



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA
MEDICAL CENTERSM

ALUMNI

College of Nursing Alumni Engagement Council Newsletter | Fall 2017

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWS

Message From the CON Alumni Engagement Council President

Rita K. Schmitz, '83, MSN, RN

Dear Fellow Alumni:

It is an honor to assume the role of president of our Alumni Engagement Council. A huge thank you to Amy Thimm '91, for her skilled leadership these last few years. I also want to welcome Michael Wharton '93, to the Vice Presidency position and into the role as CON representative on the UNMC Alumni Association Board of Directors. I look forward to all members of the Council working collectively to engage alumni and friends in the life and promotion of the University. I sincerely hope that we can continue to enhance our support for UNMC nursing students through the formation of meaningful student to alumni relationships.

It is such an exciting year for the UNMC College of Nursing as we celebrate *A Century of Academic Nursing Excellence: Transforming the Future*. Activities are being held on all campuses throughout the 2017-2018 academic year to celebrate the College's centennial anniversary.

Friday, October 20th, 244 alumni, students, and friends of the College gathered at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Omaha for the College of Nursing Centennial Gala. It was a privilege to recognize our two College of Nursing Alumni Award recipients, the inaugural class of Hall of Fame inductees and hear from keynote speaker Deborah Trautman, PhD, RN, FAAN, President and Chief Executive Officer of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. You can view photos from this special event [here](#). You can read more about all of the honorees down below.

As the holidays steadily approach us, I wish you and yours health and happiness. It would be wonderful if our paths would cross in the future. If you have an interest in getting involved with the CON Alumni Engagement Council, you can learn more below.

Sincerely,

Rita K. Schmitz, '83, MSN, RN

2017 CON Alumni Engagement Council Award Recipients

During UNMC Alumni Reunion Weekend, the College of Nursing Alumni Engagement Council presented two awards. Below are the recipients who were recognized during the College of Nursing Centennial Gala on Friday, October 20th. Photos from Alumni Reunion Weekend 2017 are online to view [here](#).

Distinguished Alumnus Award

Mary C. Sullivan, PhD, RN, FAAN '81



Dr. Mary Sullivan is a Professor at the University of Rhode Island, College of Nursing. She has been involved in interdisciplinary research in the field of developmental pediatrics for more than 25 years. Her research program examines the developmental outcomes of premature infants in a series of longitudinal studies funded by the National Institutes of Health. It is one of the longest U.S. studies of premature infants with a recently completed project of a cohort at age 23 years. The latest study examines the impact of prematurity, medical history, and environments on young adult health, function, behavior and achievement. Assessments included biomarkers of blood chemistry, pulmonary function testing, cardiopulmonary response to exercise and metabolic functioning, and

HPA (hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis) function by salivary cortisol. The intent is to show whether prematurity impacts health and whether early disease onset can be explained by alterations in HPA function.

While in Omaha, Dr. Sullivan presented the Distinguished Alumnus Award Lecture entitled, "Born Too Soon: Premature Infants & Their Development to Adulthood". The lecture was broadcast to all College of Nursing campuses.

Nursing Excellence Award

Douglass Haas, MSN, APRN-NP, AGACNP-BC, CCRN '09, '15



Douglass Haas, graduated from Garden County High School in Oshkosh, Nebraska in 2005. He received his BSN degree from the UNMC College of Nursing-Kearney Division in December of 2009. He then worked at CHI Health Good Samaritan Hospital as a Staff Nurse in the Progressive Care & Intensive Care Units as well as the Emergency Department until January of 2015. He received his MSN as an Adult/Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner from UNMC CON in May of 2015. After completion of his APRN degree he worked as a Cardiology Nurse Practitioner at the Nebraska Heart Institute – Kearney Campus from June 2015 until July 2017. He is currently employed as a Nurse

Specialist/Instructor at the UNMC College of Nursing-Kearney Division and is working toward a Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree as well as a Post Masters Certificate as a Family Nurse Practitioner from UNMC.

Read their full bios [here](#).

The College of Nursing Innovation Fund: Learn how your donations matter



In partnership with the University of Nebraska Foundation, we are actively leading an annual giving program to promote academic excellence and innovation in the College and to support the people and programs of your UNMC Alumni Association. Your investment in the College of Nursing Innovation Fund helps provide funding for high-impact initiatives, which benefit all students and programs of the College. In FY 2017 these initiatives included the White Coat ceremonies, celebrating the College's centennial anniversary, and support of the College's written history. Future initiatives include those above and also matching dollars for participation in scholarship programs for students and supporting nursing faculty in their professional development.

[Pledge your donation of support here.](#) To see the impact of gifts to the CON Innovation Fund, view the [impact report here.](#)

Legislative Update

In the spring, we shared information with alumni in Nebraska regarding how the State of Nebraska's budget impacts the University of Nebraska. Thank you to those who expressed support for the University to their state senator. We want to continue to keep you informed about how the Nebraska Legislature and the state budget impacts the University and how we educate the state's health professions workforce.

The University of Nebraska is actively taking measures that will help us see cost savings over the next several years, so that we can meet the \$49 million budget shortfall that we are facing. To stay engaged and learn more, please click [here](#).

Seeking Volunteers for the Alumni Engagement Council

We are seeking CON alumni to apply for consideration on the Alumni Engagement Council. A helpful packet of information has been created and is available for your review [here](#). Please thoughtfully consider this opportunity to reconnect with your alma mater and to give back. For questions, please contact Kat Hamilton in the Alumni Relations Office: kat.hamilton@unmc.edu or 402.559.1063.

Submit your news for Class Notes

The UNMC Alumni Relations Office publishes class notes twice a year in the UNMC [CONNECT magazine](#). We want to hear from you!

Please consider [using this link](#) to provide your personal or professional news, including:

- Employment news: new job, promotion, or retirement
- Awards: Professional or service related recognition
- Personal: Weddings and births

Submit your class notes and based on publication space, we will share your good news in an upcoming issue of Connect.

The UNMC Alumni Directory is Now Available

Alums can [request login credentials](#) and access the directory to search for classmates and colleagues. Please be sure to go to the "update your information" tab to keep your information current in the directory.

COLLEGE OF NURSING NEWS

Message from the Dean



I am so pleased that our College Centennial year is now well underway. It has provided an opportunity for us to reflect, connect, and celebrate.

Thursday, October 19th, Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts signed a proclamation proclaiming October 15-20 as University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing Centennial Week. On October 16th, the College formally turned 100 years old. See the photo of the proclamation signing [here](#).

The College of Nursing Centennial Gala on October 20th was an exciting time to look back at how the College began and to see the progress through the years that has made the College what it is today. I am grateful for the dedicated leaders who came before us and am honored to work together with today's leaders to continue to transform the future of nursing.

The transformative work that we are doing as a College would not be possible if not for the many generous donors to the College of Nursing Innovation Fund. This fund replaces the former membership dues program and supports activities of the CON, as well as the UNMC Alumni Association.

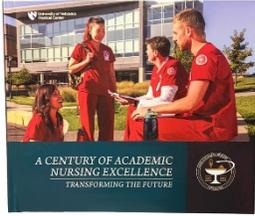
I wish you and yours all the best this holiday season.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Juliann G. Sebastian". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Juliann G. Sebastian, PhD, RN, FAAN
Dean and Professor
UNMC College of Nursing

Take Home a Piece of UNMC Nursing History



In celebration of the UNMC College of Nursing Centennial, a beautiful coffee-table book has been created to showcase the history of the College. The book features historical information taken from the 1917-1987 College of Nursing book and continues through present day. You can purchase a copy in the UNMC Bookstore on the Omaha campus or online [here](#).

College of Nursing Hall of Fame Established

The University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing Hall of Fame was established in 2017 to identify distinguished and notable graduates and to recognize their extraordinary contributions. This is the highest honor of the College and candidates may be nominated posthumously. Congratulations to the inaugural members who were inducted into the Hall of Fame during the UNMC College of Nursing Centennial Gala on Friday, October 20, 2017.

- Beatrice Kalisch '65
- Carol Wilson '51
- Gladys Sorensen '45
- Joan Lappe '81
- Kathryn Barnard '60
- Kimberly Siniscalchi '88
- Susan Hassmiller '83

You can visit this [website](#) to see photos of the inductees and read their biographies.

Lincoln Campus Construction Well Underway

Click [here](#) to view a video timeline of updates on the new College of Nursing building on the Lincoln campus. May of 2018 is the anticipated completion date.

UNMC NEWS

\$1.2 Million UNMC Grant Enlists Community Help to Prepare More Nurse Practitioner Students for Rural Practice

The University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing has received a two-year, \$1.2 million grant to boost the number of family nurse practitioners and psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioners practicing in rural and underserved areas. A major part of the grant will involve community partners who will mentor, nurture and inspire students while they get clinical experience in a rural community.

The grant is funded by the Health Resources & Services Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The college plans to recruit UNMC students for up to 36 slots in the master's degree program. The program requires 48 credit hours of academic work and a minimum of 500 hours of clinical training. One of the criteria is students need to have an interest in working in rural or underserved areas of Nebraska. A major part of the grant will go towards supporting students with tuition, fees, books, a stipend, and other expenses. Read the full story [here](#).

Online Graduate Program Ranked Among Best

The University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing is ranked as one of the nation's Best Online Graduate Nursing Programs by U.S. News & World Report. In the 2017 rankings, the college's graduate online nursing program is tied for 61st out of 144 schools – moving up from 73rd in last year's ranking. Click [here](#) for the full story.

UNMC Nursing Grads Score High on National Licensure Exam

[Scores Reflect Quality of UNMC Nursing Program](#) - It's the most important test for those who want to be licensed to practice as a registered nurse – the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). The standardized test evaluates knowledge and skills to determine if the graduate is ready to practice nursing.

College officials say the pass rate is important not only for students but it also reflects nursing program quality and recruiting.

This year, 312 students who graduated in May from the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing accelerated and traditional bachelor's degree in nursing programs, achieved a 95 percent pass rate. The national pass rate is 88 percent.

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