WE DARE TO
SHAPE THE FUTURE

Before Lauren Underwood became the youngest African American woman in Congress, she was a University of Michigan nursing student with a clear vision. P.12

NURSING INNOVATION P.6    WE DARE P.10    MY BEGINNINGS P.19
A new program is coaching nurses to realize the true potential of their ideas.

A new class of aspiring nurses includes two students pursuing their degrees together after 12 years of marriage.

Nutrena Tate shares a firsthand account of her journey as a nurse and the experiences that have shaped her accomplished career.

Before Lauren Underwood became the youngest African American woman in Congress, she was a U-M nursing student with a clear vision.
Q&A WITH DEAN HURN

In this installment of the Leadership Q&A with Dean Hurn, we discuss the introduction of U-M School of Nursing branding in 2020 and how its central theme, “We Dare,” is a unifying message for all members of our community.

The rollout of the U-M School of Nursing “We Dare” branding was one of the first major initiatives you implemented in 2020. Why was it such a priority for you to start the new year?

Dean Patricia Hurn: There are more than 900 nursing schools in the country, so for the U-M School of Nursing to attract the diverse and talented students, faculty and staff necessary to sustain the level of excellence we have worked very hard to achieve, it was clear to me that we needed to develop unified branding. Prospective nursing students have more educational choices than ever before, so it’s imperative for U-M School of Nursing to be a collection of unique form of daring, people will want to connect with us in a very authentic and meaningful way.

How do you hope someone may take the message of “We Dare” and practically incorporate it into their work as a student or faculty member?

Dean Patricia Hurn: Daring comes in many forms. It’s taking risks, challenging the status quo and pushing the boundaries of what is possible. It’s calm in the face of adversity, perseverance through failure and selflessness in the pursuit of excellence. For each person and in each moment, daring may look different. At the U-M School of Nursing, we dare every day, using our knowledge, skills, innovation and compassion to advance the public good and prepare nurses who will reinvent health care.

PH: I hope people will use it as a vehicle to support and pursue work that is important to them. For example, if there is someone interested in health disparities within the African American community, I would hope that person would use the brand — for their education, their research and their clinical care — as a way to say they “dare” to confront something as complex as health disparities. All of us want the U-M School of Nursing to be a collection of individuals, but we also want to have a common purpose and identity. In a world that seems very fractured right now, it doesn’t hurt to have something that we share in common. I think that will be extremely helpful as we continue to build a strong, value-driven culture.

“PH: Sometimes just being a kid with a big dream is enough!”
- Brock Willett, DNP student, on Instagram

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“When last night I got the most awesome friend request on FB! Her name is Sophie Cheng. She is the amazing young lady that did not hesitate to help with reviving my now dear friend Bill Hennessy. The woman [on the train] was yelling for a nurse or doctor... Sophie was sitting in the 2nd car, she sprinted to the 4th car to help and arrived in less than a minute. She initially started the compressions and helped set up the AED, then provided mouth to mouth when required as I applied the compressions. This was team work at its best.”
- Ruben Rodriguez, speaking about U-M School of Nursing alumna Sophie Cheng (BSN ’17) on Facebook

“It was great to be back at UMichNursing this weekend and meet with so many future leaders and nurses! #GoBlue”
- Lauren Benvenuto (BSN ’15) on Instagram

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“Good morning, my name is Maddie and I am FINALLY going to be your nurse today!”
- Madeleine Lee Bredin, graduate student, on Instagram

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CHANGING THE INNOVATION CONVERSATION

A new program aims to accelerate nursing discovery

Written by Alex Bienkowski

Innovation is often accompanied by thoughts of venture capitalists, “Shark Tanks” and Silicon Valley startups. In the health care field, nurses are often overlooked as innovators — even among themselves. But at the University of Michigan School of Nursing, the Healthcare Innovation Impact Program (HiIP) can provide a pathway to a different perspective.

“Innovation is usually carried out by those who are deeply immersed in their work — the people who are in the trenches,” said Dean Patricia Hurn, Ph.D., RN. “That’s why nurses are so primed to be innovators. They are in the center of the action for every part of health care.”

Hurn joined the School of Nursing in 2016 after serving as vice chancellor for research and innovation at the University of Texas System. She believes scientists and researchers have a moral obligation to return their knowledge to serve the public, and she saw opportunity at U-M. She put out a call to the U-M School of Nursing community and found a number of impactful ideas but little understanding of just how to move them forward.

“I felt we needed something to bridge the more tech-driven, commercially focused resources at the university with the U-M School of Nursing ethos,” she said. “If we’re talking about social entrepreneurship to advance the health of patients and communities, we need to do it here.”

Is there really a need for an innovation program tailored to nursing? And what does that look like? Associate Professor Olga Yakusheva, Ph.D., was called upon to answer those questions and sought help from marketing research expert and innovation consultant Ann Fitzsimons to form a task force and lay the groundwork.

The demand was noticeable. The task force engaged more than a dozen innovators with projects at different stages of development, but they found that existing resources were too standardized.

“There were a lot of places on campus to turn for help, but they didn’t fit nursing ideas,” said Yakusheva. “If you’re not developing a new device, app or other technology, it’s not as simple.”

The group knew they had to do something different from their counterparts at U-M and other institutions. They had to create a new model, focused on the individual needs and ambitions of nursing innovators.

“Many of the ideas we’re working on are focused on a social impact for the public good,” said Yakusheva. “You can’t always monetize things that improve patient care and save lives, but what’s more valuable than that?”

To lead a team of innovative nurses, the program had to be their coach. HiIP is designed to be a comprehensive innovation support system that helps nurses do the legwork on customer discovery, market analysis, licensing, promotion and more. They also connect innovators with outside resources and help nurses build their own entrepreneurial networks.

“HiIP officially launched in September 2019, excitement around innovation is building at the U-M School of Nursing. As the program adds to the growing list of innovators and projects under its guidance, the campus community is starting to take notice as well. In December, the U-M School of Nursing hosted the universitywide Innovation and Entrepreneurship roundtable for the first time.

While the program has largely focused on faculty innovation, helping students leverage HiIP support to advance their own ideas will be key to long-term success.

IF WE’re TALKING ABOUT SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP TO ADVANCE THE HEALTH OF PATIENTS AND COMMUNITIES, WE NEED TO DO IT HERE.”

HiIP worked with Boyd and the team of researchers at the U-M School of Nursing’s Center for the Study of Drugs, Alcohol, Smoking and Health (DASH) to reimagine the program. In its updated format, the ABCs meet several key objectives. The message can be understood — there is no way it’s going to increase medication adherence,” Boyd said. “But the ABCs might.”

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We knew this was a valuable resource and we went to work figuring out how to make it convenient for prescribers to order and administer,” said HiIP Innovation Coach Ann Fitzsimons.

Finding a way to distribute the product without losing control of content and quality was crucial, so HiIP facilitated the development of an online store — a first for the U-M School of Nursing. With a few clicks, health care providers and other organizations can order the ABCs of Prescription Drug Safety and have copies delivered right to their door.

“A faculty member simply couldn’t have done this,” Boyd said. “I believe in it, but I didn’t have the time to make it what it’s become. We needed HiIP to make it happen.”

LEARN more about the ABCs at nursing.umich.edu/DASH.

TEACHING THE ABCs OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG SAFETY

Over six million people in the United States misuse addictive medications. Carol Boyd, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, spent years trying to develop the ABCs of Prescription Drug Safety to address this public health crisis, but she struggled to get her idea off the ground. The Healthcare Innovation Impact Program helped her find a new way to get this educational intervention into the right hands.

When patients are prescribed a potentially addictive medication, they often receive an assortment of papers filled with complex language and unnecessary information. The ABCs break this dense and disorganized process down into simple steps, which are carefully laid out in an easy-to-read poster and brochure.

“You shouldn’t be given something that you cannot understand — there is no way it’s going to increase medication adherence,” Boyd said. “But the ABCs might.”

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“How far we can go is going to be driven by how we engage our students,” Hurn explained. “Given the resources and coaching they need, we can create avenues for Michigan nurses to make giant leaps.”

Measuring success can be difficult, however, when you’re not focused on revenue, commercialization and more traditional metrics. But with an uncommon approach, HiiP is helping nurses realize the true potential of their ideas.

“Ingenuity, compassion and service are embedded within the nursing profession, and that is where innovation comes from,” said Yakusheva. "We want nurses to take credit for this. So when people outside of our community recognize us as a champion for nursing innovation, that is a success.”

SUPPORT FOR SURVIVOR MOMS

One in five women has a history of abuse and neglect in childhood and youth, making them 12 times more likely to develop posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) during pregnancy. PTSD during pregnancy leads to a host of negative outcomes, including lower birth weight. It’s also a strong predictor of cross-generational abuse and psychiatric problems.

“Women have worried about this in the past, but it was taboo to talk about,” said Professor and Associate Dean for Strategic Affairs Julia Seng, Ph.D., CNM, RN, FAAN. “Nobody had applied knowledge from the field of PTSD to childbirth.”

For nearly a decade, Seng has been developing the Survivor Moms’ Companion (SMC) to help new mothers coping with trauma. She and co-developer Mickey Sperlich, Ph.D., MSW, CPM, have made great strides, but as they look to expand the program, they’ve encountered challenges outside their expertise.

SMC is the first evidence-based, trauma-specific intervention created for pregnant women and new moms who have histories of sexual abuse and family violence. In a 10-part workbook, SMC uses weekly lessons to help moms manage emotions, relationships and trauma reactions during and after pregnancy.

Moms then work with trained “tutors,” who coach them through each lesson in person or by phone. Tutors may be nurses, midwives, social workers, childbirth educators, doulas or other skilled service providers.

To grow and sustain the program, SMC has to generate revenue. Agencies can purchase a license, including training, but the cost structure is complicated when trying to fit a variety of maternity care organizations. That’s where HiiP stepped in, providing support with market research, pricing analysis, promotional strategies and more.

“When it came to talking money and how to implement buying a site license, training staff and fitting SMC into their routines, we were stuck,” Seng said. “We had to figure out what to charge for this and how to work with organizations who aren’t used to paying for manualized interventions.”

In November 2019, HiiP helped coordinate an SMC launch event on campus. The three-day program served as an informational training session for providers from across the country who signed up to be early adopters.

“It’s amazing to see how empowering this training is,” said one attendee. “It helps these mothers define themselves and move forward.”

Learn more about the Survivor Moms’ Companion at survivormoms.org.

Above: Ann Fitzsimons (left) and Olga Yakusheva (right) attend the SMC event at the U-M School of Nursing.

Top right: Seng (top left) and early adopters at the SMC launch event on campus.

2020 THE YEAR OF THE NURSE AND MIDWIFE

#SupportNursesAndMidwives

Globally, 70% of the health and social workforce are women. Many of them are nurses and midwives.

Nurses and midwives play a vital role in providing health services around the world. To honor the contributions of these dedicated practitioners and their efforts to improve global health, the World Health Organization has designated 2020 as the Year of the Nurse and Midwife. The yearlong celebration coincides with the bicentennial anniversary of Florence Nightingale’s birth and will focus on ways to bring awareness to the challenging conditions nurses and midwives face while advocating for increased investment in the global nursing workforce.
Eddie and Tamara Villavicencio’s 12-year marriage has been anything but ordinary, but things got even more interesting when the husband and wife became classmates at the U-M School of Nursing.

The two met in Ensenada, Mexico, while working with a Christian missionary group. Eddie, who was born and raised in Mexico, was already working as a nurse when he met Tamara, who grew up in Williamston, Michigan. The two became close during their missionary work, fell in love and got married.

They remained in Mexico for the next few years and had two children. In 2015, they moved to the United States, but due to a series of complications Eddie could not transfer his nursing license. He tried changing careers, working for a time with the U.S. Postal Service and at a local financial institution, but something didn’t feel right.

“The pay and benefits were good, but I was dying sitting behind a desk all day long,” he said.

After working for years as a birth doula and childbirth educator, Tamara wanted to become a nurse-midwife, and Eddie was ready to be a nurse again, so they decided to enroll at their local community college and eventually applied to U-M’s BSN program.

“I remember when Tamara got the acceptance email,” Eddie said. “She was screaming with excitement, and I was so afraid to open mine.”

As they raise their 7-year-old daughter and 4-year-old son, Eddie and Tamara commute together, study together and share the same class schedule, balancing responsibilities most of their classmates don’t have to consider.

“We have to be full-time parents and full-time students. We take the kids to swimming lessons, dance classes and do all of the things normal parents do,” Eddie explained. “Even though it’s a unique situation, it’s very nice to have a constant study buddy,” Tamara said.

From Ensenada to Ann Arbor, the Villavicencios have taken a nontraditional path to nursing school, but they’re grateful to be on this journey together.

“DARING COMES IN MANY FORMS. IT’S TAKING RISKS, CHALLENGING THE STATUS QUO AND PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF WHAT IS POSSIBLE.”

- Patricia Hurn
U-M School of Nursing Dean
For Lauren Underwood (BSN ’08), health care and politics were always part of the same conversation. At 33, she is the youngest African American woman to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. She is the first woman, first person of color and first millennial to represent Illinois’ 14th District. She’s been called a rising star in the Democratic Party and was recently listed on Time magazine’s “100 Next” list of influential people who are shaping the future. But at the heart of it all, Lauren Underwood is a nurse.

The politics of the profession

In fall 2018, Underwood defeated a four-term incumbent to win the congressional seat in the reliably Republican 14th District. She realizes not every nurse aspires to a career in politics, but she also knows that being apolitical is impossible.

“Everything we’re doing is political,” Underwood said. “For the advanced practice nurse, their license and ability to prescribe is dictated by our political structure. For the RN who works at a community clinic, what happens if that federally qualified health center loses its funding? We don’t just get to opt out. Patients trust us, and that comes with the responsibility to do everything we can to ensure the systems they depend on give them a chance to live their best lives.”

On the campaign trail and now in office, much of her work is grounded in one of nursing’s foundational principles: Health care is a human right.

“We shouldn’t have to have conversations with constituents that talk about ‘heat or health care’ in the winter. We shouldn’t have seniors on a fixed income who can’t afford anything because they’re trying to take their medication as prescribed. And we shouldn’t have sick kids worrying about their parents’ ability to afford their insulin,” Underwood said.

For many nurses, those conversations have crept into the clinical setting.

“There are nurses who now have to spend more time talking about cost and affordability than they do about strategies to improve their patients’ health — that’s not acceptable.”
A vision to serve

Underwood grew up in Naperville, a western suburb of Chicago. As a child, she was diagnosed with supraventricular tachycardia, or an abnormally rapid heart rhythm. Routine trips to the pediatric cardiologist sparked an early interest in health care, which converged with a burgeoning passion for public service in high school.

At 16, she was appointed to serve on Naperville’s Fair Housing Commission, where she reviewed discrimination cases and made recommendations to City Council on ways to make housing more equitable in the upper-middle-class community.

“I wanted to make sure that our community was as welcoming as we professed it to be,” she said. “I was curious, opinionated, and I loved the opportunity.”

She served a second term on the commission her senior year before receiving the Sidney J. and Irene Shipman Scholarship to attend the U-M School of Nursing. Underwood was excited to enter the field but struggled to see a career path that could combine her interests in health care and public policy. “Maybe I could testify at city council one day,” she thought. Then an early morning class her first year on campus changed everything.

Policy and Politics in Nursing and Health Care met on Mondays at 8 a.m., and while sleepy classmates second-guessed their schedules, Underwood couldn’t wait to get started.

“I think I was the only one excited about it, but that class changed my life,” she said. “To be introduced to something that would combine my interests that early in my education was transformational. I had no idea that a nurse could spend their career focusing on policy to improve the well-being of communities and populations.”

“She came in with a vision to make a difference through policy, which is rare for undergraduates,” said Professor Emerita Barbara Guthrie, who co-taught the course with former U-M School of Nursing Dean Ada Sue Hinshaw. “Lauren wanted to understand how policy could keep people out of the hospital. She was always asking questions and seeking out new information and experiences. I think she was born to do this work.”

With focused ambition, Underwood capitalized on opportunities to position herself for a career as a policy nurse, including a summer internship at then-Senator Barack Obama’s Washington, D.C., office. On campus, she became a leading voice on the University Health Services Advisory Board and adjusted her curriculum to better align with her goals.

“The idea of health care policymaking was no longer theoretical,” she said. “I wanted to develop a diverse skill set, and the nursing faculty helped me cultivate that.”

It’s easy to draw a line from Underwood’s experiences at Michigan to the work she’s doing in Congress. Last spring, she co-founded the Black Maternal Health Caucus to improve outcomes for a population that experiences one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. During her senior year at U-M, Underwood worked with Professor Antonia Villarruel on interdisciplinary research to reduce the risk of low birth weight and increase access to prenatal care for women in Detroit.

“You can’t work on policy without hearing from those you’re trying to impact, and I could tell Lauren was serious,” said Villarruel, who is now dean of the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. “I think that work helped her understand some different perspectives and approaches. I’m so proud of the person she’s become. The way she speaks about evidence-based policy and her willingness to hear from every constituent … that is all nursing.”

After earning master’s degrees in nursing and public health from Johns Hopkins University in 2009, Underwood returned to Washington, D.C., to work for the Department of Health and Human Services, where she helped implement the Affordable Care Act and prepare communities for public health emergencies such as the Ebola outbreak, Zika virus and Flint water crisis. She left government for a brief period in 2016 before launching the underdog campaign that would lead her right back to the nation’s capital.

Underwood enters 2020 vying for re-election to build on the work she’s prepared for her whole life. She is a passionate public servant, an unexpected incumbent and a proud Michigan Wolverine. But above all else, she is a nurse.

“When people ask me what I do, I say that I’m a nurse,” Underwood said. “That is part of my identity, and I love the career that I’ve had in this profession.”
ALUMNI NEWS

Bethany J. Brown (BSN ’04, MS ’07)

Celebrated one year as assistant director of nursing at the Central Michigan University School of Nursing, where she helped implement the university’s first nursing program with an RN to BSN platform.

Karen Hollingsworth (BSN ’76)

Accepted the senior vice president of information services position at Spectrum Health.

John Inthaophanya (DNP ’19)

Accepted a position as surgical ICU nurse practitioner at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, Michigan.

Amanda Jones (BSN ’08)

Celebrated one year as assistant director of advanced practice providers at Texas Children’s Hospital in Houston.

Robert Knaehr (BSN ’14, Ph.D. ’17)

Awarded the 2020 Oncology Nursing Society’s Victoria Mock New Investigator Award in recognition of his contributions to building a scientific foundation for oncology nursing practice.

Carol Ann Fausone (BSN ’75)

Received the 2019 David B. Hermelin Award for Fundraising Volunteer Leadership along with her husband Jim Fausone (BS and BSE ’76).

Natalie Fluent Mchugh (BSN ’84)

Hired as assistant professor at the Concordia University Ann Arbor School of Nursing.

Amy Grand (MS ’02)

Promoted to director of certification and accreditation for the Board of Certification for Emergency Nursing. Grand also began her term as a member of the Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification’s board of directors.

Jordan Harrison (BSN ’14, Ph.D. ’17)

Published findings from a new study titled “In Hospitals with More Nurses Who Have Baccalaureate Degrees, Better Outcomes for Patients After Cardiac Arrest.”

Julie Postma (BSN ’98)

Named associate dean for research at Washington State University College of Nursing.

FACULTY NEWS AND ACCOLADES

Patricia Aakhus

Served as reviewer and informatics expert for the National Academy of Medicine report “Taking Action Against ClinicalSUM: A Systems Approach to Professional Well-Being.”

Jennitta Rooker (BSN ’15)

Named Tampa General Hospital’s Nurse of the Year for the Infusion Center and Divisional Nurse of the Year for Ambulatory Services.

Amanda Jones (BSN ’08)

Promoted from associate professor to full professor at the Eastern Michigan University School of Nursing.

Susanne Quallich (Ph.D. ’17)

Named for her contributions to building a scientific foundation for oncology nursing practice.

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University of Michigan School of Nursing
Ingalls & Beyond

Nursing Out and About

1. Past and present recipients of the Terri Murtland Memorial Scholarship for Nurse Midwifery with Greg and Audrey Murtland (center) during the Terri Murtland Memorial Lecture Oct. 3.
2. Attendees tell us who they are during the Survivor Moms’ Companion program Early Adopter Launch, led by Professor and Associate Dean for Strategic Affairs Julia Seng (bottom row, third from left).
3. (From left) Class of ’69 classmates Kathy Fischer, Cheryl Bourquintron and Linda Feighner reconnect during the Homecoming Reunion Celebration.

Ingalls & Beyond

My Beginnings

Tate shares a firsthand account of her journey as a nurse and the experiences that have shaped her career. From her BSN, MSN and postdoctoral degrees to the University of Detroit Mercy, teaching pediatric clinical courses back at Children’s Hospital, the experiences that have shaped her account of her journey as a nurse and the importance it is to keep student success at the forefront of my mind.

As a student at the University of Michigan, I absolutely loved my pediatric nursing course. Taking care of sick children and their families felt natural to me. I will never forget my first patient: a two-year-old who had open-heart surgery. Her parents never visited, so I comforted her during dressing changes and inquired when she should have received better treatment. The experience not only ignited my love for pediatric nursing but taught me how to be an advocate for those in need.

Upon graduation, I started working as a pediatric nurse at Children’s Hospital of Michigan in Detroit, the city I called home. This experience fueled my passion for child and adolescent health and led me to return to U-M to pursue my master’s in the Pediatric Nurse Practitioner program. The courses, preceptors and faculty were phenomenal and have helped mold me into the practitioner I am today. I learned how to speak from the heart and realized how important it is to keep student success at the forefront of my mind.

Once I completed my MSN, I was able to provide chronic, acute and well-child care all in one position. Serving in this capacity was a dream, and I felt I was truly giving back to my community, which made the decision to leave and pursue my Ph.D. very difficult. But I had an itch for research.

My matriculation as a doctoral student was life-changing. Building upon the foundation of my U-M degrees, I was challenged to ponder health dilemmas differently than ever before. It took me seven years to finish the degree, but I had to accept that everyone’s time to completion is their own personal journey. The mentorship I received during this time was transformational, helping me become a researcher and realize another dream by joining the faculty at University of Detroit Mercy, teaching pediatric clinical courses back at Children’s Hospital.

I furthered my passion for research by returning to U-M for postdoctoral studies in health promotion and risk reduction. I finally started to feel like a true nurse scholar when I received my first external grant and first lead author publication. However, these accomplishments were accompanied by great loss when my father, one of my strongest supporters, passed away. He had always been there, encouraging me to keep pushing despite any obstacles that came my way. I’ve had to figure out the rest of my life without him, but his memory has fueled my drive for success. His passing made me think differently about the world, and I always feel his smiling down on me as I continue to move forward in my life and career.

When I started as a nursing student at Michigan, I never thought I would be where I am today. Being a nurse does not feel like work — it is a calling.

As a nurse, I have been a practitioner, researcher, educator and administrator, and I am looking forward to the next part of my journey.

Inspired by parents, alumna finds purpose, passion and success in nursing

Dr. Nutrena Tate is a certified pediatric nurse practitioner and associate dean of the College of Health Professions and McAuley School of Nursing at the University of Detroit Mercy. Tate earned her BSN, MSN and postdoctoral degrees from the University of Michigan and her Ph.D. in nursing research from Wayne State University. In this edition of My Beginnings, Tate shares a firsthand account of her journey as a nurse and the experiences that have shaped her accomplished career.

When I dreamed about what I wanted to do in life, it never involved being a nurse. As a high school freshman, my mother — a retired nurse of 30 years — was in a car accident. She broke both her legs and was bedridden for an entire summer. It was my responsibility to take care of her, and I distinctly remember saying, “I could never be a nurse. I don’t see how you do it.” But that was the start of my journey, when I learned about selflessness and sacrifice.

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