

# Changing Times, Changing Lives:

## *New Faculty Work to Expand SON Initiatives*

Globalization. World marketplace. Technological revolution. Research breakthrough. Our world changes now more in a year than it did during a lifetime a century ago. What are the implications of this change for nursing and nursing education? New administrators and professors who joined the School of Nursing this academic year believe it means a greater emphasis on taking learning beyond the traditional classroom walls, showing the nurses of tomorrow how to create new partnerships, care for people from unfamiliar cultures and understand burgeoning new knowledge. And although changes in today's world are helping drive nursing and nursing education, these new faculty members are leading changes of their own.

### ADMINISTRATORS

#### *Guiding Faculty and Students In These Changing Times*

**Richard Redman**, PhD, RN  
*Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Professor*

As the new associate dean for academic affairs, it is Dr. Richard Redman's responsibility to provide leadership and oversight for the educational mission of the School. His strongest commitment, he says, is to advance the excellence in education that has been a hallmark of the School for over 50 years.

Redman's work as a nationally respected educator and academic administrator has influenced many of his ideas on how to best accomplish this goal. His ideas include the recruitment of a diverse faculty and student body; the development of research and prac-



**Redman**

tice programs that address society's most pressing health care problems; the fostering of a curriculum that prepares culturally competent care providers; and a balanced approach to the use of technology.

An initiative Redman believes will benefit the School in particular is the creation of stronger campus-community partnerships. He sees these partnerships as a way to build more effective patient-provider relationships.

"I want our students to experience how to form partnerships with communities and agencies in a way that will address issues of social

justice, make a difference in the health of communities and engage the students as citizens and professionals for their entire careers," he says. "I see this grassroots approach as the primary way to affect the kinds of change and reform needed in our health care system and society today."

Redman recently joined the board of Campus-Community Partnerships for Health, a national organization made up of nearly 1,000 communities and institutions of higher learning with the common goal of improving community health and health education. His fellow new associate dean at the School, Dr. Sonda Oppewal, also shares his vision of more campus involvement for the greater community good.

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DR. RICHARD REDMAN

**Sonda Oppewal, PhD, RN**  
*Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, Clinical Associate Professor*

Dr. Sonda Oppewal has spent her nursing career advancing clinical practice and education. She joined the School in October from the College of Nursing at East Tennessee State University, where during her eleven years as a professor and associate dean, she directed two school-based health centers and oversaw the operations of seven other nurse-managed health centers that cared for the homeless, rural and student residents of the area. The centers provided care for more than 43,000 patients in 2001 alone.



**Oppewal**

At Carolina's School of Nursing, she will use her community-oriented nursing care experience to oversee all the School's clinical outreach activities, bringing faculty practice arrangements and Area Health Education Centers and Continuing Education programs under the leadership of one office. As the director of community-based initiatives at the School, she says her goal is to promote a better integration of nursing practice with education, research and scholarship.

"The mark I'd ultimately like to make is a better understanding of

working in partnership with communities for improved health," she explains. "I'm currently exploring innovative clinical initiatives with University and community partners in long-term facilities, Latino community members, at-risk elderly residents and school-based health centers. I also plan to work with faculty to advocate for and facilitate successful clinical practice arrangements in a variety of settings."

Sites where faculty currently practice include UNC Healthcare, local county health departments and family medical centers. Plans are under consideration to add an adult day health center and an on-site nurse-managed clinic at an adult assisted living center as clinical faculty practice sites.

## NEW FACULTY IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

### *Providing Unbiased, Consistent Care in the Clinic and Classroom*



**Harwood**

Professors **Theresa Raphael-Grimm, Elaine Harwood** and **Julee Waldrop** all lead by example. As professors who practice, they split their time between teaching students at the School of Nursing and caring for patients at UNC Healthcare. All agree that in order to teach clinical courses well, you have to practice what you teach.

Raphael-Grimm says she shares her experiences as a nurse psychotherapist with the students in her

psychiatric mental health classes all the time. Health care provider bias, her field of expertise, is an issue she often sees in the field. Making students face their own biases is one of her most important goals. "I want to make biased thinking so much a part of the consciousness of the nurses we prepare that every patient interaction will be experienced through the eyes of a sensitized provider, aware of the hazards of stereotypical thought and implicit assumptions," she says. Her new course, "Biases, Stereotypes and Implicit Assumptions in Health Care Delivery," will be offered as an elective this fall.

Harwood is looking to blaze new paths in patient satisfaction as a family nurse practitioner collaborating with physicians in the Department of Family Medicine at UNC Healthcare. She serves as a hospitalist, a position practiced widely in international health care but just emerging as an advanced nursing role in the United States. As such, Harwood acts as the first and last person many family medicine patients see in the hospital, admitting them in the emergency room, facilitating their admission into the proper unit and, upon discharge, providing them with the education they need to care for them-

selves. This quicker admission, better education and consistency of care is meant to improve patient satisfaction, shorten length of stay and reduce rates of readmission. Eventually, Harwood hopes to follow patients throughout their entire stay in the hospital, offering complete care. "I hope to teach my students what a difference a good nurse can make in a patient's life," she says of her medical surgical nursing students.

Complete care is also a primary concern for Waldrop. She cares for children in the general pediatrics clinic at UNC Healthcare and teaches nurse practitioner students about pediatric care at the School of Nursing. Many of the patients she sees are on Medicaid, which presents a host of challenges. Waldrop says she deals with these challenges by not only treating her patients' current ills, but also by educating them for the long run. "My primary goal is to facilitate complete care of patients, not just treating their chief complaints, but getting to know them and working with them on a long-term basis to ensure that they develop healthy habits and choices in life," she says.

*Leading to the Next Frontiers of Nursing Research***Genetics**

When many people think of genetics, they often think of controversial cloning research. What Professors **Dennis Cheek** and **Marcia Van Riper** want people to think of is basic nursing care. As newly appointed School of Nursing professors and Carolina Center for Genome Sciences researchers, they believe genetics can revolutionize the field of nursing.

“The patient of the new millennium will be turning to the nurse at the bedside for their counsel and expertise with regard to genetics and its impact upon them and their family,” explains Cheek, who teaches undergraduate pathophysiology and graduate pharmacology at the School. His work in genetics is bench-based, focusing on the relationship between gender and the development of cardiovascular disease. Grants from the American Heart Association and the National Institute of Nursing Research are allowing him to study the effects sex hormones have on the ability of cardiac endothelial cells (the lining of blood vessels) to regulate blood flow.

Van Riper, a pediatric and family nursing professor at the School, is studying a more social aspect of genetics: how families define and manage the ethical issues that emerge during genetic testing. During her nearly 30-year career spent working with children with Down syndrome and their families, Van Riper has become increasingly aware of how dramatically the lives of individuals and patients can be altered when they undergo prenatal screening for genetic conditions. “The most important thing I have learned in my research is that nurses and other health care professionals have the power to set the tone for those initial few weeks or months following awareness of a diagnosis,” she says. “One nurse can turn a potentially negative experience into a positive, growth producing experi-

ence. Nurses have the power to help families heal and grow.” Van Riper plans to serve as an Ethics Fellow in the inaugural Institute for Arts and Humanities Ethics Fellowship program this fall.

**Underserved Women's Health**

Though women's health care is an established field of study in nursing, the women who do not receive regular care due to economic or cultural barriers are often overlooked in research. Professors **Noreen Esposito** and **Pamela Pletsch** are both working to push the boundaries of women's health research through working specifically with underserved groups.

“North Carolina's health care system is challenged in trying to meet the needs of underserved minorities such as African-Americans, Spanish-speaking immigrants or ‘invisible’ groups such as drug users or sexual assault victims,” says Esposito, who is currently engaged in a study on women drug users and post-sexual assault care funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse. “I hope to provide my women's health nurse practitioner students and other health care professionals with new insight into the unique needs, experiences and health of underserved women, and I hope to widen student interest in theoretical and intervention issues regarding marginalization, access to care and violence against women.”

Pletsch, who teaches undergraduate and graduate classes about culturally competent care and practice guidelines, says she is working to help students develop skills to work with people from various cultural, ethnic and economic groups. Two studies she is working on now focus on effective smoking cessation strategies for women and the special health needs of women who have HIV/AIDS. “I hope to improve the quality of health care that women

receive and make recommendations about skills that providers need to develop and interventions that providers can use to improve the health care received by women.”

**Policy Development**

Over half the nursing home population in the United States is incontinent, making the problem a public health issue in the eyes of Professor **Mary H. Palmer**, the School's first Helen Watkins and Thomas Leonard Umphlet distinguished professor in aging. Her more than 20 years of research and policy experience in the area has shown her that nurses can act more proactively in preventing and treating the condition, and she hopes her latest project, a two-day conference on urinary incontinence, will go far in proving that. Created in collaboration with researchers from the Center for Continence and Pelvic Health at the University of Pennsylvania and the editor-in-chief of the *American Journal of Nursing*, the conference will bring together academic, research, government and industry nursing leaders this summer to develop research priorities and clinical care and policy recommendations to address the prevention, treatment and management of urinary incontinence.

What ultimately drives Palmer's work, though, like her fellow new faculty members, is the ability to change others' lives for the better.

“Nursing blends the art of tender loving care with the rigorous pursuit and application of knowledge. The discovery of effective clinical practices, the prevention of prevalent conditions and the improvement of quality of care—who could ask for a more exciting career or a more enriching life?” ■

*“One nurse can turn a potentially negative experience into a positive, growth producing experience. Nurses have the power to help families heal and grow.”*

DR. MARCIA VAN RIPER

# The Price is Right for Three SON Students



Anastasia Masino, Ashley Hutchins and Liz Koch spent their spring break in California shopping, sightseeing, going to clubs and—oh, yeah—guessing the right price for toilet bowl cleaners. The three senior BSN students attended a taping of *The Price Is Right* on March

14, sporting Carolina blue t-shirts and crossing their fingers that Rod would call for their names to “come on down.” Although they were never selected from the audience at-large, it was exciting just to be there, the students said. “This was a dream come true for me,” said Masino.

“My grandfather and I used to watch *The Price Is Right* everyday when I was a little girl, so attending the show made me feel like I was right there with him again.” The students also managed to stop by the Golden Gate Bridge during their trip, as seen here.

## *SON Students Network and Learn at ANS Conference*

*The Alumni Association awarded scholarships to SON students Danner Chambliss, Dargan Gilmore, Kirsten Fridlund and April McDuffie to attend the 2001 North Carolina Association of Nursing Students conference in High Point last October. The students thanked the Association for sponsoring them, and here are excerpts from those letters.*



Thank you so much for sponsoring the Association of Nursing Students to go to the State Convention. We met nursing students from all over North Carolina

who will be our future colleagues at work, and we met representatives from hospitals, schools and clinics all over North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia who were recruiting new grads for their programs. It was a great experience. . . .



This was a great opportunity to further explore the “world of nursing” and also the different aspects colleges incorporate into the study of nursing. Not only did the sessions present a great learning opportunity, but discussing both current concerns and future plans with fellow nursing students allowed

me to see that everyone is dealing with the same excitement and uncertainty as I am.



It was encouraging to me to see the many schools that were represented and the amount of students that are active in their ANS chapter. I hope that each year our representation will only increase at the state and hopefully national convention. I am so thankful for being given the opportunity to expand the knowledge of nursing beyond the classrooms at UNC. The support of the Alumni Association made this a wonderful experience.

## CE Sponsors Conference Featuring Lt. Governor

Alzheimer's disease is a growing health concern for the nation's aging population. It's estimated that four million Americans currently have the disease, and the number is projected to increase to 14 million by the year 2050. In order to address this growing health concern, the School's Department of Continuing Education teamed up with the

Eastern NC Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association to co-sponsor the Sixth Annual Conference on Dementia in November. The Honorable Beverly Perdue, lieutenant governor of NC, spoke on state and governmental guidance in promoting the best practice in Alzheimer's care.

"Lieutenant Governor Perdue

understands the distress of Alzheimer's on both the patient and the family," said Dr. Barbara Jo Foley, CE director. "She was able to convey that in a very caring way and it was so uplifting to the audience to know that someone in her position understands and is advocating for them."

## SON in the News: January–March, 2002

### Linda Brown, professor

University News Briefs, "Twenty Faculty Get Teaching Awards," *Chapel Hill News*, March 3, 2002

Feature article, "2002 Teaching Awards Announced," *University Gazette*, March 6, 2002

### Linda Cronenwett, dean

Feature article, "New Focus on Private Funding," *Daily Tar Heel*, January 28, 2002

Feature article, "Nursing Education 2002: The Nursing Faculty Shortage," NurseZone.com

### Leslie Davis, professor

Feature article, "Hope for Heart Failure: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: Combining Forces in Heart Failure and Electrophysiology," *MD News*, Triangle edition, February 2002 issue

### Molly Dougherty, professor

**Subject: Urinary Incontinence in Rural Older Women**

Interview, *Report on Medical Guidelines and Outcomes*, February 18, 2002

Feature article, "Study Increases Awareness of Incontinence," *Coding and Reimbursement for Urology*, March 2002 issue

Many of the School's faculty and students were called on to share their expertise and accomplishments with the press this spring.

### Carol Durham, professor

**Subject: SON human patient simulators**

Photograph, *University Gazette*, January 23, 2002

Interview, WTVD-TV, February 7, 2002

Front page photograph, *Chapel Hill Herald*, February 8, 2002

Interview, North Carolina News Network, February 9-11, 2002

Interview, WRAL-TV, February 15, 2002

Interview, WNCN-TV, February 18, 2002 (Sherry Dumas also interviewed)

News brief, *Advance for Nurses*, Carolinas/Georgia edition, March 4, 2002

### Carol Durham and Judy Miller, professors

**Subject: SON human patient simulators**

Feature article, "Smart Man Helps Teach Student Nurses," *Raleigh News & Observer*, February 8, 2002 (This article was distributed nationwide by the Associated Press.)

Feature article, "Stan Starts Career at Nursing School," *Daily Tar Heel*, February 8, 2002

Feature story, *Carolina Week* TV Show, February 13, 2002

Feature article, "UNC's Newest Nursing Instructor Is No Dummy," *Charlotte Observer*, March 4, 2002

### Theresa Raphael-Grimm, professor

Feature article, "Seniors Teach Lessons from Lives," *Chapel Hill Herald*, February 6, 2002

### Barbara Mark, professor

News brief, "Study to look at nurse staffing implications for patient care," AHAnews.com and AONE e-Newsletter, March 21 and 22, 2002

News brief, *Legislative Network for Nurses*, March 25, 2002

Interview, North Carolina News Network, March 26-27, 2002