

# NURSING

## THAT TRANSFORMS

*RUSH NURSING STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, CLINICIANS  
AND RESEARCHERS IN ACTION*



### LEADING THE WAY AGAINST HEALTH INEQUITY

*RUSH Harnesses the Power of the Nursing  
Profession to Tackle Health Disparities*

Page 6

## ON THE COVER

Care doesn't end after you give birth at RUSH. Family Connects nurses offer free support and services to help Chicago moms, babies and families thrive.

Family Connects at RUSH, in partnership with Family Connects International and the Chicago Department of Public Health, is an innovative care model that extends health services to mothers, babies and families after they leave the hospital. Family Connects nurses visit new moms and babies three to five weeks after birth to provide baby health checks, safe sleep information, breastfeeding support, moms' health checks, post-partum depression screening and support resources for families. The Department of Academic Practice Nursing (see page 19) houses the program as part of its work in community focused care. Nurses center their care on whole person, whole family wellness and will see families in home or virtually, depending on what best fits their needs. These expert nurses have experience in community health for parents and babies, and build strong relationships that support and nurture healthy families. RUSH became a pilot site for Family Connects in 2020 and has since provided care to hundreds of mothers and babies.



Family Connects Nurse Manager Kathryn K, BSN, RN, visits new mother Melissa Q. and her partner for their child's newborn check-up.



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### MISSION

The mission of RUSH University College of Nursing is to integrate nursing practice, scholarship and education throughout the communities we serve and to boldly lead health care transformation to ensure health equity across the continuum of care.

### VISION

Our vision is to lead nursing practice scholarship while driving health equity.

### TOP RANKED PROGRAMS



# A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Dear Friends,

Since our founding in 1885, RUSH University College of Nursing has been celebrated for leadership in nursing. This legacy of excellence is a through-line across our history that is recognized still today. As one of the top-ranked nursing institutions in the country, we are proud to serve as the innovators, thought leaders and experts fueling excellence in nursing education, practice and science.

As we set our sights on the future, we have built a framework for tackling some of the greatest health care challenges we face. Whether we're working with patients in historically underserved communities across Chicago, or generating new evidence that will improve health outcomes, our faculty, staff, students and alumni are focused on making a transformational impact on health care. With our newly codified mission and vision, and our five-year strategic plan, we can actualize a future where health care is more equitable and accessible, and nurses have the educational foundation to lead this change. Together, we are charting a course for the next five years that focuses on the strengths inherent throughout the College of Nursing. From our deep footprint in the Chicago community, to a revolutionary approach to research and scholarship, we are committed to success for all.

The rich diversity we have in our community makes our faculty, staff, students, patients and partners stronger. Serving the Chicago community with equitable care is essential to our ethos. As the demographics of our city continue to change and evolve, we are committed to meeting the needs of the growing Hispanic and Latino/a communities and investing in marginalized communities with care rooted in anti-racism and health equity principles.

Despite the myriad challenges the COVID-19 pandemic has brought, our community has remained robust. Students embraced the challenges of a new way of learning and, while working at vaccination and testing sites, found connections to each other and families across Chicago. Our faculty pivoted to all virtual learning and took lessons learned in the pandemic to craft publications and journal articles highlighting the effects of COVID-19 on patients, communities, learners and practitioners. Our staff broke the mold to craft innovative solutions that made all of the other work possible. And our alumni and community stakeholders served as passionate advocates for our educational and clinical pursuits.



Within these pages, we highlight the changemakers at the College of Nursing who dedicate themselves to advancing health equity; leading research and practice-based scholarship; and creating a world-class culture for students, faculty and staff. I am incredibly proud of the College of Nursing community and all that we have been able to accomplish together, and I am grateful to each of you for your support as we work toward our mission of integrating nursing practice, scholarship and education throughout the diverse communities we serve and boldly leading health care transformation to ensure health equity across the continuum of care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christine Kennedy'.

Christine Kennedy, PhD, RN, FAAN  
John L. & Helen Kellogg Dean, RUSH University College of Nursing  
Provost (Interim), RUSH University

# LEADING THE WAY AGAINST HEALTH INEQUITY

RUSH harnesses the power of the nursing profession to tackle health disparities

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NURSING THAT TRANSFORMS



RUSH nursing faculty Tricia K. gives an exam to a baby at Sue Gin Health Center.





**F**or 20 consecutive years, nursing has been considered the most trusted and honest profession in the United States. The faith patients place in nursing — not only for their care but for the care of loved ones and their communities — affords nurses the power and responsibility to tackle the myriad challenges that plague health care. That includes the pervasive inequities that exist both inside the walls of a health center and beyond.

Health equity is the term many scholars and clinicians use to understand how well a society is addressing the needs of a community. Through this lens, nurses can work to address health disparities including economic stability, neighborhood and physical environment, education, food, community and social context, and health care systems. All of these domains impact a person's ability to thrive. As the future workforce of the most trusted profession, nursing students at RUSH are learning what it means to advance equity.

## Innovating in the Classroom

RUSH is using its power as a leader in academic spaces to effect change for the next generation of nursing leaders. From hiring diverse faculty and recruiting students from underrepresented backgrounds, to advancing research that will provide solutions to complex problems, leaders at the College are committed to realizing a more equitable future in health care. In 2020, Wrenetha Julion, PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN, CNL, was named the inaugural Associate Dean for Equity and Inclusion and tasked with developing, implementing and evaluating a strategic plan to strengthen the college's diversity efforts in nursing education, practice and research. She believes RUSH can empower nurses to reduce health disparities and improve outcomes in at-risk communities across the country by elevating the position of equity and inclusion in the classroom as one of the college's strategic priorities.



Wrenetha Julion, PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN, CNL

"To address structural racism in higher education and health care, we need to ensure our efforts are embedded in every aspect of the College," said Dean Christine Kennedy, PhD, RN, FAAN. "Dr. Julion's prominent role in equity work positions the college to influence and contribute to positive, visible and sustainable change."

Julion is leading efforts to weave equity and inclusion into the students' curriculum. She developed a required course for master's students to provide context and examine solutions that advance equity in health care. Across the DNP and PhD programs, faculty work with students to integrate health equity strategies into projects and research. These educational tools provide a foundational understanding of the power nurses have to effect change.

"A key piece of what I'm doing is helping faculty be comfortable with subjects that they haven't been taught to teach," says Julion. "They may not know all of the answers, but we want them to keep the conversation going and work with students to come up with answers together."



**We are working at this unique junction between the community, clinical care, and academia... by approaching health equity from all three of these angles we can really impact the future of our profession."**

### Angela Moss

Angela Moss, PhD, APRN-BC, FAAN, assistant dean of practice and acting department chair





Generalist Entry Master's (GEM) students complete a mental health rotation at Cornerstone Community Outreach. GEM students complete rotations in the community to improve their clinical skills and gain real-world experience.



Students from RUSH University come together to distribute masks during the Million Mask Donation to support community organizations and shelters during COVID-19.

## Exploring our Community

The learning students do within the classroom is just one component of RUSH's approach to addressing health equity. In Chicago, a 16-minute bus ride — just 7 miles — separates the West Side and the Chicago Loop. But those 7 miles represent a 16-year life-expectancy gap for neighborhood residents. The cause of this startling “death gap” is not explained solely by violence statistics. Poverty, unemployment, systemic racism, lack of access to healthy food, insecure housing and lower high school graduation rates have had a devastating effect on access to health care.

A team of community health nurses led by Angela Moss, PhD, MSN, APRN-BC, RN, FAAN, assistant dean of faculty practice, works with more than 25 partnering sites across Chicago to provide direct patient care at nurse-led health centers. These partnering organizations are often serving historically marginalized communities, including people without citizenship, those experiencing homelessness, the formerly incarcerated, those suffering from mental illness or substance use disorder, victims of domestic violence and young children. Most earn below the federal poverty line, which can drastically reduce access to affordable, routine health care. The nurses on this team provide MSN and DNP students with 25,000 hours of clinical learning experience in the community.

“We are working at this unique junction between the community, clinical care and academia,” says Moss. “By approaching health equity from all three of these angles, we can really impact the future of our profession.”

## Moving the Needle

More than ever, nurses are at the frontlines providing vital care to individuals and families. With the ongoing impact of COVID-19 still unresolved, the workforce of nurses RUSH is preparing will be tasked with bringing innovative solutions to the table. Nursing students at RUSH will be armed with direct experience working along the fault lines of the health care systems. Their skills will be used not only to provide exceptional clinical care, but also to foster the advancement of strategies that help communities thrive.



# Where Patient Care and the Environment Meet

## Interdisciplinary RUSH team prepares health professionals to be leaders in planetary health

Climate change and planetary health have become topics of increasing importance for health care professionals in recent years. A 2015 Rockefeller Foundation - Lancet Commission report noted that health professionals are essential leaders in protecting planetary health — and that preparing the next generation will be key to providing effective patient care. The report, coupled with her experience working in the Chicago community and in alignment with the dean's strategic priorities, spurred Associate Professor Heide Cygan, DNP, RN, to bring together an interdisciplinary team of faculty at RUSH University to strengthen planetary health education across the University.

This innovative project explores ways to empower health professionals, both at RUSH and beyond, to think of themselves as leaders in planetary health. Students across the University have each been learning through their own Colleges. Cygan's new project will unify the curriculum.

"In public health nursing, one of our guiding principles is that you cannot separate patients and communities from their environment," Cygan says. "We see that clearly here in Chicago, where the residents in the communities we serve on the West Side are experiencing more negative health outcomes than neighbors in different parts of the city."

Before their work began, each of the four RUSH colleges was taking its own approach to a planetary health and climate change curriculum. Cygan teaches the public health course for generalist entry master's students in the College of Nursing. Her course includes content related to environmental sustainability and climate change. This content overlaps with what Andy Garman, PsyD, teaches in his health systems management and allied health classes in the College of Health Sciences and Santosh Basapur, PhD, teaches in the Graduate College. However, their approaches to teaching differ based on program-specific requirements. Further, only students enrolled in a small number of courses at each college receive this important content. As they explore the gaps and needs of all RUSH students, the curriculum will better serve students and prepare them for their work in the next stages of their careers.

"It's our duty as educators to ensure that the next generation of health professionals has the skills it needs to treat their patients and advocate on their behalf with planetary health as a framework," Cygan says. "For our students to be change agents, it is essential that they understand how climate change impacts people and communities, and how, as health professionals, they impact climate change."



Heide Cygan, DNP, RN PHNA-BC

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



### Milton Aguilar dos Santos, MSN, DNP Student

**His life experiences revealed health care disparities — so he made a life plan to combat those inequalities**

Growing up in Honduras, Milton Aguilar dos Santos, MSN-GEM '18, saw family members die prematurely and painfully because they couldn't pay for medical treatment — experiences that “had an impact on my desire to pursue a career in health care,” he says.

After moving to the United States, Aguilar dos Santos earned a bachelor's degree in psychology while serving in the Marines. With the goal of applying to medical school, he enrolled in one of the City Colleges of Chicago, where he was awarded a scholarship for the RUSH University College of Health Sciences (CHS). “The scholarship was the beginning of my academic future at RUSH,” says Aguilar dos Santos, who soon applied to the RUSH Generalist Entry Master's (GEM) Clinical Nurse Leader Program with the encouragement of his CHS advisor.

“RUSH faculty made a difference in my two years as a student in the MSN-GEM program,” Aguilar dos Santos says. “It was a great experience to have faculty who honestly cared and were invested in myself. And I saw faculty members from minority groups as role models.”

He adds, “Every nurse in the hospital was always willing to teach me and expose me to different fields of nursing. They were all instrumental in my finding my niche in nursing.”

During his MSN clinical rotations, “it became evident to me that health care disparities affect the African American and Latino communities of Chicago at exponential rates” — a concern that was underlined by his post-MSN experience as an inpatient RN at a local hospital. “For the Latino community, access to health care, cost of care, cultural identity and stigma toward mental health are often barriers to accessing the help patients need.”

Now a registered nurse in an inpatient psychiatric unit, Aguilar dos Santos is a student in the RUSH Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Doctor of Nursing (PMHNP-DNP) program. “My DNP project, which is based in the Chicago West Side community — currently the community with the highest rate of substance use-related deaths in Chicagoland — focuses on the impact medication-assisted treatment may have on substance use disorder,” he says. Besides continuing to practice in the area of substance use disorders, “I'd also like to teach,” Aguilar dos Santos says. “I think a more diverse faculty will open doors to new ideas and promote inclusiveness in our health care system.”

He adds, “RUSH prepares students to address health care disparities by exposing us to the importance of working together with community-based organizations, governmental institutions, schools, social services agencies, religious institutions and residents of these communities. I feel proud to be part of RUSH for its commitment to decrease health care disparities within its diverse neighboring communities.”



**RUSH prepares students to address health care disparities by exposing us to the importance of working together with community-based organizations, governmental institutions, schools, social services agencies, religious institutions and residents of these communities.”**

**Milton Aguilar dos Santos**  
MSN-GEM '18



# Creating Alternatives for Violence-Affected Black Men

**Online intervention will break down barriers to accessing pragmatic, evidence-based resources**

Research shows young Black men are disproportionately victims, perpetrators and witnesses of youth violence and homicide, often co-occurring with recent substance use. Despite the availability of community-based resources, young Black men who harm or use violence report structural, cultural, and logistical barriers to using and trusting these services. Barriers such as the over-criminalization of Black boys, treatment stigma, racially insensitive programs, life demands and gender norms contribute to service avoidance and higher recidivism to violence.

One way to mitigate these barriers is through technology-enhanced interventions that can confidentially offer evidence-based resources to young men. Chuka Nestor Emezue, PhD, MPH, MPA, is a digital health researcher and RUSH assistant professor of nursing. He was recently awarded one of three RUSH Health Equity Research Scholarship grants to develop a culturally appropriate, service-mediating online intervention, called BrotherlyACT, for young Black men in Chicago, 15-24 years, who harm or use violence.

The project aims to offer alternatives to criminal justice involvement and to empower violence-affected young men to be better fathers, partners, sons, friends and co-workers. The intervention will combine life skills and mindfulness coaching based on acceptance and commitment therapy with pragmatic rehabilitative tools.

"The Health Equity Research Scholars Program has adopted a strategy to centering health equity and an opportunity to build and sustain research that amplifies the voice of young Black men who are disproportionately victims, witnesses and perpetrators of violence," says Emezue.

## An Active Strategy to Boost Health Equity

Funded by the RUSH BMO Institute for Health Equity, the RUSH Health Equity Research Scholarship Program is expanding the number of RUSH health equity researchers, facilitating community-partnered health equity research, mentoring future researchers and supporting RUSH researchers in developing evidence-based approaches to improving health equity. Chuka Nestor Emezue, PhD, MPH, MPA, assistant professor of nursing, is among the first group of researchers supported by the program.



Chuka Nestor Emezue, PhD, MPH, MPA

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



# Linda O'Kelley, PhD Student

Researching the effects of ethylene oxide on Chicago communities

"I became a nurse because I wanted to improve the lives of my patients. I've done that for more than 12 years, but I've learned you can have an even greater impact and serve entire patient populations through nursing research," says Linda O'Kelley, a PhD student at RUSH University College of Nursing.

A longtime NICU nurse, O'Kelley's career has evolved from solely providing bedside care to serving as a leader at the unit level, where she helped conduct research on mothers with opioid addiction and the reasons for Sudden Unexpected Postnatal Collapse. When she was ready to take the next step and earn her doctorate in nursing, she chose RUSH's fully online program to mesh with her busy schedule as a full-time staff nurse and mom to three girls.

O'Kelley's doctoral research is examining exposure at the community level to ethylene oxide gas, widely employed in chemical and manufacturing industries and often used to sterilize medical equipment. A series of *Chicago Tribune* articles alerted O'Kelley to the potential hazards of ethylene oxide gas exposure in Chicagoland communities, including one area O'Kelley serves as an NICU nurse. Though existing research has focused on occupational exposure to the gas, "There's a huge gap in understanding symptoms of community exposure, how pervasive the threat is and what are the long-term consequences of exposure," O'Kelley says.

Current methods of assessing ethylene oxide exposure are costly and usually involve a blood test, so it's not feasible to screen all community members through existing methods. O'Kelley hopes to develop a symptom questionnaire paired with a reliable, point-of-care gas screening tool, called an electronic nose or eNose.

Improving health equity — a thread that runs through the College of Nursing's teaching, practice and scholarship activities — is a key goal of O'Kelley's research focus. "Communities with economically and socially disadvantaged members are much more likely to be exposed to air, water and soil contaminants," she explains. "My research aims to better inform policymakers of these discrepancies and to provide evidence of how ethylene oxide gas exposure impact surrounding communities."

Though O'Kelley is passionate about research, she sees it as only one piece of the well-rounded nursing career to which she aspires.

"I hope I can do a combination of teaching, research and public policy advocacy work," she says. "It's difficult to choose only one path. Fortunately, the field of nursing provides many opportunities."

“

**Communities with economically and socially disadvantaged members are much more likely to be exposed to air, water and soil contaminants. My research aims to better inform policymakers of these discrepancies and to provide evidence of how ethylene oxide gas exposure impacts surrounding communities.”**

**Linda O'Kelley**  
RUSH PhD nursing student

# EXPANDING SCHOLARSHIP IMPACT

RUSH's innovative model integrates research, practice and education in an expanded understanding of nursing scholarship

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NURSING THAT TRANSFORMS

“**R**esearch — the scholarship of discovery — is critical to nursing science and to our patients,” says Barbara Swanson, PhD, RN, FAAN, RUSH University College of Nursing. “But RUSH recognizes that to have a bigger impact, we need a group of expert clinicians who have the experience of translating research into the real world, then learning from that translation and bringing what they’ve learned back to the researchers. That’s what we’re hoping to do with the college’s Office of Nursing Research and Scholarship: bridge and strengthen those relationships.”

Co-led by Sarah L. Livesay, DNP, APRN, ACNP-BC, associate dean for practice, who leads the practice and educational scholarship segment, and Swanson, who helms research efforts, RUSH’s Office of Nursing Research and Scholarship (ONRS) expands the idea of scholarship beyond traditional research to include insights gained from the real-world applications of practice and education.







College of Nursing research assistant Martina W. talks a patient through her exam as part of an ongoing research study exploring cardiovascular health.

## Building on a Legacy

Historically, the ONRS was structured to support discovery by assisting investigators seeking grants — and RUSH nursing faculty have been leading the way in research. “Our federally funded research footprint has expanded tremendously in the last 15 years,” says Livesay, explaining that RUSH has grown its portfolio of NIH funds to \$4.2 million in 2021.

With research opportunities integrated across the curriculum at all levels and in every program of study, the ONRS has also emphasized students’ active participation as investigators. Students serve on research and scholarship committees, and many have won awards at the annual Midwest Nursing Research Society meeting.



Sarah L. Livesay, DNP, APRN, ACNP-BC, ACNS-BC



Barbara Swanson, PhD, RN, FAAN

The new structure of the ONRS will build on this strong legacy by also supporting the scholarship that comes out of education and clinical work. “We’re taking a model that works, accessed primarily by nurse researchers and PhD students,

and expanding it to also be available for faculty and DNP students who are doing either practice- or education-based scholarship,” Livesay says.

The end goal of this broadened approach: better outcomes for both patients and students. “Everything we’ll do in the office advances our knowledge and evidence base to directly improve patient care, and indirectly improve students’ preparation so they become even more competent clinicians,” says Swanson.

## An Evolving Definition of Scholarship

With the evolution of the ONRS bringing Livesay into a leadership role to address practice scholarship, RUSH becomes a leader and role model in a national movement toward widening the concept of nursing scholarship to include the clinic and the classroom. In a 2018 position statement, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing

(AACN) defined nursing scholarship as “the generation, synthesis, translation, application and dissemination of knowledge that aims to improve health and transform health care.” The AACN points to three forms of scholarship: discovery or scientific inquiry, practice and teaching (see sidebar, page 17).

Critical to this evolving definition is the recognition that scholarship should lead to real-world outcomes that improve health. “Threaded through the three domains of nursing scholarship is an emphasis on health care policy, which is critical to generating support for health care innovation and improvement in the public domain,” the statement says.



**We’re taking a model that works, accessed primarily by nurse researchers and PhD students, and expanding it to also be available for faculty and DNP students who are doing either practice- or education-based scholarship.”**

### Sarah L. Livesay

DNP, APRN, ACNP-BC, ACNS-BC,  
co-leader of RUSH’s new Office of  
Nursing Leadership and Scholars

RUSH nursing faculty and students have long been active influencers of public policy, engaged in meaningful health equity and antiracism efforts as they address the myriad challenges to health that face the communities surrounding the university. Some current research and scholarship projects conducted by faculty and students are exploring the impact of ethylene oxide gas exposure at the community level (see page 13), a physical activity and dietary behavior program for Black mothers and daughters (page 18) and an online intervention for violence-affected young Black men (page 12).

“Our practice and educational scholarship in particular has long included all aspects of community, from inception through outcomes,” Livesay says. As the office’s scope widens, “we’re supporting the scholarship of the faculty and students already doing great work out in the community, so they can have an even bigger impact there.” A stronger connection between research and practice scholarship also creates a loop, as discoveries are put into practice and uncover new opportunities for further research.

## New Opportunities in Education

In addition to the positive effect it creates for community health, expanding the definition of scholarship will have a significant impact on improving nursing education and career options for faculty. At most universities, models for academic nursing have been focused on PhD faculty, not DNP professors. As PhD enrollments nationwide remain flat while DNP programs are growing, RUSH’s model

creates opportunities for many more talented nurses who are eager to teach. RUSH is the first academic institution in the country to shift to a co-led research and scholarship department. The innovative approach is specifically designed to meet the changing trends of nursing education.

“With DNPs, we’ve got a growing number of highly educated clinician-scholars, but universities haven’t had the resources or structures in place to allow them to continue their scholarship to benefit patients and students with their knowledge,” says Swanson.

“The old path isn’t a good fit for them. RUSH’s innovation is giving them the support they need to advance up the academic ladder.”



**Everything we do in the office advances our knowledge and evidence base to directly improve patient care, and indirectly improve student outcomes.”**

### Barbara Swanson

PhD, RN, FAAN, co-leader of RUSH’s new Office of Nursing Research and Scholarship

## INTERCONNECTED DOMAINS OF SCHOLARSHIP

RUSH is one of the first nursing schools in the country to integrate the three areas of scholarship as defined by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing in its “Defining Scholarship for Academic Nursing” position statement:

- **Scholarship of scientific inquiry**—primary empirical research, analysis of large data sets, theory development and testing, and methodological studies; results in new knowledge, refines or expands existing knowledge and is translatable into practice
- **Scholarship of practice**—interprets, draws together and brings new insight to original research; a critical component in shortening the theory-to-practice gap
- **Scholarship of teaching**—focuses on the transmission, transformation and extension of knowledge



# Black Girls Move

## Model centers Black moms and daughters in obesity prevention

How can a school-linked physical activity and dietary program help Black mothers and their adolescent daughters prevent obesity? Nursing researcher and assistant dean for generalist education Monique Reed, PhD, MS, RN, FAAN, plans to work with mothers and daughters to find out.

Reed recently secured a grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to test a model that centers Black moms and daughters in obesity prevention. She and her team will invite mother-daughter duos to a 12-week group session where they will develop personalized movement and dietary goals and compare their changes with groups of daughters only. Reed will recruit from eight area schools across the city of Chicago.

An important goal of this research is to decrease disparities in obesity and associated diseases in Black women, a group with increased risk for obesity-related morbidity. Reed notes that rooting nursing research in an anti-racist framework is critical to its success. She recently co-authored a publication that calls on other nursing researchers to adopt a new framework that challenges scientists to identify and dismantle structures that perpetuate racism and impede health equity.

“My career in research has been focused on solutions that empower Black women and girls to live healthy, fulfilled lives,” says Reed. “Movement and physical activity are obviously important, but what role does family play in obesity prevention? And how can we help Black moms raise their daughters to navigate encounters with everyday discrimination in ways that set them up for success? This new grant will help us find out the answers to these questions and provide much-

needed scientific discovery for mothers and daughters who are often left out of this kind of research.”

The Black Girls Move project will last until 2025. Reed will use the findings from this research to continue her work in obesity prevention in Black mothers and daughters.



Participants of the Black Girls Move program meet to develop personalized movement goals and meal plans.



Monique Reed, PhD, MS, RN, FAAN



# Strengthening Student Experiences and Improving Community Care

## Expert clinicians provide nurse-led care to Chicago's historically underserved communities

Each year, more than 75,000 hours of direct patient care are provided across Chicago's South and West Side neighborhoods, where more than 90 percent of the patients served by community health nurses self-identify as racial or ethnic minorities and live below the federal poverty line. Partnerships with community organizations like Flying Food, St. Leonard's Ministries, Mercy Home for Boys and Girls, and Community Builders have flourished with health care provided by RUSH College of Nursing faculty.

Now, the reorganization of a key RUSH College of Nursing unit will strengthen community impact even more while deepening students' clinical skills. The Department of Academic Practice Nursing is the first of its kind nationwide and will expand support for faculty to provide both clinical care in the community and educational experiences to students.

Established more than 50 years ago by the College of Nursing's inaugural dean, Luther Christman, the Office of Faculty Practice has a rich history of caring for some of Chicago's most vulnerable and historically underserved communities. This year, the Office of Faculty Practice evolved once again, taking its new form as the Department of Academic Practice Nursing.

The Office of Faculty Practice has been critical to the mission of the College of Nursing, allowing more students to gain hands-on clinical experience and contributing to scholarly activities based in the community. By creating the Department of Academic Practice Nursing, the College is more fully able to support the integration of practice into the tripartite mission of education, research and service while increasing scholarly contributions. The nursing faculty practice model is unique because it is: (1) fully integrated into the college's strategic mission, vision and operations; (2) financially independent and self-sustaining; (3) highly productive in terms of student learning and research opportunities; and (4) health equity focused.

"The growth of our team from an office to a department will have a profound impact on the communities we serve and the students we teach," says Angela Moss, PhD, APRN-BC, FAAN, assistant dean of practice and acting department chair. "We are revolutionizing what accessible, evidence-based, anti-racist health care can look like in our community and making sure that the next generation of nursing leaders has exposure to community-centered care."



Nurse Raechel F., DNP, APRN, ANP-BC, gives a COVID shot to a Chicago resident at a community vaccination event.





Community members and RUSH University College of Nursing faculty come together for the ribbon cutting ceremony at the Sue Gin Health Center.

# NURSING DONORS IN ACTION

Today's nursing innovation propelled by past philanthropic foresight





## TRANSFORMATIONAL GIFTS

# 1978

**First endowed nursing deanship  
at an American university**

# 1986

**First community practice site,  
where faculty and students work  
together to serve Chicagoans**

# 2015

**Major scholarship fund supporting  
PhD nursing students**

## The First Endowed Deanship at a U.S. Nursing College

In 1978, a transformational gift from the estate of philanthropists John L. Kellogg, son of the founder of the cereal company, and his wife, Helen, established the first endowed deanship at an American nursing college. In the 44 years since, the John L. and Helen Kellogg Deanship has yielded millions of dollars in endowment income to the leader of the college.

The first dean to hold the position was Luther P. Christman, PhD, RN, FAAN, a pioneer in the nursing field who introduced nursing reform and new educational standards at every opportunity. With endowment support, Christman developed and disseminated what became known nationally as the “RUSH Model for Nursing,” a plan that emphasized the integration of practice, education and research and defined the practitioner-teacher role — concepts adopted at nursing schools around the world.

## Supporting Nursing Service in the Community

Through the RUSH Nursing Office of Faculty Practice, expert faculty clinicians work alongside nursing students to deliver comprehensive nursing services at partner sites across the Chicago area. These sites serve a variety of populations, including those experiencing homelessness, mental illness and domestic abuse. The program has become a key aspect of the student experience and a national model — demonstrating the ability of nursing interventions to improve health outcomes, reduce costs, and increase patient and partner satisfaction.

Donor support was critical to establishing the first and longest-running faculty practice site in 1986: the RUSH School-Based Health Center at Orr Academy High School, a Chicago public school. Gifts over the years have helped grow the program to include over 25 partner sites, including a donation from the Exelon Corporation in 2014 to establish the Sue Gin Health Center at Oakley Square, an apartment complex offering affordable housing on the

**A**t the RUSH University College of Nursing, a legacy of philanthropic partnerships — some dating back to the college’s earliest origins in the late 1800s — has enabled RUSH to make an imprint on the entire nursing field. Since the college’s modern establishment in 1972, gifts from visionary donors have demonstrated an abiding commitment to the field and helped create the margin of excellence that separates RUSH from its peers.

# Nearly Five Decades of Dedication to RUSH

## Passion for nursing education leads RUSH alumna and retired faculty member to leave lasting legacy

Karen Van Dyke Lamb, DNP, knew she wanted to be a nurse since she was in high school. Her experience volunteering in the 1960s at RUSH University Medical Center, formerly known as Presbyterian-St. Luke's Hospital, piqued her interest in pursuing nursing as a profession.

After graduating from Presbyterian-St. Luke's Hospital School of Nursing in 1967, Lamb worked at RUSH as a nurse and later earned her master's degree. Realizing how much she enjoyed mentoring students, she decided to pursue a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree and teach full time. Lamb went on to spend 47 years at RUSH. When she retired in 2019, she decided to make a gift through her estate plan to support scholarships for students enrolled at RUSH University College of Nursing.

"I knew I wanted to leave a legacy and support nurses," she says. "My experience at RUSH showed me nursing should have an equal seat at the table with all other health professions, and I wanted to promote professionalism in nursing."



Karen Van Dyke Lamb, DNP

West Side. Support from the business community with partners like Flying Food Group have made it possible to develop nurse-led health care sites like the St. Leonard's Ministries, which serves formerly incarcerated individuals. Donor support for RUSH's COVID response has enabled RUSH nursing faculty and students at these sites to deliver over 40,000 tests and more than 8,000 vaccinations.

## Visionary Gift Prepares More PhD-Educated Nurses

The demand for nurses with a doctorate-level education has never been higher — particularly in the academic setting, where waves of retirement are contributing to a declining number of nursing faculty. Nurses who receive PhD training at RUSH gain the skills necessary to also serve in critical roles beyond academia, including leading clinical research programs and influencing national health policy. Simply stated, training more nurses with this level of advanced knowledge and expertise is essential for the future of the profession. Dorothy Yates recognized the need to attract and

support more PhD nurses. Yates was a 1937 graduate of the College's predecessor school, the Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing, and former head nurse at Presbyterian during the 1940s and 50s. After her passing in 2015, she left the College of Nursing a \$2.9 million bequest that has already supported tuition and living expenses for dozens of nursing PhD students. Yates's endowed scholarship fund is among 40-plus that have been established to date by generous friends and alumni, providing tuition assistance to hundreds of students each year.

# A NATIONAL LEADER IN NURSING EDUCATION SINCE 1885

## Fast facts about RUSH University School of Nursing

### ACADEMIC PIONEERS

**1st** endowed nursing dean in the nation,  
**2nd** oldest clinical doctorate in the nation

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### GRANTS ARE GROWING

National Institutes of Health research funding is **up to \$4.2M**

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### DEDICATED TO DIVERSITY

**67% of staff,**  
**36% of faculty**  
and **35% of students**  
are from diverse populations

### TOP-RANKED PROGRAMS *U.S. News & World Report* for 2023

**#1**

Pediatric Acute Care and  
Nursing Administration

**#2**

Overall Doctor of Nursing  
Practice, Pediatric Primary Care  
and Psychiatric Mental Health

**#3**

Adult/Gerontology NP  
Primary Care

**#4**

Adult/Gerontology NP  
Acute Care and Family NP

**#17**

Master's in Nursing Science

### EDUCATOR-PROVIDERS

Home of the  
**teacher-practitioner  
model**

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### COMMUNITY CARE

**25+ Faculty Practice sites**  
providing high-quality care  
to historically underserved  
communities and  
real-work innovative  
learning lab for students

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### PREPARED FOR PRACTICE

RUSH students have a  
**97% NCLEX pass rate**

### DISTINGUISHED FACULTY

27 AAN Fellows • 20 Public Voices Fellows • 21 Fellows in National Health Care Organizations  
1 American Heart Association Fellow • 2 International Nurse Researcher Hall of Famers  
President of Illinois Society for Advanced Practice Nursing

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COLLEGE OF NURSING

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