

Cultivating leaders in the Delta

Dr. Lachel Story is planting seeds in the Delta that she hopes will produce communities with the necessary skills to make lasting health changes.

A nurse who earned her Ph.D. at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in May, Story trains lay people in the Mississippi Delta to be Community Health Advisors.

"In the Delta we don't have enough health-care providers to go around and many people don't have insurance, so this gives them a resource," said Story, who works for the University of Southern Mississippi.

Community Health Advisors perform a variety of roles, such as promoting healthy living and physical activity to the rest of the community and providing social support for those with limited resources. They are members of the community who have not had any formal medical training but who have natural leadership abilities.

As a doctoral student at the School of Nursing, Story discovered a need to study the effectiveness of CHA training, and the research that followed became the subject of her dissertation.

"I noticed a gap in the literature that evaluated the training programs, specifically in evaluating outcomes," Story said. "There are very few studies that even have examples of those CHAs being able to put into practice the skills they've learned."

With the help of Dr. Sharon Wyatt, chair of her dissertation committee, Story developed a curriculum for the training, then implemented it over the course of ten weeks, training five community members in the Delta one night a week.

After giving the new CHAs a couple of months to put their training into practice, Story began collecting data. The five CHAs were asked to give feedback on the training process through questionnaires and taking part in a group interview (which Story did not attend in order to ensure candid responses).



Lynda Tate-Smith, standing, delivers a presentation during CHA training in Mayersville two summers ago. Watching her presentation is Pheby Hunt, from left, Terri Williams, Dr. Lachel Story and Kristen Smith. Photo courtesy of Dr. Lachel Story

Story's evaluation gauged core competencies, knowledge attainment, satisfaction and experience of the training.

Because it was only a group of five, she said she was not aiming to generalize the results, but instead building a case study.

"What we found was that these five did master core competencies," she said of the results. "They gained some knowledge, but not as much as we'd hoped. And they were very satisfied with the training on all components."

"We found that the training experience was individually and communally transforming as they became learners as well as doers, doing for themselves as well as their communities."

Story's research was based on a foundation laid by Wyatt, who had been traveling to the Delta since 2002, conducting needs assessments on communities there. That led to grant funding to begin training health workers with

a focus on treating high blood pressure.

Wyatt said she and Story spent many months on the road together and will continue to work together as colleagues.

She said the challenge is to help health workers realize their potential. "Nobody empowers," she said, referring to the training. "They already have the power. Instead it's a way of working together so the expertise they already have is harnessed to do what they want to do. We each have our own expertise."

That expertise, Story says, will eventually trickle down and have a lasting impact on public health.

"Globally, if we can establish a model for evaluating training, we can be assured we're giving them the tools to go forth and achieve significant health changes," she said.

"I'm hoping to do this kind of work for the rest of my career. It is so needed, and they have such an opportunity to make health changes at the community level."

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Fond farewell

Dr. Kaye Bender, who resigned as dean of the School of Nursing in late May, hands out a diploma during commencement.

Medical Center says goodbye to Dean Bender

Dr. Kaye Bender said goodbye to the University of Mississippi Medical Center on May 26, bringing to a close her six-year term as dean of the School of Nursing. And as a parting gift, she was honored with the announcement of an endowed fund newly established in her name.

The Dr. Kaye W. Bender Endowed Fund, presented by interim Dean Dr. Kim Hoover, was created to pay tribute to Bender's contributions as dean.

Bender left the Medical Center to assume a new role as president and chief executive officer of the Public Health Accreditation Board where she will lead an effort to establish a voluntary, national accreditation program for public health departments.

"The position allows me to take my passion about quality and performance improvement in public health into work with various-state health departments in the country," Bender said earlier this year. "It is an honor to be asked to lead this pioneer effort."

Prior to joining the Medical Center, Bender spent more than 20 years with the Mississippi State Department



Dr. Kaye Bender and interim Dean Dr. Kim Hoover

of Health, including five years as deputy state health officer.

"What we were trying to do was to recognize that Kaye's service has been incredible, but her work for the state has been phenomenal," Hoover said, referring to the endowment. "Her work here has certainly been important but it was just a continuation of her work for the state."

Bender also worked to build a bridge between the nursing school and University of Mississippi Health Care, Hoover said. "A priority for Kaye was to improve the School of Nursing's relationship across the campus but particularly with UMMC. We've made huge progress in that area. They're our partners. She helped grow relationships across campus."

Hoover said she met Bender while they both were working toward their Ph.D.s at UMMC, and they've been friends ever since. When Bender was considering applying for the office of the dean, she called Hoover

who was on faculty at Alcorn State University and discussed the possibility with her. Hoover said she urged her to go for it and, once in office, Bender recruited Hoover.

Hoover said that in less than three months, they were able to raise \$14,000 for the endowed fund. As the endowment is in Bender's name, she will be the one to decide how the money is spent.

"We will make some decisions and recommendations," Bender said on her last day as dean. "It will probably go toward something with students."

Dr. Annette Wysocki, professor of nursing, helped organize the endowed fund and drafted the appeal letter. She called Bender "a true asset to the community."

"I think Kaye is a very perceptive and effective leader, and I think she knows how to make decisions that can move an organization forward."

Upon hearing Bender's plans to lead PHAB earlier this year, then Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs Dr. Dan Jones said the Medical Center's loss is the country's gain.

"Dr. Bender's departure will leave a large void of leadership, not only in our School of Nursing, but in our institution and in the state," he said. "Her appointment to lead the new national organization charged with accrediting state health departments is a testament to how she is viewed nationally in the world of public

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Nursing veteran Machiel Perkins joined UMMC in '55

Machiel Perkins, one of the nurses hired to help open the Medical Center, died March 15. She was 84.

A Jackson native, Perkins graduated from the Touro Infirmary School of Nursing in New Orleans, where she was a member of the U.S. Nurse Cadet Corps during World War II. She joined the Medical Center in 1955 and was the first 11-7 nurse supervisor here. She retired as

assistant director of nursing after 31 years.

Ivory Davis, clinical director at the Winfred L. Wiser Hospital for Women and Infants, was nursing manager of labor and delivery at the time Perkins was with the hospital. Perkins was one of her supervisors but not her direct supervisor.

"What I remember is that she was so efficient and accurate in her instructions," Davis said. "She could be intimidating and tough, but she didn't intimidate me. I enjoyed talking with her."

"Many of the nurses were intimidated by her at first, but once they got to know her, they all liked her."

Davis said she learned a lot about how to handle challenging situations from Perkins.

"People like her helped mold me professionally," Davis said. "You could always count on her. She took the best care of her staff. She took care of everyone."

Mary Love, administrative assistant in hospital administration, remembers working with Perkins when she was a part-time staffer in Nursing Service Administration in 1984.

"I have fond memories of her," Love said. "I enjoyed working with her. She was a firm but fair supervisor."

Funeral services took place March 18 at Fellowship Baptist Church in Jackson with burial in Florence Cemetery. Donations may be made to Fellowship Baptist Church.



Fresh Faces



Above: First-year nursing student Bethany Autry invites passersby to stop for a blood-pressure check on June 17.

Left: First-year nursing student Hieu Ho reads a volunteer's blood pressure as part of the screening exercise the students participated in.

Upcoming Events

- **August 5:** Welcome Lunch for Masters program students.
- **October 8:** Guardian Society Annual Meeting.
- **October 21:** Nursing Alumni Chapter Reception - MNA.
- **November 18:** Nursing Alumni Board of Directors lunch meeting.
- **TBA:** Oglevee Papers Day/STT Founders Day.



the Dean's Corner

It is my honor and pleasure to welcome you to the fall 2009 edition of the alumni newsletter. As we say goodbye to our former dean, Dr. Kaye Bender, and our vice chancellor for health affairs, Dr. Dan Jones, we wish them well in their new expanded state and national roles. As a result of their career moves, both the School of Nursing and the Medical Center are undergoing changes in leadership. During this time, rest assured that the School of Nursing will continue to move forward providing our state with nursing leaders in practice, education and research.

During times of economic unrest, I hear many of our students and graduates express gratitude for choosing a career in nursing. While you may hear rumors of the unavailability of new jobs in nursing, our practice partners tell us that new graduates simply need to begin searching for a position before they graduate and be willing to compromise on the setting until they gain experience. Often, uncertain financial times lead nurses to delay their retirements and nurses who are working part-time choose to work full-time resulting in more nurses in the work force. While our supply may be stable at the moment, we continue to monitor the progress of our nursing work force both in Mississippi and the nation. Demand for RNs and advanced practice nurses is expected to increase when baby boomers begin to hit 65 in 2011.

This issue will cover Dr. Bender's accomplishments and her new role as president and CEO of the Public Health Accreditation Board. Additionally, we feature accomplished alumna who recently received awards. Finally, enjoy reading about our collaborative Doctorate of Nursing Practice program and a special feature on a recent Ph.D. graduate who has dedicated her career to nursing research in underserved areas, particularly the Delta, as evidence of our commitment to improving the health of Mississippians.

— Dr. Kim Hoover, interim dean



Above: School of Nursing faculty members met recently for a DNP planning meeting. The group included Dr. Cindy Luther (front row, from left), interim Dean Dr. Kim Hoover, Dr. Sally Real, associate dean for clinical practice at the University of Arizona who is serving as a consultant, Dr. Joyce Brewer (standing, from left), Dr. Jean Walker, Dr. Sharon Lobert, Dr. Barbara Boss and Dr. Marcia Rachel. Left: Dr. Sharon Lobert (right) discusses the DNP curriculum during a planning session on July 23 as Dr. Boss (from right), Dr. Brewer, Dr. Walker, Dr. Sharon Wyatt, Dr. Savina Schoenhofer and Dr. Hoover listen in.

SON launches doctorate program

Advanced-practice nurses now have the option to continue their education beyond the master's degree level while at the same time keeping the focus on patient care rather than following the research-intensive Ph.D. route.

In August, the first crop of students will begin coursework in the School of Nursing's Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program, a degree program that's not only new to the University of Mississippi Medical Center but also a new concept nationally.

"This has been talked about in nursing for five, six, seven years," said Dr. Barbara Boss, professor of nursing and director of the program. "It has become – in a very short period of time – a very hot issue."

Boss said the nation's first DNP classes have just graduated in the last couple of years. The idea is so new that the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) began the accreditation process for DNP programs in the fall of last year, according to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.

The concept is simple: Ever-expanding scientific knowledge coupled with an increasingly complex health-care climate demands a high level of preparation and expertise of staff nurses. The DNP is geared toward advanced-practice nurses such as nurse practitioners, midwives and nurse anesthetists, professionals who already have their master's degrees, although, Boss points out, nurse administrators have shown a great deal of interest in the program as well.

"The focus of this training and education is not on one-on-one care but how to deliver the best evidence-based care," Boss said.



The type of care that specializes in complex issues like dealing with patients who have limited means or those that have multiple issues, she said.

The program will consist of two years of coursework plus a capstone inquiry which may take up to an additional year to complete.

"We started talking about ours three or four years ago through Deans and Directors meetings," said Sharon Lobert, professor of nursing and associate dean for graduate studies in the School of Nursing. She said the statewide Deans and Directors group created a curriculum and presented it to the state Institutes of Higher Learning.

As a result, the IHL approved a single DNP program that would

be offered at UMMC as well as the University of Southern Mississippi, which, Boss explained, is exactly how UMMC's nursing Ph.D. program got started ten years ago.

Boss said the use of this "consortium model" stemmed from a concern over duplicating resources. The program will require no new faculty members, she said, and the courses and objectives will be virtually identical.

Ten students, most of whom work full-time as staff nurses or nurse practitioners, will begin the first term at the Medical Center, with orientation scheduled for Aug. 7.

"We've told students it will come in different formats," Boss said. "There'll be a traditional format for certain courses, some courses will be online. But we won't use a lot of distance learning."

Boss, who will teach classes in addition to her role as director of the program, plans to use an "intensive format" – all day Fridays and part of the day on Saturdays. The idea is to schedule classes around the students' work schedules as much as possible.

"We'll try a variety of formats to see what works best," said Boss. For the moment, the program only accepts students who already have their master's degrees, but Lobert says they hope to make it available for baccalaureate students within five years.

Overall nine faculty members will handle instruction duties. Although the DNP program will mean more hard work for faculty members, Lobert says it's work they are happy to take on.

"It's definitely something that everyone is excited about. We feel like it will really improve practice. It'll take a lot of hard work, but the faculty is very committed to this."

Nurse Pinning & Honors Day



Above: School of Nursing Dean Dr. Kaye Bender, left, announces the new Bess C. Blackwell Nurse Executive Award on Honors Day. Left: School of Nursing faculty Molly Moore, left, and Dr. Anne Norwood receive a donation for the Johnson Elementary School Clinic from class officers Danielle Barrier, center, Tye Ketchum and Anna Wall.

2009 Nursing Alumnus of the Year



Dr. Barbara Rogers (from left), Janet Harris, former Dean Kaye Bender and Julia McCormac.

Dr. Barbara Rogers had only one fallback if a career in nursing didn't work out: coaching basketball.

"I played basketball in high school, and in nursing school as well," she said. Jackson had a women's basketball league at the time, and Rogers said they played other nursing schools around the region.

"I'm 5'10", and that was tall for a girl back then."

But her career in nursing has been successful and, on April 24, she was honored as the Nursing Alumnus of the Year, presented by the Nursing Alumni Chapter of the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

The award was presented at the annual Driskell Lecture. Janet Harris, chief nursing executive for UMHC, delivered the lecture.

After graduating from Neshoba County High School, Rogers earned her nursing diploma from the Gilfoxy School of Nursing in Jackson before earning her B.S.N. from UMMC in 1965. From there, her career led west.

She earned the M.N. at Montana State University, the M.S. at Colorado State University and her Ph.D. at the University of Arizona.

"The Rocky Mountain west is just

beautiful," she said. "I loved the climate."

Rogers returned to her home state in 1990, where she spent her career following her passion for her field of research.

She completed a post-doctoral fellowship at a burn center in Texas, studying wound healing, the primary focus of her research.

"Nurses have always been the ones to manage wounds. It's a natural fit," she explained.

In 2002, she served as interim dean of the nursing school, and she continues to contribute to the school as a researcher and a consultant.

"I really enjoy the challenge of working with doctoral students as well as RN students," she said. "It gives me a chance to consult with faculty and students. I enjoy that role."

Dr. Annette Wysocki, professor of nursing and fellow researcher, says she met Rogers years ago at a conference in Washington, D.C., and became friends with her as they continued to cross paths thanks to their research.

"Barbara Rogers was one of the reasons I came to Mississippi," she said. "She's been a great friend and colleague."

Kimbles' gifts leave lasting legacy

When a graduate of the School of Nursing died in a plane crash in 1997, her former classmates pulled together to raise money for what would become the Class of 1965 Winstead-Herr Conference Room, as well as a scholarship in her name.

And the spirit of giving remains strong within the class. Retired nurse Patricia (Dyre) Kimble, 1965 class president, and her husband, Rees "Skip" Kimble, have set up an endowed scholarship and will leave a percentage of their estate to the School of Nursing at the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

"We decided we'd like our assets to be used in a good way that could make a difference in the lives of others," Skip said.

"We wanted to make sure a student who gets it would have enough mon-

ey to stay in school," Pat said. "We also thought that it might be nice to be able to eat when you're a student, and we wanted to help with living expenses."

The Patricia Dyre Kimble School of Nursing Endowed Scholarship will be awarded for the first time early next year. The Kimbles, who live in Washington, have finalized paperwork to leave a substantial percentage of their estate to the School of Nursing. Of that donation, more than half will go toward the endowed scholarship. The endowment was established with \$25,000.

The rest of the gift will go to the nursing school's general fund and the School of Nursing's Class of 1965 Fund.

As a student in the School of Nursing, Pat Kimble worked a psychiatric rotation at the Mississippi State Hospital and soon found herself fascinated by psychiatric nursing.

Money was available for a graduate program in psychiatric nursing in Washington, so Pat relocated after graduating from the nursing school and went on to earn her master's degree at the University of Washington. "And I met Skip, and we got married and we've been here ever since," she said.

The couple will celebrate their 42nd wedding anniversary this year.

Every so often, the couple makes the journey to Mississippi. They visited family in the state last year and, before that, came for the 40th anniversary reunion of the Class of 1965 in 2005.

Julia McCormac, president of the alumni chapter and a member of the Class of 1965, agreed.

"Pat was the studious one," she recalled. "She liked a good joke, but she was a little older and a little more mature."

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