

# S.O.N. TIMES

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SCHOOL OF NURSING

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## CLINICAL HOT TOPICS

### Human Papillomavirus and Cervical Cancer: Barriers and Prevention by Prof. Nicole Rouhana

One variable contributing to development of cervical cancer is the human papillomavirus (HPV) and is the most common sexually transmitted virus in the United States, affecting over 20 million Americans and projected to infect an additional 6.2 million individuals each year. Exposure to HPV is so common that the majority of all sexually active adults will contract it at some time in their lives unknowingly, as most infections are asymptomatic and resolve spontaneously with no detrimental clinical outcomes. While cervical cancer is one of the most frequently occurring gynecological cancers, the nature of its slow progression and proliferation generally allow for early identification through appropriate screening schedules and techniques. When diagnosed in early stages, treatment of pre-invasive disease reduces the likelihood of more extensive disease.

Despite increasing cervical cancer surveillance and identification of human papillomavirus, an approximate 20,000 women in the United States will develop cervical cancer annually, with a third of this group dying from the disease. While progress has been made, certain segments of the population are more at risk than others, regardless of national public health efforts to improve cervical cancer statistics.

African American women continue to develop cervical cancer at twice the rate of white women, as are rural dwelling women who demonstrate higher rates of cervical cancer morbidity and mortality compared to urban populations. Several factors perhaps contribute to these geographic disparities, ranging from socioeconomic characteristics, life style variations, inadequate health care system resources and access to care. Lifestyle behaviors that have also been associated with increased risks of cervical cancer include: three lifetime sexual partners, early age of sexual debut, suggested as under age eighteen, a personal history of sexually transmitted disease (STD), or partners' history of STD, and a history of smoking (over 100 cigarettes ever smoked) .

Epidemiologically, high cervical cancer rates often have a predictive value for other regional health disparities such as breast and colorectal cancer, strokes and infant mortality. Common denominators of these health



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indicators are frequently poverty, decreased education and lack of regular health care screenings. HPV has recently been implicated as a causal factor in the incidence of oral, head and neck malignancies suggesting that oral HPV infections are primarily sexually acquired and are a strong predictive risk factor for oropharyngeal cancers, which occur more frequently in men than women . This is of particular significance as the strain of the virus most commonly associated with these cancers is the oncogenic type HPV 16, for which there is a prophylactic vaccine which at this time is indicated for females only.

Recent studies suggest that knowledge regarding HPV in the general public varies greatly. A national survey conducted by the Kaiser Foundation in 2000 revealed that a mere 2% of the America public could identify that HPV was a sexually transmitted disease (STD), less than one third had heard of the virus, and 89% had never discussed HPV with a health care provider. Since the advent of the HPV vaccination in 2006, there has been increased media coverage which may have improved general knowledge regarding HPV; nonetheless, confusion and misinformation persist. Many women are not aware that cellular abnormalities on Pap smear results can be linked to a viral infection with HPV and fail to make the association of the virus's link to cervical cancer. Providing accurate and relevant information regarding HPV and related health complications is essential, however, dissemination of the information remains fragmented. Much of the current public HPV information available is derived from a variety of sources including health agencies, pharmaceutical companies, media and electronic sources. This large variation has the potential to generate information that is conflicting or complex in nature, therefore making it difficult for the public to decipher. In 2004, only 79% of the news media reported the HPV is an STD, and only 50% mentioned that it was the most frequent STD.

Additionally, parental acceptance of HPV vaccines remains disappointingly low. Traditional parental decisions regarding routine childhood vaccinations rely on knowledge and beliefs, however, when considering STD vaccinations, beliefs and attitudes are more influential on vaccine acceptability. Previous work has determined that vaccine acceptability is increased when there is a perceived increased vulnerability to HPV, vaccines are viewed as beneficial and safe, and most importantly, those other individuals, such as family, friends and health care providers feel positive about vaccination and would support their decision to vaccinate.

Perceived barriers, whether factual or not, have the potential to become major factors and can interfere

with parental vaccine acceptability. One such anticipated barrier to the HPV vaccine was the assumption that the vaccine could promote adolescent sexual activity and promiscuity. Of the four studies that measured this concern was very little evidence from the parents supporting this notion. However, one study reported that of the parents least likely to vaccinate their daughter by age 13-16, the most frequent reason was parental concern regarding how the vaccine would influence their daughter's sexuality. Other perceived barriers that have been identified are out of pocket costs, vaccine safety and pain at injection site. Given the economic challenges occurring financial cost may also become a barrier to HPV vaccine acceptability.

Barriers also exist within the health care system itself. Providers' reluctance to stock the vaccine due to inadequate reimbursement, lack of time to address parental concerns regarding vaccinating against an STD, variations in state wide funding programs and insurance coverage all can have a detrimental effect on ensuring HPV vaccine availability. Almost all studies suggest that parental HPV vaccine acceptability is highly correlated with how their health care provider feels about the vaccine and promotes its use.

The development of the HPV vaccination offers promising evidence in eliminating up to 70 % of all cervical cancers worldwide, thereby greatly decreasing the societal burdens of cervical cancer morbidity and mortality. However, attainment of these goals will require acceptance from all involved, including health care workers who provide care to women and adolescents, policy makers and especially those populations most at risk. This would require initiation of effective public health measures to increase HPV vaccine knowledge and acceptability, not only in the population in general, but more specifically, those geographic areas that are most at risk who would benefit the most. Legislative and public health policies must be developed to ensure uniform consistent funding for all those parents seeking to vaccinate their daughters. Only with acceptance on a local, state, regional and national level can the effects of this new method of cancer prevention contribute to improving the health of the American women.

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**When you're a nurse you know that every day  
you will touch a life or a life will touch yours.**

**~Author Unknown**

## *Community Outreach*

### **Real World Experience**

#### **During Tough Economic Times, Stony Brook University Nursing Students Lend Hand to Homeless Families in Long Island Shelter**

The current economic climate is putting increased stress on Long Island's already crowded shelters and emergency housing facilities. With homes in foreclosure and families in crisis, 14 Stony Brook University nursing students are helping provide services to homeless families in one Long Island shelter operated by the nonprofit organization Community Housing Innovations. The junior nursing students are part of Stony Brook University's Community and Family Nursing course, in which 56 students help at local shelters.

The students meet with family members at the shelter. For many families, it is their first experience with being homeless and the students start by assessing the emotional, psychological and physical conditions of the family members. As a second step, the students conduct a medical genogram, a pictorial display of a person's family relationships and medical history. Next, they conduct a windshield survey by walking through the neighborhood and researching what resources the families can find in walking distance, as they do not have cars. Using all of this information, the students help the shelter to develop a family action plan. Each student group has specialized projects as well. One student group developed a child discipline easy-to-read poster for the shelter; and another group is currently working on an employment skills workshop, teaching resume writing and linking clients to resources for vocational training and job searches.

Dr. Brenda Janotha, a professor at Stony Brook University, uses the CHI shelter as a clinical site for her students and is studying the impact of Service-Learning on her students. Service-Learning is the process of submerging the student in a community setting, guiding them to provide client specific-care with the expectation that both the student and the client will gain from the experience.

"My student feedback in their informal journals has reflected that they are gaining from the clients, the setting, the experience and their project," stated Dr. Janotha. "Nurse empathy improves patient outcomes. These students see how difficult it is for these families. And, it's the little details that impact them. For example, the clients have trouble finding fresh vegetables at an affordable price. This is

specific. It's real to them." Dr. Janotha plans on using the Caring Behaviors Inventory assessment tool, developed by Dr. Zane Wolf, to measure the level of student empathy before and after the shelter experience.

Community Housing Innovations is also noticing a positive change in the families at the shelter. *Because they do not view the students as a threat or as another authority figure, the residents of the shelter find their interaction with the students to be a positive experience, and the interaction provides them with greater autonomy and control.*

"Homelessness is incredibly stressful for families," stated Rosemary Dehlow, Director of Long Island Programs for Community Housing Innovations. "During tough economic times, it's even worse. These students are helping these families to develop practical steps they can take to help themselves."

The shelter is operated by Community Housing Innovations and is funded through the *Suffolk County Department of Social Services*. For more information on Community Housing Innovations, visit [www.chigrants.org](http://www.chigrants.org) or call (631) 475-6390.

## *SON Outreach History*

In 1968, the School of Nursing was a vision of Dr. Ellen T. Fahy, founding Dean for Stony Brook University School of Nursing. She came to Long Island from New York City's Columbia University to meet with several of the community leaders, faculty and students at the local colleges to discuss her idea of developing a non-traditional undergraduate nursing program that would focus primarily on community health. Dr. Fahy's concept of community health differed greatly from the norm as it included acute and critical care nursing on the street in the community, not necessarily in a tertiary care facility.

The School of Nursing opened in 1970 and shortly thereafter, community outreach programs were initiated and became a theme/thread throughout the curriculum. Prof. Vaughn Nevin and the lead community activist, the late Prof. Madeliene Zunno, taught faculty and students to integrate the community as client concept such that it continues today. In several of the subsequent issues of the SON Newsletters, you will read about the multiple community activities performed by the faculty, staff, alumni and the undergraduate and graduate students of whom we are most proud. — Prof. Ora James Bouey



# St. Baldricks's Day

## The Men of the Stony Brook University School of Nursing go bald!

by Steve Waugh and Dr. Philip Tarantino

On March 14, Twelve Nursing Students and one Professor from Stony Brook University raised almost \$3000 for Children's Cancer Research by participating in the International St. Baldrick's Foundation fund raising event in Northport NY. The funds are raised by the participants soliciting sponsorships to have their heads shaved. The head shaving is a symbol of solidarity with the children who lose their hair through the course of treatment for cancer. The men were joined by several of their female classmates and school of nursing staff who colored their hair green as a sign of support for their classmates and to join in the festivities to support this great cause. Donations came from faculty, students, family and friends of the participants. The top fund raiser from Stony Brook Was Jesse Greenberg, followed by Steve Waugh and Dr Philip Tarantino. Dr. "Phil" said, "I am moved to support this event simply because cancer effects so many lives and children need to know that they are supported and loved."

The Stony Brook School of Nursing participants began their day with traditional Irish-American corned beef and cabbage as the ladies colored their hair and the men prepared for their new look. Dressed in "Stony Brook Red," the participants walked into a sea of green in Naper Tandy's Pub in Northport NY where the local festivities were being held. With the support of their cheering classmates, friends, and the crowd at Naper's, the twelve Stony Brook shavees took to the stage in two shifts and were ceremoniously shorn.

The "shavees" from Stony Brook University School of Nursing were: Jesse Greenberg, Dave Amarasena, Kevin Budway, Chad Williams, Henry Martinez, Henry Taur, Derrick Tan, Dr. Philip Tarantino, Vinny Andino, Lenny Catanzaro, Reuben Quint, and Steve Waugh.

The "Green Haired Ladies," fundraisers and supports were: Magdelyn Batista, Xian Li, Karuna Balkaran, Jennifer Copolla, Prof Sharon Placella, Lauren Muzio, Melody Miclat, Danielle Aleksandrowicz, Ilene Jackowitz, Singh Kudeep, Juliane Walton Rantz, Diana Gonzalez, Yin Jie Zhao, Jeremiah Lorico.

St Baldricks is an international movement that was started in New York City in 2000. St. Baldrick's donors and volunteers made possible over \$15 million in funding for childhood cancer research in 2008 and as of March 27, 2009,

we have already raised \$10 Million dollars, half of the 2009 goal of \$20 Million!

For more information go to: [www.stbaldricks.org](http://www.stbaldricks.org).

We thank everyone for their support and encouragement!



\*Cover, Guess Who — Dr. Philip Tarantino

## *School of Nursing Research Day — March 16, 2009*

The School of Nursing held its annual Research Day 2009 on March 16, 2009. Over 220 people attended and the audience consisted of SBU students, faculty, and hospital staff and administrators. This year's topic, "Culturally Competent Curriculum, Culturally Competent Care" allowed the exploration of a theme that has emerged throughout the New Baccalaureate Essentials. The Keynote speaker, Dr. C. Alicia Georges, was riveting. Her presentation touched on areas such as how to introduce cultural sensitivity within the hospital setting as well as in educational institutions, and how a curriculum rich in cultural content breeds nurses that are culturally sensitive at the bedside which in turn improves patient outcomes. Dr. L. Escallier and Dr. B. Messina shared their research project "Culturally Congruent Care: Nursing's Challenge" which was a great follow-up to Dr. Georges' presentation.

Collaboration between the School of Nursing and University Hospital is outstanding. The integration of

practice, research and education within these two facilities creates an environment that fosters safe, high-quality patient care. Spotlighted on Research Day 2009 were two studies which emphasize the support Stony Brook University Hospital gives its nurses in their pursuit of evidence-based research. One study was titled "Cultural Competency at the Bedside-Creating an Environment of Transcultural Care" by D. Bellucci, M. McHeffey and S. Boughton and the other was "Evaluation of Anxiety and Stress in Triage Nurses in the Emergency Department" by E. Wagner, E. Dowdy, J. Mount, A. Boukas, M. Buhse.

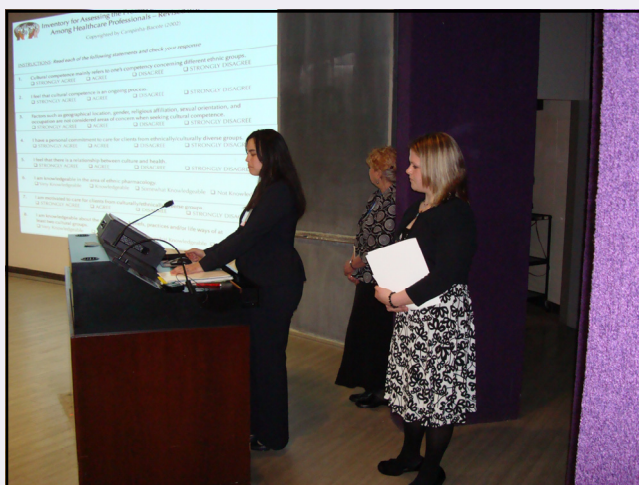
The day finished off with a moderated poster session following research day which was well attended by spectators who asked relevant, thought provoking questions. Evaluations of the day reviewed were overwhelmingly positive. The School of Nursing's Research Day 2009 was a great educational success for all involved! — Professor Janet Galiczewski



Dr. Marijean Buhse and Dr. C. Alicia Georges



Sabra Boughton, Danielle Bellucci, Maureen McHeffey



Danielle Bellucci, Sabra Boughton, Maureen McHeffey



Professor Ora James Bouey and Dr. C. Alicia Georges

## FACULTY/STAFF/STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to **Professor Kathleen Gambino** on the successful defense of her doctoral dissertation. Way to go Dr. Gambino!

Congratulations to **Professor Kathleen Bratby** on the successful defense of her doctoral dissertation. Way to go Dr. Bratby!

Congratulations to **Professor Linda Cimino** on the successful defense of her doctoral dissertation. Way to go Dr. Cimino!

Congratulations to **Professor Terry Cavaliere** on the successful defense of her doctoral dissertation. Way to go Dr. Cavaliere!

Congratulations to **Professor Beverly Dean** on the successful defense of her doctoral dissertation. Way to go Dr. Dean!

**Professor Brenda Janotha** has earned the title of *Diplomat of Comprehensive Care* by passing the American Board of Comprehensive Care DNP certification exam in November 2008.

Congratulations to **Valerie DiGiovanni** who earned a *Master of Professional Studies* with a concentration in *Human Resource Management* in December.

**Jennifer Coppola** was selected as a *Program Reviewer* for the 2009 National Association Student Personnel Administrators Annual Conference titled "Nourishing Partnerships for Lifelong Learning."

**Jennifer Coppola** was the keynote speaker on April 19, 2009 at Dowling College for the induction ceremony of the Mu Tau Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society.

Class of 2010 student **Diana Gonzalez** presented her research project, "Review of the Quality of Patient Treatment at the Enrique C. Sotomayor Obstetrics and Gynecological Hospital of Guayaquil, Ecuador and the Positive Effects of Implementing a Patient-Centered Health Care Model" at the Undergraduate Research & Creativity (URECA) Celebration on April 29, 2009. The project abstract was also published in *Imprint*, a professional magazine for nursing students. Please see next column for the complete abstract.

Many of our readers have expressed interest in the archive version of the PRN that was published last issue. We would like to acknowledge Linda Edmunds, 1975 Editor of the PRN.

### ***Review of the Quality of Patient Treatment at the Enrique C. Sotomayor Obstetrics and Gynecological Hospital of Guayaquil, Ecuador and the Positive Effects of Implementing a Patient-Centered Health Care Model***

Co-authored by: Diana N. Gonzalez, School of Nursing, Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, New York; Francoise B. Cromer, Ph.D., Women's Studies Program, Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, New York.

Labor Unit of the Enrique C. Sotomayor, Obstetrics and Gynecology Hospital, Guayaquil-Ecuador

During a four week clinical internship in June 2008, Diana N. Gonzalez interviewed 41 patients of low-socio economic status in the general area of the Labor Unit at the Enrique C. Sotomayor Obstetrics and Gynecology Hospital in Guayaquil, Ecuador. The general area of the Labor Unit admits women in active labor whose family income falls below the equivalent of \$300 U.S dollars a month. The research was aimed at identifying the demographics of the patient population and how each patient classified the treatment they received in the Labor Unit (physical, psychological and emotional). Of the 41 respondents, 78% were Mestizo or an ethnic mixture of European Spanish with Native Indigenous, 12% of African origin (Afro-Ecuadorian), 7% of mixed Mestizo and African descent and 3% Native Indigenous. Six of the 41 respondents noted post-partum complications and stated they were fearful upon entering the hospital; these same six patients said they continued to be fearful of their possible outcome once they were assigned to a specific section (Vaginal Delivery, High Risk, Cesarean Section) of the Unit. Interestingly, these six respondents gave the most specific and detailed suggestions for improvement of patient care in the general area of the Labor Unit. Preliminary results suggest that there is a need for improved methods of health care delivery such as increased patient sensitivity, availability of patient support systems (extended visiting hours), and patient-provider communication, all of which indicate the need for implementing a patient-centered care model that is specific to the needs of low-socio economic patients.

*SCHOOL OF NURSING  
DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS 2009*



Dean Lenora McClean



Honoree Donna Nickitas



Honoree Donna Nickitas, Dean McClean, and Liv Peterson, SON Alumni Board President



Honoree Rosemary Mahan, Dean McClean, and Liv Peterson, SON Alumni Board President



Keynote Speaker Sister Pat Duffy



Student Activities Center Ballroom

The 2009 School of Nursing Distinguished Alumnus Awards Reception was held on March 28<sup>th</sup> at Stony Brook University's Student Activities Center. Alumni, faculty and friends gathered to celebrate the accomplishments of two distinguished alums, Rosemary A. Mahan, RN, MS, PNP-BC, CPNP, CPON®, Class of '84 and '92 and Donna M. Nickitas, RN, PhD, CNAA, BC, Class of '76.

Rosemary Mahan is a Certified Pediatric Nurse Practitioner in the Division of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology at Stony Brook University Medical Center and Donna Nickitas is a Professor and Graduate Program Specialty Coordinator, Nursing Administration at Hunter College, Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing.

Congratulations to Rosemary and Donna. They personify the School's tradition of excellence and have brought distinction to themselves, the School of Nursing, and to the Nursing profession through their exemplary achievements.

## Student Legislative Action

### Meeting With Assemblyman Englebright

For a meeting in which we were supposed to inform our local state legislator about the grievances concerning the “tuition” increase, I actually learned from the experience more than I expected. As a usual apathetic college student, I only cared about the tuition hike mainly because it increased what I was paying for, but through research, I learned that this increase is not even going towards improvement of my education. I was outraged at the fact that 90% of the tuition increase is going to fund the budget deficits of the state. It’s hardly tuition at all. It’s tax. We expressed this outrage to Assembly member Steven Englebright, who was understandably empathetic to our cause. He listened intently and assured us that he will do everything he can to prevent the state from taking money from the students. He enlightened us of all the bureaucratic red tape hurdles that must be overcome in order to fix this situation. We gave him concrete examples of the effects of the budget cuts already being manifested, including the suspension of the Family Health Nurse Practitioner program. Mr. Englebright was surprised, to say the least, to hear how the budget cuts are already forcing the suspensions of a lot of academic programs university-wide. He expressed understanding of the reverberating impact these budget cuts have not just on the quality of education, but also to the economy and quality of healthcare provided in the community, as well. Overall, I think that the meeting was a learning experience for both parties, and that we succeeded in giving light to the concrete and current consequences of these budget cuts. — Juan-Carlo Medina



Undergraduate Nursing students meet with Suffolk County Legislator John M. Kennedy. Left to right: School of Nursing Professor Denise Snow, Prof. Snow, Marjorie Remolette, Michelle Morales, Ariane Almirante, Legislator Kennedy, Melody Miclat, Pamela Weinstock, Julianne Walton-Rantz, Lauren Muzio.

**Congratulations  
Graduating  
Class of  
2009!**



### Kappa Gamma Chapter Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing

- Scholarship Fund Raiser
  - Appetizers by Chef Eric
  - Various wines
  - Chinese Auction
  - Raffles
- Award Ceremony
  - Education
  - Leadership
  - Research
  - Clinical Practice
  - Student Contributions
- 20th Anniversary Celebration
  - Kappa Gamma Past President's Awards



Research

WHEN: Sunday, June 14, 2009 1 PM - 4 PM

WHERE: Professor Gene Mundie's Residence  
42 Erland Road, Stony Brook, NY

COST: \$25.00

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO  
SCHOLARSHIPS! NO ADMIN COSTS  
AT ALL!!!!

Please RSVP Pam : 631-444-3074 or Pamela.Crisuolo@stonybrook.edu