



GATEWAY TO HEALTH

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DR. SHANE NEELY-SMITH
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING & HEALTH SCIENCES



As I reflect back almost two years ago, I humbly, and yet boldly, accepted the position of Executive Director for the Department of Nursing and Health Sciences (DN&HS) here at Florida Gateway College (FGC). When I accepted the position, I was fully aware of the challenges that faced the Department and I knew that I had the solutions to overcome these challenges and lead the Departmental programs to success.

I accepted the position because of my vision for the Department. I envision high quality, educated faculty, staff and students/graduates who demonstrate professionalism, caring and compassion. I envision our Nursing and Health Sciences programs as one of the most sought after, equitable programs in the U.S. I envision our graduates making up at least 90 percent of the workforce needs in our surrounding communities and that our licensure rate would be no less than 98 percent consistently among all of our Nursing & Health Sciences Programs.

As a result, I worked with faculty and staff to develop a mission for the DN&HS that is congruent with that of FGC's: our Departmental mission is to provide high quality and affordable nursing and healthcare programs that will produce highly educated, caring and compassionate graduates, who will meet the workforce needs within our local and surrounding communities, while making a lifetime commitment to continuous education.

I knew that in order to realize our mission, I had to plant "seeds of greatness." These seeds were planted

so that they could bear four (4) Pillars of principles to guide our Department: A Culture of Excellence, Culture of Caring, Culture of Safety and Culture of Inclusiveness. These guiding principles will help us reap the fruits of our five (5) Departmental goals related to Student Success; Faculty/Staff and Students' engagement in lifelong learning; Strong Relationships with Clinical Partners; Expanded Program Offerings; and Increased Program Accessibility.

After one year in office, like the entire world, we too were hit with the Covid-19 pandemic. The crisis of Covid-19 brought with it many challenges for all educational institutions and their programs, but additional challenges for Nursing and some Health Sciences programs. These additional challenges were due to mandatory clinicals and laboratory hours needed for program completion. Challenges included, but were not limited to temporary loss of on-ground clinical sites; sudden needs to switch to online teaching including virtual clinicals and labs; issues with curriculum supplements related to remote testing; maintenance of online testing security and integrity; balancing College mandates with professional/accreditation mandates; student and faculty issues with connectivity and technical devices among others.

It is important to note, however, that the challenges brought on by Covid-19 coupled with the initial challenges I embraced when I took the position, created a great opportunity for me to steer the changes within our Department. Furthermore, these challenges sparked

many opportunities for innovation and creativity among our faculty, staff and students.

With the continuous support of College Administration, our NCLEX-RN scores continue to increase; we have ongoing faculty development activities to promote their pedagogy and student engagement; we have dedicated and proactive student advisement by faculty and a robust testing and remediation program by faculty and a dedicated coordinator, which is showing promising results; our students are demonstrating professional behavior and are accepting accountability for their actions; our students are provided with more academic support to enhance their learning; we are seeing some growth in select programs; we are meeting more frequently with our clinical partners outside of our biannual advisory meetings to keep them abreast of our activities and to learn how best to meet their needs; we have most of our positions filled in our Health Science programs and plans are in place to have the last two (2) positions filled early in the spring 2021 semester; we have had our first faculty of the year awards (2019-2020): Dr. Melissa Davis (full-time) and Ms. Joanna Nolte (part-time) and we are proud to release our inaugural biannual Departmental Newsletter.

I am proud to say that amid Covid-19, we have had many favorable changes and we know that our Departmental programs will continue to excel and achieve their goals as we realize the Department's mission.

Sincerely,

Dr. Neely-Smith

EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION FOR HEALTH SCIENCE STUDENTS



EHR ON THE RISE

by Dr. Deborah O'Hearn

The COVID-19 pandemic has provided every healthcare educator the challenge to strategically explore innovative and affordable learning experiences for their students. Whether nursing, health information technology (HIT), or physical therapist assistant (PTA), faculty are looking for affordable tools that will help their face-to-face and virtual students develop clinical skills.

To accomplish this, Dr. Deborah O'Hearn collaborated with Kevin Cummings, a nurse educator in Virginia, to expand upon his original version of an Excel-based electronic health record (EHR). Taking the original format and converting it to a useable FGC-EHR for all of our Nursing and Health Sciences students has been a major undertaking over the past summer. These efforts resulted in a free product for FGC faculty and students to use to help improve documentation, interprofessional collaboration, understanding of health informatics, and clinical judgment.

This malleable EHR is used by health science students to practice patient-care note writing and to assist students in becoming more comfortable with locating vital patient care information within the electronic patient record. The FGC-EHR is currently being used by simulation faculty to create fictitious patient records that the students will use to extract emergent patient information from. This EHR is also used by HIT students when learning how to read through procedure findings and physician notes for coding purposes as well as PTA students needing to explore patient information and write patient care notes.

As a unique tool for Nursing and Health Sciences students, this innovative EHR has many possibilities for use in all health care training at FGC. COVID-19 has certainly pushed faculty to explore innovative and strategic opportunities to develop affordable learning experiences that expand student engagement and interprofessional collaboration. This new, no-cost FGC-EHR is a win-win for Nursing and Health Sciences students and faculty alike as we all move forward in training the next generation of healthcare professionals.

AN UPWARD TREND

New Programs Promote Improved NCLEX Scores
by Dr. Shelby Havens

Dr. Shelby Havens helps students succeed in adapting to classroom and program demands in all DN&HS programs. She provides individual and group academic support sessions that focus on test-taking strategies, study skills, time management, and course content review. Dr. Havens also collaborates with faculty to identify at-risk students and provides resources that support student success.

Additionally, Dr. Havens works with faculty and coordinators to ensure that DN&HS course exams are valid, reliable, and measure student and program learning outcomes. She reviews HESI and ATI test scores and works with nursing students to optimize their performance on standardized testing, which helps ensure success on the NCLEX licensure exam after graduation.

Dr. Havens recently facilitated implementation of the Virtual ATI (VATI) program to assist ASDN graduates with passing their NCLEX-RN exams. VATI is a 12-week NCLEX preparation review course that begins thirty days prior to graduation.

During VATI, each graduating ASDN student has access to an online coach who works with students to verify readiness for NCLEX success. At the end of the 12-week VATI enrollment period, students who are ready to pass NCLEX with a predictability of 98 percent will be given a "Green Light" to test. The VATI has been proven to increase the probability of NCLEX success.



Dr. Shelby Havens is the Testing & Remediation Coordinator for FGC's Department of Nursing and Health Sciences. She serves as a catalyst for licensure examination success and provides testing strategies to students. Contact Dr. Havens at shelby.havens@fgc.edu.

WOLVES MAKING A DIFFERENCE

STUDENT GOES THE EXTRA MILE

A HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

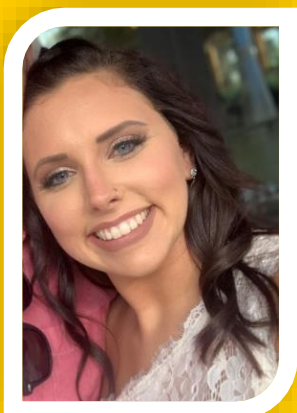
by Patricia Orender, MSN, RN

Spring Break 2020 was unlike any other as the world was impacted by COVID-19. Beach vacations, family trips and museum strolls were all of a sudden replaced with community-wide quarantines, invasive COVID tests, and disappointing trips to the grocery store. Meanwhile, FGC nursing faculty worked feverishly to transform their on-campus classes to a virtual format for students while Alison Martinez, a sophomore in the ASDN nursing program, put her sewing skills and Spring Break to excellent use.

At minimal costs, Alison constructed hundreds of masks and donated them to her local hospitals, CVS, and Walgreens pharmacies. While in her last semester of nursing school and during the crisis of COVID-19, Alison used her sewing talents to promote health in her community. Alison is now a proud spring 2020 graduate of the ASDN Program and currently works in Jacksonville as a Registered Nurse.



Alison Martinez, RN
Spring 2020 ASDN Graduate



Kathryn Smith,
Sophomore Health Information
Technology Student

COLLEGE LIFE SINCE COVID-19

by Kathryn Smith

COVID-19 has taken away a lot of things from us, but we won't let it take away our education. With FGC now offering 70% of their courses online to better serve our community and students, campus has been a little different this semester. Those who are required to come on campus at the Medical Technology Building (103) go through a check-in process to help ensure a safe and clean environment. Students must wear masks, adhere to social distancing, get their temperature taken, sanitize their hands, and receive an admission bracelet before they can walk into class.

One thing this pandemic has done is prove how necessary healthcare workers are. From nurses to physical therapists to billers and coders, we are all needed and can make a positive impact. With the constant advancement of healthcare technology, online classes are a good way for students to get out of their comfort zone, adapt to a new way of learning, and prepare for their future work that will be shaped by innovations in technology.

Everyone is asking the same question: *Will things ever go back to normal?* There is no solid answer at this moment, but we can promise to do our part in reducing the spread of germs and hopefully expediting the return to normalcy. Social distancing, the use of masks, hand washing and sanitizing have become priorities for each one of us. Let's stay safe, stay motivated, and continue on our journey to higher education.

Go Wolves!

STUDENTS ATTEND ANNUAL CONVENTION TO PROMOTE NURSING LEADERSHIP

by Kelcey McLean, 2019-2020 FNSA-FGC President, Spring 2020 ASDN Graduate

The 2019 Florida Nursing Student Association (FNSA) Annual Convention was a memorable and remarkable experience for myself and fellow FGC nursing students. For four days we retreated to Daytona Beach, FL to not only soak in the Florida sun, but to soak in the expertise of nursing industry leaders and professionals. I thoroughly enjoyed the convention and attended a variety of seminars that allowed me to strengthen and supplement my nursing education. We attended seminars on interviewing as well as nursing skills, and we participated in voting on resolutions that will further the practice of nurses both in Florida and nationally.

I am personally interested in emergency care. Therefore, when I saw that a seminar was being offered on emergency and trauma care by an experienced and well-known nurse, I was ecstatic! I attended two of his lectures and learned information that I continue to use today in the clinical setting.

Another session that I found beneficial was a class on the characteristics of strong leaders. These characteristics of leadership will follow me throughout my nursing career. Attending this lecture enabled me to utilize those skills and characteristics to become a better leader for my class and future co-workers.

As if everything provided by the convention wasn't rewarding enough, I was also able to form a better bond with my fellow officers. This bond has allowed for improved communication and teamwork that was initiated at the conference and continues now. Overall, I feel blessed to have attended the convention with such an awesome group. I highly encourage newer nursing students, as well as all interested in the nursing profession, to attend future conventions.

The Florida Nursing Student Association is a great source of networking opportunities and knowledge re-enforcement for students. For more information on getting involved in the Florida Gateway College Chapter of the FSNA, please contact Mrs. Kristeen Roberts at kristeen.roberts@fgc.edu.



Attending the Florida Nursing Student Association (FNSA) 2019 Annual Convention were, from left: Zoe Love, Lindsey Levings, Kelcey McLean, Amy McCray, Joni McKenna, Lindsey Fish, and Alison Martinez.

Healthy at Home

6 TIPS FOR STAYING HEALTHY WHILE WORKING FROM HOME

by Yuracy Salazar, MSN, BSN, RN



COVID-19 has brought about countless changes and challenges to our everyday routines. According to Nicholas Bloom, Economics Professor at Stanford University, "We see an incredible 42 percent of the U.S. labor force now working from home full-time." With this shift from corporate office to home office, sometimes health and wellness are put on the backburner. Be not dismayed! Here are six tips I've found helpful for staying mentally and physically healthy while working from home:

1. Keep work-life separate from home-life. Create healthy balances between work and home activities. Know when and how to "turn off" work mode.

2. Stay physically active. Find time to exercise at least 30 minutes per day. A quick jog or some creative exercises in the backyard can help boost mental and physical health.

3. Vitamins, please! A daily dose of essential nutrients helps to regenerate cells, fight off disease, and increases energy levels.

4. Stay hydrated. Certainly, Florida can get hot and humid. Making sure your hydration status is adequate is important for vital organ and tissue function.

5. Go to bed. It is recommended that we should get at least 6-8 hours of sleep per night. Getting adequate hours of sleep is important for your overall mental, physical, and emotional health.

6. Stay safe. When you finally get to leave the house, wear a mask, keep your distance, keep your hands away from your face, and sanitize often. Also, washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20-30 seconds is always best practice.

Stay happy, stay safe, and stay healthy, everyone!

References:
Wong, M. (2020, June 26). A snapshot of a new working-from-home economy. Retrieved September 07, 2020, from <https://news.stanford.edu/2020/06/29/snapshot-new-working-home-economy/>

DEPARTMENT OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES HONORS DISTINGUISHED FACULTY

AUGUST 13, 2020

Two Florida Gateway College (FGC) Department of Nursing and Health Sciences faculty are the proud recipients of the 2019-2020 Faculty of the Year Award. The Award was established to recognize full-time and adjunct faculty who have contributed significantly to the mission of Florida Gateway College and the Department of Nursing and Health Sciences. Recipients of the award demonstrated their excellence as educators over a sustained period of time. The full-time faculty awardee received a reserved parking space for one academic year, an honorary plaque, a \$500 check, and recognition at the DN&HS Faculty of the Year celebration. The adjunct faculty awardee received an honorary plaque and recognition at the DN&HS Faculty of the Year celebration.

Nominated faculty submitted reflection papers and supporting documentation demonstrating their Excellence in Teaching, Excellence in Service, Excellence in Professional Development, and Professionalism. Below are the honorees, Dr. Melissa Davis and Ms. Joanna Nolte.



Photo: Stephen Culloti

“Being awarded Faculty of the Year is a humbling experience, however, demonstrating excellence in educating our next generation of nurses is a commitment that I take very seriously. Being part of the Nursing and Health Sciences team here at FGC allows me to lock arms with some impressive talent whose goals align with mine in providing outstanding, student-centered education. It is a commitment of passion that allows me to serve others in a unique and impactful way.”

DR. MELISSA DAVIS, DNP, MSN, RN
2019-2020 FULL-TIME FACULTY OF THE YEAR

“Being honored by my peers for this award is meaningful to me as I admire my peer’s commitment to the nursing program and community as a whole. Many faculty are actively engaged in community volunteering. All faculty are committed to student’s growth and success. The FGC program is important for the health of Lake City and surrounding area. The FGC program provides a community legacy in nursing. I’m delighted to be part of such an outstanding team of instructors. Thank you for this honor.”

JOANNA NOLTE, APRN, MSN, ANP-BC, FNP-BC
2019-2020 ADJUNCT FACULTY OF THE YEAR



Photo: Stephen Culloti

RECENT DN&HS FACULTY GRADUATES CELEBRATE THEIR HARD-EARNED DEGREES

by Christa Pribble, Senior Staff Assistant

Embodying the spirit of lifelong learning, faculty members Emily Howell, Japera Denson, and Melissa Davis recently completed graduate degrees, adding expertise and knowledge to their roles at FGC.

In FGC’s Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) program, Emily Howell serves as both the Program Coordinator and Assistant Professor. She received her Master of Education in Science Education (M.Ed.) from the American College of Education. Emily said, “Acquiring this degree allows me to understand learning styles, educational theory and apply it to my classes.”

Japera Denson is an Assistant Professor for the Health Information Technology (HIT) program and is also the Program Coordinator for the HIT and Medical Coder/Biller programs. Japera received a Master of Business Administration degree (MBA) with a concentration in Health Care Management from Saint Leo University. She expressed, “I am so blessed to have completed this degree. It was exactly what I needed to propel me further in my academic and professional pursuits.”

Dr. Melissa Davis is an Assistant Professor for the Associate in Science Degree in Nursing (ASDN) program and she earned a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree (DNP) with an Emphasis on Nursing Education from Grand Canyon University. Melissa shared, “This was a personal goal, to complete my Doctorate and continue to work in Nursing Education. I would like to thank all of the faculty and staff that supported me and kept me in their thoughts and prayers throughout this process.”

The Department of Nursing and Health Sciences is proud to celebrate the hard work of our faculty who demonstrate continuous professional development and live the Culture of Excellence.

FGC DEPARTMENT OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Thank you to all of our clinical partners for your continued support of our students, programs, and College!



MISSION

The mission of the Department of Nursing and Health Sciences is to provide high quality and affordable nursing and healthcare programs that will produce highly educated, caring and compassionate graduates, who will meet the workforce needs within our local and surrounding communities, while making a lifetime commitment to continuous education.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

- Nursing, B.S. (RN-BSN)
- Registered Nursing, A.S. (ASDN-RN)
- LPN-RN Bridge: Traditional Full-Time
- LPN-RN Bridge: Fast Track
- Practical Nursing, O.C. (PN)
- Physical Therapist Assistant, A.S.
- Health Information Technology, A.S.
- Medical Coder/Biller, A.T.D.
- Phlebotomy, O.C.



DATES TO REMEMBER:

- December 3rd: ASDN and PN Pinning Ceremony
- December 8th, 10th, and 11th: Fall 2020 Commencements
- January 11th: Spring 2021 Classes Begin
- January 29th: PTA Advisory Committee Meeting

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