



*UTC School of Nursing  
Fall 2013*

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## ***Message from the Interim Director***

*Christine Benz Smith, PhD, APN, FNP-BC  
Interim Director, School of Nursing*

Our School of Nursing offers educational opportunities for professional and advanced practice nursing through our undergraduate and graduate programs. Embracing UTC's mission to be an engaged metropolitan university, many community partners enable us to deliver our programs.

Our Mission is to prepare qualified nursing professionals who can influence the health care environment and enhance the quality of life for individuals, families and society. We are committed to providing leadership in health care. The faculty believes that the UTC School of Nursing provides opportunities for our undergraduate and graduate nursing students to translate knowledge into practice. They will be ready for the challenges facing consumers of health care in 2014. I think that as you read this publication, you will agree.



# *What Is Happening at UTC?*

The School of Nursing has worked diligently to ensure students receive the highest quality education and are prepared to practice as licensed nurses after graduation. We are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) through 2020. Our Doctor of Nursing Practice program received accreditation by CCNE after a site visit in 2012. Our MSN Nurse Anesthesia Concentration is accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA) through 2022 after earning a ten-year reaccreditation in 2012. Pass rates within the school consistently remain above national benchmarks and averages. Great things are happening!

On October 12, 2013, UTC will host our annual homecoming. This year, there will be a dedication of the Chamberlain Pavilion in the center of campus. After the dedication, the School of Nursing will be hosting an open house until noon for guests to tour the facilities.

The School of Nursing will be showing off newly renovated facilities as we count down for construction to be complete on the Metropolitan Building this fall. Renovations on the annex portion of the building are already complete giving the School of Nursing a new high fidelity nurse anesthesia lab to accompany the current main skills lab. There is a suite of offices for grant faculty and staff in the annex area as well. The exterior of the building is still under construction, but it now has a brick façade to match other campus structures. Updated windows have also been added to the exterior. The parking lot has been remodeled, and there will be green area with trees added around the building and lot later this fall.

Our students will also have access to a new library currently under construction. The anticipated opening is Fall 2014. The campus continues to grow and develop to meet the needs of our students.

# ***BSN News and Highlights***

The UTC School of Nursing undergraduate programs continue to successfully produce qualified graduates within the community. The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) is currently a four year baccalaureate program in nursing in which graduates are eligible to take the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Licensure exam (NCLEX) to become a Registered Nurse. The BSN program is continuing to graduate nurses who will be leaders in the community and throughout the nation. The December 2012 class had a 100% pass rate. The class of May 2013 had a 96% pass rate.



Students also have the opportunity to enter the undergraduate program as a RN with an Associate Degree in Nursing. The Gateway Program is an Associate to Baccalaureate bridge program that has grown rapidly as a result of the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant we received six years ago in 2007. The grant will be ending in June 2014, but the university will continue funding to this program as it remains an essential part of the school. The RN to BSN program offers both a hybrid and online track option. The hybrid option provides students with a blend of online and in class learning. The online track is a completely online learning experience that provides the students with content that meets the requirements for a BSN. The Gateway program provides those nurses with a BSN, which enables them to enter career ladder programs at their institutions.



The Baccalaureate Enrollment Expansion grant, also funded by HRSA, will be ending in late September 2013 after three years. This grant has allowed the BSN program to increase enrollment each semester from approximately 27 students to 40 students. When this grant ends, the university will continue to provide resources to maintain quality and growth.



Increasing enrollment is a high priority to ensure there are enough baccalaureate prepared nurses locally and nationally. The School of Nursing continues to monitor our programs to make certain the increasing enrollment does not affect the quality of the program.



The Nursing Workforce Diversity grant, a third project funded by HRSA for the UTC School of Nursing, will be ending June 2014. This grant was originally funded in 2007 and received a three year continuation in 2010. This year the grant received a one time no cost extension. This project has supported the UTC School of Nursing's efforts identifying economically, educationally and ethnically disadvantaged students who are potentially interested in nursing, applying to the BSN program or currently in the BSN program. Support is given in the form of tutoring, mentoring, advisement, book loan programs, clinical shadowing experiences and many more opportunities afforded to potential and current nursing students. UTC and the School of Nursing will continue to



# ***MSN Family Nurse Practitioner Program***

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Concentration has seen dramatic growth over the past five years and continues to see increased interest in the program. The FNP Concentration is known for its successful graduates who are working in the community, our high pass rates and flexible scheduling adapted to meet with students' needs. The students in the program currently have a unique opportunity working with federal HRSA grants to help with the severe and persistent mentally ill as well as the elderly populations in the community. The FNP Concentration continues to focus efforts on educating and graduating successful advanced practice nurses who will be leaders in the health care profession. The latest MSN FNP graduates have already begun certification testing. To date, fourteen of the fifteen new graduates have already taken their certification exam, and 100% have passed the test. The UTC School of Nursing expects great things from these recent graduates and wishes them luck in their careers as FNPs.



# ***MSN Nurse Anesthesia Program***

The Master of Science in Nursing Nurse Anesthesia Concentration has historically offered a distance learning option in Tupelo, Mississippi. The school received a federal grant allotting additional resources to help promote and support the site in Tupelo. The grant ended June 2012, and the university has continued to support the efforts for distance learning in Tupelo. The Nurse Anesthesia program is held in high regard for this effort as well as high pass rates and exceptional graduates working across the nation. The Nurse Anesthesia Concentration holds the same values in graduating quality advanced practice nurses and most recently graduated a class of 26 in August 2013. This group of nurse anesthesia graduates will begin certification testing soon. Currently, the Nurse Anesthesia program boasts a 100% first-time pass rate on certification testing, which is expected to continue with these graduates.



# ***Doctor of Nursing Practice Program***

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) was implemented at the UTC School of Nursing with the first cohort in January 2011 at the post masters entry level.

The school is proud to announce this first cohort of students graduated in December 2012. There are currently two cohorts at the post masters entry level with one cohort targeted to graduate in December 2013. The post masters DNP program continues to be a popular choice for advanced practice nurses wanting to continue their education. The UTC School of Nursing has begun planning and implementing the post baccalaureate DNP in Nursing Administration Systems. There is currently a cohort in this concentration.



Planning is underway to include more concentrations such as Family Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Anesthesia. The UTC School of Nursing continues to see growth within the DNP program and will continue graduating clinical leaders and educators to contribute to the health care profession.

## ***Graduate Student Assistance***

The graduate programs at the UTC School of Nursing received two significant grants totaling over \$2,500,000 that have contributed to student scholarships and traineeships. The Scholarship for Disadvantaged Students (SDS) provides funding to assist federally determined disadvantaged students while the Advanced Nursing Education Traineeship (ANET) awards students for committing to practice in underserved, rural and urban areas after graduation. As a part of the ANET awards, students are asked to consider employment in rural and underserved areas with a focus on vulnerable populations. Through our federally funded grants, students are receiving opportunities

to work in clinical sites with these populations learning the importance of holistic care prior to graduation. The School of Nursing is striving to focus on the mentally ill, geriatric, rural, urban and other underserved and health professional shortage populations. The goal is to graduate students who are educated and confident to work with these unique populations.



# Get Healthy Project

Miriam Zwitter

Individuals with severe and persistent mental illness are among the most at risk, underserved, and vulnerable members of our society. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the average lifespan of a seriously mentally ill person is 25 years shorter than the general public. This troubling disparity is associated with the fact that health care providers are often uncomfortable with or inexperienced in working with people who are severely mentally ill. This lack of knowledge, skills and experience impacts the quality of health care provided to this high-risk, vulnerable population.

In July 2011, The UTC School of Nursing was awarded over \$850,000 from the Health and Human Resources Administration (HRSA) to begin the Get Healthy Project (GHP). GHP seeks to remedy the health disparities within the Severe and Persistent Mentally Ill (SPMI) population by providing an innovative program that offers various health interventions such as wellness visits, health teaching, and Tai Chi. Currently, GHP has partnerships with Volunteer Behavioral Health System (Johnson Mental Health) NAMI of Chattanooga, and The Chattanooga Community Kitchen.



The Get Healthy Project is pleased to announce the opening of a fully equipped wellness center in partnership with Johnson Mental Health Center (JMHC). The center is managed by Dr. Jeanne Hopple, Family Nurse Practitioner Clinical Supervisor, UTC Faculty and students in the UTC MSN Family Nurse Practitioner Concentration. Moreover, we will continue to offer wellness screenings, health coaching, and Tai Chi among other services. The center opened late in spring 2013 with an open house! This is a very exciting year for the grant!

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The past two years have been busy and exciting for the GHP grant including such accomplishments as highlighted below:

- ◆ Hosted three successful mini-health fairs at Johnson Mental Health Center designed to enroll clients in GHP's wellness center on-site at the community mental health center. Since starting these fairs in spring 2012, we have had over 75 clients participate and the number continues to grow with each event. During the fairs, undergrad and FNP students, and UTC clinical staff conduct biometric screenings (A1C, cholesterol, and body fat), health coaching, and our physical conditioning team, led by Dr. Zibin Guo and Katie Zwitter, offers Tai Chi.
- ◆ Conducted a half-day staff development seminar with the staff of the Chattanooga Kitchen on stress management. The workshop was well-attended and got a lot of positive feedback.
- ◆ Held a major health fair at Eastgate Town Center on October 11<sup>th</sup> 2012. The purpose of this fair was to target the Severe and Persistent Mentally Ill and provide our wellness interventions on a larger scale. Further, the Mary Ellen Locher Memorial Mobile Mammogram Coach was onsite to offer mammogram screenings to women. As a result of our efforts, over 112 people participated, 12 mammograms and an estimated 70 immunizations were given. Due to the success of this event, plans are currently underway to have another in late fall 2013. Services offered on this day included:
  - ◆ Biometric screenings (diabetes, cholesterol, body fat, etc.)
  - ◆ Mammogram screening
  - ◆ Dental screenings with fee coupon to get a free dental cleaning by local dentist
  - ◆ Health coaching (smoking cessation, heart disease, etc.)
  - ◆ UTC School of Nursing undergrad and FNP booths on healthy children and women's health issues
  - ◆ Over 20 vendors including Erlanger, Hamilton Department of Public Health, Komen Chattanooga, and many, many more.
- ◆ Offered the first Integrated Care Conference, which facilitated the exchange of ideas and integrated care practice. It provided the first Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) in the Chattanooga area.

**INTERPROFESSIONAL  
COLLABORATIVE  
PRACTICE -**



Approach for Geriatric Education Strategies



In September of 2012, the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga's School of Nursing (UTC SON) secured a high profile Nurse Education Practice Quality and Retention (NEPQR) award from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) totaling over \$1.4 million for a three year period. In response to the regional health indicators and healthcare workforce needs, UTC SON designed the InterProfessional Collaborative Practice Approach for Geriatric Education Strategies (IPCP-AGES). One of the first projects of its kind in the nation, UTC SON is one out of 24 universities and/or medical clinics selected for this competitive grant award with a primary focus on interprofessional collaborative practice (IPCP). Dr. Carolyn Schreeder is the Program Director of the grant.

The goal of the IPCP-AGES program is to create new and expanding existing IPCP environments where nurses along with other health professions trainees join together to provide comprehensive healthcare services for older adult patients and their families. The project includes the following hallmarks:

- ◆ One hundred percent of UTC SON students will have an opportunity to demonstrate leadership in interprofessional team building, collaborative problem-solving, & care-coordination.
- ◆ Through the House Calls Program UTC SON students will provide education, medication reconciliation and falls assessments for approximately 600 patients aged 65 and older with a diagnosis of heart failure and who are at high risk for hospital readmission.
- ◆ Innovative strategies with a focus on IPCP education and teams will be threaded throughout the SON curriculum, virtual learning environments and simulation experiences.



In addition, the UTC School of Nursing was awarded a \$1.1 million HRSA grant in September of 2012. Providing Advanced, Culturally Competent Care through Clinical Training for Interprofessional Geriatric Care also known as PACT 4, seeks to enhance advanced nursing education and practice by engaging FNP students, along with other advanced practice trainees, in shared, complex clinical learning opportunities using technology, simulation, and standardized patients to support meaningful interprofessional learning. Dr. Joanie Jackson is the Project Director of the grant.

The purpose of the project is to enhance advanced nursing education to prepare family nurse practitioner students for safe and effective delivery of primary, acute, and emergent care and effectively working within interprofessional teams of health and other care providers to maximize geriatric patient safety and quality of care. The program will have a regional impact by building on UTC's established partnerships institutions of higher education and clinical sites region-wide. The program aligns with the Advanced Nursing Education legislative purpose in that it will enhance complex learning in nursing education and practice in advanced practice nursing and interprofessional programs in the region and enhance the FNP workforce to implement best practices for geriatric care and promote patient safety by working in interprofessional teams within diverse health care settings serving the geriatric population.

The PACT 4 grant will be working with UTC's Physical Therapy and Athletic Training departments as well as Southern Adventist University's Social Work department to incorporate interprofessional learning into multiple disciplines. The interprofessional grant is for a three year award period and is expected to make an impact within the university, community and even the regional area.

# ***Beth Lancaster Prize Awarded***

***By Christine B. Smith, PhD, APN, FNP-BC***

In 2004, I had the pleasure of meeting Beth Lancaster for the first time. She was enrolled in the UTC MSN Family Nurse Practitioner Concentration. Beth was a single mother with three small children. Her pleasant demeanor and her happy smile are the things I remember most about her. She never complained about the amount of schoolwork she had or the number of clinical hours she was required to do. She had an apparent love for learning. And, whether she knew it or not, she was a natural teacher. I served as her preceptor while she was in her Primary Care of Adult Practicum. We had a patient who said she had been having seizure activity but no one had witnessed this. We were unsure this was the case. We started examining her and she began to have a seizure. Beth was employed in the Neurosurgical ICU at the time. When the patient began having this seizure, Beth went into action and dealt with the situation. As we were discussing the patient, Beth downplayed her part in the care of this patient. But, that was Beth. She was unassuming by nature. She and I discussed the events of the last few minutes and I found the student had become the teacher, and I was the student. ●●●●●●●●●●



***Beth Lancaster with her children.***

I asked Beth's parents to share their thoughts about how Beth became interested in nursing. Her mother, Nancy Scheurer stated the following: "It's very clear to us how Beth's path to nursing came about. She was enrolled at UTK in the pre-pharmacy program. She had almost completed the first two years and was finishing an internship in pre-pharmacy at UT Hospital. She was doing well and seemed to like all of her experiences and classes. However, she called us one day and said that after much thought, she found that she wanted to be more involved directly with patients; she felt that a career in nursing was where she needed to be. And so she changed her major and enrolled in the BSN program. As for her going on to her advanced degree, she started that after once again, feeling that she had more to offer her patients after working years in the neuro intensive care unit. She knew it would be a struggle as a single mother at that point, but she knew she had the backing of her family and friends to help her achieve that goal. She had the drive and work ethic to get it completed!

In the summer of 2011, Beth became ill with cancer and died shortly after surrounded by her family and friends. Because of Beth's love for nursing, the Scheurer family has established the *Beth Ellen Lancaster Prize* in the Family Nurse Practitioner Program of the School of Nursing at UTC. To receive this prize, the recipient must be currently enrolled or admitted to the Family Nurse Practitioner Program balancing their academic pursuit with family responsibilities, particularly those managing a single parent household. The recipient must demonstrate great professional promise, successful academic achievement and the compassion and concern that will enable him/her to become an exceptional nurse practitioners as exemplified by Beth Ellen Lancaster. Those with financial need are also considered.

The School of Nursing has selected the first recipient of the *Beth Ellen Lancaster Prize*. After reviewing all eligible recipients, the Scholarship Committee named Adria Sherrill, MSN, FNP, class of 2013 as the first recipient. Adria, exemplifies the qualities that Beth demonstrated. As the mother of two young children, Adria has balanced work, the demands of being a full time mother and being enrolled in the FNP concentration as a full time student. Adria has a commitment to primary care and helping those patients who have challenges in accessing health care. I am sure that Beth would agree with the Scholarship Committee's choice. The School of Nursing and Adria are grateful to the Scheuerer family for this generous prize in honor of a wonderful mother and nurse practitioner.



**Adria Sherrill**  
**MSN 2013**

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## ***School of Nursing*** ***Announces Scholarship***

***By Christine B. Smith, PhD, APN, FNP-BC***

The School of Nursing is pleased to announce the establishment of the Phyllis Scott, RN Endowed Scholarship (the Scott Scholarship). This scholarship is in memory of Phyllis Scott, MSN, FNP, BSN, RN who died in October 2012. Phyllis was a graduate of the UTC School of Nursing with her BSN in 1997 and her MSN in the Family Nurse Practitioner concentration in 2010. She worked for 26 years at Erlanger Medical Center and for most of her career worked in cardiac services. She returned to school to earn her MSN as a Family Nurse Practitioner in hopes of working with the cardiology services at Erlanger Health Systems.

As a result of her sudden death, the Phyllis Scott Endowed Scholarship was set up in her honor by her family, friends and co-workers at Erlanger Health Systems. The applicants must be enrolled or admitted to the UTC School of Nursing and pursuing a nursing degree. The recipient will have demonstrated successful academic performance and the award may be used for tuition, fees, books or educational expenses. A student who holds the Scott Scholarship in one year shall have preference in subsequent years as long as the recipient continues to demonstrate successful academic performance. If at all possible, the student should be afforded an internship at Erlanger Hospital.

Phyllis was a wonderful advocate for our programs at UTC. She exemplified what a nurse should be. She was an excellent nurse manager but she never strayed far from the bedside. I expected great things from her as an advanced practice nurse. She left us before we could see that wonderful spirit at work as an APN. Phyllis will be remembered by her classmates in our FNP program as an avid Braves fan, but more importantly one who never let adversity get in her way. She had a wonderful sense of calm about her. Her friends have celebrated her toughness and tenacity, her sense of humor and her ability to lead with assurance and strength. She continued her education and working full time even when she did not feel well. She is a role model not only as a nurse but also as a person. Those who crossed her path, if even for a moment, were lucky to have known her.



**Phyllis Scott**  
**MSN 2010**

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE **UT**  
**CHATTANOOGA**

School of Nursing  
615 McCallie Avenue  
Department 1051  
Chattanooga, TN 37403

**School of Nursing Open House!**  
October 12, 2013 · 9:30 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.  
UTC Metropolitan Building  
518 Oak Street · Chattanooga, TN 37403

For more information about our programs, please contact:

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**MSN Nurse Anesthesia**, Dr. Linda Hill, Linda-Hill@utc.edu

**Doctor of Nursing Practice**, Dr. Joanie Jackson, Joanie-Jackson@utc.edu

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