

From the Director



••• The Chatham nursing program has experienced much change this past academic year. We have new leadership in the University administration, and we launched our new competency-based curriculums in all three online Nursing programs based on the revised American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) *Essentials: Core Competencies for Nursing Education* (2021). We said goodbye to two full-time nursing faculty due to retirement and relocation. We experienced significant growth in our RN-BSN enrollment. We have physically moved office spaces (even though the virtual culture from the pandemic still permeates). And finally, within the College of Health Sciences, we have new program leadership outside of nursing and several more full-time faculty departures.

Perhaps it is found wisdom from years of professional experience, but I accept change, in the workplace or otherwise, as inevitable. Someone said to me earlier in my career “*Don’t look back.*” Three simple words have brought me through tumultuous change and challenging times, and I have shared those words with faculty and staff over the years as well. I have found that if you focus on what is different or uncomfortable, it can be all consuming and counterproductive.

As Chatham nursing faculty, alumni, and students continue to face academic and clinical nursing innovation and challenges in health care, I remind everyone to embrace change, move forward, and “*Don’t look back.*” In the words of Socrates: “*The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not fighting the old, but on building the new.*”

Thank you nurses, academic colleagues, and healthcare partners for all you do for the health and wellness of our nation.

Best regards,
Dr. Diane F. Hunker
Director of Nursing Programs, Professor of Nursing



Message from the Editor

••• The Chatham University nursing programs are pleased to share this edition of InTouch, a 2023-2024 Year in Review. This issue provides an overview of student and faculty accomplishments, alumni achievements, and various activities that occurred over the last academic year amidst our new challenges and changes. This newsletter was developed through collaborative writing with nursing program faculty serving as contributing authors.

Enjoy!
Dr. Emily Hopkins

From the Dean



••• The academic year 2024-2025 marks Year Two of Chatham Renew 2025, a strategic plan that rests on the pillars of enhanced student experiences, institutional efficiency, and academic excellence. Under the leadership of President Philipps, the University continues to seek ways to foster an exceptional and effective educational environment that provides a transformative learning experience for our students.

At the College of Health Sciences (CHS), we align our activities to support Chatham Renew 2025. I am most grateful and appreciative of Dr. Diane Hunker’s steadfast leadership for setting examples of how constituent academic units coalesce around our mission and bring about change that matters. To that end, we are entering the second year of our UPMC partnership to provide UPMC RNs access to high-quality post-licensure nursing education to obtain their BSN. This coming year, we are extending this partnership to offer BSN holders the opportunity to matriculate into our MSN program with particular emphasis on nurse education and nurse leadership. Collaborations such as these underscore our commitment to meeting the evolving needs of the healthcare industry and supporting career advancement opportunities for healthcare professionals. We welcome additional collaborations with other healthcare partners and stakeholders.

While we continue to find ways to be efficient through restructuring policies and practices across campus, we also strive to find alternative ways to sustain traditions of excellence in student experiences. In December 2023, we introduced a new tradition at Chatham—the SHS Recognition Ceremony for fall graduates. This inaugural event was met with enthusiastic participation and positive feedback from

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FACULTY NEWS & UPDATES

DR. LORRI BIRKHOLZ

Artificial Intelligence and Upholding Academic Integrity



●●● Dr. Lorri Birkholz, assistant nursing professor, feels passionately that educators have a professional responsibility to evaluate student work for academic integrity and the use of artificial intelligence (AI). AI has been advertised as a student tool for use in higher education since fall 2022. The debate exists whether AI can be used to solely enhance learning and not jeopardize academic integrity. Institutional policies governing the use of AI have not been able to keep pace with technological advances. As a nurse for

over 40 years and nurse educator for seven years, Dr. Birkholz is aware that caring and compassion which are core tenets of the nursing profession, cannot be mimicked using AI. However, much of the coursework can. If AI is dishonestly used in nursing education, it has the potential to facilitate the success of nursing students who do not do the work, lack critical thinking skills, and are foundationally dishonest.

Throughout her diverse and distinguished nursing career, Dr. Birkholz has worked ardently to uphold the nursing code of ethics and preserve academic integrity in her role as nursing educator. An author of several publications on ethics, the use of ethical language and ethical dilemmas of nurse leaders, Dr. Birkholz contends that AI is not only a threat to the nursing profession but also society in general. “Society is founded on clear definitions of dishonesty and truth. With AI, people are developing their own definitions of these entities without consequence.” Dr. Birkholz further shares, “AI doesn’t only generate inaccurate information, but it also collects user information jeopardizing patient and student confidentiality. It cannot ensure protection against these being breached.”

In fall 2024, Dr. Birkholz will give a podium presentation at the American Society of Bioethics and Humanities conference entitled “AI and the Nursing Profession: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly.” During the presentation, Dr. Birkholz and colleagues explain how AI is threatening the nursing profession. “Nursing is guided by a non-negotiable code of ethics. As educators, we have a responsibility to be cognizant of students who are not being honest in their work. We are at a crossroads in nursing education between traditional education pedagogy and recognizing that AI is here to stay. As faculty, the onus is on us to ensure we are graduating students who have gained and demonstrated the necessary knowledge for the degree, to do otherwise, places the profession of nursing at risk and reduces the value of education.”

DR. EMILY HOPKINS

Nursing Faculty Member Elected to IRB Chair for Second Term



●●● Dr. Emily E. Hopkins, PhD, RN, WHNP, FNP-BC, associate professor and MSN program coordinator, has been elected to a second three-year term as Chair of Chatham University’s IRB. Dr. Hopkins teaches in both the MSN and DNP programs. She has over 25 years of clinical experience and 15 years of experience in nursing education. Her clinical experience encompasses the lifespan and includes geriatrics, medical surgical, pediatrics, and neonatal intensive care.

For the last 20 years, she has practiced as a nurse practitioner in women’s health focusing primarily on prenatal care. In addition, Dr. Hopkins attended the Summer Genetics Institute, at the National Institute of Health, for specific training of nurses in genomics. Her research interests include infant development including genomic threats to prematurity and congenital malformations as well as quality improvement in nursing education.

During her doctoral studies at the University of Pittsburgh, Dr. Hopkins was fortunate to have her dissertation chair hold a separate appointment on the university’s IRB as a committee member. This provided the opportunity to attend meetings and learn more about what the process of human subject protection entails. As a doctoral student and postdoctoral scholar, she gained experience with IRB proposal submissions including full board reviews as the primary investigator of research on preterm infants. When the opportunity arose to join Chatham’s IRB in Summer 2011, Dr. Hopkins did not hesitate to become a committee member. Completing required NIH and CITI trainings for this position as well as reading the book *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, has provided her with invaluable knowledge on the atrocities committed to others for the sake of research. For her, this has solidified the importance of an IRB which is why she chose to stay on the committee as a board member and co-chair to gain experience, then lead in the role of IRB chair.

As IRB chair, Dr. Hopkins has discovered many areas for improvement through additional IRB chair CITI training modules. She recognized the need to create better guidance for IRB members which improved review

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FACULTY NEWS & UPDATES

DR. RACHEL DIETERICH

Congratulations and Farewell



●●● Dr. Rachel Dieterich, Ph.D., RN stepped down from her position as Assistant Professor of Nursing and Practice Experience Coordinator in the Chatham University nursing program at the end of August 2024 and relocated to California with her fiancé. Dr. Dieterich has taken a position with the Palo Alto Veteran’s Institute for Research working as a Clinical Research Nurse. She will be working with a team of researchers focusing on a study in the Psychiatry department that evaluates the effectiveness of repetitive

transcranial magnetic stimulation (rTMS) as a treatment for Treatment Resistant Major Depression (TRMD) among the veteran population.

When reflecting on her time at Chatham: “I want to extend my greatest thanks and appreciation to Dr. Hunker and all of my colleagues within the nursing programs here at Chatham University. It has been a pleasure working with students across all our nursing programs and assisting in the coordination of their practice experiences and as a faculty member and advisor. Chatham University was my first faculty position after graduating with my Ph.D., and the support, opportunities, and relationships I have forged while here will stay with me forever as I embark on this new chapter of my life with my fiancé out in California. I also would like to acknowledge the unwavering support and admirable expertise of Cathy Natalia who has been an integral cog in the “practice experience machine” here at Chatham. She has been a tremendous asset to me and our students in facilitating affiliation agreements and ensuring students are compliant with site requirements. Most importantly, she has been a wonderful team member, mentor, and friend. A big thank you to all the wonderful students I have had the joy of working with over these last three years. I am blessed to have had the opportunity to serve you and help facilitate your professional and personal goals.”

We wish Dr. Dieterich all the best in her new venture and thank her for her service to the nursing department over the past three years.

Dr. Emily Hopkins, continued

quality and ensures participant safety. Further, her IRB training and experience has benefited both nursing faculty and DNP students who are required to obtain IRB approval. Throughout Dr. Hopkins 15 years as nursing faculty, she has counseled and assisted countless faculty and students on the process, including documents and content needed and appropriate IRB proposal language. Plans are in motion over the next 3 years to create electronic QI/EBP templates that delineate an evidence-based practice project from a research study—providing a quality improvement review rather than a standard IRB. With the growing number of OT and DNP student reviews, it will be extremely beneficial to create a specific review process that does not burden the IRB committee which is accustomed to research design rather than quality improvement and evidence-based practice.

Adjunct Faculty’s Scottish Deer Hounds Win at Westminster Dog Show



●●● Congratulations to Dr. Kathy Wright, adjunct faculty member for her accomplishments in showing Scottish Deerhounds! Both male dogs recently placed at the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show in New York City which was televised on May 13, 2024. The renowned Westminster Kennel Club

started in 1877 and recognizes purebred dogs in various breed categories. Fiddich placed first in the Best of Opposite Sex category, and Cooper placed second in the Select Dog category. Further, their female dog Piper placed first for Select Female at a Tampa based competition in mid-June 2024. Dr. Wright and her husband, Gary, have been participating in dog shows in Florida, Georgia, Tennessee and Kentucky since 2020. We wish them continued success!



Adjunct Faculty Spotlight



••• Anna N. Vioral, PhD, MEd, RN, OCN, BMTCN has had a nursing career in oncology spanning over 35 years. In addition, she serves as the Director for Oncology Practice and Professional Development which includes education and research for Allegheny Health Network Cancer Institute and has been an adjunct faculty member at Chatham University since 2015

Her journey in nursing began when she was 14 years old as a candy striper at Allegheny General Hospital. She was placed on the oncology unit and began connecting with patients. Anna continued to volunteer for the next five years with over 3,000 hours of time. She went to Albright College in Reading, PA for her BSN with every intention to become an oncology nurse. She was a nurse extern in oncology and was hired for her first job at Allegheny General on the same unit where she had found her passion that has continued for over 35 years. Anna went on to earn her MSN in Nursing Education from Duquesne University, Masters of Adult Education from Pennsylvania State University World Campus, and Ph.D. from Indiana University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing.

Dr. Vioral teaches both graduate and undergraduate nursing courses for Chatham. She is passionate about teaching the spirit of inquiry and seeing the students evaluate and apply the evidence to practice. Her greatest reward as an educator is creating the environment for students to learn, sharing knowledge, and supporting nurses in their professional journeys.

In Dr. Vioral's spare time she enjoys long distance running and skiing! She has four wonderful children ages 18-28 and fur baby boxers who keep her busy! She loves to travel and has seen all 50 states as well as many parts of Europe, New Zealand, and Australia.

Preceptor Updates to Meet Curriculum Revision

••• In April 2021, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) updated *The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education*, the professional nursing standards and guidelines that help form nursing education. This update helped guide nursing faculty completing curriculum revisions in each of the nursing programs at Chatham. One exciting revision in the DNP Program is all incoming students will be assigned a full-time faculty member as their DNP Project Chair to support and guide the student as they complete their DNP project. The DNP Project Chair will also function as the student's preceptor, eliminating the need for securing a preceptor at their project site. Conversely, MSN students will still work with an external, master's-prepared preceptor, employed in leadership or education matching the student's chosen specialty. This will enable the student to learn more about their specific role as well as identify an area of need to collaborate on a final program project.

Faculty and staff of the Chatham nursing program have always appreciated the time, effort, and skills preceptors have offered our nursing students. Thank you!

MSN Precepting: A Rewarding Experience

Precepting is a formal arrangement between a novice and an experienced nurse for a defined period. Preceptors serve as role models working collaboratively with the student towards meeting established program goals. Precepting is a rewarding experience for both the student and preceptor. It is also an essential component to nursing education. The identification of preceptors grows increasingly difficult as competition for practice experience sites increase. For the Chatham MSN program, we need MSN-prepared preceptors who are currently serving in the advanced practice roles of nurse educator (clinical or academic setting) or nurse leader (any setting).

As a preceptor, you are required to sign a student-preceptor agreement, provide a copy of your resume and your professional license number for verification and approval. If you meet the qualifications described above and are interested in precepting, please contact Cathy Natalia, practice experience assistant, at c.natalia@chatham.edu or 412-365-2926.



RECENT FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP

PUBLICATIONS

Beil-Hildebrand, M. B., Sari, F. K., Kutschar, P., & **Birkholz, L.** (2024). What keeps you up at night? Moral distress in nurse leaders in the USA, Germany, Austria and Switzerland. *Leadership in Health Services*, 37(3), 377-393. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LHS-09-2023-0075>

Sara, A., & **Hunker, D.F.** (2023) Innovative quality improvement initiative to increase nurse knowledge and decrease readmission rates of postpartum women with preeclampsia. *Nursing for Women's Health*, 27(5), 337-343. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nwh.2023.03.007>

Singh, A. (2024). Nurse faculty perceptions of external factors affecting Psychological Capital and leadership development. *Nurse Education Perspectives*, 45(2), 82-86. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.NEP.0000000000001218>

Singh, A. (2023). Psychological Capital among nursing faculty: Implications for practice. *Nurse Educator*, 48(6), 336-341. <https://doi.org/10.1097/NNE.0000000000001430>

Slade, J., & Walter, L. (2024). Music lyrics: A student-centered approach to engaging online learning. *Nurse Educator*. <https://doi.org/10.1097/NNE.0000000000001687> Published online ahead of print.



From the Dean, continued

our community including our DNP graduates. The ceremony celebrates the achievements of our graduates and highlights their potential to be change agents.

As we continue to forge ahead with progress, we invite you, our alumni, students, professional colleagues, and healthcare partners, to support our initiatives and provide input on ways we can do better. Specifically for our Chatham nursing alumni, clinical-academic partnerships, student and faculty engagement, new program development, and giving are just ways that you can play a part.

We thank you for your ongoing commitment to Chatham!

Salvador Bondoc

Dean, College of Health Sciences

PODIUM AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Dieterich, R., Shope, T., Glasser, M., Harpel, C., & Demirci, J. (2023, June). Maternal and childcare provider views of lactation support in childcare centers. Poster presentation. Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses Convention, New Orleans, LA.

Doas, M. (2023). Creating emotional awareness in order to increase emotional competence. Podium presentation. Southwestern Pennsylvania Organization of Nurse Leaders, Wheeling, WV.

Doas, M. (2023). Cultivating self and emotional awareness in order to promote mutually respectful interactions. Podium presentation. National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), PA Mental Health and Wellness Conference, Harrisburg, PA.

Orgon Stamper, T. & Park, R. (2023). A dual-discipline virtual outpatient clinic for patients with advanced heart failure. Podium presentation. Hospice and Palliative Nurses' Association Teams Conference, virtual conference.

Piotrowski, M., Wickline, E., Nekrashevich, N., & Cole, A. (2024). From research to real world impact. Panel discussion. UPMC St. Margaret 19th Annual Clinical Research Forum, Pittsburgh, PA.

Singh, A. (2023). Psychological capital: An overview for Nursing. Podium presentation. Greater Pittsburgh Chapter- Association for Nurse Professional Development. Pittsburgh, PA.

Walter, L. (2024). Self-paced modular learning course for academic success: A competency-based approach to online learning. Podium presentation. Online Learning Consortium (OLC) Innovate, virtual conference.



PTN STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

Turning a Failure Into Success

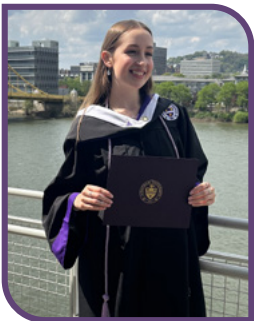


●●● In 2020, amidst the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ella Ochs, a sophomore Pathways to Nursing Student from Minnesota, embarked on her academic journey at UPMC Shadyside School of Nursing. She navigated the hurdles of remote

learning, chronic migraines, and the emotional strain of being away from her family and friends.

Spring of 2021 proved especially challenging as Ella faced her first academic failure. Failing the theoretical component of a nursing class by a mere one percent left Ella devastated and unsure of what step to take next. Rather than take a gap semester, Ella opted to pursue a minor. Her long-term goal is to become a Nurse Midwife, so a minor in Women and Gender Studies made the most sense. Ella learned about the importance of addressing intersectionality in feminism and how it creates disparities in healthcare for many individuals. Ella was proud to graduate this spring with a minor that supports women’s health and membership in the Iota Iota Iota (Triota) Honors Society for the Women and Gender Studies program. Triota promotes increased awareness of intersectional issues of feminism and encourages personal growth, scholarship, excellence, and the fostering of community.

For some students, failing a nursing course might have been the end of their nursing dreams. But for Ella, it was just a bump in the road. She saw the Women and Gender Studies minor not as a detour, but as a valuable addition to her future nursing career in women’s health and midwifery.



Nursing Not Just a Job, but a Way of Life

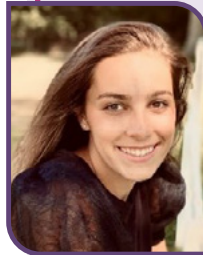


●●● Ameerah Muhammad is a junior Pathways to Nursing student from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Her healthcare journey started at the Cancer Treatment Centers of America. As a volunteer, she helped patients cope with the stress of

cancer treatment in various ways such as joining them in arts and crafts, escorting them to appointments, doing their laundry, and simply being present during difficult times.

During the pandemic, Ameerah took on the role of a medical assistant, administering hundreds of Covid-19 vaccines. Inspired by the dedicated nurses she worked with, she decided to become a nurse. Her first year at UPMC Shadyside School of Nursing was a transformative experience. Ameerah’s commitment to caring for her patients is unwavering, and she eagerly anticipates the day when she can make a difference as a BSN-prepared nurse. She often reflects on the challenges she faced, and the moments of joy and fulfillment she experienced. For Ameerah, nursing is not just a job, but a way of life.

Pathways Student Receives Prestigious Daisy Award



●●● Molly Goss, PTN BSN '24 was honored in September 2023 as a DAISY Foundation award recipient in the “Student Nurse” category. The DAISY Award is a global

program that celebrates and recognizes nurses by collecting nominations from patients, families, and coworkers. The foundation was created by Mark and Bonnie Barnes to thank nurses for the care, compassion, and kindness that they provide through their work. On her first day working in the ICU in the Pittsburgh area, she searched for a book to read to her sedated and intubated patient. Despite not finding a book, Molly still made a point to talk to her patient even though he was unable to communicate. Molly eventually donated a book of poems to the ICU so future nurses can family members could read to patients and maintain connections with them despite medical challenges that might impede communication. We are so proud of you, Molly!

For more information about The DAISY Foundation, please visit www.daisyfoundation.org



PTN Summer Study Abroad in Greece

Pathways to Nursing students Morgan Jurash and Alexis Sykes studied abroad in Greece in the summer of 2024 at the Discovery Program under the guidance of Chatham faculty leaders Dr. Rob Lettan and Dr. Andres Carillo. The Discovery Program 2024, aimed to provide students with the skills, knowledge, and experience needed to become successful professionals, is an undergraduate professional development program based out of the University of Thessaly in Trikala, Greece.



Chatham DNP Alumnus Advances Academic Career and Becomes Member of National Advisory Council



●●● Jordan Yakoby, EdD, DNP, ACNP-BC, CCRN, CNE, FNYAM, FCCM, FNCS, has excelled since graduating from the DNP program in 2017. Dr. Yakoby’s studies at Chatham launched his academic career in nursing education, with his first faculty position at Drexel University. He later moved to New York, serving as faculty, then Director of Undergraduate Nursing, and later Interim Dean at a School of Nursing in the Bronx. Currently, he is at Touro University as Director and Associate Professor of Nursing. Dr. Yakoby maintains his scholarly

agenda through practice, research and dissemination through presentations at state and national conferences, and publishing in peer reviewed journals. He has also authored both books and book chapters and has created several continuing medical education courses on various topics related to his area of expertise in neurology. Dr. Yakoby also serves as an accreditation site evaluator for nursing education programs for two national accrediting agencies, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and National League for Nursing Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (NLN CNEA).

In addition to his professional accomplishments within academia, Dr. Yakoby was recently inducted as a Fellow of the American College of Critical Care Medicine and was recently appointed by the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services to the National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice; advising both Congress and the Secretary on matters related to nursing education and practice, workforce development, finance and care delivery, accessibility, and other issues under Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act. He is also an exceptional leader within his community of practice.

Dr. Yakoby is currently serving on the board of directors for several organizations in the areas of anti-human trafficking (Freedom Network USA in Washington, D.C.), sexual violence treatment and prevention (New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault in Trenton, NJ), education (Chicago Collegiate Public Schools in Chicago), health and research (Neurocritical Care Foundation in Chicago), and as a panelist of a state government agency (New York State Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs in Albany, NY). Dr. Yakoby is an exceptional leader whose grit, determination, and extraordinary accomplishments have influenced the lives of many.

Chi Zeta: Chapter Update

●●● Chatham University has successfully maintained its Chi Zeta chapter of the Sigma Honor Society of Nursing for ten years. Chi Zeta is the 508th chapter of Sigma. Currently, there are over 555 chapters. During the fall term of the 2024-2025 academic year, Chatham will host a Virtual Founder’s Day event. The educational event will focus on applicable strategies for maintaining healthy work environments. Content will include best practices, resiliency and self-care strategies.

Chi Zeta continues to focus on Sigma “Be Bold” initiatives: BE BOLD just as our founders were during the turbulent times in which they founded this now global organization; BE BOLD and raise our voices together as the largest constituency of healthcare providers around

the globe to influence decisions and create a better world for all, which we strive to serve. What does it mean to be bold? Being bold does not mean being brash. It does not have to be inflammatory. Being bold does not have to be confrontational. It does not require you to be the loudest voice in the room. It does require you to step outside your silo and engage with others for the sake of our populations, our profession, and our planet. What does it take to be bold? It takes being informed with facts. It takes knowledge. It takes leadership. It takes fluency in economics, technology, and conservation. It takes love, courage, and honor.



Sigma Theta Tau International
Honor Society of Nursing[®]
Chi Zeta Chapter

●●● Chi Zeta provides many opportunities for membership involvement in leadership, scholarship, and community service. The chapter website can be found at chizeta.nursingsociety.org. If you are a member of Sigma but not part of Chatham University’s Chi Zeta chapter, please consider joining our current membership by contacting Sigma Membership Services at 888-634-8174 or memserv@sigmanursing.org. If you are a current member and interested in joining the leadership succession committee or education committee, please contact the Chi Zeta Chapter President Dr. Michelle Doas at mdoas@chatham.edu.



DNP ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

Nadzeja Nekrashevich DNP '23



••• Nadzeja (Nadia) Nekrashevich, DNP'23, is more familiar with Chatham nursing than most graduates. Born in the eastern European country of Belarus, she immigrated to the United States with her parents at 19 years of age. Initially, Nadia was not sure about professional nursing and education in the United States but enrolled in the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) Shadyside School of Nursing diploma program. In 2009, through Chatham's Pathways to Nursing partnership, her UPMC Shadyside science courses were taken at (then) Chatham College. After graduating from Shadyside nursing, Nadia completed her RN-BSN at Chatham in 2013. After a seven-year break from academia, Nadia returned to Chatham's BSN to DNP program and focused her evidence-based practice change project on *Compliance with Clean Abdominal Closure in Colorectal Surgery*.

Nadia represented nursing as the graduate speaker during the Winter Chatham University School of Health Sciences Recognition Ceremony. A few months later, she presented her DNP project poster at the 2024 Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses National Conference. In June 2024, Dr. Nekrashevich's dream to become a nurse educator was fulfilled when starting her new position as a nurse educator at Allegheny Health Network's West Penn Hospital in Pittsburgh, PA. Nadia is excited and embracing her latest challenge. She resides with her husband and two school-age children in Pittsburgh's South Hills area and hopes to motivate her children's education as a role model. Dr. Nekrashevich also continues to apply her various educational and professional experiences to motivate change and advancement for future nurses and healthcare providers.

Courtney Kresge, DNP '21, APRN-CNP, AGACNP-BC, CCRN



••• Courtney Kresge, DNP, APRN-CNP, AGACNP-BC, CCRN, has been in critical care for twenty years, having spent the last ten years working as an acute care NP in the ICU at Riverside Methodist Hospital in Columbus, OH. During this time, Courtney also created and implemented a professional development curriculum for OhioHealth's Advanced Practice Providers (APPs) Acute Care Fellowship. Prior to the start of the pandemic, Courtney began considering a return to school to obtain her DNP degree. Little did she know that the COVID-19 pandemic was looming and would remain an extra challenge throughout her time in the program, as she was working as an acute care nurse practitioner in the ICU. There was more than one occasion where Courtney reconsidered the feasibility of doing both but persevered.

Dr. Kresge's DNP project focused on developing a formalized communication curriculum for APPs to improve self-efficacy in their communication abilities. This project merged her two passions: simulation and education. This project was effective in building the confidence of the providers in their abilities to deliver bad news, ability

to speak clearly and concisely, and demonstrate empathetic behaviors such as listening without interrupting. When asked about what from the DNP program she values the most, her answer was "knowing how to look at evidence and using it guide your practice."

After graduating from the program, Dr. Kresge planned to continue her clinical role training APPs since she enjoys being at the bedside and teaching. However, while unplanned, an opportunity for her "dream job" presented itself and she applied. Shortly after graduating, Dr. Kresge started teaching at The Ohio State University in their acute care nurse practitioner program as part-time faculty. She continues in this role today as well as keeping a half-time position in the ICU where she continues to train APPs. Right now, this blend is the perfect balance for her.

Recently, Dr. Kresge co-authored her first publication "The Use of Virtual Reality in Teaching Diagnostic Reasoning to Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Students" in the *Nurse Educator* journal. When asked about this experience, she noted that while the process was involved, a great deal was learned about getting an article published and collaborating with others.

SUSAN CLAPP, DNP '23

DNP Graduate Reflects on Her Time at Chatham



••• We recently connected with Susan Clapp, DNP'23 and an adult nurse practitioner for Community Access Network in Lynchburg, VA who successfully published her evidence-based practice change project, *Providing Hepatitis C Treatment Locally for Substance-Using Patients*, to get her viewpoints on the DNP program.

Q: What do you remember most about your DNP degree at Chatham?

A: From the outset of the Chatham DNP program, I was instructed to formulate a project idea and given guidelines to follow. I felt respected for the previous knowledge gained and ready to venture into a more challenging curriculum.

Q: How do you think the DNP degree has further prepared you to meet your professional goals?

A: I feel I have enhanced my skills as a critical thinker and the success of my EBP practice project has paved the way for additional opportunities. For example, the CEO of Centra reached out, wanting to meet me and asked if they could use my EBP project as part of their Magnet Certification process. The Virginia Hepatitis C Coalition named me as a Hep C Champion, and I participate in the monthly virtual meeting that includes paraprofessionals from around the state. I was also honored at a banquet with the Centra Nursing Outstanding Research award in 2023 and was an invited speaker at the UCSF (University of California in San Francisco) conference addressing Health Equity in April 2024. Further, I am serving on a Harm Reduction committee seeking grant funding to establish a Harm Reduction free-standing clinic in Lynchburg, Va. Committee members include police, behavioral health partners, city council representatives, Centra Health, representatives from the Virginia Dept of Health and local health department, as well as other stakeholders.

Q: What would you say to potential applicants and Chatham BSN and MSN alumni considering the DNP program?

A: You owe it to yourself to strive for the highest degree available, within your profession. I have never regretted returning for my DNP while continuing to work full time. I found myself using concepts learned in class at my clinic and asking questions on current practice or processes and how they could be improved. I became more analytical in my thinking and realized I can make a difference. I felt well-supported the entire way

and the Chatham professors were available when I had a question or needed help. They were just as interested and passionate about my project.

Q: What was your area of greatest learning in the DNP program?

A: I have learned that change can be painfully slow in a community setting. On paper, it appears clear cut to get consensus from stakeholders. But it takes an enormous amount of time to get everyone on-board to make a change. Therefore, I had to convince others in our community by providing the data and positive outcomes to demonstrate how it can be done.

Q: Anything else you like to share?

A: I was convinced that I could demonstrate through my EBP project that although the uninsured or underinsured population may be challenging, they matter and deserve respect, despite there being difficulties with communication and follow-up. I wanted my EBP to reflect that simply because individuals use illegal substances, doesn't make them irresponsible if they want treated for their Hepatitis C. It feels great that my project has made a difference in the community, and to see the positive results of my hard work. Many of my patients express gratitude that I have cured them from chronic Hepatitis C.

Clifton Kenon, DNP '12 Lifetime Achievement Award



••• Chatham is proud to acknowledge DNP '12 alumnus Clifton Kenon, Jr., DNP, RN, IBCLC, FAWHONN, FAAN for his 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award from The Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN). The award is the most prestigious honor given by AWHONN for those who significantly contribute to the health and care of women and newborns. Dr. Kenon is an International

Board-Certified Lactation Consultant and currently a member of the senior service at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Congratulations Clifton! We are so proud of your achievements!



NURSING PROGRAM GRADUATES

••• We are pleased to extend our congratulations to the following Chatham University nursing programs students that received a degree conferral in this past academic year.

AUGUST 2023

BSN

Kayla Codling

MSN

Drew A. Jordan
Megan McBride
Dahlia L. Merritt
Ian Miller

DNP

Moyosore Abere
Ashley L. Adams
Berenice M. Anjeh
Nancy Ariwodo
Bolanle O. Babajide-Gbenga
Opeyemi E. Blessing
Hilda M. Chi
Amanda M. Chisholm-Hegarty
Shanica Davis
Marilyn B. Dzati
Obinna Ezealor
Shayna L. Hampton-Mielke
Chantal A. Hlontor
Nafisa Ibrahim
Symphorien A. Kamanou
Andrew T. Lininger
Darcy McRedmond
Stacey Michael
Nadzeya Nekrashevich
Victoria O. Olaniyan
Mayra Rael
Scott G. Stokes
Jane Tsamoh
Christopher N Wise

DECEMBER 2023

MSN

Parbati Gautam
Aimee A. Mack
Lauren Smith

DNP

Anita Akwete
Lilian Bor
Kateri Dixon
Basil E. Fomanka
Daniel Graves
Tina Hall
Angela D. Jones
Debbie Martin
Katherine Newlon
Aanu E. Olorunsola
Uju C. Osagie
Kerryann Penny
Trasera L. Rabenold
Eric K. Safo
Dejanea Tucker
Carrie B. Vincett
April L. Woofter

MAY 2024

BSN

Juliana M. Boyd
Victoria L. Brain
Molly R. Goss
Ashley M. Hall
Lindsay T. Hans
Cheyanne L. Howe
Liliya R Madeja
Ella Ochs

Brittanie Sapp Arnold
Madison Shenigo
Lily A. Slagle
Darryn M. Sleeman
Stephanie O. Walter
Racheal M. Weighley
Lauren K. Wolfe
Brynn A. Zajac

DNP

Muhammad Abdussalaam
Gloria U. Akunna
Stephanie Boyd
Kristine B. Brown
Suryamol Chacko
Sadia Cheema
Michelle R. Daniels-Devore
Alberta Derkyi
Albert Legrand S. Dzati
Rose Ette
Angela Hite
Holly L. Jacobson
Stevonica J. Logan
Lizette Mationg
Emmanuella Nortey
Kingsley O. Oyem
Pearl R. Rucker
Ifè Torrence
Honorine Wanie
Grace Wiredu

DNP Campus Residency

••• Chatham University held two on-campus residency experiences for our DNP students. With the newly updated DNP curriculum, the residency agenda has changed, and all students presented their completed projects, including their final outcomes. Timing of residency was moved to include weekdays just prior to the end of the term and commencement. Students had the opportunity to receive poster feedback and network with faculty and staff. We welcomed 14 attendees on December 14 and 15, 2023 and 14 attendees on April 25 and 26, 2024.

April 2024 Residency



December 2023 Residency



Please keep the Chatham University nursing programs updated with your achievements. We would like to share your scholarly work and projects with the Chatham University community. Send your stories, news and publications to G.McClellan@chatham.edu.

Also, consider joining our *Chatham University Nursing Programs* group on Facebook. It's a great place for students, alumni, and faculty to share and connect.

Stay connected and get involved with the Office of Alumni Relations! We offer numerous volunteer and networking opportunities as well as alumni receptions at professional conferences and exclusive events at local Pittsburgh attractions. Interested? Please send us an e-mail at alumni@chatham.edu or visit us at chatham.edu/alumni. Stay connected with the Alumni Association via Facebook.