



Mu Gamma

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My favorite winter past time is snow-shoeing....however, this winter I am spending a great deal of time wishing and praying for snow! What does snow shoeing and the weather have to do with nursing and Sigma Theta Tau? For me, both suggest change and flexibility! As we are all aware, the weather and the events in our lives are impossible to predict, but many times things turn out in positive ways.

The Nursing Department has experienced a myriad of changes over the past several years; the changes are too abundant to enumerate. Below is a summary of some of this year's highlights in the department of nursing. Flexibility is our mantra! We have:

- Increased enrollment by 30 AS/BS students from 90 to 120 non-licensed students. This increase is monumental when one considers that we accomplished this during a time of deep budget cuts that resulted in lost faculty positions. We have engaged adjunct (part-time) faculty in creative ways, and have formed great relationships with nurses who might want to teach full-time in the future.
- Phased in a new curriculum, while simultaneously phasing out three seasoned curricula. 2002 through 2005 are the transition years in the department. We currently have 4 programs running and by the end of 2005, we will evolve into one comprehensive, customer-driven program.
- Experienced cultural shifts in the department. From an administrative perspective, we are evolving from three separate and distinct programs, into one fully-integrated program. Those of you who have experienced re-engineering and re-design can relate to the amount of anxiety and energy those types of changes generate.
- Increased utilization of the Canyon County campus. We are offering one section of each of our classes in the new curriculum at the Canyon County campus.
- Been awarded the La Buena Salud grant: This semester, we will provide interdisciplinary education through Health Sciences and Modern Languages to deliver preventative health services to Migrants and Season Farm Workers in Southwest Idaho.

- Implemented a joint practice model: As part of La Buena Salud, 2 of our faculty who are Nurse Practitioners (NP) are practicing in their NP roles with Terry Reilly in Nampa to provide services for the increase in clients as a result of the work with La Buena Salud.
- Increased Scholarly Activity: We have one joint research appointment with St. Lukes Regional Medical Center. Dr. Ingrid Brudenell and Dr. Judy Farnsworth have partnered with professionals at St. Lukes to study decision-making models rooted in evidence-based practice to improve clinical outcomes for clients with pressure wounds. We are in discussion with St. Alphonsus for a joint appointment for next academic year. These joint appointments are very beneficial for both agencies and the communities they serve.

The increased focus on scholarly activity brings me to my next point about change and flexibility. Health care is changing at a rapid pace (but I am not telling you anything new). We certainly feel it here at Boise State University. One example of rapid change is the growing interest in evidence-based practice.

Evidence-based practice is vital to proving superior nursing education and practice. Our clients deserve the most up-to-date research based care we can deliver. For us, that means our students deserve cutting edge information throughout their nursing education. In addition (and most importantly) students deserve to graduate Boise State equipped with the skills needed to apply evidence-based practice and to meet the standards of best practices. As faculty, no longer can we rely on notes from last semester to teach.....not even for skills such as IM injections and catheter insertions. As I perused the literature today, I discovered new techniques, well tested with research for what we consider to be beginning psychomotor nursing skills.

So, what does this mean for the practitioner? Clients deserve the most up-to-date, research-based nursing care that can be delivered. First, nurses must be clear on the definition and meaning of nursing. In addition to staying current on medical treatments and interventions and educating our

clients, nurses need to perform care based on accurate research. What does research reveal about IM injections? What does research demonstrate about urinary catheterization? What does research tell us about warming clients after surgery? What does research say about the importance of social support, education, and helping clients make changes in their lives? These are a few of the studies I found as I reviewed the literature.

So how do we stay current? One way is to develop and implement organizational models and systems that support contemporary health care delivery. None of us are experts in all areas...how can we put systems in place to provide quality services to our customers and to ensure that they are receiving the most up-to date care and education? This is where our quality improvement processes and policies based on the best evidence come in to place.

So, as I go back to pondering about the snow (or lack of it), I ponder what changes I will need to undertake this summer because of the lack of snowfall. I ponder the flexibility I will have to obtain in enjoying the brown color in my lawn. Lastly, I ponder what this new year will bring to health care and to nursing education as we try to prepare graduates for an ever-changing world.....this is indeed a daunting task. But it is a task that all of us together can undertake and achieve. So, the next time you are working with a nursing student, be sure to ask him or her provocative questions to stimulate that spark of curiosity and work with us to instill those professional yearnings to base practice on the best evidence!

Luann Fife, President
Mu Gamma Chapter, Sigma Theta Tau

Welcome to the Fall/Winter edition of the Mu Gamma newsletter. Your board has been very busy this fall creating a more active plan for Mu Gamma and offering more opportunities for involvement with this organization as well as benefits.

Included in this newsletter are information and forms for nominating community members. Please review carefully the qualifications and return the forms as outlined.

We are a dynamic organization with the potential to enhance and support nursing in this community and would welcome new members who are also committed to being involved with this goal.

I am very excited to announce the scholarships that MuGamma is sponsoring for graduate nursing programs! The board has worked long and hard to develop criteria and approve the process. These scholarships are to be awarded annually and it is with great pleasure that we are able to offer these.

I appreciate all input, ideas, and suggestions and am very pleased to represent you as your president.

Luann Fife
381-4429
fifel@slrmc.org

Do you know a Nurse Leader who would like to join Mu Gamma Chapter, Sigma Theta Tau?

Members of Sigma Theta Tau International are nurses who have demonstrated personal commitment to nursing excellence. For more information, go to:
<http://www.nursingsociety.org>

How can they apply for membership?

Complete the Membership Intent Form and return to:
Rosemary Macy
1910 University Drive
Boise Idaho 83725
Return by February 28, 2003

Mu Gamma Scholarships

In an effort to encourage nurses in the community to further their education and pursue advanced degrees, Mu Gamma Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau is pleased to offer three scholarships for the 2003-2004 school year.

- * One \$1000 award for a Mu Gamma member and
 - * Two \$500 awards for any qualified nurse applicants.
- Applications will be accepted in the spring with scholarships awarded for the following academic year.

Applicant Criteria:

1. Applicant must be entering or continuing in an accredited nursing graduate program.
2. Applicant will provide verification of acceptance into a graduate program.
3. Applicant can be any qualified nurse practicing in the Treasure Valley.

Procedure for submitting application:

1. Mu Gamma Scholarship application form can be obtained by contacting Mu Gamma Scholarship Chair, Jennifer Jones, at jennjone@sarmc.org
2. Applicant will write a 500 maximum word essay, double-spaced, 12-font size, in response to the following question: "As an advanced practice nurse, how will you promote your profession and level of practice?"
3. Applicant will attach essay to Mu Gamma application form and mail to Mu Gamma Scholarship Chair, at the following address:

Jennifer Jones
Saint Alphonsus RMC, Heart Center
1055 N. Curtis Rd.
Boise, ID 83706

4. Applications will be accepted if postmarked between Monday, March 3, 2003 and Friday, March 28, 2003.
5. The Mu Gamma Scholarship Chair will remove applicants' identifying information; the remaining Scholarship Committee members will review the applications.
6. Scholarship recipients will be notified by Friday, April 25, 2003.

Procedure for receiving award:

- ◆ Scholarship payments will be equally divided and issued by Mu Gamma over the school year
- ◆ Evidence of enrollment must be provided to receive 1st payment. Verification of continued enrollment must be provided to receive additional payments.
- ◆ Financial award will be sent directly to applicant.

Mark Your Calendars

Spring Program

Thursday March 6, 2003
Business at 5:30PM
Dinner at 6:00PM
Program at 7:00PM
Anderson Center at St. Luke's
Registration form below

Come join the herd! Mu Gamma needs you!



We have two current openings on the board.

- We are searching for someone who enjoys working with people and has some clever ideas for fundraising. If this describes you then please come be our "Fundraiser Chair."
- If your talents lie in gathering news and getting the word out, then you are just the right person for helping with our "Newsletter." Your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

For more information on these openings or any upcoming positions please call Lois Hine,
426-3591 work or 362-0818 home.

Spring Induction Ceremony

Sunday April 27, 2003
Candidates Program at 7:00PM
Barnwell Room
Boise State University