profession bolstered by the valuable skills he has learned in the University of Arizona College of Nursing Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program. In addition to the professional competencies he developed through his studies, he enters the workforce with a strong background of community involvement, leadership, and the importance of health equity – all core qualities for a Wildcat Nurse.

**“I was inspired by the limitless potential to make a difference in the lives of others. With the support of professors, peers, and the wildcat community, I’m confident that I will be able to realize the potential to become the best nurse I can be”**

*~ Enoch Faith Gideon, Tucson BSN Student*

**Can you tell us a bit about your extracurricular activities in the BSN program?**

I had a lot of opportunities to showcase my abilities. During my sophomore year I was selected as a preceptor for one of the microbiology introductory courses. This allowed me to assume a leadership role and share my knowledge with students. I also volunteered at a COVID-19 vaccine drive-thru on the university campus. That was an exciting time because it provided me with multiple opportunities to work closely with the Tucson community and promote health through primary prevention. I also worked with the disabled population, assisting them with accessing healthcare. From these experiences, I gained a greater appreciation for public health nurses and the impact they have on our community.

### **Why did you choose UArizona Nursing To pursue your studies?**

I went on a College of Nursing tour where I learned about all the resources that were available to equip students to excel as future nurses. The BSN program is one of the best in the country. It has a curriculum that is well-constructed, and it includes 1,000 clinical hours during the program. Personally, I enjoy hands-on learning. The program offers a lot of simulation activities where we were able to work with clinical equipment and practice our skills to get a view of being in a hospital. On top of that, the college has a lot of clinical rotations in different types of settings, from rehab centers to Intensive Care Units, so it gave me a good understanding of how nursing is in real life. The learning opportunities and experiences I got from these rotations are unmatched.

### **What are your biggest takeaways from time in BSN program?**

The program focuses a lot on evidence-based practice, which is very important in providing high-quality care. As nurses and as healthcare providers, we should equip ourselves to research the latest evidence-based practices to improve patient care. The other biggest takeaway is understanding the importance of patient-centered care. I saw during my clinical rotations that sometimes, even though health care workers try to provide patient-centered care, that can be overlooked. As nurses, it's very important to understand that from diagnosis to treatment we need to keep the patient's goals and needs in mind to provide the best care they need.

### **Do you have any advice for students who are considering following in your footsteps?**

Nursing school is challenging, but it is not impossible. As long as we find the right balance between school and personal life, nursing school will be fun. Sometimes, clinical rotations, classes, and exams are challenging. However, with self-care it can be made possible. Especially as future nurses, self-care is very important because we need to take care of ourselves to be able to take care of our patients. I would also recommend finding a group of friends to work together and share the workload -- that benefits the students in nursing school, but it also benefits their future, because nursing is all about teamwork.



### **What are your post-graduation plans?**

I completed my fourth semester 5-week preceptorship in Banner in a post critical care unit. This experience was great and I want to continue working on that unit and gain some experience. After that, I'd like to move on to a cardiovascular ICU with more intensity and more acuity where I can broaden my scope of practice. Then I want to practice as a RN for a few years, with an end goal of earning my Doctor of Nursing Practice and become an acute care nurse practitioner.

### **What does it mean to you to be a Wildcat Nurse?**

As a wildcat nursing student, I'm very grateful to be a part of a program that prioritizes my growth as a future nurse. The program is designed to equip me with knowledge, skills, and clinical experience that will help me excel in this field. What truly sets this program apart is the intensive community that it fosters. I'm surrounded by fellow students who share my passion for healthcare and who are equally committed to make a positive impact on the world.

Over the course of my time here, I have had the pleasure of making some truly meaningful connections. These are the kinds of friendships that go beyond small talk. We laughed together, we supported each other during difficult times, and shared our unique experiences and perspectives with each other. It makes it easier to pursue your goals when you are in a community of like-minded individuals who you can lean on for guidance and motivation.

I would also say that this program constantly reminded me of the responsibility that comes with being a nurse. I was inspired by the limitless potential to make a difference in the lives of others. With the support of professors, peers, and the wildcat community, I'm confident that I will be able to realize the potential to become the best nurse I can be.



# Alumni Connections



Did you know we have over **9,700 alums** all around the world?  
So you don't need to live in Tucson to participate!

All UArizona College of Nursing alums are automatically members of our Alumni Council. There are no fees, just the opportunity to network with fellow alums and support current students.

**For more information visit**

<https://www.nursing.arizona.edu/alumni>

**or contact**

**Tanya Welch,**  
**Alumni and Donor Relations**  
**Coordinator**

[tanyawelch@arizona.edu](mailto:tanyawelch@arizona.edu)

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

**College of Nursing**



# ARIZONA COLLEGE OF NURSING RANKS 13TH among Public Institutions in NIH Funding Recipients



*NIH awarded College of Nursing professors, including Dean Brian Ahn, PhD, APRN, ANP-BC, FAAN, Judith Gordon, PhD, Terry Badger, PhD, RN, PMHCNS-BC, FAPOS, FAAN, Kathleen C. Insel, PhD, RN, Elise Erickson, CNM, FACNM, Thaddeus Pace, PhD, Rina Fox, PhD, MPH, and Aleeca Bell, PhD, RN, CNM.*

In 2023, the University of Arizona College of Nursing achieved significant recognition, securing the 13th position among public universities and the 19th position overall among nursing schools in National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding, as reported by the Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research (BRIMR). The College of Nursing obtained approximately \$5.02 million in funding during the fiscal year 2023, marking a notable increase from \$3.73 million in the fiscal year 2022. This signifies a \$1.28 million increase in grants compared to the previous year, reflecting a remarkable growth of 34%.

“I extend my sincere gratitude to the faculty and staff whose dedication and efforts have led to this significant accomplishment for our college. I would like to express special appreciation for the invaluable contributions of Dr. Judith Gordon, serving as the Associate Dean for Research, and Dr. Terry Badger, in her capacity as the Director of Research Initiatives. Alongside the NIH grants, our faculty have also been successful in securing numerous non-NIH research and educational grants during the fiscal year 2023.” said Dean Hyochol Brian Ahn, PhD, APRN, ANP-BC, FAAN.

The recent rankings underscore the remarkable productivity of our faculty and highlight the significance of their research and scholarship in advancing health and well-being nationwide. Faculty members at the College of Nursing are engaged in pioneering interdisciplinary research and scholarship endeavors aimed at elevating healthcare delivery, enhancing health outcomes, tackling health equity issues, and addressing the nursing shortage.

Below are brief synopses of the projects and researchers that received NIH funding in 2023:

PI	Grant #	Project Title
Hyochol Ahn	R01NR019051	Combination Therapy of Home-based Trans-cranial Direct Current Stimulation and Mindfulness-based Meditation for Self-management of Clinical Pain and Symptoms in Older Adults With Knee Osteoarthritis
Judith Gordon	R01AT011500	Testing the Efficacy of A Scalable, Telephone-Delivered, Guided Imagery Tobacco Cessation Intervention
Terry Badger	R01CA263714	Adaptive Symptom Self-Management to Reduce Psychological Distress and Improve Symptom Management for Survivors on Immune Checkpoint Inhibitors
Kathleen Insel	R01NR020261	Digital Technology to Support Adherence to Hypertension Medications for Older Adults with Mild Cognitive Impairment
Elise Erickson	R00NR019596	The Clock is Ticking: Epigenetic Age Acceleration as a Biomarker of Uterine Function in Pregnancy
Elise Erickson	R01HD111125	Oxytocin sensitivity and postpartum hemorrhage: testing genetic and epigenetic biomarkers for improving maternal morbidity
Thaddeus Pace	R01CA264047	Leveraging social connection by including informal caregivers in an internet video conference-based compassion meditation intervention to reduce psychological distress in breast cancer survivors
Thaddeus Pace	R21OH012386	Reducing Psychological Distress in Fire Fighters with an Asynchronous App-based Meditation Intervention
Rina Fox	K08CA247973	Improving sleep in gynecologic cancer survivors
Aleeca Bell	R01NR018828	A Randomized Controlled Trial to Improve Mother-Infant Synchrony Among Women with Childhood Adversity



**Public  
#13**

**Overall  
#19**

## NIH Funding Ranking

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**Blue Ridge Institute of Medical Research**

**93%**

**MEPN NCLEX Pass Rates  
- Arizona State Board of  
Nursing 2022 Pass Rate**

**#31**

**Doctor of Nursing Practice  
Program in the U.S. - US News  
and World Report 23-24**



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