2011 NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARDS

OHSU NURSES WEEK 2011

Nur-syn-er-gy: the power of nurses working together

May 6 – 12, 2011
Nurses are the lifeblood of our care. They listen, heal, counsel, advise, hold, and so much more. Nurses provide the hand, eyes and ears of a caring system, considering the needs of each of the patients minute by minute and staying in tune with their physical and psychological needs. I am pleased to join in celebration of our OHSU nurses’ dedication to excellence and the vitality they bring to our collective work each day.

Charles M. Kilo, MD, MPH
Chief Medical Officer
OHSU Healthcare

Each year we seek exemplars from our nursing staff that represents their contribution to our profession, our community and our patients and families. This year we received 226 nominations to consider. Every story was a special one and deserving of respect. We engaged a wide variety of opinions from all of our Shared Governance committees to help us select the winners in 11 categories. I am in awe of the breadth and depth of talent in OHSU nurses that is displayed in the stories of each of our awardees. They live and breathe professional practice in the way it is envisioned in our model. I am most fortunate to be the Chief Nurse in the most dynamic nursing organization of my career. Congratulations to the winners, to the nominees and may the spirit of Florence be with us all.

Jennifer Jacoby, MSN, RN, NEA-BC
Chief Nursing Officer
OHSU Healthcare

This year marks the beginning of a new century of nursing at OHSU. Imagine that we have reached this milestone only because of a commitment to an academic – service partnership, where a commitment to serve the poor flourished in the minds of civil leaders. From a pauper’s farm with untrained care givers rose Multnomah County Hospital and the School of Nursing, led by Mrs. A.B.Y. Spaulding, and on June 12, 1911, seven nurses graduated in the first class.

Throughout this year, you have all noticed the mantra that has marked this year of celebration: FLOURISH: 100 Years of Nursing at OHSU. What you might not know is that there is specific meaning behind the colorful, slanting, fluid word. Flourish means innovation, progress, forward momentum and expansion. It means connection with the whole person in the context on caring for the family and each other. It was designed to represent a personal touch – a sense of being “hand crafted” and belief that each of us makes a mark on the lives of others. And it represents then – now – and tomorrow. The design was meant to reflect a fresh outlook, and carry the theme of energy and innovation.

As we lead up to June 12 – the day that those first nurses graduated from our school – let us use this week of honoring nurses to continue to flourish. Individually, collectively, and as academic – service partners. Let us leave a legacy that in the next 100 years will be a milestone for others to reflect on what Dr. Donna Shalala commented on in her recent visit to OHSU – this is nursing’s golden age. Flourish.

Michael Bleich, PhD, RN, FAAN
Dean, OHSU School of Nursing
AWARDEES
Maureen Harrahill, RN, MS, ACNP-BC
Nurse Practitioner, Trauma Program
Manager: Judi Workman

Maureen has provided innovative leadership to OHSU’s Trauma Program for many years.

The first nurse-led Case Management model at OHSU was developed in 1992 by Maureen and her colleagues. To this day, the trauma case management model is effective and efficient, and boasts one of the lowest lengths of stay in the hospital. It has also received national attention via its presence in professional publications.

Maureen has also served as our Trauma Program Manager since 1993. In this capacity she has assumed leadership for many key elements of our trauma program. She has oversight of our trauma registry, a comprehensive and extensive data base that includes key information on more than 30,000 trauma patients. Extraction and interpretation of elements of this database have been used to formulate the implementation of key quality measures that have improved the care of our trauma patients over the past decade. She also produces the Annual Report of OHSU’s Trauma Program – a comprehensive compilation of the many activities and outcomes of our trauma service. Finally, Maureen also serves in a leadership capacity in OHSU’s preparation for our bi-annual recertification as a Level One Trauma Center. Our most recent survey brought us not only designation on the state level, but for the first time in many years, accreditation was granted by the American College of Surgeons as well. The prestigious recognition is achieved by only 32% of Level One Trauma Centers and was a major milestone included the many successes of our Trauma Program. Maureen’s expertise in this area has led to her recruitment on the national level as a reviewer for other trauma centers seeking designation on the state level.

Maureen’s leadership extends beyond OHSU to the larger community. She has been a leader throughout the state of Oregon by teaching EMS

“I have been very fortunate to find myself at OHSU, where nurses have the ability to thrive in such a vibrant environment. I have been able to blend both patient care through my Nurse Practitioner practice and administrative work through my program manager position. I have a passion for the trauma care and I value the opportunities I’ve had to share this enthusiasm. I’ve always said that I have the best job at OHSU and it is true.”
Maureen is an exceptional leader who is committed to the patient population that she serves and to the responsibilities of her position. In the areas of accountability, service excellence and systems thinking, I consider Maureen to be the gold standard, a true leader amongst her peers. She not only honors the commitments she makes but she will also willingly go the extra mile if it brings benefit to the work or the individuals she is involved with. Additionally, she is a true public servant, evaluating every situation for how she can bring the greatest contribution or benefit. The generous gifts of her time, dedication and talents not only directly benefit our patients and families but also have a positive influence on those nurses to whom she exists as a role model and mentor.

I would like to acknowledge the sentiments shared by those that nominated Maureen for this honor and to say with them what a privilege it is to work with her and how deserving she is of this recognition.

-Maureen’s manager, Judi Workman
Kelly Hyde, RN, BSN
RN, 14A General Surgery
Manager: Megan Boyle

Kelly has advanced and strengthened nursing both as a profession and in the delivery of patient care beyond OHSU through her involvement with Productive Ward. Through Productive Ward, Kelly has been a part of a collaborative including three other Oregon hospitals, pioneering the use of Productive Ward to improve the delivery of healthcare and patient outcomes. She has modeled being a scientist to the 14A staff and others involved in the Productive Ward collaborative in her devotion for collecting evidence and incorporating evidence based practice into improvements that have been made on the unit. Kelly has exemplified leadership by presenting the 14A journey in Productive Ward at this collaborative’s monthly meetings. During these presentations, she provides data that she and other staff have collected to support the improvements that have been made on 14A. She has given input and suggestions for improvement in the program based on 14A’s experience. Kelly recognizes the unique opportunity that she has as a scientist, practitioner and transferor of knowledge within this collaborative, and facilitates the sharing of ideas and improvements among all four hospitals involved in this journey. This work will help to provide a more efficient and improved experience to the next units and/or hospitals that implement Productive Ward. Kelly has also developed both professional posters and abstracts about Productive Ward for upcoming conferences and events, including the ONA annual conference.

“I was a civil engineer for 12 years prior to entering the nursing profession. I thoroughly enjoyed the engineering profession as I was able to engineer storm water and drinking water systems to optimize and promote public health. I went into nursing because I wanted to use my critical thinking and problem solving skills in a clinical setting to promote healing and health in a more tangible, personal way.

I have been a nurse on 14A for 2 ½ years. It is a challenging yet rewarding nursing unit with a diverse, complex patient population. I enjoy the endless opportunities for personal growth and the honor of being a bedside nurse. What gives me the greatest satisfaction as a nurse is the privilege of guiding a patient through their hospital journey; supporting them, teaching them, celebrating their progress, being inspired by their life stories, their courage, their spirit.

I believe that my role as Staff Champion in the pilot of the NHS Productive Ward program led to this award. The overall goal of Productive Ward is to increase the amount of time a nurse is able to spend at the bedside in direct patient care. This is accomplished by removing barriers to efficient workflow, implementing daily efforts to improve unit performance data, organizing a streamlined work environment, and strengthening the voice of the bedside nurse. I believe that my project management skills gained as an engineer prepared me well for this unique leadership role as a nurse.”
Within OHSU, Kelly has been a prime example of a staff nurse leading change and improving outcomes for patients as well as the satisfaction of the nurses. When the Productive Ward program was instituted on 14A, Kelly faced adversity and some negative feedback from staff. She faced this with true professionalism and began with making sure that her communication effectively to all staff about the project. She also knew that it would be important to bring in other informal leaders from 14A to help get the program off the ground. Kelly has been diligent about collecting and monitoring improvements, so that 14A has strong data to show and support the improvements that are being made. Productive Ward has been one of the strongest examples on 14A to help link the professional role of nurses to patient outcomes. The staff attitude towards change and their ability to affect change has improved dramatically. While the Productive Ward program is set up to help facilitate this, it would never have been possible if 14A did not have Kelly's leadership.

Kelly’s ability to lead 14A staff through the Productive Ward process has been extraordinary. She understands the importance of being a leader—and inspiring staff to get involved to make a difference—as well as the importance of managing the process when necessary. Kelly has been extremely organized in her daily tasks as well as in assigning tasks to other staff to make sure that the unit can accomplish what is expected for the program. She constantly gives peer feedback to the unit’s Productive Ward team, to ensure that the unit is staying true to the program, and to ensure that all of the unit’s efforts are showcased through the data. She makes sure that daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly data collection is kept up to date. She has organized workgroups around specific Productive Ward topics, as well as encouraged and inspired other staff to take on leadership roles. Most importantly, Kelly has been a role model for using the data collected and the improvements made, in her daily practice as a RN caring for patients. Kelly constantly helps to remind staff of the ties between the Productive Ward process and excellence in their own practice.

Kelly has also served as an leader/ambassador for the Productive Ward program to other units as well as leadership within OHSU. She has served as an expert on Productive Ward to the next two units who will be implementing the program. There is no truer example of a nurse who has advanced and led the profession of nursing than Kelly.

Kelly's leadership skills and strong tie to her practitioner role has led to the success of the program on 14A. Kelly had the foresight to recognize the opportunity this program would provide for the unit’s patients, staff, and all of OHSU. She has truly turned this opportunity into something very special.

During her two years in nursing, Kelly has evolved as a unit leader on many levels in addition to her role with Productive Ward. She has served as preceptor to a senior nursing student (now a valuable addition to 14A staff). She is currently acting as 14A’s interim UBNPC Chair. In collaboration with Tin Cotton, a 14A colleague, she has conducted a research project on safer and more environmentally sound ways to dispose of unused medications and presented her findings to the unit, exemplifying collegiality. She “walks the walk” in her practice, exemplifying a positive attitude, forward thinking, evidence-based practice and a constant drive to assess and improve nursing practice.
ANCILLARY STAFF MEMBER
(within nursing services)

Jeremy Tiefer, CNA
Certified Nursing Assistant, 13KPV Medical & Surgical Oncology
Manager: Bonnie Cox

The 13 KPV staff describe Jeremy as “the perfect CNA”. Patients and staff often praise Jeremy’s professionalism and respectful communication. He is motivated, eager to learn, and thorough in everything that he does. Jeremy embodies service excellence and contributes to a culture of “always” at OHSU.

During his shift, Jeremy always ensures that his patients get their shower, bath, oral care and ambulation. He recently suggested to his manager that denture tablets be added to the pyxis so that dentures could be cleaned. He offers help to everyone, including patients’ families. His joy in providing care is evident in all he does. He is kind, caring, hard working and gentle with his patients and their families. He knows several languages including Spanish and Russian, and is always willing to communicate with people in their native language. He welcomes busy days, stating “I hope tomorrow is really busy. I like to be busy”, and is proactive in his task management, such as always having rooms ready for new admits.

Jeremy’s reliability and the quality of his work has been noticed by many. His manager states that float pool nurses have stopped by her office regularly to praise him.

Jeremy received a nomination for the Golden Rose award in March 2011 from one of his patients where he was described as being ‘one of the most thoughtful, generous, and caring CNAs in this hospital with a terrific sense of humor’. Additionally, he was described as being very patient, making the recipient of his care feel as though he had all the time in the world. Lastly, he was described as exhibiting prioritization and ‘calm in the midst of confusion and turmoil, attending to the jobs that need to be done first.’

“Nursing at its best is a collaborative effort. The ancillary role within nursing, such as mine as a Nursing Assistant, is at the heart of this collaborative practice. My role is one which involves working alongside the Registered Nurse and directly with the patient. My assistance to the nurse involves keen observation of the patient’s condition, effective reporting skills, and communication about the daily goals the nurse has for the patient. One aspect of this teamwork which I love is when the nurse and I plan on assisting a patient out of bed for the first time after surgery. The nurse will plan medication administration accordingly, and I will offer a bath and a linen change once the patient is sitting in a chair. Together the nurse and I will help the patient stand and provide him or her with a safe environment. As a team, the nurse and I have fulfilled a therapeutic need for the patient. My assistance to the patient brings a human element to healthcare. While assisting with personal care and performing basic nursing tasks, I also know it is essential that I effectively communicate with the patient. I achieve this by listening to the patient’s concerns and providing comfort during his or her experience in the hospital.”

Award Criteria:
Any CNA, CMA, LPN, HUC, EMT, Tech (surgical, telemetry, mental health, etc) who supports nursing with excellence in patient care.
**Erin Ehly, RN, BSN**

RN Care Manager, Internal Medicine  
*Manager: Paige Perry*

Erin Ehly epitomizes the essence of a care manager with her compassionate and empathic nature, exemplary organizational skills, perseverance despite barriers, and resolve to ensure the patient’s needs have been met.

One recent example involves a patient in the Internal Medicine clinic with advanced multiple sclerosis, admitted with a stage IV decubitus ulcer. The patient was discharged to a skilled nursing facility, and seen in follow up by the neurologist, who expressed concern that the facility may not be able to provide the optimal care to ensure healing of this wound. The neurologist was aware of Erin’s excellent care management for this patient in the past, and through conversations with the primary provider, requested her involvement in this case once again. Erin gladly took on the role of coordinating and managing the patient’s care. She sought the concerns and recommendations of the patient’s providers (primary care, urology regarding neurogenic bladder and need for possible suprapubic catheter, physiatry at an outside facility for durable medical equipment and consideration of transfer to an in-patient rehabilitation center, outpatient wound care at an outpatient facility.

“For the last 11 years I have worked primarily in community health clinics, federally qualified health clinics and primary care clinics. I have worked extensively in Infectious Disease and Internal Medicine and also I have worked in Surgery, Gastroenterology and as a Diabetic Educator. I have worked at OHSU Internal Medicine for the last 3 years as a Care Manager and triage nurse.

I am passionate about advocating for patients’ needs. As a community health nurse, I strive to see the patient beyond only a medical diagnosis, but to incorporate a person’s family, life history, cultural beliefs, education and community to deliver the best medical care possible. It is a pleasure for me to help patients navigate complex medical systems and provide education regarding disease process, medication and medical equipment. I hope to make each patient feel comfortable, supported, understood and empowered in their medical home at Internal Medicine.

It is an honor to have been awarded the Clinical Care Nurse of the Year. I feel that this award would not have been possible without the excellent physicians, nurses, medical assistants and phone staff that I work intimately with every day. I feel blessed to be in the nursing profession, as it has given me opportunities to grow, learn and stretch my limits in ways that would not be possible in other professions.”

**Award Criteria:**
A nurse who demonstrates excellence as a practitioner of direct care delivery in any clinical setting. The practitioner directs and manages care in a therapeutic manner to inspire others to transform, and to transform practice.
In dermatology, and plastic surgery, and then made arrangements for the appropriate care including scheduling appointments and coordinating both monitoring and follow up needs. Some of these recommendations were contrary to the care direction of the skilled nursing facility, yet with a gentle firmness and persuasion, she succeeded in making the necessary arrangements to ensure that the patient’s outcome was the only consideration in the care plan. Without Erin’s compassion, tenacity, and tireless nature, this patient’s outcome would not have been as successful. Only time will tell what functional impact these interventions will make on this patient’s quality of life, but it is without doubt that it will be far superior to the result without Erin’s care. It is remarkable how her reputation for excellence goes beyond the internal medicine clinic and how her input is sought after by other providers.

One of Erin’s attributes is her tireless nature and perseverance. This is further exemplified in the care that she has provided to a patient in the clinic that extended far beyond the requirements of her job description. There is a homebound patient who does not have local family or a social support system, with complicated medical needs and numerous medications. Erin independently decided to take on the role of picking up the medications at the pharmacy and delivering them to the patient’s home on a monthly basis, also giving her an opportunity to provide a home visit to evaluate the patient’s current condition. Alone this would be exemplary care - but Erin commutes to work on her bike. She is doing this on her bicycle, rain or shine. Few would even consider this level of personal sacrifice, yet Erin does this without consideration for herself, as she recognizes this is one way that she can help meet her patient’s needs. As a result of the success she had with this patient, the practice has added home visits to the RN job description. This would not have happened without Erin’s initiative.

Erin is a skilled advocate for the patient and his/her unique needs. She is quick to identify ways that she can help optimize the care of the patient, which inevitably results in improved patient outcomes. One further example of this occurred when the clinic received a call from an anxious daughter regarding her elderly mother. Her mother had been diagnosed with urinary retention and an indwelling catheter had been placed earlier that day. It was 5:30 pm, and the daughter was worried because no urine had been collected. The clinic was now closed and the daughter did not want to bring the patient back to the emergency department. After a phone conversation, Erin decided that the best way to ensure that the catheter was working appropriately was to go and see for herself. She left work and stopped by the house (on her bicycle), ensured that the catheter was flushing appropriately, counseled the patient and her daughter in catheter management and most of all, provided reassurance.

Erin has been a nurse for 11 years, employed at OHSU in the Division of General Internal Medicine and Geriatrics since 2008, most recently in the capacity of RN patient care manager. In this role, she is responsible for managing the care needs of complex medical patients, monitoring the status of both acute and chronic conditions, advising in modifications to their treatment plan, identifying the need for more involved provider intervention, and coordinating care between multiple medical and allied health providers including home health. She is a deft communicator, articulate and appropriate for the level of sophistication of the encounter, conscientious of the sensitive and personal nature of the issues that she discusses, and thoughtful in her responses.
As a nurse care manager, Erin maintains exemplary organizational logs, tracking patients concerns and ensuring that follow up occurs in a timely manner. In her registry, she often identifies potential problems and is proactive in contacting patients, monitoring for signs or symptoms, and identifying issues with compliance or non-adherence to the proposed plan. She is able to determine barriers that limit the patient’s ability to adhere to the proposed plan and is adept at discovering ways to overcome these barriers. She has helped the team avoid bad outcomes that would have been inevitable without her diligent care. She has also been a tremendous team member, always available to help when issues arise, but more importantly, being self-directed to identify learning needs of the team and has intervened in a proactive manner.

One example is when Erin noticed a number of our referrals to home health were not being met. She investigated the requirements for home health and provided the team with a list of criteria that need to be fulfilled for appropriate referral as well as ways to document to ensure coverage. Currently we are working on a plan to improve our follow up for patients with depression. Erin independently took on the role of reviewing the patients from our team who scored high on the depression screening test, and has been calling these patients to arrange outpatient appointments for follow up.

As is evident with the examples above, Erin has been an irreplaceable asset to the provision of care that is provided through the Division of General Internal Medicine and Geriatrics. She epitomizes the mission of OHSU as an institution where healing, teaching, and discovery come together. As a nurse, she is self-directed, identifying patient needs and learning needs of the team, and working to ensure that we are all educated to provide the optimal care for our patients. Her clinical skills, professionalism, leadership, and excellence as a communicator and team member make her OHSU nurse of the year in clinical care.

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“Erin is truly an exceptional nurse who could not be more deserving. She always--and I mean always--puts the patients first. She does this without a thought of compensation - she does it out of compassion. Erin initiated home visits for our patients without being asked, completely on her own. By extending her clinical care to the home, she has made a positive impact on the lives of many of our most vulnerable patients. If a patient is involved Erin does not wait for the OHSU process to work before acting; she will take it upon herself to act first. I recently found out that she determined that double sided pill boxes work best for many of our patients, so she has been purchasing them with her own money. She hasn’t told me this but I found out from another staff member. Erin sees it as her duty to provide the best possible care. Of course we can (and will) reimburse her, but the point is, she never asks ‘what’s in it for me’? She only asks ‘what can I do for you’?

Erin is a true pleasure to work with and we are so very lucky to have her on the Internal Medicine Team. I know she keeps patients out of the hospital on a daily basis.”

- Erin’s manager, Paige Perry
Charmika Schuster, MS, MPH, FNP-C
Nurse Practitioner, Pre-Operative Medicine Clinic
Manager: Janet Whalen

Charmika’s commitment to volunteerism and taking her skills beyond the walls of OHSU is enormous. She has been to Haiti twice, for a total of approximately 12 weeks, to volunteer her medical expertise to assist earthquake victims. She has worked with Medical Teams International, Medishare, and Heart to Heart International, serving as a Family Nurse Practitioner in a rural medical clinic housed at a large orphanage and implementing public health care measures. Charmika works full time, and uses her vacation time to travel to Haiti to volunteer. She has previously volunteered with an orphanage in Kenya.

Charmika fosters health in her church’s community through her involvement in their Health Ministry Team: offering her congregation seminars on healthy eating, hypertension and stroke prevention, diabetes management, and healthy lifestyle. She organizes the seminars, reserves the rooms, and markets them to her congregation. She also serves Portland through volunteering with the Bridge City Family Medicine Clinic, doing both clinical and community work in group homes and foster homes.

In addition to the above sharing of her healthcare expertise, Charmika volunteers her time with the Clark Center, a center for homeless men. The Center houses 90 men, providing a place to sleep, eat, receive job search assistance and get back on their feet. Charmika organizes volunteers to help her serve dinner to these men. She gathers volunteers to help her cook and serve, plans a healthy menu incorporating fresh produce, and goes to local grocery stores to garner donations for the meals. Her extra efforts keep the Center’s food pantry fully stocked. Charmika has served as a role model for the Center’s volunteers, and encouraged volunteerism about her OHSU colleagues and their families.

Charmika is a shining star at OHSU as well, always willing to provide support to her peers, and staying later when needed to see patients who are late arrivals.
“I am very thankful to have received this honorable recognition as Community Service Nurse of the year award at OHSU. I believe the main reason that I became a nurse practitioner was because it was my calling to serve others. Charitable deeds focused on meeting the health needs of individuals and communities have been particularly rewarding forms of service. Nursing for me is a vocation, not just a job. It is written, “now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all (1 Corinthians 12:4-12:9, King James Version).” The reading goes on to explain how every one has been given different gifts, such as teaching, healing, or knowledge. The essence of advanced practice nursing is based upon maximizing the culmination of the gifts of wisdom, knowledge and healing in the deliverance of care. My greatest satisfaction in nursing has been in rendering care to all persons with health needs, especially through volunteering. I have been given the opportunity to serve socioeconomically disenfranchised populations locally and globally.

My initial meaningful trip that sparked my interest in global health community service was when I went to Africa with my dad in 2007. My dad adopted a large village in Ghana and helped instill drinking wells for clean water to eradicate Guinea Worm, a waterborne parasite. I lead a public health project and was able to engage the villagers in reducing malaria incidence. We then traveled to Nairobi, Kenya and served orphans there at a large orphanage. We went to Tanzania and I volunteered at a hospital, helped run clinics and house calls for the frail. It was so gratifying to be able to help staff and patients by transferring knowledge I’d learned in nursing and also learning from other cultures. After returning home, we were able continue to raise funds to help the orphanage which has now expanded into four different facilities. All of these experiences inspired me to want to continue volunteering abroad to help alleviate health disparities.

Over the past year I was able to travel to Haiti twice for disaster relief efforts after the earthquake for medical relief to disaster response efforts. In September 2010, I volunteered with Medical Teams International. I worked in an urban primary care hospital as FNP providing diagnosing and treating pediatric, adolescent, adult and geriatric populations. I worked in a rural mobile medical clinic at orphanage as an FNP which entailed implementing public health care measures for disease prevention and management. I was able to diagnose and treat pediatric and adult patients with a variety of chronic and acute conditions.

In January 2011 I returned to Haiti and volunteered with Medishare, Heart to Heart International at an urban primary care clinic/hospital, developed and led a mobile medical clinic at a large rural orphanage for about four weeks. I worked in a trauma hospital, and other clinics in Port-au-Prince within the primary care clinic as FNP treating co-morbidities in impoverished pediatric, adolescent, adult and geriatric patients. I worked with an orphanage in Haiti to bring needed supplies and help obtain bulk food for orphans to help curb widespread malnutrition. After assessing medical needs I was able to purchase bulk medications, and I organized and led a mobile medical clinic with group of volunteer American providers. “

Some of Charmika’s volunteer experiences in Haiti
Mary Denise Smith, RN, CNS, ACHPN
Clinical Nurse Specialist, Nurse Coordinator, Palliative Medicine and Comfort Care Team
Manager: Susan Yoder

Mary Denise works tirelessly for the welfare of all patients, utilizing decades of clinical, teaching and consultative skills. She brings genuine caring and compassion to her decades of work, leading colleagues of various professions to develop innovative care approaches to ultimately improve the lives of patients and families. Mary Denise has a long and effective career in nursing. She has worked as a floor nurse, a nurse manager, nurse educator and nurse specialist. As an Advance Practice Nurse with a Certificate in Hospice and Palliative Nursing, she provides daily consultation to severely ill and dying patients both in the hospital and outpatient settings. Her breadth of care is holistic—spanning the clinical, social, psychological, ethical and even spiritual needs of the patient.

As part of her leadership in bereavement care, she helped establish and continues to coordinate the regional Compassionate Quilters group, easing the suffering of those who have recently lost a loved one. Mary Denise provides care in collaboration with team members and is widely recognized for her outstanding service as evidenced by her recent Golden Rose Award. Ms. Smith is a key leader of the Palliative Medicine and Comfort Care Team (PMCCT) at OHSU. As part of this dynamic PMCCT team, her excellence of service was recognized by the American Hospital Association in 2009 with the Circle of Life Award, celebrating innovative approaches to palliative and end-of-life care. Honoring only three programs nationwide, Mary Denise and colleagues demonstrate best practice to be emulated by other professionals.

Here is an example of this best practice standard from a colleague: ‘Jane Doe’ was a woman hospitalized and eventually dying at OHSU. During that time she endured some of the most intense suffering I have ever seen—both physical pain and periods of agitated delirium where she would cry out for days at a time. Driven by a desire not to abandon her children, she endured countless procedures and repeated setbacks. The intensity of her suffering had a powerful effect on all who cared for her. Through her ordeal in addition to the staff on the units where she was cared for, two people were able to stand by her the entire time. One was her primary physician, who compared her case to ‘The Road’ (Cormac McCarthy’s devastating story of a father and son traveling west without a clear destination through a post-nuclear holocaust US). Mary Denise also continued to see her throughout her entire hospital stay of greater than a year. Mary Denise was always able to relate to Jane in ways that she could accept and even came to appreciate. She just kept coming back, and she looked after everyone. In particular, Mary Denise recognized the extreme moral distress some of the nurses caring for Jane felt and took special care to...
help them understand that, even though it sometimes seemed futile, ultimately the care reflected Jane’s wishes. I will never forget this case and I will never forget the incredible self-discipline, steadfast courage, and exquisite compassion it took for Mary Denise to see it through. It is to me the most powerful illustration of the power of nursing care that I have ever witnessed because it started with the patient, extended to her family, and from there flowed like a fountainhead to everyone touched by the patient.

Beyond excellence in direct patient, family and co-worker care, Mary Denise is also a teacher of teachers. She has taught all levels of students, in all health professions, on various topics, especially those that focus on easing suffering for patients, families and caregivers. Venues include teaching advance care planning, POLST, the new Oregon POLST Registry and use of the Ethics Consult Service to nursing staff meetings and OHSU new employee orientation. Mary Denise is a member of the OHSU’s Teaching Interprofessional Ethics team of the Center for Ethics in Health Care, providing direct teaching and developing innovative curricula for each school on campus. Moral distress, disclosure of medical errors, determination of surrogate decision-makers are just a few of the myriad current issues for which she has helped new nursing graduates and fellow professionals at OHSU and across the state. Many nurses and doctors come from around Oregon to “shadow” Mary Denise on hospital rounds, gleaning key bedside pearls that will improve practice in their own settings.

“We, as nurses, are privileged to witness acts of tremendous courage and strength with the patients and families we serve. By our knowledge, skill and personhood we assist patients and families to navigate the healthcare system and their experience. The healthcare system is frequently overwhelming, frightening, and foreign. We can provide an anchor. We have the opportunity to influence not only the outcomes our patients achieve, but their experience—that their individuality, their struggles, their gifts, their strengths are acknowledged, witnessed and supported. This is the true art and science of nursing!

One of the activities we did on the unit I worked on my first year at OHSU was identify the values that were the foundation for our practice—we identified commitment, knowledge, teaching, respect, professionalism and caring and designed a logo for our unit. The logo continues to be in my office and guides my practice daily.

“Every day when I walk into work I think about the privilege and responsibility of being a nurse and the amazing patients I have met. This has not lessened over the years, and in fact has only increased through my career. I am one of those nurses who for as long as I can remember wanted to be a nurse and have never regretted my choice. My career has allowed my many opportunities for professional growth and today I am able to practice in a setting I could only dream of when I entered nursing school.

We, as nurses, are privileged to witness acts of tremendous courage and strength with the patients and families we serve. By our knowledge, skill and personhood we assist patients and families to navigate the healthcare system and their experience. The healthcare system is frequently overwhelming, frightening, and foreign. We can provide an anchor. We have the opportunity to influence not only the outcomes our patients achieve, but their experience—that their individuality, their struggles, their gifts, their strengths are acknowledged, witnessed and supported. This is the true art and science of nursing!

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I get to work with the most amazing clinicians here at OHSU—who demonstrate these values throughout their practice. One of the responsibilities of a ‘senior’ nurse is to work with clinicians who are entering their professions and provide mentorship and guidance as we collaborate not only in the clinical setting, but also in education and research. This is one of the favorite parts of my role. Throughout my career, and especially here at OHSU, I have been mentored by individuals who generously shared their knowledge, their skills, their belief in my abilities and opportunities—without these individuals I would be a different nurse and a different person. Thank you.

Currently I am one of the advance practice nurses on the adult palliative medicine and comfort care team—a practice active in clinical, education and research arenas. It provides challenges, opportunities and rewards on a daily basis derived from the patients, families and staff we serve. It is an incredible experience to work with the individuals in our team and all the ‘trainees’ who spend time with us—I am grateful for this experience.

Thank you for recognizing me with the Distinguished Nurse of the Year Award, I am honored and deeply touched.”
The body of her work recognizes the risk health professionals, nurses in particular, face each day as advocates for their patients. From a professor in emergency medicine and Center for Ethics leader: “Mary Denise is always a nurse educator and nurse advocate. When she is seeing a patient she always takes the time to talk to the patient's nurse in order to get the nurse’s insight about the patient, to learn if the nurse has any needs and to educate the nurse about palliative care.”

Mary Denise’s efforts go beyond clinical, teaching and program development; promoting nursing excellence by coordinating the annual Virginia Sznewajs Award for OHSU, recognizing nursing colleagues who excel in palliative care of patients. Given this experience, Mary Denise recently helped found and is Membership Chairperson of the newly chartered Hospice and Palliative Care Nurses Association for Oregon and SW Washington. She was also chosen to lead OHSU’s Ethics Consult Service, facilitating solutions for some of the most challenging care decisions that confront today’s health care teams.

She has a personal style that allows seemingly unapproachable issues to be discussed in a mutually respectful atmosphere with compassion. Here’s a good example: A family medicine resident from a rural residency program (not OHSU) approached Mary Denise to express her moral distress at being censured by one of her attending physicians for not participating in the cardiopulmonary resuscitation of a frail, elderly patient who was DNR at her nursing facility and according to her POLST form. Demonstrating both kindness and wisdom, Mary Denise helped this young resident see that it was not her fault that this happened, and not her responsibility to fix the situation. Rather, it should be handled as a reportable incident and her only responsibility was to provide an honest accounting of what happened. The resident was visibly relieved by this revelation and very grateful.

It is with this same skill that Mary Denise has led a renaissance of the Ethics Consult Service. As the new Chair of the service (and reporting to Dr. Chuck Kilo), she inherited a team of skilled consultants yet because of declining numbers were not able to keep up with the demand for service.

As a senior faculty member, Mary Denise has mentored many future consultants in the Interprofessional Ethics Fellowship Program of the Center for Ethics in Health Care here at OHSU. Going into the fellowship’s third year, many graduates are now addressing the myriad ethical issues challenging patients, families and their care teams. This effort is training the next generation of ethics consultants for OHSU. One of the fellowship program directors cites Mary Denise as “by far the favorite” faculty member for all those who have come through the Fellowship program. Mary Denise has the strength and sensitivity to cut any ethical knot.
Cynthia Painter, RN, MSN
Professional Practice Leader, Pre/PostOp, Perioperative Services
Manager: Barbara Bonnice

Cyndi stepped into the Professional Practice Leader position at a time of great change in the Perioperative Services division. She has tackled her position with grace and enthusiasm, bringing increased awareness of the importance of professional nursing practice to the six units she oversees. She is an active listener, problem solver, motivator, and implementator.

Cyndi identified that 6A PACU was operating without standards of nursing practice. She researched the American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses (ASPAN) standards, consulted with the anesthesia department about medical practices, and solicited best practice from other similar hospitals. Her work resulted in the PACU’s first standard of care for Phase 1 pts. Cyndi exemplifies the professional role requirements of being a leader by developing structures to guide nurse decision making, a scientist in her data collection and dissemination of best practices, and a transferor of knowledge in educating the other health care providers involved.

**Why did I go into nursing?**
“‘I’ve been a nurse for just over 10 years and really…I just kind of stumbled into it. I guess what matters more is what drives me to stay. I stay because my patients center me, challenge me and keep me humble. I stay because my colleagues both inspire and push me to become a better leader. I stay because nursing gives me as much, if not more, than I give it.”

**How do I feel about my role in ensuring practice standards are upheld and how do I impact the professional practice environment?**
“Leadership is not a hierarchy kind of thing. It’s a personal, individual kind of thing. A professional practice environment is really just a manifestation of leaders who are dedicated to making the right decisions at the bedside. Often, leadership happens in the spaces around these bedside decisions. How do we communicate with our colleagues, listen to and advocate for our patients and families? And when acting within these spaces of decision making, as individuals, are we leaders enough to professionally question our own practice and the practice of our peers?

I see my role as a facilitator or a guide within the decision making process. I attempt to aid in the removal of barriers, so that our leaders at the bedside can make decisions that have the best patient outcomes and nursing satisfaction. I lead by arming our bedside nurses with resources, evidence, recognition and feedback. My role involves encouragement to seek out one another as resources, rather than tackling our jobs alone.”

**What brings me the greatest satisfaction in nursing?**
“Currently my greatest satisfaction comes from the continued renewal of faith and respect I have for the decisions made by our bedside leaders while they care for our patients. Knowing that I work in a community of professionals who dedicate their days to making the right choice for another human being during times of vulnerability...brings me great pride. Knowing that I am, at times, able to make this decision making road smoother...brings me great even greater satisfaction.”

**Award Criteria:**
A nurse who demonstrates exceptional management of nursing or patient care services in any setting. Manages the role and the application to ensure practice standards are upheld and the environment is designed to support the professional role and practice.
Similarly, Cyndi used her leadership and scientist strengths to develop and implement pre-operative orders for patients being admitted through the pre-anesthesia areas.

Cyndi recently launched the PACU handoff report to promote effective knowledge transfer to the RNs on the inpatient units. Cyndi gathered feedback from the staff RNs, who voiced concern that the previous handoff report did not address the PACU patients’ needs nor meet the needs of the RNs who are responsible for maintaining patients’ safety. Cyndi collaborated with the staff educators and UBNPC team members to develop an Epic handoff tool that is now in the implementation and evaluation phases.

Given the newness of the Professional Practice Leader role, the development needs of the staff educators, and the vacancy of the second peri-anesthesia Professional Practice Leader position, Cyndi’s achievements are even more impressive and merit recognition. She has collaborated with the staff educators to raise the standard of nursing practice. She has been a mentor to and role model for formal and informal nurse leaders in developing their leadership skills and systems-thinking knowledge. Anesthesiologists appreciate her clinical expertise and interdisciplinary approach to change and see her as an important resource to the team. Cyndi is well recognized for her commitment to life-long learning, for demonstrating courage, creativity and flexibility in addressing complex problems, and for inspiring others to contribute their strengths and passions toward better patient care. Perhaps most importantly, Cyndi’s consistent offering of her caring and compassionate heart (and her wonderful smile!) is a large part of what makes Cyndi special to so many of her colleagues.
Award Criteria:
A nurse who provides positive professional influence, guidance, and support of other nurses in any setting. Inspires others to transform service and care.

Katherine Loomis, RN, BSN
RN, Pediatric Specialties, Hematology/Oncology
Manager: Margy Bertoldi

The Beacon project (electronic chemotherapy and supportive care ordering) was a huge undertaking that consumed many hours of MD, RN, pharmacy, and IT time during this past year. Katie took on the role of the clinic’s Beacon champion and mentor with the utmost dedication and expertise. She was learning at the same time as the rest of the team, but her highly intelligent and creative mind allowed her to master the materials quickly and provide excellent support. Katie’s mentorship and ability to rapidly grasp concepts, create, and review order sets enabled the pediatric heme-onc providers to successfully implement Beacon with no gap in quality of patient care.

Katie’s mentoring and leadership role has been invaluable to everyone in the division, and she continues to be a critical resource for both providers and staff RNs - serving as Super User for both groups. She is able to grasp a need, troubleshoot and advise on the spot. Katie is a superb role model of how nurses and providers can incorporate new technology as they deliver high quality direct care to patients.

Her knowledge base also helped to minimize the fear of change that always accompanies new

“My interest in nursing began around the family dinner table. My mother is a nurse and my father also worked in healthcare. Over the years, I was encouraged by the stories of caring and healing I heard from my parents. Near the end of my college education, I decided to follow in my mother’s footsteps and become a nurse. I wanted to make a difference for patients in my own way, much as my mother had for nearly thirty years.

During my nursing education, I was challenged by nurse leaders who pushed me to think outside the box and provide excellent care for my patients. Although unsure of the nursing specialty I wanted to pursue, I knew I had chosen a career with ample opportunity for learning and growth. During my senior nursing immersion in the PICU, my preceptor encouraged me to explore the possibility of working in Pediatric Oncology. He noted that I had a love for the technical aspects of nursing, but that I also loved the relationships formed with patients who were in our care for longer periods.

I have been a nurse in Peds Hem/Onc for nearly five years. Each day presents new challenges and new opportunities for learning. I look forward to seeing my patients each day and feel privileged to partner with families during their journey. My greatest joy comes from seeing children laugh and play during treatment, their bright spirits shining through an otherwise difficult situation. Drawing on the examples of my own mentors, I have been able to guide and teach families and peers to achieve mutual goals and provide safe, efficient care.”
processes. During the Beacon Go-Live, Katie provided countless hours of elbow support, utilizing her technical knowledge in conjunction with her clinical expertise. Her dedication to quality of care motivated her to devote so much time and energy to the project.

Katie keeps things running smoothly in the clinic. She makes the time to filter through upcoming patient visits to ensure that Chemo orders are in and signed, and checking that the orders agree with the roadmaps. If this is not done, she emails the physicians and lets them know, so that it is taken care prior to that day. This is easy for her, because she has a great memory and knows (not having to look them all up) some of the more typical protocols that the children are on. The amount of knowledge she has is amazing.

Katie doesn’t leave questions unanswered. She is dedicated to finding the correct answer for everyone that she encounters, from the patient to the physician she is working with. She is a wonderful teacher. One never hears a “just because we do it that way” answer from Katie. She explains “why”: for example, why we access a port a specific way, why we flush with this amount, and where in the protocol that is stated. She will explain, in her own words, why protocols are written the way they are, and how she feels that the protocols help to protect the patient and the caregiver. She is the “go to girl” of the floor for everyone from fellow nurses and ancillary staff to nurse practitioners and physicians. She is highly accountable and described as “wise beyond her years”.

Katie’s tenacious commitment to the Beacon project demonstrated how a nurse can use her talents and knowledge to positively influence change. As her manager, I valued how she owned this project not from an individual point of view, but as an advocate for patients and her nursing colleagues. She wanted nurses to be successful in making the transition to Beacon so they in turn could ensure patient safety. She continues to serve as our Beacon expert, providing one on one tutorials, summarizing helpful hints and reviewing new protocols prior to implementation.

Everyone who works with Katie readily sees that she is highly organized, takes initiative and works with tremendous efficiency in providing compassionate patient care. This is why Katie was asked to be the nurse leader for the Beacon project. A surprising revelation was that through her drive to share her knowledge and to help others learn, Katie emerged as a dedicated mentor. We are so fortunate to have her on our team!

Katie’s manager, Margy Bertoldi
NIGHTINGALE

Anna Balcom, RN, BSN
RN, 12K Cardiac Medical ICU
Manager: Marge Willis

Upon first meeting Anna Balcom, you will likely notice her sincerity. Her listening skills are superb and she radiates a distinctive genuine kindness when interacting with others. In observing the start of her professional nursing career, it is evident that this air of virtue and goodness she exudes carries with it an offering of respect for her colleagues as well as every one of the patients fortunate to be in her care. She is the prototype of a young nurse role model. Her peers have witnessed the placation of anxious patients with the tone of her voice and eye contact, her ability to inspire confidence, and her succinct explanation of patient care observations and concerns when communicating with physicians. She is attentive to detail, efficient in executing tasks, and proactive in seeking and sharing knowledge to improve her own practice as well as the practice of others.

Anna Balcom is an outstanding new graduate nurse. She has been a nurse for 10 months and is quickly becoming a proficient practitioner. One skill she has always possessed, even before she had the title “RN” after her name, was a professional, friendly personality that makes everyone enjoy working with her. The Cardiac & Medical ICU (12K) was fortunate enough to be the site of Anna’s senior clinical immersion, and we are very fortunate to have her on our team. Anna has accepted her responsibility for patient care as a nurse with intelligence, caring and professionalism. She uses her professional demeanor to calm worried families of critically ill patients, and uses her passion for critical care to ensure the best outcomes.

"To me, nursing is an opportunity. I feel so very privileged to work in a profession where I am able to better myself as an individual, impact my immediate community, and take pride in what my colleagues and I are able to do together. I am realizing more and more as the months of my first year of nursing go by that I am a product of and indebted to my surroundings. I started as a new graduate nurse 9 months ago in a fast paced ICU after 3 years as a student at OHSU. All of the support staff, but especially the nurses on both day and night shift, have enabled me to transition from wide eyed student to even wider eyed nurse safely, thoughtfully, and occasionally, even gracefully. The Nightingale award is given to a nurse practicing less than 18 months who "exemplifies outstanding and caring leadership and professionalism as a beginning practitioner". While this award will be given to "Anna Balcom, RN", I can't help but wish I could add about 110 names to that list. Nursing culture is quickly becoming my culture and thanks to the nurses and staff in the CMICU at OHSU, I couldn't see my future as a nurse any rosier. “
possible for our patients. Fellow 12K RN Susan shared a story: “Within an hour of starting her shift, Anna’s astute assessment of her patient revealed a change in his pupils – a sign of immediate danger to the brain. She promptly notified the doctors and a stat head CT was done. The patient had a head bleed, and her quick recognition of this sign saved her patient from further brain damage. Anna’s night seemed to just get busier from there. Anna never lost her cool throughout the shift, remaining calm and collected in a very busy and stressful situation. She asked for help when she needed it, and delegated tasks appropriately. Her upbeat attitude and professionalism toward both her patient and her coworkers never faltered. This particular patient’s family also required a lot of her time and attention. Anna kept the family informed of the changes and handled their concerns in a manner that helped keep the family calm. It was a patient situation that might have made even a veteran nurse feel stressed, but Anna took it all in stride and handled herself like a true professional.”

Anna’s willingness to support her peers stands out: she is quickly honing her clinical judgment and possesses the unspoken awareness of when a peer needs help with a busy patient assignment. Fellow 12K RN Kelly states, “One night that I was admitting a new ICU patient. I was very busy with gathering supplies for a central line, arterial line, intubating, inserting a Foley, starting pressors, all while trying to take care of another patient that needed frequent assistance. Anna was my neighbor nurse that day and was an amazing helper. She continually offered to gather supplies, assist with intubation, and took the initiative to help my other patient when I was tied up. I didn’t have to ask her to check on my other patient, she would do it without me having to ask and would clarify with me what needed to be done. Anna has very strong nursing skills for only being a nurse less than a year. She is always eager to help.”

Anna’s lifelong love of learning is apparent to all who work with her. Not only is she working hard to master the basics of nursing care, she is willing and eager to embrace new changes to improve her practice. She is willing to serve as a leader, and use her skills to transfer her knowledge to her peers. Fellow 12K RN Tara states, “As a staff educator, I was asked to teach the nursing staff about the new care plan format. Anna was literally the only person who, when asked ‘do you have time and want to learn about the new care plan?’ said enthusiastically ‘yes!’ and meant it. She was attentive, engaged and immediately applied her new knowledge. She agreed to be a resource to other nurses about the new care plan and helped others reinforce and learn how to apply it. For many new nurses, just getting by is the focus of their day -- time management, assessment, etc -- and that is understandable. Anna is excelling, and doing a thorough job in all aspects seems to be her goal.”

12K staff is full of praise for Anna, and look forward to seeing how she changes nursing for the best.

For a new nurse, Anna took to the professional role quickly in addition to the tasks that all new nurses have to learn. She is a positive addition to the unit and is highly supportive of her peers both physically and emotionally.

-Anna’s manager, Marge Willis
TEACHING

Julius Fernandez, RN, BSN, CGFNS/ICHP, CPAN
RN/Staff Educator, Doernbecher PACU/Short Stay Unit
Manager: Susie Bacon

As a Staff Educator in the Doernbecher PACU/Short Stay Unit, Jules receives peer referrals for education, competency and clinical work that needs to be accomplished. During his first eight weeks in the Staff Educator role, he co-created an evidence-based, Competency Skills Day for pediatric Day Hospital/PACU, and during the past year, Jules has helped bring the unit monthly in-services and a journal club with CE credits. He helped create an Anesthesia Shadow (competency), and successfully partnered with the unit’s manager to have all staff completed before the end of the calendar year. Jules is an enthusiastic proponent of professional nursing certification, and rallied his peers to take and pass the Certified Perianesthesia Nurse exam to gain CPAN designation. Not content to see education limited to offerings within the unit, he has created an up-to-date educational calendar for nursing staff that includes offerings from other divisions and disciplines, thus leveraging our educational resources.

Jules is a consistent preceptor with student nurses in DCH PACU, and receives high praise for his ability to translate knowledge into practice. He excels in strength-based teaching and helping students to grow during their time in the unit. To support new nurses to the unit, Jules partnered with Professional Practice Leader, Cyndi Painter, to create a fully focused, American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nursing (ASPAN) evidenced orientation for nurses. This new orientation is comprised of critical thinking, knowledge acquisition, competency assessments and preceptor/orientee assessments. Participants have evaluated the orientation as highly successful.

Jules has brought forward awareness of inpatient unit needs for information and education regarding recovery nursing care, resulting in the unit using the RN Handoff Report to support the unit’s inpatient nurse peers. Jules sits on the expanded IDAC Committee, and partners with his peers and with physicians to demonstrate Epic documentation for efficiency and effectiveness.

Jules is truly a professional. He treats all with great respect, and with his positive attitude, creates an atmosphere to help each patient on the unit feel welcome. He has superior clinical and teaching skills. He has been instrumental in the unit’s unit-based nurse practice council (UBNPC), supporting a focus on clinical practice questions and improvements.

In addition to his work within OHSU’s walls, Jules has worked several PACU missions to other countries, serving under-served populations of patients, and providing information and education to his peers abroad. His mission to Phan Rang, Vietnam with Interplast involved 57 surgical cases, and was profiled in the April 2010 Nursing News to Peruse.
“I have been a Registered Nurse for 13 years. My background is Pediatric Critical Care. I have worked in areas like the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, Pediatric Burn Center, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Pediatric Acute and the Emergency Department as a Transport Nurse. I have worked at both extreme spectrums of nursing, from where you have barely existent resources with 50 acutely ill patients, to prestigious Magnet Hospitals in Southern California.

I obtained my Bachelor’s of Nursing from the Philippines and practiced as a Registered Nurse immediately after graduation. I was accepted in a government hospital (I had just turned 20) with 50 acutely ill patients under my care. I remember asking my best friend to stay with me that shift because I was so overwhelmed with all the responsibilities. At an early age in my nursing career, I was molded to be organized and methodical in order to provide caring and compassionate care. Every day is like a “medical mission”. Now this is nursing shortage!

As the staff educator for Doernbecher PACU/Day Hospital, I am honored to have gained the trust of my nursing peers, physicians and other staff. My goal is to continue the partnership with our pediatric anesthesiologist, surgeons, nursing experts and ancillary staff through evidence-based presentations and lectures. I want to strengthen collegiality that extends beyond the nursing realm.

I am also geared to further extend the Doernbecher PACU/Day Hospital Journal Club to our fellow pediatric nurses in other areas like the DCH OR Staff, Pediatric Sedation Staff, PANDA Staff, Respiratory Therapy Staff, PACC Staff, and DNCC Staff. I partnered with Robin Young, Unit Magnet Champion and Susie Bacon, Nurse Manager in making a poster showcasing the Journal Club for Nurses Week.

I am very excited to be scheduled for a Medical Mission in September 2011, bound for Cameroon, Africa. Being able to share my talent and serving the under-served gives me both personal and professional satisfaction. It also gives me an opportunity to provide information and education to our families and colleagues abroad.”
A Labor and Delivery unit might not be considered in traditional palliative care circles. Nonetheless, in this non-traditional area, a nurse can be just as meaningful and provide excellent family and patient support through what is an excruciating process for all involved. Nikki has been working as a labor and delivery nurse for five years at OHSU. In this unit, RNs take turns with assignments with patients who need to deliver a fetal demise, and with patients who terminate pregnancies for many reasons including life threatening maternal conditions. Being the nurse for a patient in this situation is extremely challenging at times and draining at best. Nikki consistently volunteers for these assignments, which could be a demise, a termination, a variety of gestational ages, or involve a family that is displaying stress and emotions in challenging ways. Once, a coworker inquired why she did this; her simple reply was, “if I was in her situation I would want someone who wants to take care of me be my nurse, not someone who was forced to”.

After a demise patients can spend hours, even multiple days with their deceased baby. This involves taking the baby out of the fridge, unwrapping it from the plastic bags that we store them in, and wrapping them in blankets. Nikki will do this as many times as a patient wants. She supports the mother by taking photos of the baby, and taking hand and foot prints of even the tiniest babies—when you barely can get anything to print at all. She will talk with the mother and families as long as they need, never rushing to ‘just be done with them.’ For demises and terminations a nurse cannot influence outcomes for the baby: they can only help the family through one of the worst days of their lives. Nikki Moentenich does this with grace.
“January 1, 2002: I was 30 weeks pregnant and on my way to the doctor’s office because I had not felt my baby move in a day. In my heart I already knew that Jordan had passed away, but we had to confirm with an ultrasound. My mom met me at the hospital and was there by my side when we saw that his heart was not beating. This was an excruciatingly devastating experience. I felt so numb inside. I kept going over it in my head, what did I do wrong? The process of delivering my precious baby boy began on that day. Looking back, it all seemed to be a blur. I remember crying a lot, but also being able to laugh a little with my family, to whom I owe so much of my strength.

My mom is a nurse in the DNCC at OHSU, and she knew one of the nurses that chose to take care of me during my stay. This nurse I will never forget. She shared with me about a loss she had the year before, and that she might cry with me during this process. She was the one who showed me that I could get through the worst day of my life. I was inspired by her strength and her ability to be there for me, even though it hit her so close to home. After meeting this very special nurse, I knew not only that I wanted to be a labor and delivery nurse, but that I wanted to be that kind of nurse. I wanted to make a connection with my patients and let them know that whatever it is they are going through, I will be there to guide them along their way.

Whether it is the beginning of life or the end, there are so many emotions; most people are not sure which path leads in the direction they want to head. So as their nurse I am there to lead them and teach them how to proceed from here. I don’t want these patients to go home feeling lost. I try to give them a heading, that this process is just the beginning, and that they should allow themselves all the time they need to get through it. I cannot find the words to say how honored I am to be receiving this award. It is in tribute to my son Jordan that I started on this path, and if not for his memory I wouldn’t know the depths of love I have for the care I provide to all my patients. Thank you.”
NOMINEES
Congratulations to our 2011 Nominees:

**ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSE:**
- Lisa Crupi, RN, CPNP
- Wendy Domreis, RN, MS, CPNP
- Maureen Harrahill, RN, MS, ACNP-BC
- Serena Kelly, MS, FNP-BC, CCRN
- Nicole Kirker, ACNP-BC
- Julie Martchenke, NP
- Helen Turner, DNP, RN-BC, PCNS-BC
- Rose Marie Tyson, MSN, RN, ANP
- Brian Wetzel, RN, MSN, NP, ACNP

**ADVANCING & LEADING THE PROFESSION:**
- Lisa Bearup, RN, BSN, CPAN
- Cindy Bergquist, RN, BSN, CCRN
- Rachel Gustafson, RN, BSN, CEN
- Kelly Hyde, RN, BSN
- Katherine Loomis, RN, BSN
- Rianna McKay, RN, BSN
- Karen Rudy, RN, BSN
- Rayna Tuski, RN, BSN, CNOR
- Meredith Von Werssowetz, RN, BSN, OCN

**ANCILLARY STAFF (WITHIN NURSING SERVICES):**
- Dinah Cernava, CNA
- Heidi Conway, CMA
- Denise Cosford, CMA

**CLINICAL CARE:**
- Carrie Aleshire, RN, BSN, CPEN
- Eleanor Aquino, RN, BSN
- Molly Barber, RN, BSN
- Lisa Bloker, RN, BSN
- Tammy Boisselle, RN, BSN, CCRN
- Nancy Bral, RN
- Tamira Chauncey, RN
- Alexandra Chilson, RN, BSN
- Holly Cooper, RN, BSN
- Catherine Cromett, RN, MSN
- Susan Davidson, RN, MN
- Kate Deem, RN, BSN

- Erin Ehly, RN, BSN
- Leotine Eskola, RN, BSN, CCRN
- Kerri Frazier, RN, BSN
- Clarice Gerlach, RN, BSN, CCRN
- Brent Goodness, RN, BSN, CEN
- Debbie Griffith, RN
- Dianne Haaland, RN, BSN, CNOR, PALS
- Joyce Hartje, RN, BSN
- Ann Houck, RN, BSN
- Caroline Jiezierski, RN, BSN
- Christy Koga, RN, BSN, OCN
- Shawnie Lary, RN, BSN
- Joyce Lear, RN, MN
- Heather Lewis, RN, BSN
- Maeve Long, RN, BSN, CPN
- Elisabeth Loree, RN
- Brian Manning, RN, BSN, CPAN
- Brooke McKee, RN
- Eryn McKim, RN, BSN, CGNA
- Joanna Mielczarek, RN
- Joanne Mikoł, RN, BSN, CCRN
- Stephanie Milstein, RN
- Cassondra Richards, RN
- Alisa Riedl, RN, BSN
- Cindy Woodbury, RN, BSN
COMMUNITY SERVICE:
Mark Browne, RN, OCN
Jennica Harris, RN, BSN, PCCN
Jacqueline Johnson, RN, BSN
Anna Mapes, RN, BSN
Ben McCullar, RN, BSN
Oluwatosin Ola, RN, BSN
Karen Rudy, RN, BSN
Charmika Schuster, MS, MPH, FNP-C

DISTINGUISHED NURSE:
Mary Allison, RN, BSN, RNC
Catherine Cromett, RN, MSN
Maureen Harrahill, RN, MSN, ACNP-BC
Cindy Ross, RN, BSN, CCRN
Mary Rummell, RN, MN, CPNP, CNS
Mary Denise Smith, RN, CNS

MANAGEMENT:
Barbara Bonnice, RN, BSN
Pam Brown, RN, PhD, CCRN
Jenn Fox, RN, BSN
Cynthia Painter, RN, MSN, CPAN
Cynthia Perez, RN, MSN, CCRN, CNS
Sandra Randall, RN, MSN, OCN
Marge Willis, RN, BSN, CCRN

MENTORING:
Lorri Aldridge, RN, BSN
Cindy Bergquist, RN, BSN, CCRN
Amy Corcoran, RN, BSN
Jacqueline Domenici, RN, BSN, CEN
Julie Epling, RN, BSN
Susan Ferguson, RN, BSN
Lisa Gross, RN, BSN, CPN
Jodi Harper, RNC-MNN
Jennifer Jacoby, RN, MSN, NEA-BC
Kathleen Keryan, RN-BC
Katherine Loomis, RN, BSN
Joanne Mikol, RN, BSN, CCRN
Erin Rickmon Swan, RN
Jason Soule, RN, BSN, CCRN
Jason Vargo, RN, BSN
Christine Wright, RN, BSN

NIGHTINGALE:
Anna Balcom, RN, BSN
Stacey Cohen, RN, BSN
Jacki Dinh, RN, BSN
Rachel George, RN, BSN
Hugh Harris, RN, BSN
Karista Peabody, RN, BSN
Amy Pitts, RN
Jennifer Zeigler, RN, BSN

TEACHING:
Nea Akayla, RN, BSN
Deborah Buchwach, MSN, RN-BC
Miriam Dean, RN, BSN, CNOR
Katie Feldman, RN, BSN
Jules Fernandez, RN, BSN, CGFNS/ICHP, CPAN
Meghan Fox, RN, BSN, CPN
Kimberly Giltner, RN, BSN
Randy Linschoten, RN, ADN
Katherine Loomis, RN, BSN
Cynthia Painter, RN, MSN, CPAN
Jennifer Pasquarello, RN, BSN, CCRN
Jill Pyle, RN, BSN
Andrea Strobel, RN, BSN, OCN

VIRGINIA I. SZNEWAJS AWARD
FOR PALLIATIVE CARE
Leotine Eskola, RN, BSN, CCRN
Rhea Geelan, RN
Elaine McDaniel, RN, BSN
Nikki Moentenich, RN, BSN
CMICU RNs
Thank you to all those who made OHSU Nurses Week 2011 possible:

2011 Nurses Week Planning Committee
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Awardee Photos
Marisa McKenney

5th Annual Nursing Research Showcase
Nursing Research Council

With great appreciation for all of OHSU’s dedicated nurses - bringing professional practice and nur-syn-er-gy to patient care.

http://ozone.ohsu.edu/healthsystem/nursing/recognition/nrc/