

EMORY

FALL 2019

# NURSING

## Next Generation PhD

*Meet the new nurse scientist*



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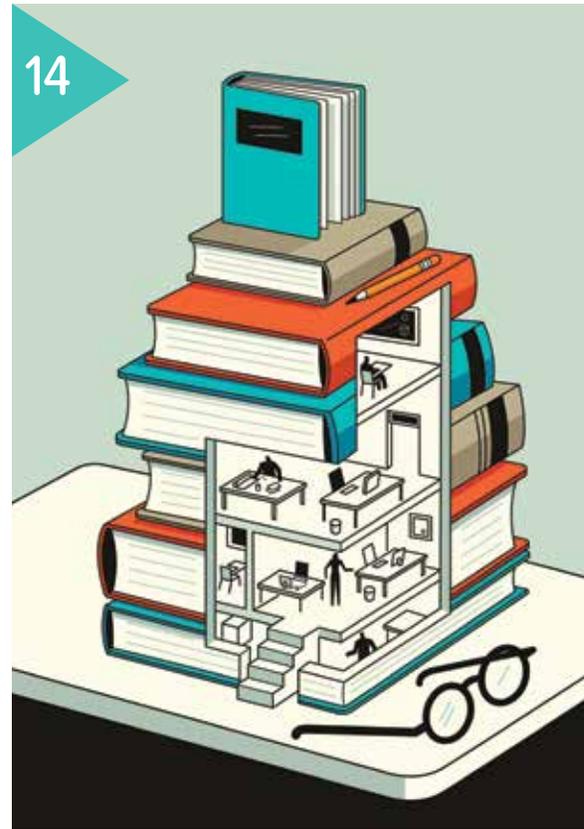
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**“I SAW A  
NEED AND  
WANTED TO  
ACT ON IT.”**

*—TELISA SPIKES*



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**“PUBLIC HEALTH  
IS A NATURAL  
CAREER CHOICE  
FOR NURSES...”**

— *NANCY MCCLUNG*



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**EMORY**

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WOODRUFF  
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NURSING**

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*Emory Nursing* is published  
by the Nell Hodgson Woodruff  
School of Nursing ([nursing.emory.edu](http://nursing.emory.edu)), a component of the Woodruff  
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19-SON-COMMS-0517



**ON THE COVER** | We photographed  
**Roxana Chicas** in a corn field at  
Mitcham Farms in Oxford, Georgia.  
For info on their products and  
activities, visit [mitchamfarm.com](http://mitchamfarm.com).



**T**wenty years ago, Emory's School of Nursing leadership had the foresight to create a doctoral program that would build the ranks of nurse scientists and help address the nursing shortage and the dearth of faculty needed to teach new generations.

To mark the PhD's anniversary, this issue looks at the program's flourishing growth in research, its students' and graduates' novel and creative approaches to nursing science, and their role in advancing public health and the health care system.

In the following pages, you'll meet a nurse scientist using advanced technology to help farmworkers; a recent graduate and postdoctoral researcher asking questions about resiliency; and a former children's minister mining big data for health disparities. They all show the potential impact of PhD work on both individual patients and health care as a whole.



## ROXANA CHICAS | If not you, then who?

**R**oxana Chicas 16BSN RN has a soft spot for blue eye shadow. Her mother wore it the day Chicas, then 4, agreed to leave El Salvador and return with her to the United States.

When her mother initially fled to the U.S. to escape violence targeting women during the Salvadoran Civil War, Chicas was a baby. The 9-month-old remained behind in the care of her grandmother. A few years later Chicas's mother visited El Salvador, and she asked her young daughter if she would like to live in the U.S. Chicas resisted until the grown-up allure of blue eye shadow swayed her.

"If you put makeup on me, I'll go with you," Chicas remembers telling her mother. "She whipped out her makeup and put it on me. I left happy, which made my mother and grandmother happy. They didn't want to force me to leave."





Roxana Chicas (left) with her partner Yesenia Bercian and their children

## TEACHING THE TEACHERS: EMORY'S TATTO PROGRAM SETS UP NURSING SCIENTISTS TO LEAD IN THE CLASSROOM

If you want an Emory PhD, you must get a tattoo.

All doctoral students go through the Teaching Assistant Training and Teaching Opportunity (TATTO—pronounced “tattoo”) Program, administered by the Laney Graduate School, before they can begin dissertation research. “It’s designed to be progressive,” says Associate Dean for Academic Advancement Sandra Dunbar PhD RN FAAN FAHA FPCNA. “Students take on increasing responsibilities as they move through the program.”

According to PhD student Tommy Flynn, “TATTO is a fantastic example of how the School of Nursing and the Laney Graduate School are very intentional about building the right PhD program for each student. It’s one of the ways they help students stay focused on their long-term goals.”

TATTO consists of four parts; first, a short class that students must take before their first teaching experience. Covering the essentials of postsecondary teaching, it includes writing syllabi, grading, lecturing, leading discussions, and conducting laboratory sessions.

Each school within the university manages the three remaining stages of the program. For the School of Nursing, TATTO’s second stage addresses teaching strategies specific to the nursing discipline. Building on the summer class, it introduces curriculum, instruction methods, styles of learning, and classroom management. Participants learn about teaching styles and build a foundation for implementing classroom research.

In TATTO’s third stage, students take on a teaching assistantship, a controlled and carefully monitored first teaching opportunity. Supervising faculty members offer close guidance and evaluation.

Finally, students move into a teaching associateship, another teaching opportunity, but with added responsibility. Often, they co-teach a course, working with a faculty member in all aspects of the class.

The TATTO program gives School of Nursing PhD students a leg up. Dunbar adds, “Not all PhD nursing programs offer this kind of teacher training opportunity. It helps our students be more marketable when they’re seeking a position, especially a faculty position.”—*Lane Holman*



The next day, mother and daughter began their long journey, by bus and on foot, to a better life. Some 1,600 miles later, they waded across the Rio Grande River and entered the U.S. without legal authorization. “My mother carried me on her shoulders,” says Chicas, now 36 and a doctoral candidate at Emory’s School of Nursing.

The idea of becoming a nurse, let alone a nurse researcher, never entered her mind until a few years ago when a pediatrician named Gerald Reisman urged her to aspire beyond her comfort zone.

Chicas and her mother settled in the Atlanta suburbs after leaving El Salvador. Some years later, in 2001, President George W. Bush authorized Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for nationals of El Salvador, where two massive earthquakes had created a humanitarian crisis. Chicas became eligible for TPS, which allowed her to obtain a driver’s license and expanded her job prospects after high school. She eventually joined Dunwoody Pediatrics as a billing and referral coordinator, where she spent a decade assisting Spanish-speaking families and physicians like Reisman, who became her mentor.

“I was the unofficial interpreter, which brought me closer to patients and allowed me to see the dynamic between health care and families caring for children with chronic conditions,” Chicas says. “The families faced a lot of barriers—access to care, language, culture, and the bureaucracy of health care and insurance and understanding what it all means. I was able to help both the providers and the patients. I felt fulfilled.”

The experience prompted her to consider becoming a medical assistant. Reisman had another idea—why not become a nurse? “That was the first time I saw myself as a professional,” Chicas says. “I had always thought of myself as an assistant.”

She began taking online courses at Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) and applied to its nursing school. But her dream hit a snag when she was denied admission because of her TPS, which must be renewed every 18 months.

Immigration attorney Charles Kuck worked pro bono to help Chicas successfully gain admission to nursing school at GPC, setting a precedent for all TPS applicants.

“I worried about what my nursing professors would think, and I was determined to do well and earn good grades,” says Chicas. “I got a 96 on my first test.”

One day, two Emory School of Nursing professors visited GPC to talk about the new Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program, funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The program, a partnership between Emory and GPC, would prepare minority students for careers in nursing practice and research. Students would move to the BSN program at Emory after completing an associate degree at GPC. Interested graduates could then pursue a doctoral degree.

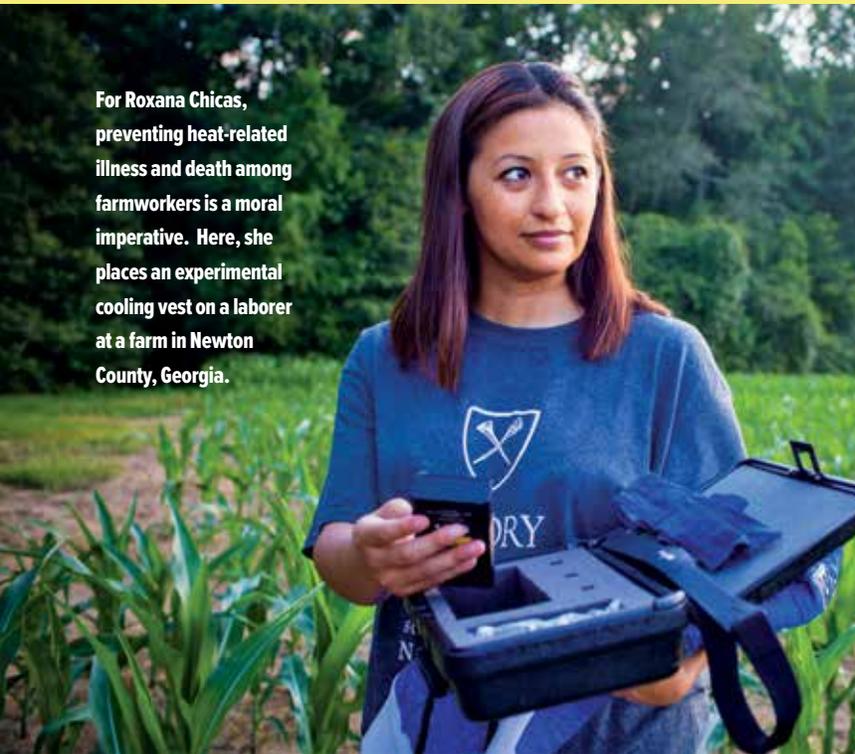
Intrigued, Chicas turned to Reisman at Dunwoody Pediatrics for advice. “If not you, then who?” he told her.

When Chicas began her BSN studies at Emory in the spring of 2016, she was 33 years old and several months pregnant. She delivered her daughter between spring and summer semester and graduated cum laude in August 2016.

Her professors encouraged her to enroll in the fast-track BSN to PhD Program, intended to produce PhD-prepared nurses faster to reduce the national shortage of nursing scientists and faculty. She’s had the opportunity to study heat-related illness among agricultural workers, teach students as a clinical instructor, and advocate on behalf of Hispanic nursing students, locally and nationally.

When Chicas learned she had been

**For Roxana Chicas, preventing heat-related illness and death among farmworkers is a moral imperative. Here, she places an experimental cooling vest on a laborer at a farm in Newton County, Georgia.**



accepted into the PhD program and Dean Linda McCauley would be her adviser, she thought it was a mistake. “I knew about her occupational health research with agricultural workers, but it never crossed my mind that I would work with the dean,” she says. “My peers already had a defined research question. I didn’t have a research question yet.”

When they met, the dean assured Chicas that her question would evolve as she learned the dynamics of working on a research team and how to approach problems scientifically to identify and fill knowledge gaps.

“The dean made me feel comfortable right away,” says Chicas. “She took me on as her student, knowing I couldn’t get NIH funding because I don’t hold a Green Card. I could be a collaborator regardless. We talk a lot about equity in the nursing school. The school and the dean made me feel equal.”

After delving into the program, Chicas developed her research question: What type of heat interventions can agricultural workers use while working in the field to maintain their body temperature at the recommended threshold of 38 degrees Celsius (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit)?

She conducted a pilot study to test two interventions—a cooling bandana and cooling vest—on Florida farmworkers. Only two similar studies had previously been conducted worldwide, one of them in a simulation lab. Chicas is in the midst of analyzing her data and writing her dissertation.

“It was important to test these interventions in the field to see if workers will wear them, whether they interfere with their work efficiency, and whether the vests keep their temperature under the threshold,” says Chicas.

“If their temperature is above 38 degrees Celsius, they are working with a fever, even though they don’t have an infection,” she continues. “Their symptoms are like those that accompany a fever—body aches, headaches, dizziness, and nausea. And they are more likely to die of heat-related illness. To suffer or die from something preventable is a reflection of the failure of society to protect its vulnerable workers.”

Four organizations funded her research, including the National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN), which holds special meaning for Chicas. Her Aguilar-Cuellar-Toben PhD Dissertation Grant Award is a first-time award for NAHN and the first time it has been given to an undocumented resident. Until this year, NAHN criteria stipulated that scholarship recipients had to be a U.S. citizen or hold a Green Card.

In November, the Georgia chapter of NAHN will cohost a youth leadership conference with the Latin American Association at Emory. The conference will bring Hispanic middle and high school students to Emory to learn what the university has to offer. Some attendees are likely to be first-generation college students like Chicas.

Upon learning this year’s conference would be held at Emory, she suggested the school promote nursing as a profession.

“I didn’t know that I could be a nurse when I was younger,” says Chicas, who is raising two boys from El Salvador and her daughter while keeping an eye on a federal court case that could revoke TPS for El Salvador residents. “We need to start putting that spark in students to let them know they can be nurses or any other professional. We need to let them see nurses who are building a minority workforce that represents the Hispanic population in the United States.” —*Pam Auchmutey*

## TELISA SPIKES | I saw a need and wanted to act on it.

**A**s a nurse manager of a health failure/post-open-heart surgery unit, **Telisa Spikes** 19PhD RN was puzzled by the number of young black women diagnosed with heart failure.

Why so many, she asked herself, and why so young? After she watched a 29-year-old mother of three die of advanced heart failure, Spikes turned to research to get some answers. Five years ago, she entered Emory's nursing PhD program, working with research mentor Sandra Dunbar PhD RN FAAN FAHA FPCNA, professor and senior associate dean for academic advancement, "who really pushed and stretched me." Spikes loved it. Her NIH-funded dissertation focused on facilitators of adherence to hypertension medications. Her most surprising finding? Women who believed their hypertension was less serious were more likely to follow through with their medication regimen than women who believed the condition was more serious.

"My PhD education provided me astonishing amounts of knowledge and research skills," says Spikes, "but I knew I wanted to gain even more skills."

That meant a postdoc. This fall, the new nursing PhD will begin a two-year postdoctoral program in epidemiology at Rollins School of Public Health. She is formulating new research questions about resiliency and how coping behaviors could serve as a buffer against disease-related stressors like poverty, racism, and living in high-crime neighborhoods. The position is funded by a T32 research training grant from the NIH. Her long-term goal is to join a research institution, using her postdoctoral findings to investigate interventions for African Americans, both male and female, with or at risk for heart disease.

"I saw a need, and I wanted to act on it," says Spikes. "Emory's doctoral and postdoctoral programs are helping me do that."—*Sylvia Wrobel*





“When I think of resilience, especially in the lives of Africans Americans, it’s centered around faith. Here in Atlanta, nothing symbolizes this more than Ebenezer Baptist Church” says Telisa Spikes.

## IN HER OWN WORDS: SARAH FEBRES-CORDERO 17BSN AND THE PHD PROGRAM

I was a server and manager at Savage Pizza in Little Five Points for 20 years before deciding to become a nurse. I watched for many years as community members struggled with homelessness, hunger, and safety. I saw many people with drug and alcohol dependence and occasionally witnessed an overdose. While I did whatever I could—making sure none of our leftover food went to waste, keeping extra clothes and blankets in my car, and occasionally handing out cash—I felt frustrated and under-equipped to help in a meaningful way.



Eventually, I decided to take real action and find a way to contribute to my neighborhood. Nursing seemed the obvious choice, and in 2014 I started my Associates of Science in Nursing at Georgia Perimeter College. While there, I was introduced to the Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program (BttB).

The Bridges program offered a unique opportunity to expand my knowledge of nursing science. Through the program, we were to attend Emory in the summers with the expectation that we would learn the skills necessary to become competitive applicants for the PhD in nursing program. In addition to courses on nursing research, we were also to seek out mentorship within the School of Nursing. Mentorship in the BttB was incredible. Professor Kate Yeager 12PhD RN FAAN and others were very influential. We were exposed to the School of Nursing’s research and had small, intimate classes conducted by Professor Jessica Wells 12PhD RN WHNP-BC.

Additionally, we were chaperoned by Cynthia Payne and Contessar Maddox of GPC. I clearly remember Cynthia Payne saying we had “won the nursing lottery” and that this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

[CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE](#)

As great an opportunity as the BttB was, it took a considerable shift in thinking about the field of nursing. Originally, I planned to become a bedside nurse. The PhD program was a huge opportunity, but it meant I had to rethink my role as a nurse.

I had mixed feelings about going straight to the PhD from the BSN. Many of the mentors in my program insisted that it is not necessary to work at the bedside before training in nursing science, as the skill set is not the same. Not everyone agrees, and I believe this is mainly because nurses who worked in the field first were thought to have a more precise understanding of needs within the clinical population.

I admit that while in the BttB, I had my doubts about whether the path from BSN to PhD made sense. However, now that I am two years into the PhD program, I agree with Ms. Payne. I won the nursing lottery. Attending Emory has been the most enormous privilege of my life. This is the first time I've had so many women mentors to look up to, I have received a stellar education, and I have had the time to figure out what kind of nurse I am and what sort of nurse scientist I want to be.

It is not uncommon for students to begin nursing school not knowing which part of health care they wish to work in. I was no different. I had many interests but wasn't sure where I belonged in health care. My original goal was only to get a job and find my way from there.

As a School of Nursing student, I have come to realize that I am a public health nurse who wishes to contribute to nursing science in harm reduction. I am committed to working with communities to reduce harms associated with drug use. As a trained nurse scientist, I can use my skills to develop interventions by using community-based participatory research. This will be the focus of my dissertation research—I will return to Little Five Points to evaluate the current understanding of overdose identification and Narcan distribution and use to save lives in the wake of the ongoing opioid epidemic.

Thanks to the BttB, Georgia Perimeter College, and Emory, I was given the time to learn, train, and think about my role as a nurse out in the world.

Since coming to the School of Nursing, I have been a research assistant, a research coordinator, a nursing simulation lab instructor, and a volunteer nurse in the community. Soon, I will be volunteering with the Atlanta Harms Reduction Coalition.

I am confident that the training I receive here will be of immense value. I am excited to work in harms reduction for my dissertation and hope to continue to contribute as a public health nurse scientist for many years.—Sarah Febres-Cordero 17BSN



Sarah Febres-Cordero

## TOMMY FLYNN | The world needs problem solvers.

“I got into nursing to help kids, and then I got into research to help nursing,” says Tommy Flynn 10BSN CPN, a former youth minister turned pediatric nurse. Flynn’s concern for children is heartfelt and comes through clearly anytime he talks about what motivates him.

“I loved working with kids, and I wanted to find a way to connect that passion with more tangible needs in the world around me, and that’s what I’m doing with my PhD research,” he adds. He admits that the more delayed gratification of research has taken some adjustment from his days as a bedside nurse.

Flynn was moved to action by challenges he encountered in his years as a nurse. “In providing care for children and their families, we do the best we can to work with a massive, unwieldy health care structure, but even then, there are still so many obstacles that get between people and their best lives. So a desire to work toward better models of care, better health care delivery, better quality of care, and better outcomes led me toward research.”

These days, Tommy works with the School of Nursing’s Center for Data Science on his dissertation, “Measuring Health Care Equity: Network Analysis of Clinical Interactions,” looking at racial disparities in quality of care. “As a bedside nurse, I saw how attitudes and a



**“The silver lining to the problems facing health care today is the vast potential for re-creation and innovation.” —**

*Tommy Flynn*

lot of unintentional biases influence the way kids and families receive care and are treated, to the point that it impacts their outcomes and baseline health. I want to make sure that the health care people are getting is the same, regardless of where they're from or who they are.” He points out that health equity is just one area of improvement. “The silver lining to the problems facing health care today is the vast potential for re-creation and innovation, in everything from the cost of care to the way information is handled to the way data is used to the way technology is implemented.”

Flynn speaks highly of his experiences in the PhD program at the School of Nursing, particularly the collaborative and interdisciplinary culture that he sees as very supportive of students. “Overall, the program has given me the tools and skills to think about complex problems and get excited about finding solutions for them rather than being defeated by them. The world needs problem solvers, and nursing, in general, is uniquely positioned to bring the patient’s perspective into the conversation about the future of health care.” Mindful of how nurses can help nursing, he adds, “It is critical that more nurses—health care’s convergent thinkers—move into graduate education and academia and research.”—*Lane Holman*

## JUMP-STARTING RESEARCH CAREERS | POSTDOCTORAL EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL OF NURSING

Nurses who want to prepare for the most complex research questions have an increasingly popular way to do it. The path is long, often grueling—and totally worth it, say the growing number of the School of Nursing's post-doctoral fellows.



This spring, eight new PhDs graduated from the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing, a school record. Half of them have gone on to post-doctoral studies,

another school record. Two are doing advanced research in HIV at Columbia University's School of Nursing. One is focusing on aging and caregiving at Vanderbilt, and another is working with heart disease in minorities at the Rollins School of Public Health. Since 2005, another five of the School's PhD graduates have completed post-docs at Duke, University of Alabama, and Emory.

"A postdoc is a wonderful jump-start on a research career," says Drenna Waldrop-Valverde PhD MS BA, director of graduate studies and interim associate dean for research in the school of nursing. "As a PhD student you learn research methodology and conduct studies under the guidance of your professors. As a postdoc, you take that experience and carve out your own niche." Such experience is especially important, she adds, for looking at complex questions—and for getting a foot up in the highly competitive world of becoming faculty in top research institutions.

During Waldrop-Valverde's own postdoc at the University of Miami, she conducted research on behavioral factors in seniors and others with HIV/AIDS. "It was amazing," she says. "Two years with no classes or teaching responsibilities, just complete immersion in my research, with a mentor in the area where I wanted to grow and fill in gaps in my knowledge."

Two of the five postdoctoral fellows working in the school are supported by National Institutes of Health T-32 training grants, awarded to institutions to develop or enhance research training opportunities. One such postdoctoral fellow is in her second year, studying HIV with her mentor, Professor Marcia Holstad PhD 77MN FNP-BC FAANP FAAN. Another is beginning a new two-year postdoc studying aging and caregiving, mentored by Professor Kenneth Hepburn PhD. Other postdoctoral positions are written into and funded as part of large grants

awarded to individual faculty, specific to each faculty member's research and usually posted on his or her own webpages. Two of the school's current postdoctoral fellows work in cancer, mentored by Professor Deborah Watkins Bruner PhD RN FAAN.

The fifth postdoctoral position is funded by the School of Nursing itself. Focusing on LGBTQ health, it's mentored by



Professor Ursula Kelly Ph APRN ANP-BC PMHNP-BC. It is a post-doc to faculty position, meaning the student will join the faculty after completing postdoctoral training.

Although all these independently funded postdoctoral fellows may be working in different areas, both content and building-wise, with different mentors, they come together monthly in a meeting organized by Waldrop-Valverde. There they get to know each other, share experiences, and get guidance and additional mentoring in career development and grant applications.

Preparing for a career in nursing research takes persistence and grit, but Waldrop-Valverde says the school's postdocs agree the long trajectory is well worth it. "You are doing what you love and you've earned a place at the table with people equally committed to making changes in things that affect the health of individuals and the community."—*Sylvia Wrobel*

Emory offers two doctoral degrees in nursing, the PhD and the DNP.

## What's the difference?



### PhD

#### Doctor of Philosophy

An intense learning experience designed to develop the next generation of nurse scientists and educators who will change the face of health care.



### DNP

#### Doctor of Nursing Practice

For nurses and nurse-anesthetists seeking a terminal degree with a focus on clinical leadership grounded in evidence-based practice.

Nursing research, geared to building new knowledge and expanding nursing science. The PhD prepares students for the highest level of research.



Nursing practice, focusing on clinical careers, population health, and health system leadership. The DNP prepares students for the highest level of practice.

Coursework focuses on theory, analysis and statistics, and research. Students take electives, both within the School of Nursing and across Emory's other schools, to support their research interests. Emory PhDs also take courses in teaching for higher education (see TATTO article on page 6).



Coursework ranges from technology and informatics to health care policy and quality improvement to evidence-based practice and training in leadership.

PhD-prepared scientists research, analyze, and build nursing's scientific knowledge base, and often teach in postsecondary settings.



DNP-prepared nurses oversee patient care to improve health outcomes. They focus on implementing nursing science.

Academic professor, nurse researcher, health care facility educator, nurse scientist. PhD graduates also work in practice settings on the administrative side.



Health care facility advanced practice leader/practitioner, clinical educator, policymaker. DNP graduates also choose academic careers.

# IN A class OF their own

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's  
Future of Nursing Scholars

By LANE HOLMAN • Illustration by HARRY CAMPBELL



**In 2015, the School of Nursing was one of 25 nursing schools nationwide to receive a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) grant to increase the number of nurses holding PhDs. The RWJF's Future of Nursing Scholars program offers financial support, mentoring, and leadership development to qualifying students who commit to earn their PhDs in three years.**

The Future of Nursing Scholars program came out of a need articulated in the Institute of Medicine's (now the National Academy of Medicine) 2010 report, *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, as part of a blueprint for nursing's future. Because the average age for nurses getting their PhDs is 47, the RWJF program offers an incentive for students to start earlier and finish more quickly, so that graduates will have longer leadership careers upon earning their PhDs.

Currently, the School of Nursing boasts five Future of Nursing Scholars in its ranks, with another three from its first cohort year having graduated recently. Through their research, they have the potential not only to change the health care system but also contribute substantially to nursing science.

## AMY GREENBLATT MPH 16BSN RN

As an MPH student at Emory's Rollins School of Public Health, Amy Greenblatt was galvanized at the idea of nurses doing mental health research. Meeting former Emory nursing faculty

member Professor Melissa Pinto, who was conducting mental health research among young adults, influenced Greenblatt considerably. She saw how a nursing background offered a unique perspective on mental health research. "The holistic approach nurses take—considering an individual's social, emotional, and physical health—made a lot of sense in understanding and treating people with mental illness."

Greenblatt applied to the Accelerated BSN program with the intention of completing her PhD in nursing and becoming a nurse researcher. Her goal is to help people with mental illness at the population level through her work. Greenblatt's thesis, "Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder in Adolescents," focuses on a little-studied disorder.

Although the three-year timeline for completing her PhD has its challenges, she says that it "turned out to be a blessing because it forced me to be very focused and intentional with my time and effort," she says. "I have excellent advisers who helped me develop my dissertation ideas early on." She adds that RWJF is "very well respected, and I've met some great nurse leaders as part of the program and have benefitted greatly from their advice. I believe these opportunities and experiences will make me a well-rounded researcher and leader."



Amy Greenblatt

**CAROLINA GUSTAFSON MSN ACNP-BC**

As an undergraduate, Carolina Gustafson realized she was interested in health care. A job as a camp health care coordinator along with the influence of a family friend who happened to be a nurse with a PhD pointed her in the direction of nursing, and she completed her senior thesis on nursing's historical gender-based stigmas with an emphasis on the nursing-led hospice and palliative care movements in America.

Gustafson thus became enamored with nursing as a discipline and entered an accelerated MSN program. "As my time in my MSN program came to an end, I decided I could better use my skills and knowledge helping develop new knowledge and educate future generations of nurses, which is why I decided to pursue a PhD in nursing," she says. "I take a lot of pride in one day being a PhD prepared nurse, and helping change perceptions of who nurses are and what they can do that are often based on stereotypes."

Her current research focuses on palliative care in solid organ transplant. Solid organ transplant patients have a high symptom burden and can benefit from symptom management using palliative care, both pre- and post-transplant. Gustafson appreciates that the RWJF program works to increase the number of PhD-prepared nurses. "They are helping build and reinforce a strong culture of research in nursing," she says, "It's paramount that nursing develop a clear identity for itself and that research be something appreciated and recognized."



Carolina Gustafson

**JASMINE NAKAYAMA BSN RN CEN**

"I knew I would be learning from the best in the field," says Jasmine Nakayama when asked why she chose the School of Nursing's PhD program. "I came to Emory for its renowned reputation, brilliant faculty, and abundant resources."

After working as an RN on a neurosciences floor and in an emergency department and then as a nurse care coordinator at a nonprofit clinic, Nakayama wanted to get more training and expand her career opportunities. As an RWJF Scholar, she is doing that and more with her research looking at the cascade of care needed for chronic hepatitis C among baby boomers. She recently completed



Jasmine Nakayama

**ABOUT RWJF'S FUTURE OF NURSING SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

- 46 nursing schools across the country have RWJF Future of Nursing scholars
- 200+ scholars will ultimately finish their PhDs through the program
- Research areas are wide-ranging; some examples include:
  - Infection control in the elderly
  - The impact of workplace bullying on new graduate nurses
  - How gaps in postpartum care influence mood disorders

her second-year coursework and is now focusing on her dissertation research and writing.

**GAEA DANIEL MSN RN** is researching health determinants and the microbiome in patients with cancer.

**DANIEL SMITH 18BSN BA RN** studies research centers on health disparities impacting vulnerable populations.

**RECENT GRADUATES**

**MARY VIRGINIA "GINNY" CARTER 19PHD BSN RN** focused on gender-based violence and kangaroo care in Amhara, Ethiopia. She now serves as a research scientist at UNC Chapel Hill's School of Medicine.

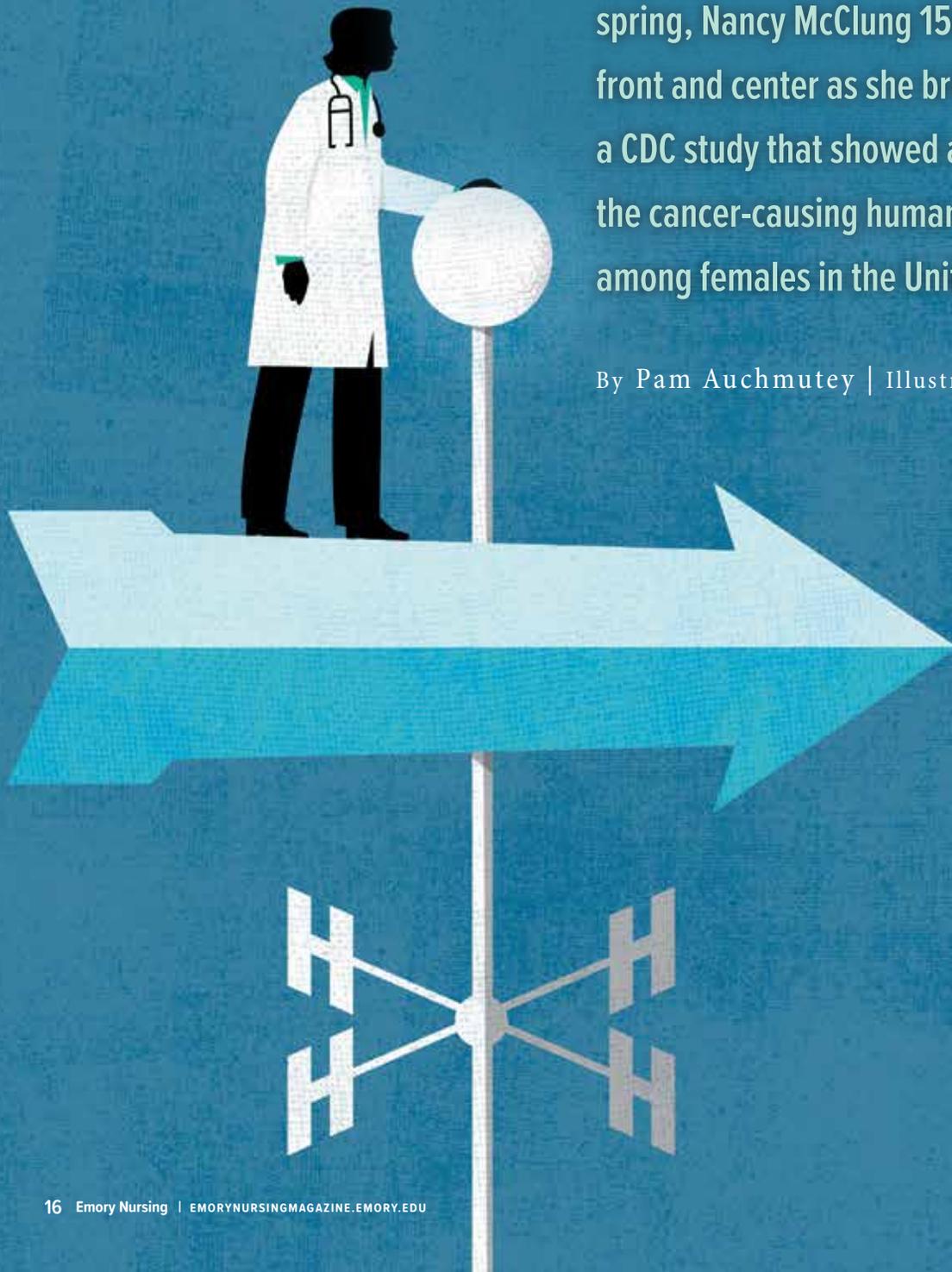
**UDIA-OGHENETEGA ENAODO OTUGUOR 18PHD MBA BSC RN** looked at stresses experienced by family caregivers of heart failure patients, particularly how the burden of care affects their sleep health. She is now a clinical instructor at Emory School of Nursing.

**ALAN JONES PHD19 MSN BSN RN-BC** examined the influence of gender, weight, and age on obstructive sleep apnea progression in REM and NREM sleep. He recently joined Georgia State University as a clinical assistant professor. [EN](#)

# Nursing's PhD Sleuth at CDC

**A**t the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) annual conference in Atlanta this past spring, Nancy McClung 15PhD BSN BA RN was front and center as she briefed the media about a CDC study that showed a marked decrease in the cancer-causing human papillomavirus (HPV) among females in the United States.

By Pam Auchmutey | Illustration by Mike Austin





**“Public health is a natural career choice for nurses.**

We have a unique lens through which to view health problems because we’re used to working at the intersection of patients, families, providers, and health systems. We see the whole picture and how to address larger problems.”

— Nancy McClung

In the study, McClung and her colleagues found that HPV prevalence had decreased by 86 percent among young women and 71 percent among young women since the HPV vaccine was introduced in 2006. The study was funded by the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey to determine HPV prevalence among white, black, and Mexican-American females.

“These findings show how well the vaccine works in preventing HPV infection and the potential for preventing cervical cancers and other cancers,” says McClung, then an EIS officer in the Division of Immunization and Respiratory Diseases.

Although McClung’s EIS fellowship is over, she continues to track and study HPV prevalence on the team in NCIRD’s Division of Viral Diseases.

It’s a role for which she is well qualified. McClung is an EIS officer at the CDC and her research interests include Emory’s School of Nursing. In 2017, she was awarded a grant from students to benefit from a \$1.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to track HPV prevalence.

She previously had worked as a nurse at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta and Emory Healthcare, all the while knowing that her goal was improving the health of large populations. Her experience led her to Emory’s RN to PhD program.

“I loved being a bedside nurse and seeing patients at a critical time in their lives,” she says. “It was a step back and focus on answering questions.”

She learned every step of the process: asking questions, write grants, conduct research, and disseminate findings to different audiences. “When she studied a familiar aspect of cervical cancer outcomes of adults who had heard of HPV,” she says.

“My Emory education was invaluable,” she says. “Dunbar [PhD RN FAAN FAHA FPCN] and [PhD RN CHFN-K CNE FAHA] were exceptional mentors, both professionally and as a scientist. I’ve worked in public health.”

After completing her PhD degree, she joined the HPV team, working with epidemiologist and medical epidemiologist Laurie Hays.

“The primary skills you get out of the program is an understanding epidemiological methods and working with a cross-section of experts in different fields, like veterinary medicine,” says McClung. “With the guidance, I’ve become a content expert.”

This year, she has served as meeting chair for several including one for which she co-wrote a review article in *Biomarkers & Prevention* in February.

The journal article reported that the prevalence of HPV virus strains targeted by HPV vaccine

Emma St. Germain (right) talks with pediatric nurse practitioner Sharron Close (middle) and PhD nursing student Amy Blumling (left).



# LEARNING ABOUT THINGS LARGER THAN YOU

By Pam Auchmutey

As a School of Nursing doctoral student, **Amy Blumling 090X 12BSN 18G** provides much-needed care to a special patient population at Emory Healthcare. Twice monthly, she and other providers see patients at the eXtraordinaryY Clinic, the Southeast's only clinic for children with sex chromosome disorders.

Boys and girls born with these disorders, also called X and Y variations, often face a tough road. As they grow, they may experience physical, developmental, and behavioral symptoms, ranging from mild to severe. Some go on to hold jobs and raise families as adults, while others struggle and require lifelong physical and mental health care.

“There are a lot of stigmas and misconceptions associated with these disorders,” says Blumling. “People assume they have something to do with your biological gender or your sexual orientation. They have nothing to do with either.”

Sex chromosome disorders develop prior to birth. Parents don’t pass them onto their children. The disorders occur randomly when children are born with too many or too few of the chromosomes that determine their sex, normally XY for boys and XX for girls.

Humans typically are born with 46 chromosomes in 23 pairs. In a few births per thousand, some infants are born with a single sex chromosome (45X) and some with three or more (such as 47XXX, or trisomy X, in females and 47XXY, or Klinefelter syndrome, in males). Children may grow to be unusually tall, have an atypical body shape, and have hormonal problems during puberty that affect adult fertility. Learning may be difficult in school. They may feel anxious and insecure, speak and act inappropriately, and have difficulty making friends, all of which can lead to depression, whether they are children, teens, or adults.

Until recently, families of children with X and Y variations had few places to turn for help. Such disorders have largely gone undiagnosed or been misdiagnosed because their symptoms are similar to conditions such as autism or learning disorders. Even with a correct diagnosis, providers have been hard pressed to help patients because of the dearth of awareness and research on how best to manage sex chromosome disorders.

When Blumling entered the PhD program at the School of Nursing, she initially planned to resume studying the low vaccination rate for HPV (human papillomavirus) among children and the high rate of cervical cancer among women in rural Georgia.

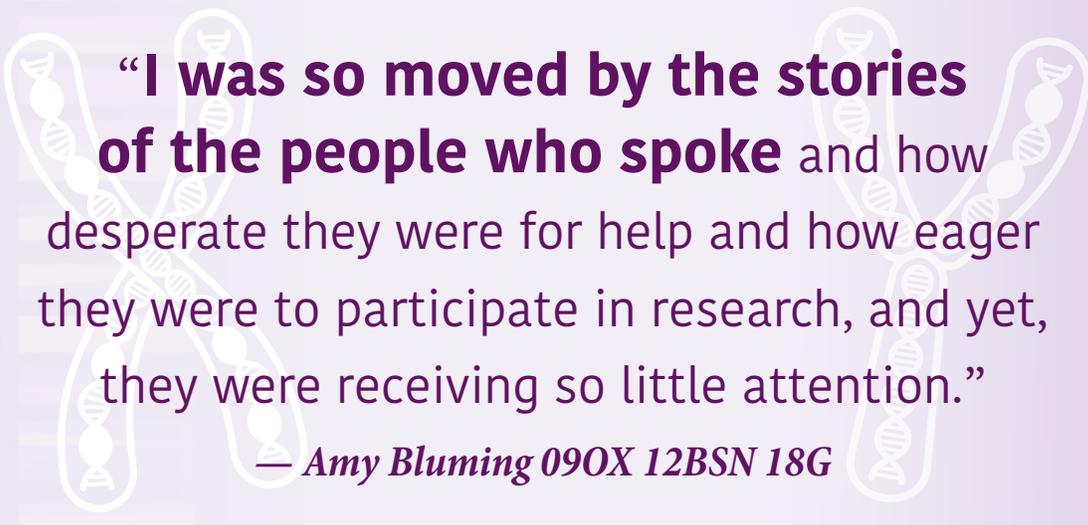
Instead, she refocused her research on sex chromosome disorders after going to a conference held by the Association for X & Y Chromosome Variations or AXYS. Blumling attended the conference with Professor Sharron Close PhD MS CPNP-PC -FAAN, a School of Nursing faculty member known for her advocacy and pioneering research on children and adults with X and Y variations.

“By the end of the day, I was in tears,” Blumling recalls. “I was so

moved by the stories of the people who spoke and how desperate they were for help. They face so many issues, especially related to stigma and access to care.”

In 2016, Close and Amy Talboy MD, a developmental pediatrician in Emory’s Department of Human Genetics, established the eXtraordinaryY Clinic for patients ranging from infancy to their early 20s. A genetic counselor, nurse navigator, neuropsychologist, pediatric endocrinologist, and adult urologist staff the clinic with Close and Talboy. Blumling is responsible for taking patient histories, performing physical and developmental assessments on babies and young children, and coordinating care with clinic specialists and community resources.

“We help get people connected,” Blumling says. “They don’t need to see the same providers all the time. But we know from the trajectory of their disorder that they need to start seeing certain specialists, such as an endocrinologist or a gynecologist during puberty.”



**“I was so moved by the stories of the people who spoke and how desperate they were for help and how eager they were to participate in research, and yet, they were receiving so little attention.”**

— Amy Blumling 09OX 12BSN 18G

“Parents really appreciate coming to the clinic,” she adds. “It’s a beacon of hope for them because they find people who really understand what they’re going through. It gives them hope that their children can get the care and services they need.”

For her dissertation, Blumling studies males age 18 and older with the rare sex chromosome disorder 48XXYY. Her 22 study participants live in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, the European Union, Brazil, and Australia. Through surveys and interviews, Blumling will determine how physical function and psychosocial health affect their quality of life: Are they suffering and if so, how much? What are their biggest issues? What makes their lives better? What makes them worse?

“I want to define what this population looks like and identify their needs and what works best for them,” Blumling says. “That’s why I love research. It’s about learning things that are larger than you.” **EN**



“We owe it to our patients to create workflows and practices that protect them,” says Sharon Vanairsdale.

## Reducing hospital-acquired infections

In the summer of 2014, Ebola virus disease (EVD) raged in West Africa with no end in sight. Working with Ebola patients in Liberia through a medical missionary program, Dr. Kent Brantly was in the heart of the storm. Brantly contracted Ebola during this time and was transferred to Emory University Hospital to be treated.

By treating the first patient with EVD in the United States, Emory and its Serious Communicable Diseases Unit (SCDU) made history and sparked national media attention. After Brantly, Emory would accept three more patients with EVD. The four Emory patients all recovered, but the fight with serious communicable diseases is far from over.

**Sharon Vanairsdale 18DNP APRN** is program director and lead nurse of the SCDU at Emory University Hospital and adjunct professor at the School of Nursing. Vanairsdale wants to take what clinicians have learned from treating four Ebola patients and translate it into everyday patient care.

“According to *Becker’s Hospital Review*, hospital-acquired infections kill 99,000 people in the United States per year,” says Vanairsdale. “What if things we did in everyday patient care could prevent this?”

Vanairsdale’s approach is to be proactive instead of reactive. Clinicians in the SCDU did not realize that four Ebola patients

would be in the unit until a few days before they arrived. But the team was able to treat the patients successfully because of the proactive work they had been doing for the past 12 years.

Situational awareness and proactivity can be looked at as a three-pronged approach, says Vanairsdale, considering design, behavior, and training.

She uses the example of personal protective equipment (PPE) as an illustration of design. “Who decided to purchase these specific gowns we used for the hospital? Was it the person trying to save the hospital money, or the person who was concerned with the quality and safety of the gown?”

Health care workers’ behavior is vital in reducing hospital-acquired infections. “They should be following the same evidence-based safety protocols every time,” says Vanairsdale. “We owe it to our patients to create workflows and practices that protect them, health care workers, and the community.”

The last prong to Vanairsdale’s approach is training. She is director of education at the National Ebola Training and Education Center, or NETEC, where she trains health care workers on serious communicable diseases and correct protocol for patient care. Vanairsdale has trained more than 1,000 health care workers all over the country, conducting in-person and video conferences for professionals to learn.—*Catherine Morrow*

## Nursing doctoral candidates awarded prestigious international fellowship

**Fekadu Aga MSN** and **Rosemary Kinuthia 17DNP 16MSN** have earned the Vanderbilt-Emory-Cornell-Duke (VECD) Fogarty Global Health Program for Fellows and Scholars Award.

Kinuthia's research focuses on reducing health disparities and inequities in Kenya. Kinuthia believes there is a gap in research addressing human resources for health needs. She will travel to Kenya to facilitate capacity-building of health systems, alleviate health workforce burden, and improve HIV outcomes of underserved populations.

Aga's research project focuses on improving care and outcomes in patients with type 2 diabetes.

Aga believes there is a gap in research concerning self-care for persons with type 2 diabetes and comorbid heart failure. He hopes to expand interventions in resource-limited settings, including his native Ethiopia.



Fekadu Aga



Rosemary Kinuthia



## New course catalog launches for Emory Nursing Experience

With the goal of advancing professional nursing expertise on a local and global scale, Emory Nursing Experience (ENE) launches Canvas Catalog, a new online course catalog platform. Formerly known as Emory's Nursing Professional Development Center (ENPDC), ENE offers all continuing education courses in one place.

Nurses can explore and enroll in an array of evolving options, from Ambulatory Care Precepting to the Medical Surgical Certification Review course, among others. The new catalog offers in-person courses and multiple self-paced options that can be completed from any platform.

In one course, **Trisha Sheridan DNP WHNP-BC SANE-A SANE-P** teaches Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Clinical Skills Training, which offers 16 contact hours. The class provides participants increased skills and confidence in performing medical forensic examination of the adult and adolescent sexual assault patient.

Those enrolled can apply the information learned in the 40-hour SANE course through hands-on sexual assault examination training with live models in a realistic setting. This will help meet the International Association of Forensic Nursing's requirement of demonstrating competency through clinical preceptorship.

ENE strives to make it more convenient for nurses around the globe to participate in the Emory education experience online. A partnership between Emory Healthcare Nursing Education and the School of Nursing, it is accredited by the American Nurses Credentialing Center. Explore ENE's offerings, or sign up for a course today at [emorynursing.pdx.catalog.canvaslms.com](http://emorynursing.pdx.catalog.canvaslms.com).

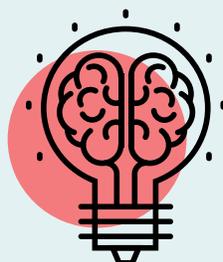
## New Directions in Nursing Research and Evidence-Based Practice Conference

Friday, November 22, 2019, 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

This yearly event hosted by the Emory Nursing Experience (ENE) explores the results of clinical inquiry, including nursing research, quality improvement, innovation, and evidence-based practice changes to empower nurses to lead health care transformation. The conference is open to nursing professionals, interprofessional partners, nursing students, and other health profession students.

To register and find out more about the conference, go to [emorynursing.pdx.catalog.canvaslms.com/courses/nd-101](http://emorynursing.pdx.catalog.canvaslms.com/courses/nd-101)

For help with registration, contact us at [enpdc@emory.edu](mailto:enpdc@emory.edu) or 404-727-9208



# Nursing student-athlete conquers Mount Kilimanjaro

While many college students spend their summers working, taking an extra class, or hanging out by the pool, nursing student **Maureen Schick** had a different plan in mind when classes ended in May: climbing Mount Kilimanjaro.

Schick, who transferred to Emory last year, is working on a traditional BSN. She also helped earn Emory's NCAA Division III 2018 volleyball title and has always enjoyed the outdoors.

"My family loves getting outside and trekking, no matter how big or small the hike," she says. "One of my most vivid memories is a hike we did at the Grand Canyon. We camped there overnight and then climbed all the way out the next day. It was so memorable!"

The idea to tackle Mount Kilimanjaro—Africa's tallest mountain and the tallest freestanding mountain in the world—took root when Schick's parents were medical workers in Tanzania in 2009.

"While we were there, we saw Mount Kilimanjaro, which is so majestic," says Schick. "Since then, climbing it has been on all of our bucket lists."

Schick had an idea of what lay ahead, considering she hiked Harder Kulm Mountain in Switzerland last summer. She prepares for her climbs through running, hiking, and a variety of other activities. Part of her training for Mount Kilimanjaro included two weeks in Colorado this spring, hiking parts of Rocky Mountain National Park with her siblings.

"Preparing for this sort of climb takes tons of time," she says. "It's not like training for a race where you get the miles in and you're set. The best way to prepare is to put on a backpack and hike for hours at the time."

Schick's father, brother, and two sisters joined her on the Mount Kilimanjaro climb, along with three guides and 17 porters. They spent eight days on the mountain: six climbing and two coming down.

At least half the people who set out to climb Kilimanjaro don't finish, but Schick's family all reached the summit.



Emory volleyball player and nursing student Maureen Schick, second from the left here, checked an item off her bucket list when she climbed Mount Kilimanjaro with her family this summer.

"The toughest aspect of the climb is overcoming the altitude," she says. "You have just one-third of the oxygen we normally breathe, so you can get tired or sick very quickly. We were very lucky going up. Once we reached summit night, I don't think any of us doubted that we would make it."

The group left camp around midnight to make the last hike to the summit.

"We reached the top around 6:30 a.m. on June 16, just as the sun was rising. It was one of the most incredible sights I had ever seen. We felt euphoric because we had all made it together and had overcome so much to get there."

"It made it all the more special that it was Father's Day, and we were able to celebrate our dad who was the one who made it happen," she adds.

The group spent about 45 minutes at the summit before the effects of the altitude began to wear on them and they had to start their two-day descent.

"There's something incredibly special about checking off a bucket list item with your

family. I hope I always remember what it felt like to stand at the summit, along with the memories of camping and hiking together," says Schick.

Her journey is one that other people also will remember.

"I am so incredibly proud of her," says Emory's head volleyball coach Jenny McDowell. "She is a relentless competitor, a hard-working athlete, and passionate about her physical training. It absolutely does not surprise me that she was able to summit Mount Kilimanjaro."

Whether she's preparing for her next mountain climbing adventure (Mont Blanc in the Swiss Alps), volleyball season, or her next semester of nursing school, Schick finds parallels that translate to everyday life.

"When a goal seems incredibly daunting, it becomes much more feasible if you split it into smaller goals," she says. "If we had looked at climbing Kilimanjaro as a 50 kilometer hike, it would have seemed unattainable. It becomes so much easier to manage when you break it down into smaller increments."—Leigh DeLozier



## Emory nursing students earn 98 percent pass rate on national licensure exam

Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing graduates continue to excel on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX)—the nationwide examination for the licensing of nurses. The 2019 year-to-date NCLEX first-time pass rate for Emory nursing students is 98 percent.

After completing nursing school, every registered nurse in the United States must first pass the NCLEX to obtain a license. A final step in the journey toward practicing as a nurse, the exam tests the essential knowledge and skills that will be necessary for newly licensed nurses to provide safe and effective care.

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## Bussenius inducted as FAANP, named distinguished alumna

### Hope Haynes Bussenius 93MSN

**DNP APRN FNP-BC** has been inducted as a fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners and also named an E. Louise Grant Distinguished Alumna by Augusta University, where she received her BSN and DNP.



Bussenius is a pioneering nurse researcher, focusing on blood pressure and hypertension in children and adolescents. Her Take 2 Heart initiative aims to improve blood pressure measurement accuracy in pediatrics. Bussenius has also developed two free mobile apps based on this idea. The apps save time and help ensure that blood pressure screenings are conducted accurately and provide immediate follow-up guidance for children who require monitoring and treatment.

## Health Care Heroes honor Sharon Pappas

### Sharon Pappas PhD RN NEA-BC FAAN

was honored as a Health Care Hero by the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*. As the chief nurse executive for Emory Healthcare since 2016, Pappas has reduced the nurse turnover rate system-wide, added additional programs to enhance nurse engagement with the system,



and improved patient safety and satisfaction. Working with Emory Healthcare CEO Jonathan Lewin and School of Nursing Dean McCauley, Pappas has focused Emory Healthcare on strengthening the ties between nursing education, research, and practice. She oversees 7,000 nurses in 11 hospitals.

## Emory School of Nursing faculty member elected to American Association of Critical Care Nurses Board

**Jennifer Adamski DNP APRN**

**ACNP-BC CCRN** has been

elected to the American Association of Critical Care Nurses Board of Directors. Adamski is director of the Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner program at Emory and also maintains a clinical practice as an acute care nurse practitioner. Her areas of

research include trauma prevention and system development, rapid response teams, and clinical care/trauma advances in hemorrhagic shock. Adamski will serve on the board for a three-year term, beginning this year.



## Nursing PhD candidate receives National Association of Hispanic Nurses Grant

**Roxana Chicas 16BSN RN**

has received the Aguilar-Cuellar-Toben (ACT) PhD Dissertation

Grant Award from the National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN). As the

nation's leading professional society for Latinx nurses, the NAHN grant provides funding to improve health outcomes

of the Latinx population. Chicas' research focuses on environmental exposures and occupational health hazards among immigrant agricultural workers and aims to keep them safe while working in hot and humid environments.



## Family nurse practitioner leader receives \$2.2 million research grant

School of Nursing associate clinical professor **Clint Shedd DNP FNP-BC RN** has received a four-year, \$2.2 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to fund a nurse practitioner residency program.

The program centers on challenges primary care nurse practitioners (PCNPs) face when adapting to patients and communities in Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), including caring for patients with complex medical and social needs who present late in the disease process. The School of Nursing will partner with MedLink Georgia, an FQHC serving 21 counties in rural Northeast Georgia, to create a 12-month PCNP residency. The goal of the residency is to help meet MedLink's need for qualified primary care providers, increase the number of fully functioning PCNPs available to provide care in rural and underserved areas in Georgia and beyond, and establish a sustainable model for a nurse practitioner residency that other academic-practice partnerships could emulate.

HRSA, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is the primary federal agency for improving health care for people who are geographically isolated and economically or medically vulnerable. HRSA programs help those in need of high-quality primary health care and support training of health professionals, distribution of providers to areas where they are needed most, and improvements in health care delivery.

Shedd, who joined the School of Nursing in 2011, has a background in critical care, pulmonary, and allergy medicine. He co-wrote the HRSA grant application with Susan Shapiro (emeritus) PhD RN FAAN. Other School of Nursing faculty involved include **Elizabeth Downes DNP O4MPH FNP-C CNE FAANP ANEF FAAN**, and **Carolyn Clevenger DNP O2MSN RN GNP-BC AGPCNP-BC FAANP**.

# Professor Jeannie Cimiotti heads NIH study funded at \$1.2 million

**S**chool of Nursing researchers have received a three-year, \$1.2 million R01 grant to study if nursing resources have an impact on hospital-acquired infections.

The award, Nursing Resources and Health Care-Associated Infections: Measures of Hospital Performance, comes from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

Led by principal investigator and Associate Professor **Jeannie P. Cimiotti PhD RN FAAN**, the study centers on preventing health care-associated infections (HAIs) in acute care hospitals. Due to the lack of focus on improving hospital-wide nurse work environments as recommended by the National Academy of Medicine, HAIs remain common, risking patient lives, adding to health care costs, and contributing to the major public health problem of antibiotic-resistant infections.

The primary aim of the study is to determine whether nursing



resources such as work environments and other modifiable features such as nurse staffing, skill mix, workforce stability, and education are associated with HAIs.

“We have a goal of identifying promising hospital-level strategies to facilitate infection reduction and identifying actionable recommendations with promise for reducing HAIs,” says Cimiotti. “This grant will allow us the opportunity to potentially save lives from entirely preventable infections.”

Cimiotti has served as a member of AHRQ’s Safety Program for ICUs. As an internationally known health services researcher, her expertise addresses nurse workforce issues and quality of patient care. Through her research she has examined a variety of provider outcomes such as job dissatisfaction and burnout, along with patient outcomes such as hospital-acquired infections and other infection-related issues.

## Faculty Spotlight | Assistant Professor Glenna Brewster PhD RN FNP-BC

**A**ssistant Professor Glenna Brewster joined the School of Nursing in August 2017. She completed a postdoctoral research fellowship at the Center for Sleep and Circadian Neurobiology at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. At the University of South Florida, Brewster earned her doctoral degree in nursing science, a master of science in family health nursing, and a master of arts in gerontology. In recognition of Brewster’s commitment to research on aging and leadership, she received the National Hartford Center of Gerontological Nursing Excellence 2013-2015 Patricia G. Archbold Scholar award.

### Tell us about a research project you’re working on...

All three of my current projects include caregivers of persons living with dementia, the one population I ultimately want to have a real impact on. For one study, I’m examining sleep characteristics of caregivers. For another, I’m providing an intervention to both the person living with dementia and his or her caregiver, with the goal of determining whether it impacts their sleep quality and behaviors.

### What is one thing you hope your work will ultimately offer?

That caregivers of persons living with dementia around the world will have access to tailored resources to improve their lives and the lives of those they care for.

### If you could go back in time and offer yourself some advice early in your career, what would you say?

Develop the art and enjoyment of writing. Learn how to publish and disseminate your research early in your career. Enjoy the process—the victories and the lessons; it is your job to ensure that you are successful.

### What do you enjoy most about being at Emory Nursing?

My research team and work colleagues have become my extended family.



## New fellows of the American Academy of Nursing

Comprised of the nation's most accomplished nurse leaders in education, management, practice, policy and research, the American Academy of Nursing (AAN) is one of the most highly regarded fellowships in the nursing profession. With 50 nurses accomplishing this milestone, Emory is home to one of the largest concentration of fellows inducted into the AAN. For 2019, Emory has 10 new fellows, the largest class in a single year. "As leaders in nursing education, practice, and transformative research, these honorees embody our mission of visionary nurse leadership at Emory," says Dean Linda McCauley.



**Jinbing Bai** PhD MSN RN  
Assistant Research Professor

**Rasheeta Chandler** PhD ARNP  
FNP-BC FAANP  
Assistant Professor

**Carolyn Reilly** PhD 94MSN RN  
CHFN-K FAH  
Associate Clinical Professor

**Patricia Moreland** PhD MSN CPNP RN  
Assistant Clinical Professor

**Theresa Gillespie** 98PhD MA 81BSN  
Professor, Department of Surgery,  
School of Medicine

**Eve Byrd** 17DNP 98MSN/MPH 86BSN  
Director, Mental Health Program,  
The Carter Center

**Michelle Dynes** 13PhD MPH MSN  
RN CNM  
Nurse Epidemiologist, Division of  
Reproductive Health, Centers for  
Disease Control and Prevention

**Deena Gilland** 18DNP 07MSN  
RN NEA-BC  
Vice President and Chief Nursing  
Officer, Emory Ambulatory Patient  
Services Operations, Emory Healthcare

**Mary Zellinger** 85MSN CNS  
Clinical Nurse Specialist,  
Cardiovascular Critical Care Unit,  
Emory University Hospital

**Tim Cunningham** DrPH MSN RN  
Corporate Director of Patient  
and Family Centered Care,  
Emory Healthcare

## New Faculty



**Amy Becklenberg**  
MSN APRN FNP-BC  
Instructor, Clinical Track



**Desiree Clement**  
DNP APRN CNM FNP-BC FACNM  
Assistant Professor, Clinical Track



**Calli Cook**  
11MSN FNP-C  
Instructor, Clinical Track



**Wanda Csaky**  
DNP FNP MSN  
Assistant Professor, Clinical Track



**Ron Eldridge**  
14PhD 10MPH BS  
Assistant Professor, Research Track



**Fayron Epps**  
PhD MSN BSN  
Assistant Professor, Tenure Track



**Angela Haynes-Ferere**  
DNP 91MPH 08BSN 09MSN RN FNP-BC  
Assistant Professor, Clinical Track



**Sangmi (Kate) Kim**  
PhD MPH  
Assistant Professor, Tenure Track



**Abby Mutic**  
19PhD MSN CNM  
Assistant Professor, Research Track



**Chance Nicholson**  
MSN CRNP PMHNP-BC RN-BC  
Assistant Professor, Research Track



**Laren Narapareddy**  
PhD MSN BS RN  
Assistant Professor, Tenure Track



**Tamara (Tammi) Tanner**  
EdD MSN  
Assistant Professor, Clinical Track



**Whitney Wharton**  
PhD  
Associate Professor,  
Tenure Track

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# CLASS NOTES

## 1980s



**KATE YEAGER 84BSN 12PHD** and Sarah Belcher were selected as winners of the 2019 Palliative Care Research Development Award (\$15,000). It is offered by the Emory Center for Nursing Excellence in Palliative Care. Their project is titled “Examining the relationship between economic hardship and quality of life in the outpatient oncology palliative care setting: a pilot study.” Yeager is an assistant professor and Belcher is a post-doctoral fellow.

## 1990s

**PATRICE HARRIS 91MSN** is helping Tuskegee University establish its first Master of Nursing program. Tuskegee’s new nursing program’s specialty focus is on community and mental health nursing. The Alabama university first expanded its nursing school in 1954.

## 2000s

**SAFIYA GEORGE DALMIDA 01MSN 06PHD 09CRG** is the new dean of the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing at Florida Atlantic University (FAU). She will be the third dean in the school’s 40-year history. Dean Dalmida was a faculty member at Emory’s nursing school until 2015 when she was recruited to the Capstone College of Nursing at the University of Alabama. Dean Dalmida will oversee and push forward the research focus areas of FAU’s College of Nursing.



## 2010s

The *Atlanta Journal & Constitution* selected **DANIELLE N. MILANO 090X 11BSN** as a 2019 Honoree for their Nursing Excellence

Awards. Milano has worked as a nurse for seven years. While waiting to attend a show at the Fox Theatre, Milano witnessed a car accident where a woman was pinned under the vehicle. She acted promptly, allowing bystanders to lift the car so that she could perform CPR on the pulseless pedestrian. When the EMTs arrived, the woman’s pulse was restored, and she could breathe. Milano is currently a registered ICU nurse at Piedmont Atlanta Hospital.



**KARA C. SHORT 11BSN** received the 2019 Advanced Practice Excellence Award at Children’s Healthcare of Alabama. Short has an established reputation in the pediatric dialysis community and has treated patients at Children’s Pediatric and Infant Center for Acute Nephrology. In 2018, she gave an oral presentation at the International AKI/CRRT Conference for her co-authored abstract “Continuous Renal Replacement Therapy via a Right Ventricular Assist Device in an Infant.” She and her husband live in Birmingham.



### NURSING FACULTY NOTE

Assistant Dean for Clinical Advancement

**LAURA PORTER  
KIMBLE PHD RN**

received a NIH Supplement Award for her study entitled: “Metabolites and Metabolic Pathways Associated with Symptoms Among African-Americans with Systemic Lupus Erythematosus and Hypertension.”



# IN MEMORY

## 1940s

**MARY FRANCES CHEATHAM RONAN 47BSN** of Montgomery, Ala., on Feb. 18, 2019, at 94. She was a member of the U.S. Army Cadet Nursing Corps and worked for many years as a public health nurse. She was preceded in death by her husband, Leonard J. Ronan Sr., and sons Joe and John. Survivors include three daughters, 11 grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

**MARILYN THOMPSON LITTLE 48BSN** of Orlando, Fla., on June 26, 2019, at 91. She worked at Orange Memorial Hospital in Orlando, beginning in the emergency room in 1963 and working her way up to head nurse in neurosurgery in 1974. Survivors include a son, a daughter and her husband, six grandchildren, and one great-grandson.

**VIRGINIA PURGASON CLOUD 49BSN** of Phoenix, Ariz., on April 24, 2019. Cloud earned her BA in speech and drama from LaGrange College in LaGrange, Ga. She enlisted in the Navy at the Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego, Calif., where she worked as a pharmacist mate and member of the Hospital Corps. After World War II and after Emory, she re-enlisted in the Navy as a nurse and served at the Oakland Naval Hospital in Oakland, Calif., where she met her husband, Dr. Daniel Cloud Jr. She was preceded in death by her husband and is survived by three children and six grandchildren.

## 1950s

**HAROLDYNE SCOTT RICHARDSON 52BSN** of Seattle and formerly of Spokane, Wash., on March 21, 2019, at 89. She met her husband, the late Lt. Col. Clarke T. Richardson 53C 54G, at Emory. They had been married 63 years when he died in 2016. She earned her MSN from the University of Washington and was a lifetime member of the Washington State Nurse's Association. Survivors include three children and four grandchildren.

**CAROL WOMMACK BABINGTON 57BSN** of McLean, Va., on May 20, 2019. She was an incredibly giving and caring person and genuinely enjoyed her time as a nurse. She met her former husband, Apollo 11 engineer Robert S. Babington, while at Emory. She was integral to the launch of the Babington medical consulting business in the 1970s. She is survived by her husband, four children, and three grandchildren.

**ANNA LEE SANDERS DUBOISE 58BSN 59MSN** of Hackett, Ark., on June 5, 2014, at 91. She was a licensed anesthesiologist and a member of the State

Board of Nursing. She retired from the University of Central Arkansas as a nursing instructor and was chair of the Department of Nursing. Survivors include her husband, H.B. Hackett, three sons, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

## 1960s

**JILL GARDNER RONE 63BSN** of Marietta, Ga., on April 13, 2019. Rone worked at Kennestone Hospital in the Coronary Care and Cardiac Rehab Units for most of her nursing career. Camping, water skiing, and gardening were her favorite hobbies. Her faith played a big role in her life. She attended Sunday school, Bible studies, Missions Ministry, and choir at her church. She is survived by a daughter, a son, a sister, and five grandchildren.

**KATHERINE BLACK DECKER 66BSN** of Chesapeake, Va., and formerly of Portsmouth, Va., on Jan. 16, 2019. After Emory, she attended Virginia Tech, where she earned a master's and certificate of advanced studies. She retired from Portsmouth City Schools. Survivors include her husband, Richard, son Robert, two grandchildren, and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

**MARY JUNE PURTLE (JUNE) GARNER 67MSN** of Little Rock, Ark., on June 20, 2019, at 92. In World War II, she was in the Nurses Army Corps. Her nursing career would span 40 years, including serving as director of nursing studies at University of Central Arkansas, Conway, and Henderson State University, Arkadelphia. She introduced a novel program for educating nurses throughout the state and beyond. In 1989, she ended her career as executive director of the Arkansas State Board of Nursing. Survivors include two daughters, two grandchildren, a sister, and two sisters-in-law.

**NANCY (NAN) RIPPEY PINKSTON 67MSN** of Ringgold, Ga., on March 14, 2019, at 78. After a childhood of moving around with her military family, she became a nurse and started a nursing career of 50 years. She worked at several hospitals and taught nursing at a variety of institutions. She loved working with children and the most meaningful part of her career was nursing in the pediatric oncology ward at Egleston Children's Hospital in Atlanta. She and her husband Theo moved to Ringgold in 2007 and started a nonprofit called Nourishing Children in Catoosa. They provided weekend food to students on free or reduced school lunches. Pinkston is survived by her husband, two children, three granddaughters, and two sisters.

## 1970s

**MONA MARIE COUNTS 70MSN** of Rices Landing, Pa., on April 4, 2019, at age 70. Counts was considered the "mother of nurse practitioners" as she was the first person to receive nurse practitioner status in the U.S. She advocated for women's education and advancement and received awards such as the Eberly Chair at Penn State University. Counts served as president of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners and as a member of its Certification Board until she died. She was also a certified master gardener and a licensed pilot. She is survived by her husband, son, daughter and son-in-law, and foster children.

**MICHELE REGETZ HELMUTH 71MSN** of Saratoga, Calif., on March 9, 2019, after battling cancer for 11 years. Still, Helmuth maintained her positive attitude on life and enjoyed hobbies such as hiking, tennis, dancing, and traveling. The University of Maryland chose her for its first nurse practitioner program. She went on to instruct its students and eventually became an assistant professor at the University of California, San Francisco for nine years. Helmuth is survived by her husband Doug, a daughter, a son and daughter-in-law, and a sister.

**MARY ANN BLOUNT 72MSN**, formerly of Dothan, Ala., on May 7, 2016, as a result of a car accident. She was a registered nurse for 45 years and devoted much of her career to advancing the nursing profession. She served on the faculty at the University of Virginia School of Nursing and later as assistant director of nursing at the University of Virginia Medical Center. She moved to Dothan to return to her first love, bedside nursing, and to be near family.

**JEANNE D. EVANS 72BSN** of Fort Smith, Ark., on April 26, 2019, at age 70. Evans worked as a registered nurse at the Sparks Hospital Emergency Room in Fort Smith for over a decade. She enjoyed the outdoors and frequented Creekmore Park to visit friends and watch the squirrels. Survivors include two sisters, a niece, a nephew, and three grand-nieces.

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