



Honor Society of Nursing
Sigma Theta Tau
International

Rho Chapter

The University of Michigan
Chartered 1959

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The Dean's Perspective

By Ada Sue Hinshaw, Ph.D.,
R.N. F.A.A.N.

Dr. Linda Aiken, PhD, RN, professor of nursing and sociology, and director, Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Research, School of Nursing, University of Pennsylvania, and her colleagues have published a study in *The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* that shows the relationship between a nurses education and patient negative outcomes. The study called **Educational Levels of Hospital Nurses and Surgical Patient Mortality**, makes clear that patients do better at hospitals where the nursing staff has more years of schooling. In fact, the impact of education on patient survival is as strong as the effect of the patient-nurse ratio, already a strong predictor of a successful hospital stay.

The researchers found that raising the number of bedside nurses with baccalaureate degrees from 20% to 60% while keeping the patient-nurse ratio at 4-1 would save four lives per 1,000 surgery patients. Thus demonstrating that the greater the percentage of nurses with baccalaureate degrees, the better the outcome for patients.

Dr. Aiken and her colleagues adjusted for total staffing levels, board-certification of surgeons, and other factors. With those adjustments in place, they found that every 10% increase in the proportion of baccalaureate prepared nurses at a hospital lead to a 5% reduction in the patient's risk of dying within 30 days of admission. The level of education also had the same effect on the inability of the hospital in saving a patient from serious complications, what we know as "failure to rescue". When it comes to identification of problems at the bedside, and assembling necessary resources, nurses with more education show better results.

Results from this study along with the recent NIH study, **Keeping Patients Safe: Transforming the Work Environment of Nursing**, give clear scientific evidence that improving the work environment for nurses along with increasing the proportion of baccalaureate prepared nurses can have a considerable impact on patient outcomes.

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President's Column

Kathleen Gold, R.N.,
M.H.S.A., C.H.C.E.
President, Rho Chapter

Spring greetings! Presiding over the recent awards ceremony I could not help but be reminded of the purpose and goals of our organization and the importance of taking the time to recognize our accomplishments. Sigma Theta Tau International has become an active force for the benefit of health care and of nursing careers—focusing on three areas that contribute to nursing excellence: scholarship, research, and leadership. Changing the status of nursing and improving health care continue to be our ideals. The awardees exemplified these ideals, but also had a common trait—a spirit of service - to community and nursing. It was a pleasure and quite humbling, to preside over the ceremony to honor them.

A goal of our organization is to develop pathways for professional excellence by among other things, fostering collaborative leadership and relationships that support nurses to lead in diverse, complex health related environments, and to stimulate scholarly practice in the professional lives of members. On an early spring afternoon we honored nurses across a full span of careers - from experienced researchers and mentors to student leaders about to embark on a variety of nursing careers. I am reminded of just how important it is to recognize and celebrate the excellence and accomplishments of our nursing colleagues and support our emerging leaders.

Rho Chapter at the University of Michigan was one of the first local chapters organized following the founding of

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2003-2004 RHO Chapter Board And Committees

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In a time when federal estimates show that in 2010 the United States will need 400,000 more nurses, policy makers must recognize that simply increasing numbers of nurses is not enough. The results of these nursing studies clearly indicate that more education for nurses will result in decreased morbidity and mortality. A better work environment for nurses will also add to better patient outcomes.

Dr. Aiken's study appears in the September 24, 2003 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association. The abstract can be found at: <http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/290/12/1617>.

*President's Column
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the Society 80+ years ago. The Board of Rho Chapter, working together with our Rho colleagues across our nursing community, has established the goal of revitalizing our chapter. If you have been an inactive member of Rho, I invite your participation. One outreach activity has been to partner with MNA Chapter 8 for joint program sponsorship. These events have proven to be enlightening as well as entertaining—and a great opportunity to network with colleagues you do not interact with as regularly as you would like. There are other opportunities - from attending special programs to serving on a short-term committee or task force to serving as a board member or committee chair. I can attest that the experience is rewarding. Please join us! I look forward to seeing you at an upcoming event.

Rho Newsletter, supported by member dues, is published three times a year: Fall, Winter, and Spring/Summer. **We welcome your comments and news about STT Rho member's activities.** Send your contributions via email or disk by the 15th of April, July, and November, to Newsletter Editor, Rho Chapter, STTI, c/o Elizabeth Beattie, Rho President, University of Michigan, 400 N. Ingalls, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-0482, (734) 647-9331, ebeattie@umich.edu

SUMMARY OF FALL EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS:

Ann Kruszewski, Ph.D., R.N., Newsletter Editor

Rho Chapter co-sponsored two educational events this winter.

On April 21, 2004 Rho Chapter and Washtenaw-Livingston-Monroe Chapter of the Michigan Nurses Association celebrated Nurses Week with a joint event, "Juggling and the Right Side of the Brain." As part of Nurses Week celebration, we were treated to juggling demonstrations and a lot of laughs. The proam was a wonderful stress reduction intervention to all of us who attended.

On Tuesday February 10, 2004, Rho Chapter co-sponsored "Improving End of Life Care: Focusing on Patients and Families," with the School of Nursing and University of Michigan Health System. The presentation focused on improving communication and collaboration among professionals, patients, and their families. Dean Ada Sue Hinshaw presented the opening address and Priscilla Schwarz described her personal experience with caring for her father during the dying process and the invaluable contribution of nurses to the quality of his life during the last months. A panel of health care providers including a hospice nurse, a home care nurse, a social worker, a chaplain, and a survival flight nurse described best practices regarding communication within the health care team and with patients and families during the dying process.



WINTER ROUND TABLE CAREER PLANNING EVENT

"Exploring the First Years of Your Nursing Career" was held on Tuesday, February 10, 2004 from 4:00-6:00pm at the Michigan League. This event was the chapter's first effort at planning educational activities specifically for undergraduate nursing students, and was open to all students. The event was held as a round table format, with recent graduates providing leadership for informal table discussions with undergraduate students. Rho chapter was most fortunate to have four nurses who have graduated within the last four years serve as table leaders and shared their experiences about the transition from student to professional nurse. Elisabeth Jilek-Pace is currently a graduate student in the FNP program and has worked as a pediatric staff nurse on 5 West Mott. Mary Hawk is currently a staff nurse in the SICU at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital. Vickie Portman is currently a graduate student and a staff nurse on 4A, Neurology-Neurosurgery at UMHS. The fourth nurse was Laura Burns. Laura is a recent graduate and a staff nurse on 6 Mott. Students had a lively discussion about the realities of life as a new nurse and the sources of support for new graduates. We hope to repeat this event next year with undergraduate student members' assistance.



Spring Awards Ceremony

On March 24, 2004 Rho Chapter held its annual awards ceremony in the lovely setting of the Matthei Botanical Gardens. Although the weatherman gave us neither the beautiful snowfall we had last year nor warm and sunny weather, our members, awardees, and their families and friends all enjoyed outstanding food and a lovely view of the gardens in early spring outside the picture window. Thirteen members were presented with Chapter Awards and one member received recognition for her special projects award from our chapter. Dean Ada Sue Hinshaw graciously provide welcoming remarks from the School of Nursing and NAME gave greetings from the U of M Health System on behalf of Marge Calarco, Chief of Nursing and Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs.

The following organizations and members were recognized:

Friend of Nursing: FRIENDS of the University of Hospital and Health Care Centers

The FRIENDS organization is a nonprofit group that has supported patient care in the U of M Hospitals and Health Centers since 1978, including patient care amenities, patient education, scholarships for nurses to continue their education, and community outreach projects such as the Trails Edge Camp for ventilator dependent children.

Awards for Excellence in Nursing Practice: Dr. Sue Fink and Michaelyn Page

Dr. Fink was noted for her work as a geriatric nurse practitioner and clinical scholarship in care of older adults, as well as for her mentorship of advanced practice nursing students. Ms. Page has been a clinical specialist in the area of neuro-oncology for almost 20 years and has provided consultation and continuing education to nurses at local and state levels. She also is a founder and facilitator for the brain tumor support group at UMHS.

Awards for Excellence in Research: Dr. Donna Algase

Dr. Algase was recognized for her behavioral research with nursing home residents and her pioneering work on wandering associated with dementia. Dr. Algase has also mentored many young researchers, helping them to achieve their career goals.

Awards for Excellence in Education: Dr. Ann Whall and Dr. Judy Wismont

Dr. Whall has served as an educator at Wayne State University, the University of Michigan, and has been a visiting professor at Rutgers, the University of Tennessee and University of Iowa. She is currently a Fulbright distinguished scholar to the University of Ulster in Northern Ireland, and has taught thousands of students during her distinguished career. Dr. Wismont has taught in practical nursing programs, baccalaureate nursing students, and childbirth classes at Scott Regional Correctional Facility. She is currently serving as Interim Undergraduate Program Director and was noted for setting the bar for fairness, respect, open communication and professional growth.

Mentorship Award: Ann Kaiser

Ann Kaiser has been a manager for over 15 years, currently on 8A at UMHS. She is recognized for encouraging her nursing staff through her active listening, support, and guidance and for serving as a management preceptor for a generation of nursing students, helping them to understand the importance of nursing leadership to patient care and the nursing profession.

Rising Star: Dr. Alice Davis

The rising star award recognizes those who demonstrate the potential to make significant contributions to nursing practice, education and/or research. Dr. Davis was recognized for her numerous contributions as an educator in the Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Program, a researcher in the area of neurobehavior, an advanced practice nurse, and as a leader in nursing organizations including the Society of Trauma Nurses and the American Board of Neuroscience Nursing.

Distnguished Service: Dr. Ruth Barnard & Dr. Ann Kruszewski

Drs. Barnard and Kruszewski were noted for their many contributions to Rho Chapter activities and their communities. Dr. Barnard has held multiple roles in Rho chapter including treasurer, publicity chairperson, and newsletter editor, and established the Rho chapter website. Dr. Barnard has actively worked for the development of a nursing school in Haiti. Dr. Kruszewski has held multiple service roles in the School of Nursing and

has acted as Rho Chapter newsletter editor, publicity chair and faculty advisor.

Student Leadership: Paula Graff, Lina Sirgedas, and Angela Henderson

The accomplishments of these three young women, all School of Nursing senior students, would be remarkable in an experienced nurse, let alone someone young in their career. Ms. Graff has been class president, served on the Student Conflict Resolution Board and volunteers at Ronald McDonald House. Ms. Sirgedas is a research assistant, president of the Nursing Council, has organized multiple fundraising events and a job fair for nursing students, and has been a class officer for several years. Ms. Henderson is the senior class president, membership director of the Michigan Student Nurses Association, and a delegate to the national convention of the NSNA. She has received multiple academic honors and has worked with the Hunger Action group in Ann Arbor.

Special Project Award: Nah-Mee Shin

Nah-Mee Shin, a candidate in the Doctoral Program, was awarded a Sigma Theta Tau Rho Chapter research grant to support her dissertation. Ms. Shin is investigating, "The Effects of Resilient Coping Capacity on Depression in Patients with Acute Coronary Events."

We are so pleased to continue to honor chapter members and others who have contributed their communities, to quality care of patients, and to the nursing profession. Special recognition and a spring basket of thanks goes to our energetic Awards Ceremony chairperson, Barbara Christy, and to her hardworking committee members, Ingrid Deininger, Lisa Falzetta, and DeJuana Meekins. Special recognition and thanks also go to Charlene Berry whose hammer dulcimer music set a warm tone for the afternoon.



Dean Hinshaw gives welcome address



President Kathy Gold welcomes awardees and guests



Members of the hardworking awards committee

Spring Awards Ceremony



Recipients of Chapter Awards



Recipients of Chapter Awards



Special Projects Awardee, NahMee Shin

Member Spotlight

By Ann Kruszewski, Newsletter Editor



Recipients of
Chapter Awards



In this issue, we are pleased to spotlight a recent member of Rho Chapter, DeJuana Meekins. DeJuana joined our chapter last fall, after moving to Ann Arbor to begin work on her masters degree in the acute care nurse practitioner program. DeJuana

earned her bachelors degree in nursing from Michigan State University in 2003 where she was inducted into Alpha Psi chapter. She currently works in the Trauma Burn Unit at U of M Health System. She is a member of Chi Eta Phi Professional Nursing Sorority, Delta Sigma Theta Community Service Organization, and the Michigan Nurses Association. She received nine awards for community service and academic excellence as a nursing student! Since arriving in Ann Arbor last fall, she has been an enthusiastic Rho Chapter member, working on the Induction Ceremony planning committee and the Spring Awards Ceremony committee. DeJuana writes, "My career goal is to practice as a Family Nurse Practitioner in a clinic, I would like to work with minorities and teen pregnancy prevention programs. I plan to further my education by obtaining my PhD in nursing so that I can teach at the University level."

When asked about what she enjoys most about nursing, she states, "The most rewarding aspect of nursing in my eyes are seeing change and what we do on a daily basis to make that happen. It's nice to see your patient, who was once on a ventilator and close to death, walk in after rehabilitation and say 'Thank you.' It's also nice to see policies changed to better the work environment or to see evidence based material put to work. These also can be the most challenging aspects of nursing because it is such hard work to get the rewarding results." All of us on the board have enjoyed working with DeJuana, who exemplifies the active, intelligent, and altruistic young people that are the bright future of nursing.

Do you know a member who deserves to be spotlighted? Please send your suggestions to newsletter editor, Ann Kruszewski (annkrusz@umich.edu). Ann will do the rest!

NOMINATIONS FOR RHO CHAPTER BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED

The Nominating Committee is currently soliciting members for the 2004 ballot. The bylaws require two names for each position on the ballot so we need your advice and help. Please contact Todd Ray (rayt@umich.edu), Chair of the Nominating Committee, with your offer to serve on the board. Like many volunteer organizations, Rho Chapter is in great need of people who are willing to donate their time. We cannot sustain our chapter without your help. Even if you have served on the Board in the past, we need you to consider running again. We especially need suggestions for President-Elect, Faculty Advisor, and Vice-President. We promise to keep the job fun and the workload reasonable!

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