

University of  
Southern Indiana

FALL 2019

# Synapse

College of Nursing and Health Professions



**BETTER HEALTH  
THROUGH  
INNOVATION**

## Letter from the Dean



**T**he medical field is constantly evolving due to innovations in technology, patient care and research advancements. As educators and mentors for tomorrow's health care workforce, we are challenged to keep current so that when our students graduate, they are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for their new careers.

Innovation doesn't just apply to having the latest medical equipment or electronic health records. Innovation means putting the patient first and looking for creative ways to solve problems or make health care delivery more efficient.

Earlier this year, our college hosted the eighth annual Startup Weekend Evansville with the theme, "Better Health Through Innovation." The event combined health care professionals, business, engineering, community, students and health care customer perspectives with a goal of solving some of our most pressing health care issues. One of our master of health administration (MHA) graduates was part of a team that was awarded first place in the competition. His motivation for participating? He said he wanted to try something new, something to get his creative juices flowing.

Throughout this issue are examples of creativity and innovation within the College of Nursing and Health Professions. Because of generous gifts to our College, we have updated our facilities with state-of-the-art classrooms, plus our students and faculty are sharing their knowledge and expertise outside our walls, whether it be a hospital across town, in another community, or in the case of one faculty member, the United Nations!

Every day, faculty expertise in each discipline guides students by providing a supportive learning environment that is both challenging and creative. Whether it is the classroom, clinical setting or through collaboration on a grant-funded project, new ideas and technology are providing the spark to transform education at USI.

Dr. Ann White  
Dean, College of Nursing and Health Professions

# Synapse

College of Nursing and Health Professions

Synapse magazine is published by the University of Southern Indiana College of Nursing and Health Professions.

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The University of Southern Indiana is committed to principles of equal opportunity and affirmative action.



Advancing Health and Wellness through Visionary Leadership,  
Dynamic Learning and Strategic Partnerships



# BETTER HEALTH THROUGH INNOVATION



## A GRUELING 54-HOUR WEEKEND WITH STRANGERS THAT EVENTUALLY BECAME TRUSTED BUSINESS PARTNERS.



Jacob Delk

That's how a USI graduate described his first experience with Startup Weekend Evansville 8.0, held at USI in the Health Professions Center April 12-14, 2019. This year's theme was "Better Health Through Innovation," a platform that intrigued Jacob Delk '17 M'19, health services and health administration.

Delk was part of a team that developed Safe Tracking for ELOped Individuals (STEI), which was awarded first place during the Startup Weekend. "This is a personal tracking system that is meant for elderly patients who wander," he said. "Wandering affects 60% of all Alzheimer's patients, and

it is very dangerous, often leading to injury or even death. With an increasing amount of people aging in the home, our goal is to allow families to have peace of mind while allowing elderly people to have their independence."

One of the team members was a firefighter who responds to calls about missing older adults from either nursing facilities or private homes, according to Delk. The STEI device can track individuals within three feet, provide vitals while tracking and automatically alert first responders and rescue personnel.

As the first-place team, STEI received development funding from USI's Eagle Innovation Accelerator, consulting and software services from Lieberman Technologies and a six-month membership to Cowork Evansville.

Delk, who works as a clinical recruiter for Maxim Healthcare Services, said this was the first time he participated in Startup Weekend at USI. "I thought about trying something new, something that would really get my creative ideas thinking," he said. "I didn't go into the weekend with an idea, but I went in wanting to join a group that could benefit from my ideas, educational and personal experiences."

This year, Startup Weekend Evansville 8.0 represented the intersection of health care professionals, business, engineering, IT, community, students and patient perspectives to promote innovation and improve community and regional health care. The event is a collaboration among the USI Provost's Office, USI Romain College of Business, and USI College of Nursing and Health Professions.

Two ideas tied for second place: Vital Ryde, a mobile application created to curb drinking and driving, and Healing Gardens, a product focused on mitigating food insecurity and education. Two married USI master of health administration graduates, Rokas Cesnulevicius and Hope Cesnulevicius, were among those on second-place teams. Second place teams also received awards and prizes from the USI Eagle Innovation Accelerator, Lieberman Technology and Cowork Evansville, as well as business coaching services from Focal Point Coaching.

Other ideas that made it to the final pitches included Leap, a ride sharing solution for students during at-risk hours after school; Holistically Hoosier Health & Wellness, services focused on promoting mental and physical health; and Care 4 Me, an online service to ensure medical instructions are followed as senior citizens age at home.

Dr. Swateja Nimkar, assistant professor of health services, said her MHA 4+1 students presented version 2.0 of the Care 4 Me project that they developed with USI computer science, computer information systems and public health/health services students. The concept and original version of Care 4 Me was co-created in 2016 by Nimkar's public health students as part of an interprofessional team including the disciplines of occupational therapy, computer science, computer information systems and graphic design.

"We are all extremely pleased with the turnout and participation at this unique, health-centered event," said Bryan Bourdeau, instructor in Romain College of Business and Startup Weekend Evansville co-founder and co-organizer. "I look forward to working with these teams in collaboration with the Eagle Innovation Accelerator. Our goal is to push these ideas to implementation as quickly as possible."

Founded in 2007, Startup Weekend is billed as "the world's largest community of passionate entrepreneurs," with events held in cities throughout the world. Startup Weekend Evansville is the largest event of its kind in Indiana.



Left to right: Michael Austin, Michael Polley, Sydney Schmitt, Suri Nuthalapati, Jacob Delk



## Stone Family Center for Health Sciences: A look back at the first year

After years of planning and construction, the Stone Family Center for Health Sciences was completed and open for classes and research activities for the fall 2018 semester. It is a striking presence in downtown Evansville, both inside and out.

A collaborative effort between the three universities, the Stone Center is home to the Indiana University School of Medicine—Evansville as well as programs for the University of Southern Indiana and University of Evansville.

Bill Stone, along with his wife Mary, donated \$15 million in support of the mission and collaboration between the universities and hospital partners. Stone, an Evansville native, founded Connecticut-based SS&C Technologies, Inc. in 1986 and has remained chairman of the board and chief executive officer since its inception.

More than 250 USI graduate-level students in the Masters of Science in Occupational Therapy, Master of Science in Nursing and Doctor of Nursing Practice Programs, and 120 undergraduate, senior nursing students are utilizing the Stone Center in their educational pursuits.



Ann White and Victor Schriefer, Jr.

USI's space includes the Dr. Victor V. Schriefer, Jr. Therapeutic Intervention Classroom in recognition of a generous gift from Schriefer, a longtime University friend, USI Foundation Life Director, member of the President's Circle and recipient of an honorary doctor of science degree in 2008. Also, a gift from the estate of the late Hershel B. Whitney has created an endowment that funded the USI Occupational Therapy Lab at the Stone Center.

"Because of the vision and generosity of these two men, Dr. Schriefer and the late Hershel B. Whitney, USI students at the Stone Family Center have the opportunity to study and do research in rooms that are truly state-of-the-art," said Dr. Ann White, dean of USI's College of Nursing and Health Professions.

The Stone Family Center for Health Sciences was the site of an interactive discussion on April 2, 2019, marking the inauguration of Ronald S. Rochon as the fourth president of the University of Southern Indiana. The theme was *Building Community by Celebrating Diversity, Engagement and Service*. President Rochon



Respiratory students with Dr. Rochon: (left to right) Makenna Gries, Cayleigh Shrader, Zachary Blake

and the Honorable Lloyd Winnecke, Evansville Mayor, welcomed guests as faculty members and students from the College of Nursing and Health Professions offered interactive sessions on 11 areas of health care. The goal of the event was to demonstrate the University's focus on building a healthier community by ensuring medical care in Evansville is for everyone.



Dental hygiene students Shelby DeMoss (left) and Renee Burch at the Stone Family Center.



# Grant Projects:

## Engaging Students and Improving Health

From June 2018 to June 2019, the College of Nursing and Health Professions (CNHP) was awarded four grants from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). “It speaks volumes to the quality of our academic programs and level of faculty expertise that we have been able to not only apply for these competitive federal grants, but be selected as recipients,” said Dr. Ann White, dean of the CNHP. “These grants enable us to engage students and continue to expand partnerships and strengthen the relationships between academia, primary care sites and health systems to improve health outcomes in southwestern Indiana.” Below is a description of the projects currently underway:



### July 2018



#### RN Primary Care Program

This \$2 million, four-year grant project increases the number of nurses in primary care working to the full scope of the registered nurse practice. The project is a collaborative effort between CNHP, Southwest Indiana Area Health Education Center (SWI-AHEC), Memorial Hospital Jasper and Gibson General Hospital. Memorial will begin a family medicine residency program through the implementation of a new primary care clinic. Undergrad nursing students will join residents to create a model of providing care within this primary care setting.

### September 2018



#### Indiana SANE Training Project

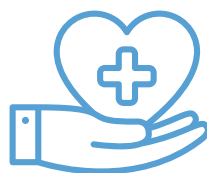
This \$1 million, three-year grant project expands training and professional development opportunities with the goal of increasing the number of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) across rural and underserved communities in Indiana. SWI-AHEC is working in conjunction with CNHP, Indiana Emergency Nurses Association, Indiana State Department of Health, and other organizations to provide trauma-informed, evidence-based care to victims of sexual assault in communities across the state.

### July 2019



#### Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP)

The \$3.7 million, five-year grant project establishes a GWEP to improve health outcomes for older adults in underserved areas of southwest Indiana by developing a workforce to maximize patient and family engagement and integrate geriatrics into primary care. The CNHP will be working with Deaconess Family Medicine Residency Program, three Deaconess primary care clinics and two Council on Aging agencies (SWIRCA & More and Generations).



#### Nurse Practitioner Residency Program

This \$1.7 million, four-year grant project establishes a residency program for USI nursing practitioner graduates. The CNHP is collaborating with four community partners including ECHO Community Health, Southwestern Behavioral Health, Tulip Tree and Good Samaritan Family Health Center, all serving underserved and diverse populations.

## AROUND THE COLLEGE

### Faculty Member Active with Committee Focus



Dr. Serah Theuri (center) served as a resource for a team of students that chose Kenya for a cultural meal project in Elizabeth Ramos' Quantity Foods Production and Purchasing course at USI.

The power of food as medicine and the strong correlation between food choices and disease has always fascinated Dr. Serah Theuri. The associate professor of food and nutrition has studied food access among underserved communities and the impact on health, not only in the local community but also globally.

As a member of the Society of Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB), her interest in global issues in nutrition influenced her to be involved with, out of numerous divisions within SNEB, the Division of International Nutrition Education (DINE). During her tenure as

DINE Chair-elect and Chair in 2014-2015, her responsibilities included coordinating conference sessions, which led Theuri to her first interactions with nutrition professionals from the United Nations (UN). These UN conference speakers ignited a series of conversation focused on DINE's involvement in global nutrition.

In 2018, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations granted SNEB consultative status, which enables active engagement with council and its subsidiary bodies, programs and agencies. The UN Charter established this council in 1945 as one of the six main organs of the United Nations. Theuri is one of three nutrition professionals who will be involved in coordinating SNEB activities in support of the work of ECOSOC.

Theuri recently drafted a document to help SNEB members understand the benefits of consultative status and the role ECOSOC plays in the United Nations system to advance economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Born and raised in Nairobi, Kenya, Theuri has lived in the United States for several years and has been a member of the USI faculty for nine years. She earned her bachelor's degree in consumer science from Kenyatta University in Kenya, and a master's degree in nutrition from the University of Central Oklahoma. Theuri completed her doctorate and dietetic internship from Mississippi State University.

As an undergraduate student, Theuri said a nutrition class opened a world of information on the profession of food and nutrition, which influenced her to pursue a career in dietetics. Ultimately that choice has inspired her research on food access, healthy lifestyle education, health behavior change and her current involvement with the United Nations council.

### Unleashing the Power of Plants

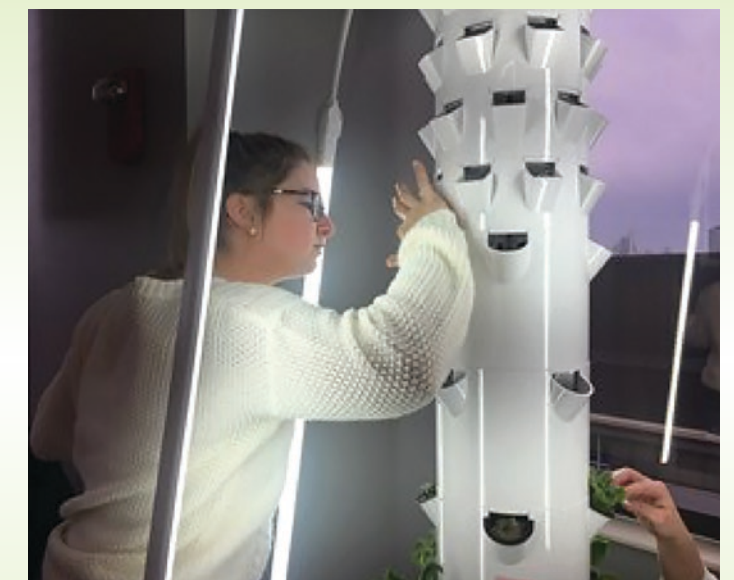
Despite the gray days and chilly weather, Beth Young, instructor in food and nutrition, decided February was the perfect time for her Community Nutrition class to plant a garden.

“We wanted to get as much variety as we could,” she explains, listing the many micro greens being added by students one afternoon. Each seedling (dandelion, broccoli, arugula) has its own tiny home on the third floor of the Health Professions Center. Close to 70 plants fill the tall, white plastic tube surrounded by hanging lights.

“When she [Young] said [we'd be planting] a Tower Garden, I honestly was kind of like, ‘What's a Tower Garden?’” recalls Claire Johnson '19, exercise science and kinesiology. “I was so intrigued.”

The vertical, self-watering growing system, funded through an American Heart Association grant, is a new twist on Young's long-standing service-learning approach to the course—and the inspiration behind curriculum her students are developing. Through a partnership with the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation, they're creating lesson plans for fourth-grade students at Lincoln Elementary School, involving approaches to healthy snacks, developing cooking skills and learning to utilize the schools food pantry for home meals.

(Continued on page 15)



Claire Johnson tends to Tower Garden seedlings.



**Veterans Day in Dental Clinic**

Four days. One hundred forty-four patients. The USI Dental Clinic isn't just busy; it's booked solid. "Appointments are full every time, we're jam-packed every time—and we always have a wait list," says Dr. Kim Parsons, chair of USI's Dental Assisting and Dental Hygiene Programs. The clinic is active throughout the school year, prior to the Give Back to Veterans Week, the phone rings off the hook. During this week (early March), students and faculty in the clinic focus solely on providing free treatment to veterans, from 8 a.m. until 9:30 p.m.

"Cleanings, X-rays, fluoride, sealants: preventative care is what we can do," Parsons says. Unlike some initiatives that take time to grow, the collaboration between USI's Dental Hygiene Program, the Southwest Indiana Area Health Education Center and USI's Veteran, Military and Family Resource Center has been successful since its start in fall 2015. "The problem is that veterans get medical care, but oftentimes their dental care is not covered," says Parsons. "By providing free dental care for them, we're able to take care of a need that otherwise is not going to be met. I think it's really important for our students to also be able to step outside their box a little bit and get to know different people and different needs around the community."

Roommates Lindsey Nelson '20 and Hayley Smith '20 are two of the 46 dental hygiene students who worked with veterans in the clinic. "To be able to help them, I just feel really grateful—especially with all that they've done for us," Smith says, after wrapping up her first appointment of the day, "He [Smith's first patient] was telling me his background and why he became a [member of the military] and where he's been around the world, and I just thought it was really interesting and cool to hear about that."

"The veterans tend to talk a lot and share a lot, so the students probably spend a little more time with them because there's more



communication or interaction than just cleaning their teeth," explains Parsons. "But the students seem to really enjoy it, and they like hearing the stories."

Not only is that connection enjoyable, it's valuable—helping students develop conversation and listening skills in addition to their clinical knowledge and experience.

"Obviously knowing how to do it all [dental hygiene skills] is important but being able to talk to the patient and relate to them and help them understand what you're doing—you wouldn't be able to do any of the other stuff without that," says Nelson.

The USI Dental Clinic aims to serve every veteran seeking treatment during its Give Back Weeks. Overflow appointments are honored, at no cost, at a later date. The clinic is open to adults and children from September through April. Call 812-464-1706 to schedule an appointment.

**Smile on Down Syndrome**

In an effort to give back to the community, students in the USI Dental Assisting Student Association visited the Smile on Down Syndrome organization in Evansville to teach individuals with Down syndrome about good oral care and help them with a craft activity.

The students taught basic brushing techniques, along with how to choose healthy snacks.

SMILE on Down Syndrome is committed to provide a network of support services to meet the physical, emotional, spiritual, social and educational needs of people of all ages with Down syndrome, their families and communities.



**OT/OTA Visit to Indiana State House**

Occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant students and Dr. Mary Kay Arvin, chair of occupational therapy, visited with Lt. Governor Suzanne Crouch at the Indiana State Capitol in January 2019. The students had the opportunity to meet state legislators, discuss their work and activities at USI, and tour the capitol building.



Micayla (Gonzalez) Argo '19 was named USI's 2019 Homecoming Queen. She is a senior pursuing her bachelor's degree in health services while concurrently taking courses toward a master's in health administration. She has served as an executive member of the Honors Student Council, Best Buddies and National Society of Collegiate Scholars, as well as a student ambassador and Welcome Week leader. When not studying or attending events, Gonzalez can be found training a future service dog. She plans to complete her master's degree and ultimately participate in medical missions. Pictured with Argo is Matthew Kreutzer, who was crowned Homecoming King, and USI's President Ronald Rochon.

**USI Students Host Nutrition Focused Physical Exam Workshops**

USI and St. Vincent Hospital hosted the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Nutrition Focused Physical Exam (NFPE) Hands-On Pediatric Training Workshop in February 2019 at St. Vincent Hospital in Evansville.

The training workshop provided registered dietitians (RDs) with the skills to perform an NFPE, allowing RDs to accurately identify and provide a nutrition diagnosis of malnutrition for patients.

Research shows that nutrition interventions of a patient with, or at risk for, malnutrition can decrease the length of stay, falls, pressure ulcers, infections, complications, re-admissions and decrease overall health care costs.

This workshop was a "train the trainer" type of event, which allows USI to host stand-alone Pediatric NFPE workshops, led by Beth Young, instructor in food and nutrition, to train RDs from the tri-state area.

USI students have hosted two adult NFPE workshops over the last two years.

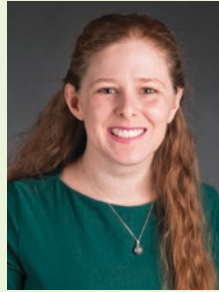
**MAKING HISTORY**

For the first time, back-to-back graduating BSN cohorts (Fall '18 and Spring '19) achieved 100% pass rates on the NCLEX-RN exam. The national average is usually around 86% to 88%. "This percentage is based upon first-time test takers, so no one had to complete the exam a second time to pass," said Dr Ann White, dean of the College of Nursing and Health Professions. "We have had isolated cohorts with 100% but I believe this is the first time in the history of the program that we have had back-to-back cohorts achieve 100%. What is even more exciting is that they all have jobs with 84% remaining in Indiana."





New Employees



**Carly Andrews**  
*coordinator of  
 clinical simulations*



**Kelley Collazo**  
*senior administrative  
 assistant, Center for  
 Health Professions  
 Lifelong Learning*



**Shellye Davis**  
*instructor in Nursing*



**Dr. Karen Dishman**  
*assistant professor  
 of Occupational  
 Therapy*



**Kelly Hartwick**  
*instructor in Nursing  
 and academic  
 practice partnerships  
 coordinator*



**Erica Hooker**  
*academic advisor,  
 Advising Center—  
 Nursing and Health  
 Professions*



**Angie Morris**  
*Indiana SANE  
 training coordinator*



**Dr. Monica O'Neil**  
*academic advisor*



**Ziporah Rascoe**  
*senior administrative  
 assistant,  
 Occupational  
 Therapy Assistant  
 Program*



**Lisa Riley**  
*administrative  
 assistant, Dental  
 Hygiene Program*



**Katelyn Russell**  
*instructor in Nursing*



**Jeremy Smith**  
*instructor in  
 Radiologic and  
 Imaging Sciences  
 Program*



**Deborah Sullivan**  
*instructor in Nursing*



**Michelle Wakefield**  
*instructor in Nursing*



**Dr. Zachary Ward**  
*assistant professor  
 of Health  
 Administration*



**Sean Weir**  
*assistant professor  
 of Occupational  
 Therapy Assistant and  
 academic fieldwork  
 coordinator of  
 Occupational  
 Therapy Assistant*

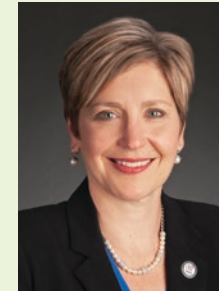
Promotions



**Joy Cook,**  
*associate professor  
 of Radiologic and  
 Imaging Sciences,  
 was named chair of  
 the program.*



**Dr. Katie Ehlman,**  
*associate professor  
 of Gerontology  
 and director of the  
 Center for Healthy  
 Aging and Wellness,  
 was promoted to  
 professor.*



**Dr. Jennifer Evans,**  
*assistant professor  
 of Nursing, was  
 promoted to  
 associate professor.*



**Dr. Mellisa Hall,**  
*associate professor  
 of Nursing and  
 chair of the Master  
 of Science in  
 Nursing Program,  
 was promoted to  
 professor.*



**Jennifer Nunning,**  
*instructor in  
 Occupational  
 Therapy Assistant,  
 was named  
 interim chair of the  
 program.*



**Dr. Erin Reynolds,**  
*assistant professor  
 of Health Services  
 Administration,  
 was promoted to  
 associate professor.*



**Katherine Peak,**  
*instructor in  
 Radiologic and  
 Imaging Sciences,  
 was promoted to  
 clinical assistant  
 professor.*



**Dr. Ekta Rathee,**  
*instructor in Nursing,  
 was promoted to  
 assistant professor.*



Promotions (continued)



**Heather Schmuck**, clinical assistant professor of Radiologic and Imaging Sciences, was promoted to clinical associate professor and named clinical coordinator for the program.



**Pam Thomas**, instructor in Nursing, was promoted to clinical assistant professor.



**Connie Walker** was named director of advising, Advising Center—Nursing and Health Professions.

Retirement



**Dr. Roberta Hoebeke** was named professor emerita of Nursing. She retired at the end of the spring 2019 semester with 17 years of service.



COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS  
FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AWARDS

Two teams of faculty members received 2019 College of Nursing and Health Professions Faculty Development Awards for projects involving interprofessional education and collaboration:



Connerton



Theuri

**Dr. Charlotte Connerton**, assistant professor of nursing and **Dr. Serah Theuri**, associate professor of food and nutrition, received a Faculty Development Award to conduct a wellness project in the spring of 2020 for faculty, staff and students. Their team currently consists of nursing and food and nutrition faculty with a goal to add other professions.

**Joy Cook**, associate professor and program director for the Radiologic and Imaging Sciences Program, **Heather Schmuck**, clinical associate professor in radiologic and imaging sciences, and **Amanda Reddington**, clinical assistant professor of dental hygiene and dental assisting received a Faculty Development Award to help students in their programs understand the risks of ionizing radiation and also the use and care of lead apparel. Four groups consisting of both radiology and dental students will assess the integrity of lead apparel through visual, tactile and radiographic inspection. Students will also study lead apparel hygiene and the risk of this apparel to harbor microorganisms which may lead to infections.



Cook



Schmuck



Reddington

ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIP GRANT

**Dr. Charlotte Connerton**, **Dr. Mary Doerner** and **Dr. Jeri Burger**, all members of USI's nursing faculty, have received a \$2,079 grant from Academic Partnerships to develop the process for the RN to BSN Program assessment. Workshops were held on May 20 and May 23, 2019, to identify key elements of assignment to demonstrate meeting RN to BSN program outcomes and the development of assessment rubrics for evaluation.



Connerton



Doerner



Burger

Faculty Achievements



**Dr. Jeri Burger's** proposal, *Evaluation of Measures to Promote Social Presence in Accelerated Online Courses*, was approved for an award from the USI Faculty Awards for Service, Teaching and Research Committee (FASTRC). Burger is associate professor of nursing and chair of the RN Completion Program.



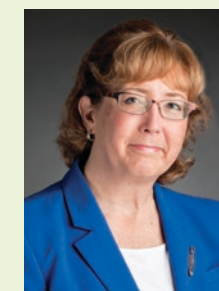
**Joy Cook**, associate professor and program director for the Radiologic and Imaging Sciences Program, has been appointed chair of the Bylaws Committee for the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT). This position is by appointment by the ASRT Speaker of the House and is a one-year term, which began September 1, 2019, and will end on August 31, 2020. As chairman, Cook is responsible for facilitating all meetings of the Bylaws Committee and required to attend the 2020 Annual Governance and House of Delegates meeting at ASRT headquarters in Albuquerque, New Mexico.



**Dr. Katie Ehlman**, professor of gerontology and director of USI's Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness, has been named the inaugural holder of the Hershel B. Whitney Professorship in Gerontology. The University of Southern Indiana Foundation received a leadership gift from the estate of the late Hershel B. Whitney to USI's College of Nursing and Health Professions which included \$1.1 million for the establishment of the professorship. Ehlman also received the Dr. Jane Davis-Brezette Faculty Excellence Award, presented to a USI faculty member who has contributed to the success of USI Athletics by mentoring student athletes and helping them to achieve their goals in the classroom and beyond.



Evans



Seibert

**Dr. Jennifer Evans**, assistant professor of nursing, and **Dr. Susan Seibert**, instructor in nursing, gave a podium presentation, "Bridging the Gap: Linking Academia and Practice," at Sigma's 45th Biennial Convention in Washington, D.C., in November 2019. Their presentation was one of three at a symposium highlighting nursing research outcomes from the Healthcare Research Consortium, an academic-practice partnership involving schools of nursing and health care organizations within the tri-state. More than 2,000 Sigma members and global leaders in nursing attended the convention.



## FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS



**Jane Friona**, executive director of Southwest Indiana Area Health Education Center (SWI-AHEC), has been named the recipient of the 2019 Behind the Scenes Award from the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA). This national award recognizes an individual who has made significant contributions to promote ENA's mission of advocating for patient safety and excellence in emergency nursing practice. Friona received the award October 1, 2019, after the Emergency Nursing 2019 conference in Austin, Texas. In December 2018, Friona received the statewide Behind

the Scenes Award from the Indiana State Council of the ENA at its meeting in Indianapolis. Under Friona's leadership, SWI-AHEC has offered a five-day SANE course for the past four years at USI—an area of Indiana that had not hosted a training since 2006. She is currently implementing the Indiana SANE Training Project, funded through a \$1 million, three-year grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration to provide advanced nursing education to increase the number of SANEs state-wide.



**Dr. Mikel Hand**, associate professor of nursing, is the recipient of the USI Tenured Faculty Grant to conduct a pilot study concerning death and dying and advance directives in correctional health care. This study is a collaborative effort along with Dr. Sheryl Mitchell, clinical associate professor, University of South Carolina Columbia College of Nursing and Dr. Angela Wooton, assistant professor of nursing, University of Evansville. This pilot study involves correctional nurses practicing in New York and California and will serve as the basis for future research at a regional and national level.



**Dr. Elizabeth Kalb**, project coordinator for nursing, is part of a team addressing the American Psychological Association's Interprofessional Education (IPE) activities. She collaborates with other psychologists who are housed in schools or colleges of nursing across the United States. Kalb and Dr. Wendy Ward of Little Rock, Arkansas, plan to submit a three-part article series on IPE work in psychology to the journal, *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*.



**Katherine Peak**, instructor in radiologic and imaging sciences, passed the pediatric sonography national certification exam. She is now one of seven in the state of Indiana to hold credentials in abdomen, OB/GYN, pediatric and vascular sonography.



**Jenny Nunning**, instructor in occupational therapy assistant and interim chair of the program, is the recipient of the College of Nursing and Health Professions' Faculty Excellence in Teaching award for 2018-19.



**Amy Wilson**, chair of the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program, presented a new webinar for the international Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonography (SDMS) to serve as a "clinical refresher" on its website.



**Dr. Gabriela Mustata Wilson**, chair of the Health Informatics and Information Management Program was elected a member of the Technology Informatics Guiding Education Reform (TIGER) International Taskforce, which includes 58 members and liaisons representing 25 countries.

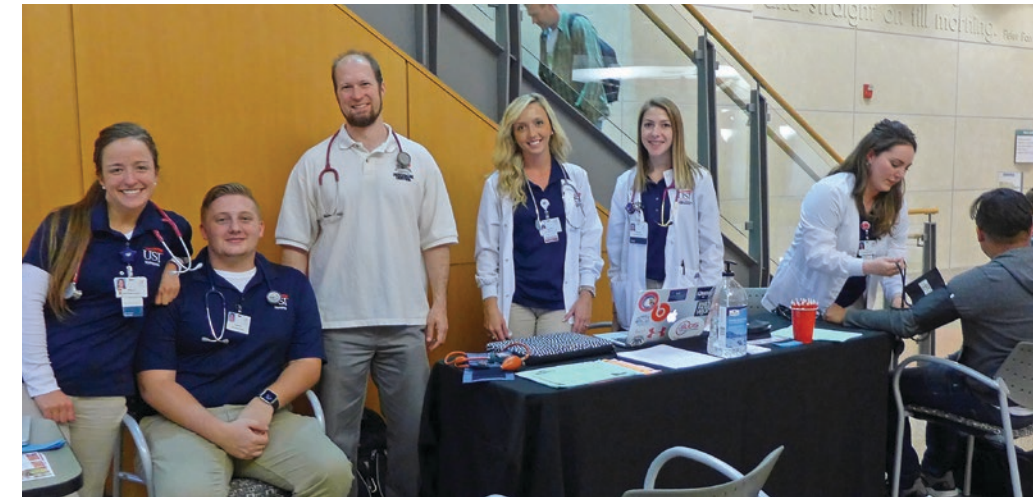
TIGER is a grassroots initiative focused on education reform, fostering interprofessional community development and global workforce development. TIGER is part of Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society.



**Beth Young**, instructor in food and nutrition, is the recipient of the College of Nursing and Health Professions' Faculty Excellence in Teaching award for 2018-19.

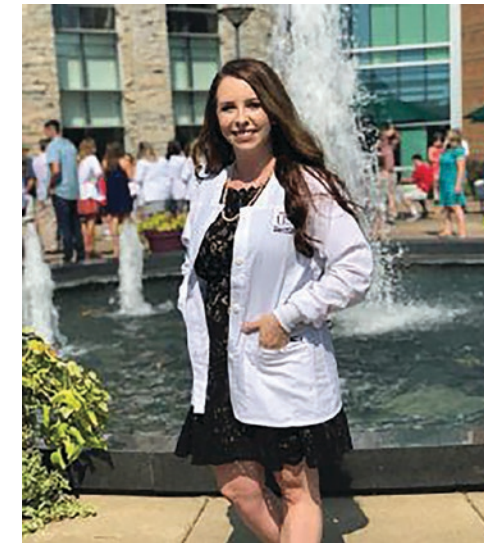
## STUDENT NEWS

### Learning Service Project at the Public Library



John Rich, RN '12 from Patchwork Central and Helen Azarian from the Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library helped USI nursing students plan and execute a recent service learning project. They provided blood pressure screening and education, taught patrons how to access credible health information on the internet, as well as how to determine when a health condition warrants an emergency room visit or when a primary care provider is more appropriate for care.

### USI BSN Student Receives National Scholarship



A desire to be a travel nurse, strong work ethic and passion to help others through the nursing profession are three qualities that made Abigail Fletcher stand out from a nationwide field of applicants for the spring 2019 scholarship from Travel Nurse Across America. The full-time nursing student at USI was awarded the \$2,500 scholarship to help her complete her bachelor's degree in May 2020.

### Nursing and Health Professions Students Honored as Presidential Scholars



A luncheon was held during the spring 2019 semester honoring students who have received the prestigious Presidential, B/MD and Deans Scholars scholarships. Donors of the awards were present and enjoyed visiting with the scholarship recipients. Two nursing students in attendance from the class of 2020 were Amberlyn Pride and Kate Hamilton, both recipients of the Presidential Scholarship. Hamilton presented the luncheon address, focusing on her USI experience.

### IONE Scholarships

Two graduate nursing students have received 2019 scholarships from the Indiana Organization of Nurse Executives (IONE):

- Carrie Sullivan is health center manager and senior nurse practitioner for Cerner Population Health. She is currently in the USI's Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program.
- Kelsey Quiambao is enrolled in USI's Master of Science in Nursing Program pursuing the nursing management and leadership specialty. She works as the valve clinic coordinator for St. Vincent Evansville.

IONE awards several scholarships in its mission to shape health care through expert nursing leadership. These scholarships are funded through the purchase of IONE nursing license plates through the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles.



## Bringing Radiology to the World

Radiology is a part of nearly every segment of health care. However, over half the world lacks access to vital medical imaging, such as X-ray, CT, ultrasound and MRI, impacting diagnosis and treatment of cancer, heart disease, infections, trauma and prenatal care. USI students responded to this global health disparity by participating in a service project to assist a hospital, over 8,000 miles away in Laos, southeast Asia.

Joy Cook, associate professor and chair of the Radiologic and Imaging Sciences Program, said she was contacted in fall 2018 by a radiology colleague from Indiana on a mission trip in Laos through RAD-AID, an international nonprofit public service agency, and the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT).

“Kristen Sprunger, a RAD-AID team member from Indiana, was sent to Laos to help improve radiology services and examination technique. While on this mission, she worked with three nurses who volunteered to become the imaging technologists,” said Cook. “Because the hospital had a single portable X-ray machine and only one X-ray imaging capture plate,

she asked us for assistance in finding additional X-ray imaging cassettes.”

Cook presented this service opportunity to the USI Theta Chi chapter of Lambda Nu National Radiologic and Imaging Sciences Honor Society. The chapter, eager to impact health care across the globe, sent out several requests to local businesses for donations. Scott Wasson, president of Evansville-based Radiology Services LLC, responded to the call and donated two imaging cassettes. Funding from the USI honor society was used to ship these cassettes to Laos Friends Hospital for Children during the spring 2019 semester.

A representative from the hospital contacted Cook to express their gratitude. She wrote, “Thank you very much to you and to the honor society students of the University of Southern Indiana for the kind effort and donation for our radiology team. We truly appreciate your support. These cassettes will be of very good use, and our team was happy and excited to receive them.”

“Laos Friends Hospital for Children was built three years ago with funding from a nonprofit group, Friends with No Borders. RAD-AID International is working with

Friends with No Borders to give the imaging technologists information they need to be successful,” said Cook. “This project not only helped the children’s hospital in Laos, but also opened the eyes of our USI radiology students who were unaware of RAD-AID’s mission to increase and improve radiology resources in the developing and impoverished countries.”

Katelyn Earl ’19, said she and the other officers of the Lambda Nu Theta Chi chapter were extremely humbled to have had the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those who share their passion for imaging in health care. “We hope our contribution has helped those in need and will allow for the continuation of quality care in Laos,” she said. “We strive to provide support wherever it is needed, because in the end we must be there to lend a hand to one other.”



Officers of the USI Theta Chi chapter of Lambda Nu National Radiologic and Imaging Sciences Honor Society received a donation of X-ray imaging cassettes from Radiology Services LLC which were shipped to a children’s hospital in Laos. Left to right: Alexis Warren, Katelyn Earl, Scott Wasson (president and owner of Radiology Services, LLC), Kimberly Gisler and Jasmine Martin.



Kristen Sprunger, second from left, is a RAD-AID team member from Indiana who helped train imaging technologists at Laos Friends Hospital for Children.



## Radiologic and Imaging Sciences and Patient Safety

Graduating students from the radiology class of 2019 participated in educating other health care providers about the different safety concerns in the radiology department at their clinical education center as part of patient safety week.

The *Wizard of Oz* theme of the patient safety poster, created with Makenzie Jones, their clinical instructor at Deaconess Midtown Hospital, demonstrates how other patient transfer mechanisms within the hospital can create safety issues within the radiology department.

*Trang Nguyen as Dorothy the patient, Makayla Williams as the scarecrow, Mariah Kesterson as the lion, Alexis Warren as the tin man and Lindsey Emge as the witch.*

## Unleashing the Power of Plants (continued)

“We cover a variety of topics that tie back in to eating healthy and growing your own foods,” Young says.

“It was exciting to learn that we would develop lesson plans to help teach kids about nutrition and health, and that we’re growing things to go with it,” says Brianna Lynch ’19, food and nutrition.

“I love the fact that we are going to be able to do this with young kids,” adds Mackenzie Hart ’19, public relations and advertising. She recently added a nutrition minor and says working with her classmates to build the tower was a breakthrough, of sorts. “We were passing each other the parts and problem solving as a unit, so it was really cool,” Hart says. “I almost think we have a different vibe in the classroom [now], more open communication.”

Community Nutrition students were invited to take home produce harvested from the indoor garden before those seedlings and plants were gifted to Southern Roots, a student growers club that maintains an outdoor garden on campus. New seedlings will be planted inside.

The project may not have happened if not for Sally Gries Smith ’02 M’16, director of community engagement and special projects. Smith, a nutrition enthusiast, was attending an American Heart Association breakfast on campus more than a year ago when an idea popped into her mind and wouldn’t go away.

“I was just like, ‘We’ve got to get a tower up here [in the Health Professions Center]. I don’t know how, but we’ve got to get a tower up here,’” Smith recalls. “I know its impact in other communities and its impact in other schools, and that’s important to me. I just know it will be a good impact on this campus. It just felt like a natural place for it.”

Smith has seen—and tasted—the results of the indoor garden tower: she has one at home and helped Young’s class install theirs.



“The more I learn, the more I believe in the power of plants,” says Smith, who still enjoys checking on the garden’s progress.

Real world, hands-on applications are a vital component to Young’s classes. “It’s not just a mock thing or a case study. USI’s students are impacting the way these kids think about food.”

And, hopefully, doing it well enough to inspire a new generation to not just eat their vegetables, but grow them, too, as they expand their healthy-eating habits.



Respiratory Therapy Alumni

**RT Alumni Help USI Employee**

USI Public Safety officers are used to helping others, but sometimes, the tables are turned. Tami Jaramillo Zuniga, staff sergeant, said when she needed help, USI respiratory therapy graduates came to her aid.

On August 18, 2019, Jaramillo Zuniga had a major anaphylactic reaction following a bee sting. “When I arrived at the hospital, my airway was closing and had to be intubated and placed on life support,” she said. “Those life saving measures were performed by graduates from our USI Respiratory Therapy Program. The entire time I was in the hospital, all the RTs I had were from USI.”

She recovered and visited the USI Wellness Fair on September 25 to share her story, and also to thank Wes Phy, clinical assistant professor and chair of Respiratory Therapy, for “having such a great respiratory program.”

“The USI graduates at the hospital literally saved my life,” Zuniga said.



*Tami Jaramillo Zuniga, Public Safety staff sergeant, and USI respiratory students*

Matthew Canfield '14, associate of science respiratory therapy, is currently enrolled in the completion BSRT Program, and has been awarded the PHIL Award at IU Health Academic Center in Indianapolis. This award is given to a respiratory care therapist who has demonstrated professionalism and extraordinary clinical care while showing compassion and empathy to the families served in the IU Health system.

**MILESTONES: FIRST GRADUATING CLASSES**

Health Informatics and Information Management



*Muhamad Almoneef*

On Saturday, April 27, the University of Southern Indiana’s Health Informatics and Information Management (HIIM) Program ushered in its inaugural graduating class. Five individuals graced the stage in USI’s new Screaming Eagles Arena, hearing their names called as the first of many students to become alumni of the Health Informatics and Information Management (HIIM) Program.

“I could not be more proud,” said Dr. Gabriela Mustata Wilson, associate professor of health informatics and chair of HIIM. “Our students’ hard work, sacrifices and dedication have been rewarded, and I look forward to seeing all of them reap the benefits as they pursue careers in a new era of health care.”

One of the HIIM graduates, Muhamad Almoneef, said he had the opportunity to learn about telemedicine during his student internship. “The concept of telemedicine is to minimize the destination between different hospitals and to keep health providers in contact with patients,” he said. “Also, by the end of the program, I was equipped with different skills in analyzing data that qualifies me to be a researcher in the future.”

Michelle Goebel, who was a student in the degree completion program, described the HIIM Program as “an exciting challenge.” She said, “It gave me the inspiration to grow professionally and enhance my knowledge in project management, data analysis and health care information technology. Taking steps to educate individuals on the current stance and future of HIT, will enable us to be better prepared for the changes yet to come.”



*Michelle Goebel*

Nursing Alumni



Amanda Blanton '09 M'17, nursing—clinical nurse specialist track, was named Deaconess’ Advanced Practice Provider of the Year in November 2018. She graduated with her associate degree in nursing from USI in 2007, her bachelor’s from USI in 2009 and Emory University’s WOCNEC program in 2009 before her CNS in 2017. She started at Deaconess in March 2006 as a student nurse.

*Shawn McCoy, Deaconess CEO; Amanda Blanton; and Cherona Hajewski, vice president, patient care services and chief nursing executive.*

**Respiratory Therapy**

Respiratory therapy also celebrated an important milestone at the 2019 commencement ceremonies with the first class graduating with a four-year degree in respiratory therapy (BSRT).

For more than 20 years, USI has offered an associate’s degree in respiratory therapy. At the beginning of 2016, Wes Phy, clinical assistant professor and chair of Respiratory Therapy, led the transition to the four-year entry level program that offers a comprehensive curriculum including hands-on training and direct clinical experience for students interested in pursuing a bachelor’s degree in respiratory therapy.

“It’s an historic event,” said Phy, referring to the graduation of the first four-year degree students. “It’s been a great opportunity for USI to offer a higher degree in respiratory therapy. All but one of our 16 graduates took the board exams in the first month after graduation, and they all passed on the first attempt. We are proud of our brand new registered respiratory therapists.”

One of these students, Kayla Deckard, is currently working as a respiratory therapist at Deaconess Gateway Hospital. “I can now use the skills I have learned over the years to provide the best care possible to every patient that comes my way,” she said. “Knowing that one has breathed easier because of me is the best feeling in the world.”



One of her most memorable learning experiences at USI was when she and her classmates had the opportunity to ventilate one of the anesthesiologists from St. Vincent using a bag valve mask. She said the USI program not only prepared her for her BSRT certification, but also led her to “meeting some of the greatest friends.”



## Center for Health Professions Lifelong Learning

### 2020 Conferences

- January 29-30, Pediatric Conference
- February 17, Homelessness Symposium
- March 9-13, Adult/Adolescent/Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Training—(Hybrid online and live) Online begins February 10
- March 10, Respecting Choices® First Steps®—(Hybrid online and live) Online begins February 10
- April 1, 17th Annual Nursing Leadership Conference
- April 15, 24th Annual Research, Evidence-Based Practice and Performance Improvement In Health Care Conference (abstracts accepted)
- May 6, 26th Annual Midwest Care Coordination Conference
- May 8, 22nd Annual Advanced Practice Nursing Symposium\*
- May 13-15, 37th Annual Institute for Alcohol and Drug Studies (IADS)
- May 19, 2nd Annual Strengthening the Health Care Team (abstracts accepted)
- August 5-7, 13th Annual Mid-America Institute on Aging and Wellness (MAIA)
- September 16, Advance Care Planning Conference
- September 22, Respecting Choices® First Steps®—(Hybrid online and live) Online begins August 24
- September 26, Dental Ethics
- October 2, 17th Annual Pharmacology Update for Health Care Professionals\*
- October 14, Health Professions Educator Conference (abstracts accepted)
- October 21, 7th Annual Health Informatics Tri-State Summit (HITS) (abstracts accepted)

### 2020 Online Certificate Programs

- Anticoagulation Therapy Management, eight weeks, begins January 6, March 9, May 11, July 27 and October 5\*
- Case Management, eight weeks, begins March 23 and August 10
- Clinical Simulation, six weeks, begins March 9 and September 14
- Coding (Medical), hybrid—16 weeks with three face-to-face Saturday labs, begins January 13 and July 6
- Complementary and Alternative Medicine Program (CAM), eight weeks, begins March 9 and September 14



- Dental Coronal Polishing, hybrid—six weeks with one face-to-face Saturday lab, begins March 2
- Dental Fluoride Application, hybrid—six weeks with one face-to-face Saturday lab, begins March 2
- Dental Local Anesthesia, hybrid—six weeks with one face-to-face weekend lab, begins January 6
- Diabetes, 10 weeks, begins February 3 and August 3\*
- Faith Community Nursing, six weeks, begins March 16 and September 14
- Health Informatics, 10 weeks, begins January 27 and August 3
- Health Promotion and Worksite Wellness, eight weeks, begins January 6 and September 14
- Heart Failure, seven weeks, begins January 13, September 21\*
- Hypertension Management, seven weeks, begins February 10 and July 27\*
- Integrating Behavioral Health into Primary Care, eight weeks, begins January 6 and August 10
- Lipid Management, nine weeks, begins January 20 and September 14\*
- Oncology Management, 10 weeks, begins March 9 and August 10\*
- Pain Management, eight weeks, begins January 13 and August 3\*
- Wound Management, eight weeks, begins January 27 and September 21

### Independent Study Programs:

- Anticoagulation: Oral
- Anticoagulation: Patient Self-Testing
- Changes to the POST and Health Care Consent Laws
- Limited Cardiac Catheterization Radiography Certification
- Opioid Program
- Pediatric Type 1 Diabetes
- Pediatric Pain Management with Opioid and Opioid Alternatives

### Registration and Program Information

Visit [USI.edu/health](https://www.usi.edu/health) or call:

Conferences:

812-464-1989

Certificate Programs:

812-461-5217