

CCN RESEARCH

Newsletter
Spring 2020

Faculty Spotlight

Capstone College of Nursing Assistant Professor, Dr. Megan Lippe, has been named a Sojourns Scholar by the Cambia Health Foundation. The leadership program seeks applicants across various disciplines to advance palliative care. Nurses, physicians, physician assistants, pharmacists, psychologists, social workers, chaplains, and health systems executives undergo a rigorous selection process that ultimately results in the selection of ten emerging palliative care leaders. Each member of the Sojourns Scholar cohort is recognized for working toward a holistic, sustainable, healing, and person-focused health care system. The Sojourns Scholar Leadership Program identifies, cultivates, and advances the next generation of palliative care leaders through supporting innovative projects and investing in their professional development. Each Sojourns Scholar receives \$180,000 in funding over two years to implement an innovative and impactful project in the field of palliative care. Projects can target the clinical, policy, educational, advocacy, or systems change aspect of palliative care. The two-year grant is also used to execute a leadership development plan designed to support the individual's growth as a national leader in the field. The newest Sojourns Scholar cohort will participate with other scholars in a collaborative learning community.

Dr. Lippe recognizes a shortcoming in the education and formal training of nurses across the nation resulting in suboptimal care for patients with serious illnesses and their families. Dr. Lippe is utilizing her position in the Sojourns Scholar Leadership Program to address this critical gap in nursing practice in Alabama.



Dr. Megan Lippe

"Through my past experience and my dedication to PC education, I am well-positioned to address this critical gap in nursing practice in Alabama and hopefully one day throughout the nation."
– Dr. Megan Lippe



2020 Sojourns Scholars cohort

She designed an initiative to enhance the provision of palliative care in Alabama through advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) education on scope of practice and leadership relating to palliative care advocacy at state and national levels. APRNs practicing in rural primary care settings will receive online education through the End of Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) Graduate curriculum. The APRNs will participate in focus groups identifying barriers to and facilitators of palliative care provision with subsequent prioritization of these factors. Furthermore, Dr. Lippe will promote leadership and advocacy through delivering a presentation to the Alabama State Advisory Council for Palliative Care and Quality of Life. She recognizes the importance of education coupled with close collaboration of APRNs to promote palliative care in Alabama. Dr. Lippe's primary project mentor is Dr. Polly Mazanec, project lead of ELNEC-Graduate and ELNEC-Undergraduate, with additional mentorship from CCN's Dr. Kristi Acker. Dr. Lippe will receive additional mentorship from Dr. Patricia Davidson, Sojourn Scholar National Advisory Committee member and Dean of Johns Hopkins School of Nursing. The Capstone College of Nursing faculty, staff, and students look forward to supporting Dr. Lippe through her Sojourns Scholar experience as she develops into a future palliative care leader with significant professional visibility and advanced palliative care expertise.



Capstone College of
Nursing

Undergraduate Research

Six students from the University of Alabama had the opportunity to display their undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative endeavors in the field of nursing while attending the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) March 26th to 28th at Montana State University.

Addison Crowder and Amanda Justice started conducting research while enrolled in “Honors Inquiry for Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing” at the Capstone College of Nursing. This course places an emphasis on students’ ability to identify practice issues, assess levels of evidence, identify and synthesize evidence, participate in quality improvement, and evaluate outcomes. Ultimately, students learn the significance of the translation of nursing research into practice. Crowder states, “I first became interested in research while working with Dr. Lippe. I saw that all good nursing practice is supported through evidence based research, and I wanted to be a part of it.” Justice adds that her interest in nursing research lead her to pursue research outside of the classroom setting.

Under the direction of multiple CCN faculty members, students have participated in various aspects of the research process including thematic analysis of qualitative data, conducting literature reviews, and writing manuscripts. Crowder sought a particular research project due to a family connection with dementia. This exemplifies her passion for nursing research coupled with her desire to improve the quality of life in underserved populations.

Justice states, “From attending NCUR, I hope to gain confidence in presenting research, as this will be my first time presenting research at a conference. Additionally, I hope to learn a lot about current research from everyone else attending this conference.” After careful monitoring of COVID-19 and thoughtful consideration, Montana State University cancelled NCUR. The Capstone College of Nursing extends sincere apologies to the students and faculty mentors who were unable to present their hard work. The Capstone College of Nursing faculty and staff look forward to promoting undergraduate research as an immersive experience as well as upcoming opportunities for undergraduate students to present their work.

Undergraduate Researchers Accepted to Present at NCUR: Rachel Castillo, Nicole Conde, Addison Crowder, Amanda Justice, Lexi Prizgint, MacKenzie Robb

2020 Randall Outstanding Undergraduate Research Award Recipients

- Addison Crowder for her project, “Variables Impacting the Quality of Life of Dementia Caregivers” (mentored by Megan Lippe)
- Landry Coupe for her project, “Opioid Toxicity and Naloxone Training for Baccalaureate Nursing Students” (mentored by Cheryl Hines & Shameka Cody)
- Allison Ricamato for her project, “Withdrawing Care for an Unexpectedly Ill Patient: Interprofessional Simulations” (mentored by Megan Lippe)
- Hillary Melton for her project, “Telomere Length, Life Simple 7, and Psychosocial Factors among African American Women.” (mentored by Theresa Wadas)
- MacKenzie Robb for her project, "Testing the Feasibility and Acceptability of a Virtual Reality Delivered Behavioral Intervention for Opioid Use Disorder in Rural Alabama" (mentored by Mercy Mumba)



Capstone College of
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CCN RESEARCH

Grants Awarded

Cody, S. (PI) *The Impact of Insomnia on Pain, Physical Function, and Inflammation in HIV*. Diversity Supplement. National Institutes of Health. \$188,806.

Key, Betty (PI). *Panola Munch and Learn*. Council on Community Based Partnerships Seed Fund. \$5,000.

Andrabi, M. (PI) & Mumba, M. (Co-I) *A Pilot Study on Feasibility and Efficacy of a Nursing Concept Based Yoga Program on Psychological Distress of First Semester Upper Division Nursing Students*. Sigma Theta Tau International, Epsilon Omega Chapter Research Grant. \$500.

Hooper, G. L. (PI) Jones, D. (Co-PI). *Investigating the Real-Life Experience of Living with Urinary Incontinence and Heart Failure in a Rural Community: A Case Study Approach*. Rural Nursing Organization. \$500.

Montgomery, M. (Co-PI), Johnson, P. (Co-PI), Hooper, A. (Co-I), & Waid, A. (Collaborator). *Alabama Counts! 2020 Census Grant*. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs. \$40,000.

CCN Research Society

The CCN Research Society continues to work toward recruiting new members and faculty research mentors. The purpose of this club is to increase student interest in, and knowledge of, undergraduate research. The ultimate goal is increasing the number of students who develop their own research projects. Students in both lower division and upper division are encouraged to join the club. The research club meets once a month on Monday afternoon. This year, several faculty and students have presented their research at the monthly meetings. In addition to club meetings, members are planning to present at the Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Conference to be held in the spring. A record number of students are working with faculty members on research projects that should yield presentations and publications from their collaboration.

Senior members of the CCN Research Society who attend meetings regularly and are in good standing, will be wearing an honor cord to recognize their membership during graduation ceremonies. A sincere thank you goes out to the club leadership during the 2019-2020 academic year: Brooke Bambis, Caitlin Saenz, Josie Niedermeier, and Landry Coupe.

If you are interested in serving as a mentor to assist an undergraduate student in developing a research project, if you are able to include an undergraduate student in your program of research, or if you are interested in speaking about your research at a club meeting, please contact Dr. Paige Johnson (ptjohnso@ua.edu) or Dr. Michele Montgomery (mmontgomery1@ua.edu). If you are an undergraduate student who would like to become involved with the CCN Research Society and would like more information, please email ccnresearchsociety@gmail.com.



Publication Highlight

Welch, T., Strickland, H., & Sartain, A. (2019). Transition to nursing practice: A capstone simulation for the application of leadership skills in nursing practice. *Teaching and Learning in Nursing, 14*(4), 283-287. doi:10.1016/j.teln.2019.06.002

The clinical environment is becoming highly specialized as patient acuity levels increase. The fast-paced turnover for patients coupled with the increasing demands of nursing resources calls for an innovative and transformative educational experience in order to prepare nursing students for the transition to professional nursing. Professional nurses are expected to exemplify autonomy while they effectively manage multiple patients with personalized complexities and challenges in an evolving technological health care environment. Furthermore, professional nurses are expected to manage the competing priorities of patients, family members, and the interdisciplinary health care team. To be successful, new graduates must exhibit competency and proficiency in the provision of evidence-based care when making critical decisions regarding patient care. Welch, Strickland, and Sartain noted that there are limited academic clinical experiences that have been implemented to prepare nursing students for fulfilling their role as a professional nurse upon graduation. The purpose of the large-scale capstone high-fidelity simulation was to immerse senior-level nursing students into the authentic role of the professional nurse. Due to limitations and safety concerns in the clinical environment, it is difficult for students to exercise autonomy; however, simulation provides students a safe environment to practice high-risk, high-acuity situations without having to collaborate with faculty before performing patient care. Students effectively transferred theory into practice during various intensive care unit scenarios which included i-Stan high-fidelity simulators as critical patients, faculty and staff “actors” to represent family members, comprehensive health records, and equipment such as ventilators, monitors, ventriculostomy, and multiple intravenous lines. Students were expected to prioritize and manage patient care while mastering delegation and critical thinking following the report. Students provided positive feedback on the opportunity to be autonomous in managing multiple complex clients, authenticity of the simulation and their interaction with “actors”, and their ability to apply skills such as problem-solving, decision-making, and critical thinking under pressure. These findings support the implementation of a capstone simulation to promote a smoother transition into the role of a professional nurse. The creative and dynamic learning opportunity fostered students’ leadership qualities in professional nursing practice. Welch, Strickland, and Sartain’s capstone simulation provided students a unique opportunity to synthesize the knowledge and skills learned throughout the program of study while equipping them with the tools and resources needed to overcome challenges associated with the transition to the role of a professional nurse.

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