

# UIC COLLEGE OF NURSING

## Urban Health Program

### Celebrating New Beginnings & Great Accomplishments

#### *Much-Deserved Recognition for Hard Work at the College of Nursing and Beyond*

**Dr. Janice Phillips, PhD (Alumnus)** will be receiving the Nurse Researcher of the Year Award at the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual National Black Nurses Association Conference in Indianapolis, IN in July 2011.

**Jennifer Baxter, PhD student**, received 3<sup>rd</sup> place for her poster, *Recovering from caring: Examining interventions for nurses exposed to trauma in the workplace*, at the 2010 International Association of Forensic Nurses Scientific Assembly in Pittsburgh, PA. She also passed her preliminary exam for PhD candidacy in March 2011.

**Elaine Hardy, PhD student**, won first place at the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Nursing Research Society Conference in March 2011. Elaine presented on: *The influence of social support and neighborhood factors on physical activity in midlife African American women*.



Elaine Hardy receives first place at MNRS.

**Olga Lazala, PhD Student**, presented a poster on *Obstetric hemorrhage: Thinking outside the drill*, at the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses National Conference in September 2010.

**Leslie Moore, Master's student**, received the Boothroyd Scholarship and was elected the Graduate Admissions Representative for the CON Graduate Student Organization for the 2011-2012 academic year.

**Jason Simmons, Graduate Entry Program Student**, received the 2011 UIC Chancellor's Student Services Award for his outstanding service to the CON and UIC Community.

Congratulations to all UHP students who celebrated their 2011 Graduate Entry Program Completion! These students will begin their Masters studies in Nursing in Fall 2011:

- Miriam Correa**, Adult Geriatric
- Jennifer Jaume**, Nurse Midwifery
- James Simmons**, Acute Care

### Congratulations to 2011 UHP Graduates

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#### Doctoral & Professional Degrees

- Elaine Hardy, PhD
- Monique Reed, PhD
- Sylvia Crawford, DNP
- Rosalia Gonzalez, DNP

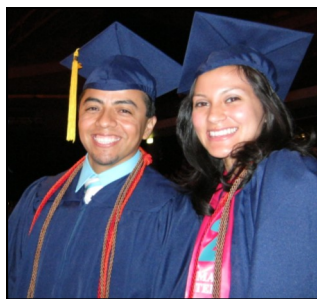
#### Post-Masters Certificates

- Consuelo Fuentes
- Ursula Garcia
- Leslie Sanchez

#### Masters of Nursing

- Claudine Atibalentja, MSN
- Robert Cortez, MSN
- Anita Howard, MSN
- Patricia Mack, MSN
- Alicia Marques, MSN
- Sylvia Perez, MSN
- Chastity Quinn, MSN
- Carla Thomas Russell, MSN
- Keionna Walker, MSN
- Lassie Walker, MSN

- Shanita Webb, MSN
  - Kathryn Workheiser, MSN
- #### Bachelors of Nursing



BSN graduates Fernando Velasquez & Olivia Trujillo.

- Danea Atkins, BSN
- Abiodun Atomori, BSN
- Stacey Bailey, BSN
- Teranika Campbell, BSN
- Martha Contreras, BSN

- Ugochinyere Evulukwu, BSN
- Daisy Fernandez, BSN
- Marjori Freire, BSN
- Vanessa Garland, BSN
- Victoria Huerta, BSN
- Alejandro Najera, BSN
- Patience Obazuaye, BSN
- Arriel Phillips, BSN
- Claudia Soto, BSN
- Olivia Trujillo, BSN
- Nightingale Uchtmann, BSN
- Kristina Valencia, BSN
- Rey Vela, BSN
- Fernando Velasquez, BSN
- Lanisha Yates, BSN
- Emelia Appiagyei, RN-BSN
- Isoken Ogbomo, RN-BSN
- Lynn H. Bochlas, RN-to-BSN
- Ceres Kangou, RN-to-BSN
- Marthe Ngongang, RN-BSN

## Real Men Do Nurse, By: Gillian Brantigam

This Spring the Urban Health Program sponsored a workshop called “Real Men Do Nurse,” featuring a panel of male nurses who shared their personal experiences in the field of nursing. All four panelists were alumni of the UIC CON, spanning various levels of practice. Dr. Kamal Eldeirawi, an assistant nursing professor in the Department of Health Systems Science, has a masters in nursing and received his PhD in Public Health from UIC in 2006. Rhys Gibson graduated from UIC with a BSN in 2009 and Kerem Korkmaz graduated with his BSN in 2006. Juan Mercado graduated from UIC’s Family Nurse Practitioner program in 2010. The panelists offered a representative sample spanning care areas, including telemetry and geriatric psychiatry, as well as medical home management. Rhys Gibson kicked off the event by offering basic facts about the nursing workforce including the fact that only 5-6% of the 3.1 million RN’s right now are male.

***“It is not about being a male, it is about having the education.”***

Rhys explained that he was first exposed to the field of nursing when he saw a nurse practitioner after a biking accident and he realized that “this is the career of a lifetime, an opportunity to delve into studies of mind, body and spirit and learn how to be a better healer as well as a better person.” Dr. Eldeirawi entered the field of nursing in his home country of Palestine and actually fought an uphill battle to join the field in a place where more men than women are nurses. He worked as both a clinician and clinical instructor before returning to school to get his doctorate. He explained that “Nursing has been a very rewarding job, giving me the flexibility that I need.” Juan Mercado started his career as an accountant in Durango, Mexico after his hopes to become a teacher were shot down by gender conflicts in his home country. He later moved to the U.S. and eventually switched to the field of healthcare as a medical assistant. However, he quickly continued on with his education to become a nurse, then an NP and is now in the DNP program at UIC. Mercado reflected on this when he said, “It is not about being a male, it is about having the education.” He emphasized that, “promoting our profession is



**Spring panelists from L to R. Dr. Kamal Eldeirawi, PhD, RN, Rhys Gibson, RN, BSN, Juan Mercado, RN, MSN, Kerem Korkmaz, RN, BSN.**

the most important thing.” Kerem was born in Turkey and migrated to the U.S. He graduated from UIC with his first bachelor’s in psychology; throughout college he worked at Lutheran General Hospital, first in the cafeteria “scooping mashed potatoes, running trays and washing dishes,” as he put it. The flexibility of this job allowed him to continue working throughout college and offered a “foot in the door” to a career in healthcare. Eventually he graduated to become a mental health counselor at Lutheran General, but when he was not fulfilled by this path, he decided to return to UIC for a BSN. He now works as a telemetry nurse and is also a board member for the Organization for Haitian Development and Progress; he also traveled to Haiti to provide support after the earthquake.

When asked what having more men in the field of nursing will do to alter the discipline, Rhys Gibson explained that a more diverse nursing workforce will be able to better meet the needs of patients. This is true for minorities as well Gibson explained, “you get better care with a diverse representation of the nurse population” that can match the population for which they are caring. Most panelists agreed that having more male nurses is one of the best methods to attract more men into nursing. Even starting at an early age, in elementary or high school, male nurses could go out into the community and serve as change agents and examples. They could inspire young men to join the field. Kerem noted, “I would like to think that we will see a cultural shift...where it is more welcoming to men.” He emphasized the importance of having more male nurses in practice to serve as an example, “It won’t be Nurse Betty at the bedside anymore. People will

actually be able to see a shift.”

Audience members included UIC students, faculty and staff, as well as community members interested in learning more about the benefits and challenges of being a male in the nursing profession. One audience member had been a long-time teacher with no experience in healthcare and he sought the panelists’ advice on how to make a switch into the field of nursing, while maintaining support for his family.

A brazen young audience member mustered the courage to ask whether nurses really do more work than doctors. Kerem and Juan agreed that nursing is a more physical profession than medicine. Rhys added that “it is a labor of love” and “It’s exciting! Nurses get to be there [at the bedside] and know the patient.” Kamal changed the tone a bit, reflecting that “you can be both a doctor and nurse” but “what matters most is that you work with passion, work with care and you do what you like.”



**Panelists offered their first-hand accounts and experiences as male nurses.**

The content was not simply limited to advancing the number of men in nursing, but improving the profession broadly. Dr. Eldeirawi advised participants of the possibility to “combine nursing with other things. That may give you an edge over other graduates.” Rhys Gibson’s words captured the inspirational tone of the workshop:

**“If anyone ever talks to you about money or about why are you are doing it. I tell people straight up, ‘This is what moves me. This is what’s dear to me.’ It’s really about what’s dear to you and you finding yourself in the field.”**

**To view a copy of the DVD from this event, email Charese Jackson at [cjacks4@uic.edu](mailto:cjacks4@uic.edu).**



## Nurses Mentoring Exchange Update

*Alumnus Phyllis Pelt offers her advice to the NME, By: Gillian Brautigam*

**Phyllis Pelt,  
MS, RN**

Phyllis Pelt, an alumnus and retiree of UIC came back to join us for the NME meetings this Spring. While at the College of Nursing, Pelt was the Director of the School Nurse Certificate Program and the Urban Health Program liaison for her department. But as Pelt told us with a smile, she failed Retirement 101 and now works at Rush as a nurse interventionalist on a \$3.5 million research project, The Woman's Walking Program, for African American Women between the ages of 40 and 65.

### "The Importance of Utilizing Your Resources: Collective IQ"

At NME's first quarterly meeting of 2011, she spoke to us about "The Importance of Utilizing Your Resources: Collective IQ." Together with Pelt, the attendees of the meeting brainstormed a list of valuable resources that we have tapped during our time as students, nurses and in other spheres of our lives, in order to achieve greater success. We

pooled our "Collective IQ" to create a list of resources that included everyone from the nursing liaison at UIC's Library of Health Sciences, Rebecca Raszewski, to the Assistant Director at the Office of Career Services, Jaime Velasquez. The list also included UIC's own Chicago Partnership for Health Promotion and the City of Chicago Central West Regional Senior Center, both right here in the same neighborhood as UIC. This exercise provided us with an invaluable list of resources and some fresh new energy to go out and broaden our own nursing networks. "You are always on. If you are outside of the house then you are on," said Pelt as she explained that nearly every interaction, whether social or professional, can serve as a networking opportunity. "Networking is crucial," she stated simply.

Ms. Pelt brought a wealth of knowledge from her vast experience as an intensive care nurse, school nurse and researcher. She also shared vivid stories from her days as a military nurse during the Vietnam

War. She shared her personal adventure of re-entering school as a master's nursing student and adult learner at UIC as she explained that her daughter was her greatest resource, helping her to navigate the new technology at the time. Ms. Pelt also shared her infectious passion for nursing, healthcare and research.

As the meeting came to a close, she shared her business cards with us and imparted a final piece of advice, "Create and carry a business card." She emphasized that even as nursing students and young nurses we should view ourselves as valuable resources; a business card is the portable method of sharing our contact information with others as we broaden our networks.

### "What is Your Preferred Leadership Style?" - The Change Style Indicator

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, Phyllis joined the NME again for an interactive presentation to help members determine their preferred leadership style. Each attendee was able to take *Discovery Learning's* "Change Style Indicator" as-

essment to determine whether she is a conservator, pragmatist or originator, with regard to leadership style.

Ms. Pelt then challenged us by asking, "How are you going to use your preferred or comfortable leadership style to make a difference and work together?" She suggested that "what you want to do when you are in a group is make the leadership style work for the common goal of the group" and that "you will find yourself shifting a little bit depending on the situation you find yourself in."

Drawing on her own experience, Ms. Pelt suggested that the Change Style Indicator is a good tool to use when a group is formed but there is limited time to determine each member's leadership style. It is a simple tool to facilitate more efficient teamwork.

This exercise provided NME members with insight into their own strengths and weaknesses as leaders and offered information on how to emphasize their strengths as individuals, who will direct positive change in the field of healthcare.

## Nurses Mentoring Exchange (NME)

The NME provides students with an outlet to share their experiences and connect with others who have diverse and similar interests. The program serves as an *exchange* to provide information and resources that will help them navigate the CON and the nursing profession as a whole. Faculty and alumni are encouraged to participate and serve as a support to students who aspire to become faculty or nurse researchers. The next NME meeting will be held:

**Monday, September 12, 2011**

**12:00-1:00 P.M.**

**CON Room 615**

Email: [cjacks4@uic.edu](mailto:cjacks4@uic.edu) for more information

## 2011 Minority Health in the Midwest Conference 3rd Annual UIC School of Public Health Conference

By: James Simmons, GEP Student



The UIC School of Public Health (SPH) hosted its annual Minority Health in the Midwest Conference on Friday, February 25th at the SPH. The conference, entitled “The Promise of Health Equity: Advancing the Discussion to Eliminate Disparities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” was held in conjunction with the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual Minority Health Conference at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Gillings School of Global Public Health. As a nursing student in the UIC College of Nursing’s Graduate Entry Program (GEP), it is crucial to understand the health care challenges faced by patients in our direct care, as well as on a macro-environmental level. This conference provided a first-hand understanding of what public health professionals are doing to improve the health of various minority communities in Chicago and beyond.

Dr. Linda Rae Murray, Chief Medical Officer of the Cook County Department of Public Health and Cook County Health & Hospital System and current President of the American Public Health Association, was the opening keynote speaker. Dr. Murray praised the audience for their continued commitment to eliminating health disparities in our own communities, as well as globally. She also challenged attendees to find new and creative ways to increase

access to healthcare for underserved populations.

Conference participants had the opportunity to network with other healthcare professionals and receive specialized education through focused learning sessions. Breakout topics included community-based interventions, women’s-health disparities and building the minority health professional pipeline, among others. I attended the session on community-based interventions and was truly inspired by the work that professionals are doing in their communities. This session included presentations on treating de-

*“Dr. Murray praised the audience for their continued commitment to eliminating health disparities in our own communities and globally.”*

pression in the elderly Latino community of Milwaukee, engaging the faith community to participate in community health improvement planning on Chicago’s south side and new HIV/AIDS prevention initiatives targeted at youth in the Humboldt Park area.

Participants were also treated to a lunch-

eon keynote address via webcast by Dr. Bonnie Duran, director of the Center of Indigenous Health Research at the University of Washington School of Public Health. Following the address, a lively panel of public health leaders presented their ideas for eliminating health disparities and entertained questions from the audience.

The conference was organized and sponsored by UIC Minority Students for the Advancement of Public Health, the UIC Urban Health Program and the UIC School of Public Health. For more information on this conference and other opportunities through the UIC School of Public Health, visit [www.uic.edu/sph](http://www.uic.edu/sph).



**The UIC School of Public Health and the UIC College of Nursing offer a joint degree program leading to a Master of Science (MS) in Nursing with specialization in public health nursing and the Master of Public Health (MPH) with specialization in community health.**

## Presenting Our Research:

### 35th Annual Midwest Nursing Research Society Conference

By: Elizabeth Florez, MSN, RN

In March I attended the Midwest Nursing Research Society’s (MNRS) 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Columbus, Ohio. This conference was different from others I have attended in the past because I was a first time attendee and because this was the first poster presentation I had done at a conference.

Upon arriving, I was surprised by the number of University of Illinois students and faculty present at the conference. Several of our faculty and even a student were presented with awards at this confer-

ence. This made me very proud to be part of such a recognized university.

Oral and poster presentations were done on a diverse set of topics, creating an environment that engaged participants regardless of whether the topic directly related to their own area of research. Despite the fact that I was well-prepared for the poster presentation, I still felt nervous. Unfortunately, my presentation time was limited due to the large volume of poster presentations. I did not have a chance to speak to many people individually, regard-

ing my research. But I learned a great deal from this experience. The next time I present my research at a conference I will try to engage more people in conversation regarding my presentation, and I will actively encourage them to ask questions.

Attending the Midwest Nursing Research Society (MNRS) conference was a great learning experience for me to build my networking and presentation skills. This was my first presentation of many to come, so I am glad that I was able to learn from this experience.

## Sullivan High School Sophomores Shadow at UIC College of Nursing



Left to Right: Sullivan High School sophomores Esperanza Sandoval, Lizette Aparicio, Paola Trujillio.

On March 10th, three students from Chicago’s Sullivan High School came to the College of Nursing to shadow current nursing students in their classes and learn what it is that nurses really do.

Each high schooler was paired with a UIC student whom they accompanied to classes so that they could get a first-hand glimpse into the real rigors of nursing school. As evidenced in their responses below, this short experience in nursing school offered these three young women an opportunity to alter their preconceived notions. It also inspired them to consider the field of nursing as a challenging profession. They were intrigued by the challenging medical terms that nurses are required to learn. The experience broadened their horizons beyond science, into the legal aspects of nursing as well. The Urban Health Program is proud to sponsor opportunities like this one.

*“I learned that they have amazing jobs because they get to know their patients and become like a friend to them.”*



Paola Trujillio

UIC College of Nursing to me, was one of all those other Universities or Colleges. I thought that the things it had to offer were the same as any other University. The experience I had during my job shadow

completely changed the way I thought of UIC. I experienced new things, such as getting the opportunity to be in a Nursing class. I learned so many new things that I had not even heard about. My first class was so interesting. I thought it was a really great benefit for students to learn about the legal part of becoming a nurse, and not just all the science stuff.

I also learned that people should not believe everything they see or hear on television because they don’t give nurses enough credit for what they do. They just put them as “a pretty face that tries to help out,” and the truth is, that they can do so much more. Nurses are people who really care for their patients. They are the ones who are going to be there for them, who are going to make a connection with them. Nurses do so much more than what people think of them. At UIC I learned that nurses can go into many different things. They can do so much. The job shadow that I experienced today was one of those moments that I know I’m not going to forget. I thought it was a great experience and thanks to this day, I am starting to think about becoming a nurse and coming to UIC. Thank you to all the people I had the chance to talk to during this great experience; and thank you, Charese Jackson.

*“I thought that nurses only had to take blood pressure, but now I know they do more than that.”*



Esperanza Sandoval

I am very glad that I had the opportunity to come to the UIC College of Nursing. Thank you because this was a very interesting day. I thought

that nurses only had to take blood pressures, but now I know they do more than that. They interact with patients unlike doctors, who only walk in and out. I also learned that there are different types of nurses.

What I like about UIC is that it has a whole building just for nursing, unlike other colleges that share a building. I also like the lab. It is so big and it has most of the things you would find in a hospital. One thing that I didn’t like was that the teachers go fast through the notes. When I would finish a sentence, she was already on to the next thing. I also didn’t like the fact that the classes are very long. Once again, thanks for the opportunity. I truly enjoyed spending the day at the UIC College of Nursing.



Lizette Aparicio

My experience in the College of Nursing at UIC was really interesting because I learned a lot of different things that nurses do.

At first, before coming here, I thought that nurses would only clean up after patients or just give the doctor different instruments while doing an operation. Even though that’s true, I learned that they have amazing jobs because they get to know their patients and become like a friend to them. I also learned that they have to learn really long medical terminology. At first I didn’t consider becoming a nurse, but after this day, I think it would be an amazing job to have. Of course I would consider coming to UIC for the College of Nursing. I thank everyone at UIC for letting me have this job shadow opportunity.

## Exposure Makes the Difference: UHP Recruitment Initiative



GEP student Laura Cailler demonstrates use of the Peak flow meter.

How else do you dispel the myth that all nurses do is “take your temperature and tell you that the doctor will be right with you?” The CON-UHP realizes that while the nursing profession has the reputation of being the most trusted, on the cutting edge of research, and the most demanding of the health professions, we always have to be ready to educate prospective students (and the public) on what nursing is and how to navigate the career paths the profession offers.

Our recruitment strategy is to engage those who have a minimal interest in nursing, and get them to see the rigors and the rewards of becoming a nurse. This past semester, our very own CON students greatly assisted UHP in pounding the pavement to provide education about nursing programs. They offered hands-on opportunities to middle, high school, and college students, sharing their own experiences as nursing students. Here are a few of their stories...

### Homewood Flossmoor Career Day: By Jamie Henry, GEP student

As a graduate of Homewood-Flossmoor High School and current UIC nursing student, I was excited for the opportunity to return to the H-F Career Fair to speak with students about their futures. It was clear that many of the younger students had not been asked

about their futures. This career fair allowed for those questions and thoughts to be explored. At our booth, students were drawn in by dramatic images of immunization-preventable diseases. This instigated the discussion of how healthcare and availability of care varies throughout the world, as well as the nurses who play a vital role in helping those in need.



UHP Health Professions Conference Nursing Student Volunteers, Left to Right: Ugochinyere Evulukwu, Isha Patel, Vanessa Garland, Jason Immertru, Giny Edakkunnathu, Krystal Maher, Claudia Soto, Jennifer Okonma, Krishna Patel, Wamaitha Sullivan, James Simmons, Irene Cheung, Ariel Phillips, Bhumika Gor.

The students were engaged in learning about the male role in nursing, the need for minority group representation and the vast variety of fields nursing has to offer. Students were encouraged to look to the UHP for support in making



Jamie Henry explores nursing with a high school student at the Homewood Flossmoor Career Fair

the decision to delve into nursing, whether through mentor-

ing and advising, or funding. The experience was an empowering one simply because I could see the students engaging in their future and starting the first of many important conversations. The UHP was one of five nursing booths at the career fair, but was the only one invested in educational support of students rather than recruitment. Our table was about changing opinions, chal-

CON early that Saturday morning to inspire students about opportunities specific to the field of nursing. A group of BSN students from the Urbana-Champaign campus even drove up to join us.

*“Our UHP table was about changing opinions, challenging misconceptions and encouraging underrepresented students to explore the wonderful field of nursing”*

Students rotated through multiple stations learning the importance of infection control and hand washing, the proper technique for donning personal protective equipment, how to take one’s blood pressure and also how to assess a patient’s lung sounds. This event offered a great opportunity to introduce young students to the field of nursing and show them some of the skills that



A middle school student dons his mask, gown and gloves as he learns about infection control precautions, first-hand.

lenging misconceptions and encouraging underrepresented students to explore the wonderful field that is nursing.

### Annual UHP Health Professions Conference: By Gillian Brautigam, GEP Student

On April 9th, UIC’s Urban Health Program hosted the Student Health Professions Conference, to introduce middle and high school students to various career opportunities in healthcare including medicine, nursing, dentistry, physical therapy, etc. More than 300 middle and high school students came to UIC to learn about careers in the health professions.

A crew of BSN and graduate nursing students came to the

nurses must master. Students enjoyed the interactive activities we provided and enjoyed the chance to apply their newly acquired nursing skills right there, putting on personal protective equipment or testing their friend’s blood pressure.

## Exposure Makes the Difference (Cont.)

### H.O.L.A. Comes to the College of Nursing



UIC undergraduates from H.O.L.A. with students and staff at the CON.

H.O.L.A., the Health Oriented Latino Association, is an undergraduate student organization at UIC that aims to provide encouragement and support to students of Latino and non-Latino origins, interested in achieving a career in the health sciences. About 10 H.O.L.A. members paid the CON a visit this Spring, and although not all of them were interested in the nursing profession, they were eager to explore what the college and profession have to offer. During their time at the CON, Joanna Maravilla, Scholarship Coordinator, was able to talk extensively about the scholarship opportunities. She emphasized the importance of applying earlier so that students might be given greater consideration. Charese Jackson highlighted the



UIC BSN seniors demonstrate the proper technique for "gowning and gloving" to teach infection control.

benefits of participating in the Urban Health Program, including advising, academic support, and professional development opportunities. Charese stressed the importance of taking advantage of the CON Information Sessions and familiarizing themselves with the application process. Finally, Gillian Brautigam, GEP student, spoke about her experiences and explained why she chose to pursue nursing. "I was initially a pre-med student but I did not quite feel I belonged in the medical profession. I knew that building rela-



Crane High School students pose with their instructors in the Clinical Lab after rotating through hands-on stations to learn about the field of nursing.

tionships with patients was the aspect of healthcare that appealed to me most. There is a fundamental difference between the theory of nursing and medicine in that nursing takes a more holistic approach to the patient. This became clear when I started nursing school and worked closely with patients in the hospital." She then facilitated a brief tour of the Clinical Skills lab and explained wound care using simulated models. Students left intrigued and informed about the field of nursing

One student confessed that while he still was not sure he would pursue nursing, he would definitely pass on the information to his sister who is in high school and aspires to be a nurse.

### Dunbar and Crane High Schools Come to UIC

Students from UIC College Prep, and the Medical and Health Careers Academy of Dunbar Vocational and Crane High Schools also visited the CON during the month of April, to participate in programs similar to the Annual UHP Health Professions Conference. The young students were excited to be engaged in many hands-on activities which ranged from infectious disease control to wound care to cardiopulmonary resuscitation. A



High school students practice lung sounds at UHP's Health Professions Conference.

onstrations and gave mini lectures on relevant topics such as hypertension, physical assessment, and heart/lung sounds. Faculty and staff also joined to discuss the many career opportunities in nursing and the admissions process.

total of 115 students rotated through various stations in the Clinical Skills Lab. About half of these students indicated that they were interested in nursing and would investigate the career opportunities further. Several GEP and BSN students helped by facilitating the clinical dem-



Senior BSN Rachel Sonstegaard Teaches a Crane High School student how to do CPR.



Many thanks to all who assisted the CON-UHP during the 2010-2011 school year!

Your service and dedication are truly appreciated!

Share your passion for nursing!  
To volunteer email [cjacks4@uic.edu](mailto:cjacks4@uic.edu).



## Five Days at the American Public Health Association Conference

By: Sally Berko, RN, MSN/MPH Candidate

Because of my participation in the pre-matriculation program at the UIC School of Public Health (SPH) over the summer of 2010, I heard faculty, students, and alumni from the SPH share one important piece of advice over and over: "Make sure to attend APHA!"

APHA is an acronym for the American Public Health Association, and every year, APHA hosts a prolific and exciting conference. I decided to attend this conference because, as a new MSN/MPH graduate student and recent BSN graduate, I wanted to learn about all of the exciting research topics and career prospects that blend nursing and global public health issues, as well as network with professionals in the field of global health. This year, the conference was held in Denver, Colorado, and the theme was both eye-catching and stirring, "Social Justice, A Public Health Imperative."



This conference gathered together about 12,000 public health professionals of many callings: nurses, physicians, epidemiologists, public health directors, public health workers, and graduate students. There were over 4,000 scientific sessions, as well as thousands of poster sessions, with topics ranging from health disparities, global health, maternal and child health, environmental and occupational public health issues, transportation and public health issues, faith based public health research, and many more. There was also an exciting public

health expo, with hundreds of booths that dispersed information on accredited public health graduate programs, companies that publish public health textbooks, government agencies, as well as not-for-profit public health agencies.

My initial exploration of APHA began with the student assembly meeting. The meeting was a day-long conference that included exciting panel discussions with top public health experts on topics ranging from transportation safety to global health.

*"Several hundred people clapped, stood up, shouted, and left the room with a newfound vigor to fight the good fight of ending health disparities and pursuing equity in public health!"*

There was also a speed mentoring session, for people who wanted to network with public health professionals. Overall it was a great introduction to the conference. The next day was the actual start of the entire conference, and it began with opening ceremonies. Several public health experts spoke, including Dr. Howard Koh, Assistant Secretary for Health from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and Congresswoman Lois Capps from California. Representative Capps has been a nurse for over twenty years, and along with Senator Chris Dodd, won APHA's distinguished honor of Legislator of the Year. We also had the pleasure of listening to an exciting and fiery talk by Dr. Cornel West, of Yale University, and Dr. Bill Jenkins of More-

house College. They encouraged us to pursue social justice, even when it is not convenient, even when it makes us uncomfortable. The auditorium of several hundred people clapped, stood up, shouted, and left the room with a newfound vigor to fight the good fight of ending health disparities and pursuing equity in public health! Some people I spoke with said that in all of their years of attending APHA, they had never witnessed such a vigorous and spirited opening ceremony!

Over the course of the next three days, I attended many sessions on a variety of topics including public health nursing, global health, maternal and child health research in low resource global settings like Togo, Malawi, and Ghana, health disparities among Canadian people of color, and faith-based HIV prevention research. I also took part in meetings held by the Black Caucus of Health Workers at APHA, and attended the Public Health Expo, where I observed and discussed research findings in poster sessions by public health graduate students and professionals. I also had the opportunity to network and have a great time at UIC School of Public Health's Healthy Spirits reception. It was one of many receptions across downtown Denver hosted by graduate schools like University of Michigan, Harvard University, and University of North Carolina, to give their alumni, faculty, and students in attendance at the conference, a chance to gather in a relaxing environment and socialize.

As if that wasn't enough excitement, I also attended the Black Caucus of Health Work-

ers' annual Hildrus Poindexter awards ceremony and gala event, where Dr. Bill Jenkins and Dr. Linda Rae Murray, President-Elect of APHA and adjunct faculty member at UIC School of Public Health, were in attendance. The gala served as a wonderful opportunity to meet, socialize, and network with other African American public health professionals and graduate students, and learn from each other.

Overall, I can now see why many people who I met at APHA are repeat attendees, year after year. It is a wonderful place to get reenergized and reconnected with our mission as health professionals, to network, socialize, and to learn from the ongoing public health research being conducted both in this country and all over the world.



**Chicago is hosting APHA's Midyear Meeting in June 2011! The meeting will focus on the Affordable Care Act and what it means for the future of public health, prevention and wellness. The meeting will provide a proactive forum to articulate a call to action.**

**June 23-25, 2011**

**For more information go to:  
<http://www.apha.org/Midyear/>**



## 59th Annual National Student Nurse's Association Convention

By: *Alexandro Najera, BSN*



Through-out the past school year I have been a member of the UIC Student Nurses' Association (SNA) and have consistently attended meetings and participated in SNA events. At the first meeting of UIC SNA last year, committees were formed to focus on certain activities. I jumped at the opportunity to be part of the Resolution Committee that would work on a proposal for presentation at the National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA) conference. This resolution is presented in a government forum known as the House of Delegates.

Before attending the conference, our resolution committee (consisting of five authors) spent extensive hours reading the research, writing and communicating with NSNA so as to meet the parameters of the proposal (I have to give much credit to Rachel Gowler who led the process). The proposal we chose was entitled, "In Support of Mandatory Nursing

Bedsides Handover on Inpatient Units." This proposal is a controversial one so we carefully prepared opposition research as well.

The interesting part began when we presented at the conference. At the House of Delegates, there is a delegate designated to present and vote on all proposals brought before the House (there were well over 500 delegates representing all states). I was an alternate delegate and attended all meetings that the primary delegate was unable to. Our initial presentation was presented with little debate because the President cut our time short. The next day was a different story, though.

When our proposal came up for discussion, I was the delegate in the House and so I helped present supporting research along with the other authors. As we anticipated, the issue was a contentious one. Debate went on for well over 15 minutes (the allotted time) and a motion was brought to end debate because many people felt strongly, either for or against the issue. The proposal failed to pass the

House by a slim margin of 5%.

Nevertheless, the preparation and proposal process was rewarding and I leaned much about nursing bedside hand-over. This experience also allowed me to actively participate in an interesting political process.

The proposal process took up the majority of our time, but I was fortunate to be able to attend numerous presentations as well. Presentation topics included, "The Role of Nurses in a Global Community," "Pharmacology Made Insanely Easy" and also a mini NCLEX review lasting 8 hours.

There were many opportunities to receive counseling on career advancement. There was a group of currently employed nurses who looked at my resume and cover letter to offer helpful suggestions. Lectures in this area included, "The Job Market for Nursing Students," "Career Fitness: Perspectives to Help You Prepare for the Real World," and "Landing the Right Job in the Current Market." There was an exhibit hall with recruiters from schools all

over the country. I am not currently planning to pursue a graduate degree, but this exposure opened my eyes to many opportunities. Now I am seriously considering returning to school within the next few years.

On the last day of the conference we had some free time so we went to Temple Square. This is the site of a beautiful Mormon temple which warranted many pictures. We also attended the ballet that evening. Salt Lake City is flanked on all sides by snow-capped mountains that added a pleasant aesthetic to the conference.

This conference was both a rewarding and informative experience. Many new horizons were revealed to me through exposure to nurses from diverse career paths. My stress level about how to find a job has also been reduced (but is still very high) thanks to the extensive career assistance we were provided. I would like to thank the Urban Health Program for their support of my attendance at the 59th Annual NSNA Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah.

## ~ Congratulations UHP Graduates: Class of 2011 ~



Doctoral students Elaine Hardy and Monique Reed.



BSN Graduates Left-Right: Alexandro Najera, Fernando Velasquez, Martha Contreras, Victoria Lopez, Neung Kwon, Daisy Fernandez



MSN Grad Keionna Walker.



MSN Grads Left-Right: Shanita Webb, Patricia Mack, Carla Russell



BSN graduates Marjorie Freire and Jamie Matthews.

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**Visit us on the Web:**

<http://www.uic.edu/nursing/prospectives/tudents/urbanhealth.shtml>

## Diversifying the Nursing Workforce

The mission of the University of Illinois at Chicago Urban Health Program (UHP) is to recruit, retain, and graduate underrepresented racial/ethnic minority students, specifically African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans, into the health professions. The UHP seeks to expand educational and research opportunities for these populations, at all academic levels (including pre-college students), in order to develop underrepresented racial/ethnic minority health care professionals, faculty and researchers with the goals of eliminating health disparities and advancing health equity. The College of Nursing UHP seeks to fulfill this mission by offering a variety of retention initiatives through academic and professional support.

## Upcoming UHP Activities & Events

**Seminars for Excellence in Nursing Sciences**  
College of Nursing, June 13 to July 14, 2011

**5th Annual Vive tu Vida Get Up! Get Moving!**  
**National Health Fair**  
Saturday, June 18, 2011 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
2210 West Pershing Road  
Chicago, Illinois

**Chicago Public Schools Summer Internship Program for High School Students**  
June 27, 2011 to July 29, 2011

**Sullivan Medical & Health Careers Academy Visit**  
Friday, July 1, 2011 from 10am-1pm

**Early Outreach Visit**  
Thursday, July 7, 2011 from 10am-1pm

**UIC College of Pharmacy Summer Pathways Program**  
**Careers in Nursing Presentation**  
Friday, June 17 & Friday, July 8, 2011  
10:30 to 11:00 a.m.  
College of Pharmacy, 833 S. Wood St.  
Room B32

**National Black Nurses Association 39th Annual Conference "Celebrating 40 Years of Nursing Excellence"**  
July 13 to July 17, 2011  
Indianapolis, IN  
Visit [www.nbna.org](http://www.nbna.org)

**National Association for Hispanic Nurses 36th NAHN Annual Conference: "Assessing and Advocating for Equity and Quality for Hispanic Health Care from Health Care Reform"**  
July 19-July 22, 2011  
Las Vegas, NV  
Visit: [www.thehispanicnurses.org](http://www.thehispanicnurses.org)

**Nurses Mentoring Exchange**  
Monday, September 12, 2011  
12:00 to 1:00 pm  
CON, Room 615

**CON-UHP Fall Welcome**  
Monday, September 12, 2011  
4:00 to 6:00 p.m.  
Location: To Be Announced



Have a SAFE & fun summer!

If you would like more information about an event, to contribute an article, or have comments/suggestions, please email Charese Jackson at [cjacks4@uic.edu](mailto:cjacks4@uic.edu).