New CNHS Dean Receives Warm Welcome

Ora Lea Strickland, PhD, DSc (Hon.), RN, FAAN, the new dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CNHS), has been busy immersing herself at FIU and in the community since her arrival in July 2011. Her “welcome tour” began with a “coffee and bagels” get-together with the CNHS faculty and staff during her first week on the job. As the fall semester began, FIU president Dr. Mark B. Rosenberg held a reception at his home to introduce Dr. Strickland and Dr. Lakshmi N. Reddi, the new dean of the FIU Graduate School, to university leaders.

Dr. Strickland then mingled with the CNHS student body during the FIU Welcome Week student picnic for new students. From there, the new dean made an appearance at the FIU football homecoming game on October 1, where students, alumni, and faculty stopped by the CNHS Tailgate Tent to give Dr. Strickland a warm welcome. Community partners Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida and the Miami chapter of the Black Nurses Association also took the opportunity to greet Dr. Strickland and introduce her to local leaders by hosting their own receptions welcoming her to our fair city.
If you saw the December 1, 2011 episode of USA Network’s hit show *Burn Notice*, you also saw the debut of a local rising star with thousands of South Florida fans – the Simulation, Teaching and Research Center (a.k.a. STAR Center) at the College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CNHS) on FIU’s south Miami-Dade campus. *Burn Notice* tells the story of Michael Westen (Jeffrey Donovan) – an ex-CIA special agent living in Miami who helps Miami citizens as a private detective with the help of his best friend Sam Axe (Bruce Campbell) and his girlfriend Fiona (Gabrielle Anwar).

Filming took place in September, with two scenes filmed at the STAR Center, renamed “Florida General Hospital,” and one in the lobby of the new CNHS Building, home of the STAR Center. Actors Donovan, Campbell, and Jere Burns were on set for the shoot, which also featured CNHS faculty and students as extras. Film crews appreciate the benefits of filming at the STAR Center, where they have the aesthetic realism of an actual hospital, but without the inconvenience of disturbing patients and doctors.

In the STAR Center’s “day job,” it serves as the cornerstone of the College’s technologically sophisticated simulation teaching and research center for students and faculty. The remarkably realistic mock hospital design is a fully equipped learning laboratory, and features an entire family of highly sophisticated “sim-patients.” It provides students with unparalleled opportunities to learn under various real-life, real-time scenarios and settings, from emergency/trauma response to in-patient care, surgical procedures and more.

The STAR Center’s reputation as one of the state’s most technologically advanced teaching facilities prompted visits last summer by noted dignitaries and supporters — (1) a July 14 visit by Florida House Speaker Dean Cannon (accompanied by the Miami-Dade legislative delegation), and (2) an August 25 visit by FIU Nursing alumna Darlene Boytell-Perez — to learn more about the College’s progress and meet with students, faculty and administrators. They were all given a detailed tour of the simulation labs of the STAR Center, and joined alongside our CNHS students interacting with virtual patients in various patient-care simulations. The esteemed visitors were impressed with the quality and sophistication of programs offered at our College and astonished at how far technology has advanced in healthcare education.

State leaders, proud alumna pay a visit

For more information on Speaker Cannon’s visit, please visit the NEWS@FIU website.
On September 15, the CNHS launched the first phase of its redesigned website, cnhs.fiu.edu, structured to better serve the diverse audiences of the six disciplines that comprise the College. Developed in concert with FIU Webcomm, the website reflects CNHS as a vibrant, dynamic, and technologically advanced institution of higher learning.

With more cohesive and unified messages across all of the College’s disciplines and fresh graphics, updated information, and easy-to-use navigation, the website is an excellent tool to showcase the college.

Work on the second phase of the new website will continue in 2012, and will include separate microsites for each discipline within the College: Nursing, Athletic Training, Communication Sciences & Disorders, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Health Services Administration.

Health Services Administration Program Joins CNHS

Along with a new dean, the CNHS welcomed another health discipline to the fold when the Health Services Administration program made the move from the Robert Stempel College of Public Health and Social Work to the CNHS.

The field of health services administration combines politics, business, and science in managing the human and fiscal resources needed to deliver effective health services.

Health services administrators will be in high demand as healthcare reform continues to transform the way hospitals, clinics, practitioner offices, and insurance companies care for patients.

Dr. Chanadra Young Whiting will lead the program as its interim director.

Dr. Chanadra Young Whiting
Donor organizations recognized at this year’s event were:

- Adam Susser Foundation, Inc.
- American DataBank
- Arnold S. Friedman Memorial Scholarship
- Black Nurses Association – Rosa Thornton Memorial Scholarship
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida, Inc.
- Citrus Health Network, Inc.
- Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation, Inc.
- Dr. Stephen and Abby Dresnick Dunspaugh-Dalton Foundation, Inc.
- Florida Heart Research Institute – Joan K. Stout, RN/Hugoton Foundation
- Florman Family Foundation, Inc.
- Gertrude E. Skelly Charitable Foundation
- Greg Esposito Physical Therapy Memorial Scholarship
- Health Foundation of South Florida
- Louis Blanchard Nursing Scholarships
- Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation, Inc.
- Marilyn Trager Nursing Award
- Mary Hurst Physical Therapy Scholarship
- Mercedes Zabaleta Physical Therapy Scholarships
- Miami Children’s Hospital
- North Dade Medical Foundation, Inc.
- Nurses Charitable Trust
- Peacock Foundation, Inc.
- Pinecrest Physical Therapy
- Smiley’s Voice Foundation, Inc.
- United HomeCare

Generosity on Grand Display at the Donors-Scholars Recognition Event

October 10, 2011 marked the 12th annual Donors and Scholars Recognition Event at FIU CNHS. The event acknowledges individual donors and community partners for their unwavering support of nursing and healthcare education, and commends student scholars for their academic achievements.

A record number of 29 donor groups – including seven newcomers – were recognized for their contributions in excess of $390,000 to scholarship and endowment funds benefiting more than 200 CNHS students during the 2011-2012 academic year.

These scholarships are essential for students trying to meet financial obligations that would otherwise impede or even halt their education.

Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation Renews Nursing Scholarship Commitments

The College of Nursing and Health Sciences was awarded a total of $45,650 through two scholarship grants from the Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation for the 2011-2012 academic year. $36,650 in grant funds will go towards continuing the Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation Undergraduate Nursing Scholarships for a third consecutive year.

Through this scholarship program, two undergraduate nursing students will receive full tuition costs for two years in their pursuit of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree.

The Foundation has also renewed its $10,000 annual pledge to fund the Dr. John T. Macdonald-Frederick Poppe Nursing Scholarship, which provides financial assistance for up to ten undergraduate nursing students each year.

For more information on the John T. MacDonald Foundation, please visit their official website.
Faculty Focus

Occupational Therapy and CSD Programs Welcome New Chairs

“A new semester of new faces” was certainly the de facto motto of the CNHS for fall 2011 semester. Along with a new dean and new students, the Occupational Therapy and Communication Sciences & Disorders departments also welcomed their new chairs – Dr. Kinsuk Maitra and Dr. Monica Hough, respectively.

Dr. Maitra was a tenured associate professor and associate chair of the Occupational Therapy department at Rush University in Chicago, Ill. prior to coming to FIU. He was also on the faculty at Ithaca College (New York) and University of Toledo (Ohio), and was a research fellow and scientist at the Indian Institute of Chemical Biology in Calcutta, India. Dr. Maitra, who sits on the board of directors for the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and was the 2011 recipient of the AOTA Research Scholar Initiative Award, has been lead investigator on 12 grants and author of more than 40 journal articles.

Dr. Hough brings three decades of experience as a speech pathologist and consultant to her new position at FIU. She has worked as a speech pathologist in private practice, hospital and home health settings, and high schools in Ohio, North Carolina, and Florida. Dr. Hough previously served as a professor and the director of graduate studies for East Carolina University’s Communication Sciences & Disorders department. She has authored nearly 60 articles, served as lead investigator on more than ten grants, and has been serving on the editorial board of the Journal of Medical Speech-Language Pathology since 2006.

Dr. Youngblut Receives Excellence in Research Award

Nursing Professor Dr. JoAnne Youngblut was a recipient of the 2011 Excellence in Research Award presented by the university at its annual Faculty Convocation awards ceremony held on September 22.

Dr. Youngblut was honored for her many academic achievements during her tenure here at FIU. Since joining the College of Nursing & Health Sciences in 2001, Dr. Youngblut, a nationally recognized and award-winning nurse researcher, has been a prolific author and speaker, publishing 28 journal articles and two book chapters, and presenting at 47 research conferences and 16 invited presentations.

As a principal investigator or co-investigator, Professor Youngblut has secured prominent federal funding from agencies such as the National Institutes of Health to support groundbreaking studies that explore the effects of a child’s death on the family unit, her most current being a unique five-year study titled, “Children’s Responses to Sibling Death in NICU/PICU in 3 Racial/Ethnic Groups.”
PT Students Win Ultimate Honeymoon Giveaway Sweepstakes

Who says dreams don’t come true? Doctor of Physical Therapy students Nicole Burgos and David Paula know that dreams do come true with the right amount of luck and love. The two lovebirds met when they were 15 and 16 and have spent the last nine years together in high school and college.

The two are ready to commit their lives together, but due to the stress of graduate school and the financial burden of student loans, they were unable to have their dream wedding or honeymoon, until now.

Thanks to the beautifully written essay by Nicole and the many votes of viewers who saw their segment on NBC 6, the two have won the NBC6 Miami Ultimate Honeymoon Contest. The two will spend their honeymoon on the beautiful island of St. Lucia with all expenses paid. Congratulations to the happy couple!

AT Students Pitch in at Dolphin Charity Event

CNHS’ Athletic Training masters students volunteered their time and skills with Manish Gupta, MD and Jennifer Schunatz, PA-C of ATC Specialty Orthopedic Center to provide coverage during a Pop Warner football tournament sponsored by the Miami Dolphins on December 10, 2011.

Two of our students, Charlie Holliday and Nicolette Stallworth, assisted with spine boarding an athlete with a suspected C-spine injury. Jennifer commented about our students, “Dr. Gupta and I greatly appreciated their help and were rather impressed with their team work, professionalism, hard work and knowledge.” The volunteer students appeared on the December 18, 2011 episode of NBC 6 Generation Nexxt local youth sports program.