

NURSING

THAT TRANSFORMS

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

MEN IN NURSING

Recruiting male students tackles the nursing shortage while creating a workforce that reflects the community

ON THE COVER



Faculty leaders Aaron Franklin (left) and Fred Brown provide guidance and mentorship to the Men in Nursing program at RUSH College of Nursing. Part of the American Association of Men in Nursing, the RUSH Men in Nursing program aims to advance representation of men in the profession and improve health care for all.



The American Association for Men in Nursing

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RUSH FACULTY PRACTICE SUMMER INSTITUTE RECAP

In July, RUSH College of Nursing hosted the inaugural Faculty Practice Summer Institute. The institute was designed to be an ideal learning environment for department leaders, business directors and clinical faculty on the journey of establishing faculty practice programs at their institutions. Participants came to Chicago from seven schools of nursing in six states. Across the two and a half days together, participants heard from more than 30 presenters from within RUSH and beyond about how they can implement best practices.



RUSH UNIVERSITY TOP-RANKED PROGRAMS



A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Dear Friends,

Since our founding in 1885, RUSH College of Nursing has been renowned for our leadership in nursing. This legacy of excellence is a through-line across our history that is still recognized 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 and shaping a brighter future for patients, families and communities.

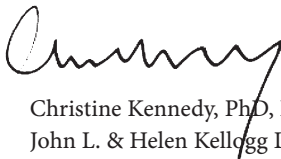
This has been an exciting and challenging year in higher education. The recent rulings from the Supreme Court on affirmative action, coupled with a transition post-COVID and the economic difficulties many communities still face, have brought with us uncertainty. Yet, with your support and the tenacity of our staff and faculty, RUSH has remained a powerhouse in nursing education. I want especially to credit the staff of the College of Nursing, without whom none of what you read in this magazine would be possible. They lay a foundation that empowers our students, faculty and alumni to thrive. Pictured below are two of the staff who have been recognized for their outsized contributions this year.

As we educate the next generation of nursing leaders, we are focused on ensuring our students will graduate with the skills and knowledge they need to advance health equity; provide high-quality, evidence-based care; and extend a hand to the students who will come after them. Our faculty are simultaneously generating the knowledge our students will use today and into the future, through newly funded research and scholarship activities. RUSH College of Nursing has the best and brightest among our faculty, students and staff who will forever transform health care in Chicago and beyond.

Within the pages of this magazine, we aim to introduce you to a handful of the transformational leaders and learners at RUSH. You will learn about the newly funded federal grants that will open the doors to new learning opportunities in underserved areas for students from diverse backgrounds. You will meet faculty who are at the top of their fields, making an impact on health equity and anti-racism, and giving much needed attention to people with developmental disabilities. We will also share the news of our nationally recognized Men in Nursing program that builds on the legacy of our founding dean, Dr. Luther Christman.

Thank you for your continued and enthusiastic support of RUSH College of Nursing.

Sincerely,



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



Christine Kennedy, PhD, RN, FAAN



Randy Henderson



Ceslete Vega

A DEDICATION TO DECREASING DISPARITIES

New grants support students who plan to work
in underserved communities

RUSH College of Nursing has a well-established track record of targeting inequities in health care by focusing on historically underserved communities. Now, primary care and anesthesia nurse practitioner (NP) students from diverse backgrounds who are interested in practicing in these communities after graduation will receive financial support through two new federally funded grants.

Ben Remor Inventor, PhD, CNP, director of the Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner program, received funding from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to fund his project Moving into Social Justice Spaces: Innovations in NP Clinical Training. This grant will provide stipends to students in the pediatric nurse practitioner, psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner, adult gerontology primary care nurse practitioner and family nurse practitioner programs.

The main goal of the grant is providing financial support to students from historically underrepresented backgrounds in nursing. This includes men, students from racial and ethnic minority groups, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, veterans and students from rurally designated high schools. RUSH nursing students who receive financial support through stipends are ready and eager to practice in underserved communities upon graduation.



Ben Remor Inventor, PhD, CNP, director of the Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner program

“This funding will have a lasting impact on trainees, especially those interested in working with historically underserved populations,” says Inventor. “It will also advance our mission of educating the next generation of NP leaders to address health equity and social determinants of health in their practice with real-world clinical experiences during training.”

RUSH has a history of success with the HRSA funding program supporting Inventor’s project. In 2019, Kathy Swartwout, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, received funding through the same mechanism for her grant RUSH Primary Care Nursing: Innovations in Caring for Vulnerable Populations. Swartwout’s innovative project develops telehealth competencies for faculty, students and preceptors as an increasing number of patient visits move to a virtual format.



Kathryn Swartwout, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, chair of the Department of Community, Systems and Mental Health Nursing

Targeting urban and rural underserved communities

Just as Inventor’s grant is beginning, Maiko Yamashita, DNP, CRNA, director of the Nurse Anesthesia program, also received new HRSA funding to increase diversity of certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA) students and enhance clinical learning experiences in rural and urban areas.

Yamashita’s proposal, entitled The Health and CRNA Education Equity Project, has four goals:

1. Financially support nurse anesthesia students in their traineeship at rural and underserved communities.
2. Diversify the population of nurse anesthesia trainees, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and underrepresented racial/ethnic minorities in the profession.
3. Enhance clinical exposure in rural and urban settings for nursing students to incorporate culturally competent care with an emphasis on social determinants of health for vulnerable and underserved populations.
4. Support students through promotion of wellness and mentorship.

The Health and CRNA Equity Education Project will support four cohorts of nurse anesthesia students. Assistant Program Directors Samantha Pratt, DNP, CRNA, and Audrey Rosenblatt, PhD, CRNA, will serve as senior personnel on this project.

“This funding will ensure RUSH CRNA students graduate with the clinical skills and cultural competency they need to provide exceptional care,” says Yamashita. “It will also reinforce our commitment to mentorship and wellness, two vitally important aspects of our profession.”



Maiko Yamashita, DNP, CRNA, director of the Nurse Anesthesia program

Offering clinical experiences in rural and urban settings is vital to both patient care and communities as they seek to recruit highly skilled providers. CRNAs offer cost-effective anesthesia care in settings with limited resources. They provide over 50 million anesthetics per year in the United States and account for 80% of anesthesia providers in rural and underserved communities, according to the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology.

“The literature is clear: increasing exposure to employment opportunities in rural and urban underserved communities will increase the likelihood that students will seek employment in these settings,” says Yamashita. “We’ve seen this among our own alumni. More than 50 percent of students who had clinical experiences at diverse clinical sites accepted jobs at sites where they trained.”

Christine Kennedy, PhD, RN, FAAN, John L. and Helen Kellogg dean of RUSH College of Nursing and RUSH University’s interim provost, believes the new funding will benefit not only RUSH students, but patients and their communities as well.

“Ensuring that RUSH nurse practitioner students have educational training rooted in a health equity framework is a core philosophy of our college,” she says.

“

This funding will have a lasting impact on trainees, especially those interested in working with historically underserved populations.”

Ben Remor Inventor, PhD, CNP



Nurse anesthesia students practice their clinical skills in the RUSH Simulation Center.

Addressing a Looming Nursing Shortage

RUSH creates certificate to help clinicians educate nurses of tomorrow

The nursing profession and nursing education are facing a crisis. A large number of faculty in schools of nursing will soon be retiring, and there is an inadequate supply of nursing faculty to fill the gap they leave behind. Simultaneously, one-third of the current nursing workforce is expected to retire by 2025, putting a ticking clock on the looming shortage that would have a devastating impact on health care.

Many doctorally prepared nurses receive little to no background in adult learning theory and how to teach, put a lecture together, evaluate an exam, write learning objectives or choose outcome metrics. Thus, these skilled clinicians are unable to contribute to the education of the next generation of nurses.

Under the guidance of Frank Hicks, PhD, RN, CNE, associate dean for academic programs, RUSH is taking an innovative approach to address the impending shortage. RUSH College of Nursing is developing a nurse educator certificate that will expand the network of nurses who can help support nursing students entering the profession.

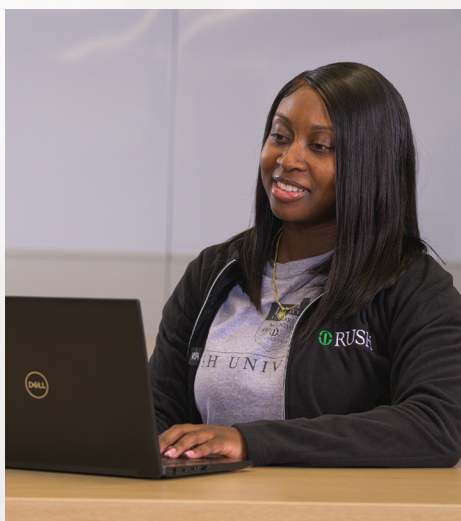
“RUSH College of Nursing is uniquely positioned to enter the nurse educator certificate market,” says Hicks. “Our academic programs are nationally recognized as some of the best in the nation, and we have a robust history of providing educational excellence in an online environment.”

This post-graduate nurse educator certificate will allow working nurses with a master’s degree or higher to develop the necessary knowledge to be effective nurse educators in either the classroom or clinical arena. It will be offered virtually and could be completed in two semesters of full-time study, or in just a year if nurses choose to attend part time.

It will also emphasize the importance of integrating social determinants of health, social justice and health equity in teaching and relating to students, something that is integral to the RUSH College of Nursing’s educational framework.

“This is the time for bold, innovative strategies that bring our master’s and doctorally prepared nurses into the fold as educators,” says Christine Kennedy, PhD, RN, FAAN, dean of RUSH College of Nursing. “When given the tools they need to be successful, I am confident nurses will answer the call to help educate the nurses of tomorrow.”

RUSH College of Nursing is working closely with regulatory and accreditation bodies to finalize implementation of the nurse educator certificate. Following approval, the first cohort will be admitted in spring 2024.



Jakeiyah Triplett, doctoral nursing student and a registered nurse at RUSH Oak Park Hospital

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

RUSH College of Nursing is pleased to highlight our alumni making significant contributions to nursing education and leadership. These alumni span our academic programs and decades and shine a light on opportunities an education at RUSH can provide.



Kathleen Potempa, PhD, RN, FAAN

PhD 1986

Kathleen Potempa is professor and dean emeritus at the University of Michigan and an internationally recognized researcher on the benefits of exercise and other health practices on health, cardiovascular fitness and cognition in physically impaired populations and the elderly. She is currently funded by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the National Institutes of Health/Fogarty International Center. She was previously director of nursing at the Bowman Center at RUSH University and dean at Oregon Health and Sciences University (OHSU), where she facilitated the expansion of the largest primary care network in Eastern Oregon and broadened the OHSU Midwifery service to become one of the most extensive services in the U.S.



Christine E. Kasper, PhD, RN, FAAN, FACS

MSN 1976

Christine Kasper is the newly appointed dean of nursing at the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing. She was previously dean and Virginia P. Crenshaw Endowed Chair at The University of New Mexico College of Nursing, senior nurse executive in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the M. Adelaide Nutting Research Chair at Johns Hopkins University, among other appointments. She has Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs funding to study the role of “desert dust” metals on the pathobiology of Gulf War Illness. She is also assessing the effects of blast injuries from embedded metal fragments in the military and was named to the Sigma Theta Tau International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame in 2015 for this work.



Julie Hoff, PhD, MPH, RN, CENP

BSN 1986

Appointed in 2020, Julie Hoff is dean of the University of Oklahoma (OU) Health Sciences Center Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing. Hoff came to OU from the Texas A&M Corpus Christi College of Nursing and Health Sciences. She previously served as chair of the Eleanor Mann School of Nursing at the University of Arkansas and chair of nursing and public health at Elmhurst College. She was also director of innovations and outcomes at Children’s Hospital Colorado. Hoff spent 22 years at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She later served as director of clinical research operations for a clinical translational science grant from the National Institutes of Health.



Shawn Collins, PhD, DNP, CRNA, FAANA

DNP 2008

Shawn Collins was recently appointed dean in the School of Nursing at Loma Linda University and vice president of LLUHS Nursing Education in Loma Linda, California. Over the last 20 years, he has lectured nationally and internationally on continuing education for nurse anesthetists in developing countries, leadership, evidence-based practice and emotional intelligence. He was a professor of nursing and held numerous leadership roles, including director of the Nurse Anesthesia program, at Western Carolina University. There, he was the recipient of several awards for teaching and mentoring. His DNP with a focus on Healthcare Leadership is from RUSH University and his PhD in Leadership from Andrews University.

Focused on Health Equity

Inaugural Goodman professor continues commitment to marginalized communities

In a resounding testament to her decades-long commitment to promoting health equity and social justice, Wrenetha Julion, PhD, MPH, RN, CNL, FAAN, has been named the inaugural Michelle and Larry Goodman, MD, Endowed Professor of Health Equity at RUSH University. This endowment recognizes Julion's exceptional contributions and her unwavering dedication to making a difference in the lives of historically underserved communities.

Having joined RUSH University in 1997 after a distinguished career as a staff nurse and patient outreach educator at Advocate and Cook County hospitals, Julion seamlessly transitioned into groundbreaking research aimed at dismantling health disparities. Her journey from clinical practitioner to tenacious researcher was marked by her steadfast commitment to the welfare of marginalized communities, particularly Black mothers and fathers.

Julion's tenure at RUSH has been one of immense growth and accomplishment. From a research assistant, she rose through the ranks, completing her PhD in nursing science in 2002. A pivotal moment in her career came in 2009 when she secured her first National Institute for Nursing Research grant as a principal investigator. This achievement marked the beginning of a series of grants that have funded her ongoing program of research for more than a decade.

Last year, Julion received new funding to expand anti-racism training across all four of RUSH University's colleges. Through the new grant, Health Equity Anti-Racism Training (HEAT), RUSH will graduate a diverse, interprofessional workforce that can provide care rooted in an anti-racist framework. The HEAT project will ensure patients and communities receive care from well-educated, culturally sensible providers who are moving toward the aspirational goal of health equity for all.

Her receipt for the Michelle and Larry Goodman, MD, Professorship of Health Equity symbolizes not only Julion's individual accomplishments but also the collective dedication of RUSH University to creating a more equitable health care system.



Larry Goodman, MD (left), with Wrenetha Julion, PhD, MPH, RN, CNL, FAAN, the inaugural recipient of the Goodman Professorship

MEN IN NURSING

Recruiting male students tackles the nursing shortage while creating a workforce that reflects the community



RUSH's Men in Nursing officers from 2020 to today



Despite being recognized as one of the best and most in-demand careers, nursing remains a profession dominated by women. Recent data shows men account for just 9.4% of the nursing workforce nationwide. Building on the work of RUSH College of Nursing's founding dean, Luther Christman, PhD, RN, FAAN, a passionate group of men is working to grow the number of men, and specifically minority men, in the profession and make the College of Nursing the premier destination for nursing education and practice.



Michael Kremer (left), PhD, CRNA, CHSE, FNAP, FAAN, and Franklin Hicks, PhD, RN, CNE, two faculty champions for men in nursing

In the 1970s, Christman helped establish and expand a national organization for men in nursing in Chicago. Originally called the National Male Nurses Association, the group set out to encourage more men to join the health care workforce as nurses, and together, strengthen health care for all. RUSH was one of the first Colleges of Nursing to establish its own chapter of the Men in Nursing group.

Frank Hicks, PhD, RN, CNE, associate dean for academic programs, has been a professor at RUSH for more than 20 years and has seen the evolution of men's interest in the nursing profession.

"We've been committed to improving the representation of men in our profession since Luther Christman helped form the group decades ago," says Hicks. "It's been a joy in my career to mentor young men through their academic journeys and see them flourish as alumni of our programs. RUSH truly leads the way for men in nursing."

“

We've been committed to improving the representation of men in our profession since Luther Christman helped form the national group decades ago. It's been a joy in my career to mentor young men through their academic journeys and see them flourish as alumni of our programs.”

Frank Hicks, PhD, RN, CNE

Revitalizing the RUSH Men in Nursing program

When he came to RUSH in 2013, Aaron Franklin, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, was eager to expand his network and find community with his colleagues and patients. One of the first people he felt connected to was the nurse who hired him, Fred Brown, DNP, RN, CENP. Franklin and Brown bonded in their shared experiences as Black men working in a field largely dominated by White women.

“I moved to Chicago the week I graduated with my Bachelor of Science in Nursing,” Franklin recalls. “RUSH was mentioned by one of my college professors as a top hospital in Chicago. I was interviewed by a Black male nurse, Dr. Brown, who I felt connected to right away. Dr. Brown is the reason I came here and the reason I stay here.”

Together, Brown and Franklin worked to revitalize the Men in Nursing program and encourage male students in the College of Nursing. They sought to create a sense of belonging in an academic space and build camaraderie with other men who had similar experiences entering the profession. One of the young men they brought into the program was Deshawn Jones, a student in the Generalist Entry Master's program.



Aaron Franklin, DNP, RN, NEA-BC

Before coming to RUSH, Jones graduated from Missouri University of Science and Technology with a Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences and pursued a career as a professional athlete in both football and rugby. He was raised on the South side of Chicago and says he always felt RUSH was a special place.

“Growing up, I saw RUSH as the Ivy League of health care in Chicago,” says Jones. “After my career as a professional athlete ended, and with my experience as a patient care assistant in other hospitals, I saw the impact nurses had on patients and decided it was what I wanted to do with my life. I was extremely excited to come to RUSH for nursing school.”

Jones was elected student president of the Men in Nursing group in August 2023. Beyond fostering a shared sense of community, the group is committed to being visible to the RUSH and Chicago communities. Members of the group volunteer at events including the Chicago Marathon and at RUSH events like the Taste of RUSH Community Service Initiative Program, and also travel to the annual American Association of Men in Nursing (AAMN) conference. During the 2022 AAMN conference, Franklin was appointed to serve on the national board of directors.



Deshawn Jones, student in the Generalist Entry Master's program



Fred Brown, DNP, RN, CENP, director of generalist education

Mike Kremer, PhD, CRNA, CHSE, FNAP, FAAN, joined the College of Nursing faculty in 1993 and has been a supporter of the Men in Nursing program and mentor of male nursing students throughout his tenure.

"The demand for highly skilled nurses has never been higher," says Kremer. "Encouraging men to join the workforce is vitally important. Men considering a career in nursing should know they have a home at RUSH."

Building the pipeline of future nurses

The push to increase men's representation in nursing not only makes the profession more representative, it also helps improve health outcomes and address the nursing shortage predicted to balloon over the next decade. As baby boomers age, life expectancies increase and nurses experience burnout, the workforce will see an ever-growing need for registered nurses.

"The recruitment of a diverse workforce of men in the nursing profession will help remedy the nursing shortage the nation has already begun to experience and improve health outcomes from the many patients who would benefit from their care," says Franklin.

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing predicts that more than 30,000 master's- and doctoral- prepared nurses will be needed each year to meet the rising demand for care. More than 300 students graduate from RUSH's MSN and DNP programs each year.

"As I enter the twilight of my career, watching Aaron, Deshawn, and others become leaders in their own right has become especially gratifying," says Brown.



Men considering a career in nursing should know they have a home at RUSH."

Mike Kremer, PhD, CRNA, CHSE, FNAP, FAAN

FOCUS ON BLACK MEN AS NURSES AND PATIENTS

Increasing the representation of Black men in nursing is of particular importance to the RUSH Men in Nursing leadership. Black men are statistically unrepresented in nursing, a sad reality that can have negative outcomes both for patients—who, studies show, do better when their health care providers include individuals who look like them—and for Black men working as nurses.

“I had people yell at me, fire me and call me the worst names imaginable,” says Franklin. “I was there to care for my patients and help them get better, and I’m being asked to leave the room because of who I am. I try to be fun and jovial with my patients, but the negative responses I got because I am a Black man did weigh on me.”

These negative experiences with patients and coworkers can have an impact on mental health, especially among men. Research suggests that men experience more stigma in accessing mental health care, and that they are far less likely than women to access care.

“I never saw getting help for my mental health as an option,” says Jones. “I was taught to channel those feelings into my athletics and to be strong no matter what. I still think it’s hard to be open. But knowing Dr. Brown and Dr. Franklin, I felt like I had someone to turn to.”

In spite of the challenges, Jones, Franklin and Brown remain passionate about their role in health care and see nursing as a place where Black men can thrive.

“I can walk into a room with a Black man as my patient and connect in a way no one else can,” says Jones. “By being there, I can make him feel more comfortable, better advocate for him with his care team, make sure he understands why we’re doing what we’re doing and help him get the care he deserves.”



Members of the RUSH Men in Nursing program

PROGRAM PROFILE

Despite being one of the smaller academic tracks within RUSH College of Nursing, the PhD in Nursing Science stands as a powerhouse program, equipping graduates to conduct clinical research that enhances health care for individuals and communities. In April, the program successfully underwent a rigorous review process, shedding light on some of its notable strengths.



Unique location and community engagement

RUSH's PhD program boasts a unique location, nestled at the epicenter of health care in Chicago, within the Illinois Medical District and directly connected to RUSH University Medical Center. Reviewers underscored the significance of this location, stating, "There may not be many nursing programs in the U.S. that have this unique structure and this aspect makes the RUSH PhD program very distinctive from others."

Moving into the future, students will benefit from valuable community connections forged by the Department of Academic Practice Nursing (DAPN), with its more than 20 community sites, offering nurse-led care.



Strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion

Diversity, equity and inclusion hold a central place in all of RUSH's educational programs. Many PhD faculty members possess expertise in health equity and are nationally recognized leaders in this field. Coupled with the implementation of a holistic admissions process, RUSH actively fosters diversity within the program, cultivating an inclusive and welcoming learning environment for both students and faculty.



Engaged and enthusiastic students and faculty

Both students and faculty in the program are passionate about their education. Students feel a strong sense of community within the University and thrive as they work with the PhD faculty. Though students are scattered across the United States, they come together for monthly calls that help them feel connected. In August, PhD students gathered in person for the first time since the COVID pandemic began.

In 2022, Barbara Swanson, PhD, RN, FAAN, ACRN, who had led the program for over a decade, passed the leadership baton to Todd Ruppap, PhD, RN, GCNS-BC, FAHA, FAAN. Contrary to national trends, RUSH has experienced a surge in applications and admissions to the program.

"Dr. Ruppap is excited to take the reins of this mature program and I envision some innovative outcomes for this vital program," remarks Christine Kennedy, PhD, RN, FAAN, dean of RUSH College of Nursing. "Thanks to Dr. Swanson's unwavering commitment and leadership over nearly 14 years, RUSH has become a premier destination for developing nursing scientists."

A POWERFUL VOICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

RUSH researcher-activist is leading the way in improving health outcomes for PWD

“Don't mess with old nurses,” says Sarah Ailey, PhD, APHN, FAAN, laughing. “We tend to have a track record.”

Ailey, a professor in RUSH College of Nursing's Department of Community, Systems and Mental Health Nursing, is good-naturedly discussing the success she and her coinvestigators have achieved in obtaining major research grants. That's just part of Ailey's long and impressive string of accomplishments in improving health outcomes for people with disabilities (PWD), particularly intellectual disabilities (ID) and developmental disabilities (DD).

Ailey is principal investigator in a five-year grant from the Administration for Community Living, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to build a national cross-sector consortium addressing the lack of content about individuals with ID and DD in interprofessional health curricula. Along with St. John Fisher Golisano Institute for Developmental Disability Nursing, the University of Illinois at Chicago, the University of Minnesota Institute on Community Integration and Villanova University, RUSH is one of five core partners in PATH-PWIDD (Partnering with Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to Improve Health Outcomes, the program receiving the grant).

Via its three action networks — communication, measurement, and education practice and policy — the PATH-PWIDD program used the first three years of the grant to develop materials now being piloted by nine institutions, including RUSH in partnership



Sarah Ailey, PhD, APHN, FAAN

with Ada S. McKinley Community Services. “We’re a bit ahead of the game, and in years four and five, we’ll be disseminating our content broadly,” Ailey says.

A personal interest

Ailey's research and clinical interests grew out of the challenges her son, now 47, faced as a child with an intellectual disability. “Being around things like the Special Olympics and dealing with school personnel, you start to see how poorly people with ID are treated,” she says. Ailey decided to go back to school to try to make a difference in the PWD community. Prior to joining the faculty at RUSH, she went straight up the nursing education ladder, earning her BSN, MS and PhD. She also formed strong, ongoing

professional relationships with many UIC nursing faculty—some of whom, like her, later came to RUSH and still partner with her.

Many years later, though incremental improvements are occurring, “The health care system is still entirely ableist,” says Ailey, who is immediate past president of the Alliance for Disability in Health Care Education. “One study found that less than 60 percent of physicians were strongly willing to have PWD in their practices. It’s shocking to me that neither medical education nor nursing education has any requirements for educating students about PWD, who are 25 percent of the population.”

Beyond her involvement with PATH-PWIDD, Ailey is taking aim at these shortcomings with her involvement in numerous other programs and connections. Through a recently concluded R01 grant from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Institute, she coinvestigated the effect of a program called STEPS (Steps to Effective Problem Solving) in group homes. “STEPS had been used with some success in forensic and clinical settings for people with ID,” she says. “We wanted to look at how problem-solving for people with ID and staff might work in group homes, where one person’s behaviors have an effect on everybody.” The investigators are currently analyzing the data from the study, with a journal article in the works.

With funding from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, she helped create and host the PATH-PWD (Partnering to Transform Healthcare for People with Disabilities) national invited conference in 2017. “A whole series of recommendations came out of the conference,” she relates, noting that fully one-fifth of the event’s attendees were PWD.

Funding from that conference helped produce a widely viewed documentary, *None of Us Want to Stand Still*.

And her advocacy extends past patients with disabilities to include future nurses who are PWD: Ailey coauthored a white paper on inclusion of students with disability in nursing education for the California Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities.

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Neither medical education nor nursing education has any requirements for educating students on PWD, who are 25 percent of the population.”

Sarah Ailey, PhD, APHN, FAAN

An inclusive approach

A common thread in Ailey’s work is the belief that health care change happens when people in academics, government, public policy, private practice and the patient community work together. That’s why PATH-PWIDD makes extensive use of social media, including X (formerly Twitter), Instagram and Facebook under the name IDD Health Equity, and why content on its site, iddhealthequity.org, is written for diverse audiences.



Ailey’s research and advocacy have been transformational for people with disabilities.

“We try to take as broad a perspective as possible,” Ailey says, explaining that to effect meaningful improvement in health outcomes for PWD, “you have to have advocates everywhere.”

A Lifetime of Support

Inspired by his late wife’s dedication to nursing, Burt Lewis pays it forward

Longtime philanthropist Burt Lewis is a firm believer in giving back. While he supports various organizations and causes, one in particular remains close to his heart — a scholarship he established in his late wife’s memory at RUSH University College of Nursing.

“You make a living from your profession, which all begins with your schooling,” says Burt, whose wife, Erma Page Lewis, graduated in 1944 from St. Luke’s Hospital School of Nursing, now the College of Nursing. “My education certainly gave me my career, and Erma’s did the same for her. Nowadays, even more than before, you can’t get your foot in the door without it, so it’s important to give back to the institution that gave you your start.”

After graduating from the College of Nursing, Erma went on to become a registered nurse in Illinois and California and spent part of her decades-long career at St. Luke’s Hospital, now RUSH University Medical Center. Her dedication to the field was evident to Burt.

Through the years, Burt, a longtime donor to RUSH University Medical, has supported RUSH in many ways in celebration of his wife’s legacy. The Erma Page Lewis and Burton Lewis Endowed Nursing Scholarship fund, which he established in 1993, continues to grow through his annual contributions.

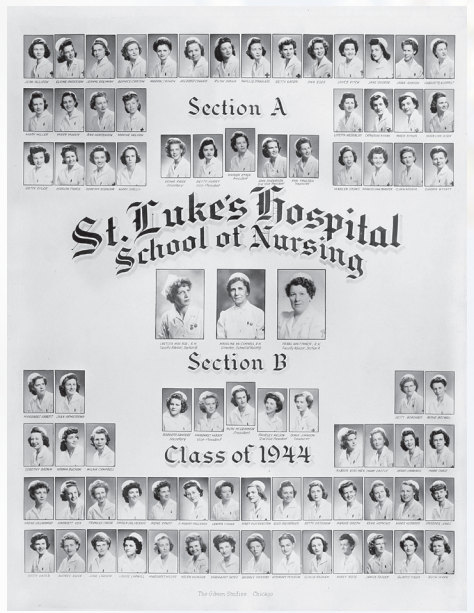
“My connection to RUSH becomes more personal every day,” Burt says. “Not only am I honoring my wife, but I’m discovering giving opportunities that fit my own passions and plans.”



Burt Lewis, philanthropist



Erma (Page) Lewis



As Burt explored his financial goals, he also established a charitable gift annuity with RUSH that would provide him with tax benefits and pay steady quarterly distributions for the rest of his life.

The remainder will be rolled into the Erma Page Lewis and Burton Lewis Endowed Nursing Scholarship fund — continuing and increasing help to the nursing students who get their start at RUSH. Burt has since made a bequest intention to RUSH, which will benefit the scholarship fund even more in the years to come.

As the field of health care and education evolves, deferred gifts help secure the future of RUSH and the College of Nursing, while ensuring valuable resources will be there when needed most. Gifts of all sizes and designations from grateful patients, alumni, faculty, staff and others enable RUSH to fulfill its promise to provide the highest quality education, patient care, research and community outreach.

In appreciation of his generous donations, Burt is recognized as a member of the RUSH Heritage, Anchor Cross and Golden Lamp societies, which celebrate donors who support RUSH's mission.

“Medical training is so valuable, and I just hope this helps people feel financially secure as they get their start,” Burt says. “I think Erma would be proud to see how the College of Nursing has evolved since her days as a student. There’s a strong sense of history and pride, and there’s so much potential that can come to fruition with a little support.”



From left: Lynn Mohr, Christine Kennedy, Burton Lewis and Angela Moss at the 2022 Golden Lamp Society Luncheon during All Alumni Weekend.



RU50

RUSH UNIVERSITY

All Alumni Weekend • October 2022



It was great to see so many alumni and friends come together for our All Alumni Weekend celebrating RUSH University's 50th anniversary.

We hope those who attended enjoyed reconnecting with fellow classmates and had the opportunity to make new connections.

A NATIONAL LEADER IN NURSING EDUCATION SINCE 1885

Fast facts about RUSH University College of Nursing

ACADEMIC PIONEERS

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

STUDENTS COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

Two Generalist Entry Master's students named **Schweitzer Fellows**

DEDICATED TO HEALTH EQUITY

75,000 hours of **direct patient care** provided by faculty practice clinicians

TOP-RANKED PROGRAMS

- #1**
Clinical Nurse Leader
- #2**
Overall Doctor of Nursing Practice, Pediatric Primary Care
- #3**
Family Nurse Practitioner, Psych-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
- #4**
Adult/Gerontology, Acute Care; Adult/Gerontology, Primary Care
- #5**
Nursing Administration
- #10**
Online Master's in Nursing Science

PREPARED FOR PRACTICE

95% annual NCLEX pass rate
Highest pass rate of any school in Illinois

COMMUNITY CARE

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

PRACTITIONER-PROVIDERS

Home of the **practitioner-teacher educational model**

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY

27 AAN Fellows • 26 Public Voices Fellows • 21 Fellows in National Health Care Organizations
4 American Heart Association Fellow • 2 International Nurse Researcher Hall of Famers
President of Illinois Society for Advanced Practice Nursing
Inaugural Fellow at Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses

Interim President Larry Goodman, MD (left), welcomes U.S. Representative Lauren Underwood, MSN/MPH, RN, FAAN, who served as speaker for the 51st RUSH University Commencement Ceremony in April 2023. She is the first woman, the first person of color and the first millennial to represent her district in Congress. Underwood is a registered nurse and co-founder and co-chair of the Black Maternal Health Caucus.

