Nicole Wertheim College
of Nursing & Health Sciences

Nursing

PINNING CEREMONY

Summer Class of 2025

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The History of Florida International University's Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences

Caring. Culturally competent. Trailblazing. Dedicated. Passionate. These are the attributes of the faculty, students, and alumni who are the lifeblood of the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences at Florida International University in Miami.

The Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences was created in 2006 with the joining of the FIU School of Nursing and the School of Health Sciences, each bringing with it more than 30 years of academic distinction. This young, vibrant and dynamic institution is focused on advancing the quality and spectrum of care through the highest levels of education, training, research and leadership. The Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences has more than 10,000 alumni in the fields of nursing, athletic training, health services administration, occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech-language pathology. They have gone on to serve communities locally and globally.

On September 25, 2013, the futures of Florida International University's nursing and health sciences programs were transformed when South Florida philanthropists Dr. Herbert and Nicole Wertheim presented a $10 million gift to name and endow the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences. This record-setting gift to the College means much more than a name change. It embodies the Wertheim family's commitment to clinical and interdisciplinary research, preventive health care and the belief that the best health care is delivered when health professionals work together as a team. It serves as a catalyst to accelerate our aggressive strategic plan to further enrich our academic and research programs and attract top faculty and students.

The Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences is one of the founding units of the Academic Health Center at FIU, built on an interprofessional approach to health care education that mirrors the new paradigm of today's health care system. It is making important strides to enhance practice and policy through interdisciplinary collaboration, state-of-the-art technology and resources, integration of real-world training in the curricula, and programs of research designed to make a difference in patient care and advocacy.

The multicultural student body and faculty of the College reflect the highly distinct South Florida community. This collection, illustrative of changing demographics across the country, provides students with a unique perspective and distinct set of capabilities to address the health care delivery and health access concerns of minority and underserved populations.

The family of professors, academic leaders and students that comprise the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences work together to prepare culturally competent, compassionate and caring practitioners who are ready for the complexities and challenges of today's health professions. They are innovative clinicians and scientists who help their professions evolve to optimally meet society's health care needs. And they are leaders who fight tirelessly to transform and elevate the healthcare system so that everyone in our society can benefit.

This is the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences at Florida International University. Fueled by intellect; driven by innovation and caring.

The History of the Nursing Pinning Ceremony

The pinning ceremony is a prominent nursing school tradition, as it signifies one's official induction into the solidarity and fellowship of nurses. The ceremony is rich with symbolic representation of both the values and ideals of Florence Nightingale as well as the core principles of the nursing profession. The history of this rite of passage can be traced all the way back to the Crusades of the 12th century. During this time, the Knights of the Order of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist tended to injured and infirmed Crusaders. When new monks were inducted into the order, they vowed to serve these sick soldiers in a ceremony where each monk was given a Maltese cross, the first badges given to those who nurse.

The modern ceremony dates back to the 1860s, when Florence Nightingale was awarded the Red Cross of St. George in recognition for her tireless service to the injured during the Crimean War. Florence Nightingale chose to extend this honor to her most outstanding graduate nurses by presenting each of them with a medal for excellence. The Wolverton Royal Hospital in England adopted the tradition of presenting all graduates with a badge. However, the first pin was presented to the graduating class of 1880 at the Bellevue Hospital School of Nursing in New York City. By 1916, the practice of pinning new graduates was standard throughout the U.S. FIU and the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences have celebrated this tradition throughout the history of the Nursing Program and will continue to celebrate nursing scholastic achievements while commemorating the common goals of all nurses around the world.

Order of Ceremony
Saturday, August 2, 2025
Student Academic and Success Center, Modesto A. Maidique Campus

PRESIDING & INTRODUCTION OF PLATFORM PARTY…..…….…….……. Dr. Jorge A. Valdés, *Dean*
Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences

NATIONAL ANTHEM & ALMA MATER ……...…….. Sylvia Eltherington
The Herbert and Nicole Wertheim School of Music & Performing Arts

REMARKS BY CLASS PRESIDENT….…….…….... Angie Candia
Class President

RECOGNITION OF NURSING HONOR SOCIETY……..…..…….Dr. Joana Bringas
Undergraduate Nursing, Clinical Assistant Professor

PRESENTATIONS OF AWARDS……Nightingale Excellence Award
presented by Dr. Nola Holness, Department Chair

Outstanding Nursing Graduate Award
presented by Dr. Joana Bringas, Clinical Assistant Professor

Deans Legacy Award
presented by Dr. Jorge A. Valdés, Dean

PRESENTATIONS OF
THE NURSING PINS……... Dr. Jorge A. Valdés
Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences

Dr. Nola Holness
Undergraduate Nursing, Department Chair

Dr. Joana Bringas
Undergraduate Nursing, Clinical Assistant Professor

NIGHTINGALE OATH……Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences Summer Class of 2025

CLOSING REMARKS……..Dr. Jorge A. Valdés, *Dean*
Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences

Nicole J. Wertheim, Honorary Chairwoman
Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences

Nicole Wertheim's journey from her roots in France to her impactful contributions in the United States is quite remarkable. After earning her bachelor's degree in Fashion Design from Elisa Lemonnier College in Paris, she followed her passion for travel and embarked on a four-year journey that led her to Miami, Florida, where she met her husband Dr. Herbert Wertheim in 1968. Their meeting sparked not only a personal connection but also a fruitful professional partnership.

Together, they founded Brain Power Inc. in 1971, which went on to become the world's largest manufacturer of optical tints, chemicals, and instruments. Their business success paved the way for their substantial philanthropic endeavors. In 1977, they established the Dr. Herbert and Nicole Wertheim Family Foundation, marking the beginning of a legacy of giving back to the community – including transformational initiatives in the fields of healthcare, engineering, and the arts, as well as community-based projects that improve the quality of life for all.

Nicole's passion for nursing is evident in her commitment to supporting the profession. With her daughter, Dr. Vanessa Wertheim, being a nurse, she has a personal connection to, and appreciation of, the field. Nicole recognizes the vital role nurses play in the healthcare system and strives to empower them to reach their full potential.

For her efforts and commitment to the nursing profession, the Board of Directors of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing (Sigma), overwhelmingly voted to induct Nicole Wertheim as an Honorary Member of Sigma. The honorary status was conferred by the Board on those who demonstrate superior achievement in a chosen field and a commitment to the ideals and concerns of nursing. Nicole Wertheim was presented the Tribute Award on November 11, 2023.

Nicole Wertheim's impact extends far beyond her professional accomplishments; indeed, her greatest legacy lies in the values she instilled in her family. As a mother to Erica and Vanessa, and a grandmother to Elan, Alexa, Ethan, and Julia, Nicole's influence will continue to shape the lives of future generations.

Jorge A. Valdés DNP, CRNA, APRN, FAANA, FAAN
Dean

Dr. Jorge A. Valdés serves as Dean and Professor of the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Florida International University (FIU). As a distinguished leader and author, with a prolific career as a clinical nurse anesthetist spanning over twenty years, he has been instrumental in fostering academic excellence, driving research innovation, and strengthening community and industry partnerships. As Dean, Dr. Valdés has led transformative changes, spearheading the growth and reorganization of the Undergraduate Nursing department through strategic PIPELINE funding. His efforts in securing LINE funding have provided critical scholarship opportunities, directly supporting student success and the states nursing workforce. Under his leadership, the college has launched new academic programs, expanded experiential learning opportunities, and cultivated a strong sense of community, all contributing to the university's enhanced reputation as a leader in healthcare education.

Prior to his appointment, Dr. Valdés served as Chair of the Department of Nurse Anesthesiology, where he made significant contributions to the field through the expansion of high-quality nurse education, scholarship, and by solidifying a dedicated workforce of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs). Under his tenure, Dr. Valdés was instrumental in enhancing a strong foundation of FIU CRNA's across the nation by increasing the first time pass rate of the National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists (NBCRNA) exam and leading the re-accreditation of the nurse anesthesiology program by the Council of Accreditation (COA).

As a researcher, he has authored various book chapters and numerous publications. Most recently, from 2022-2023, he was Principal Investigator of the Nurse Anesthetist Traineeship (NAT) Grant funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) aimed at increasing scholarship and evidence-based training of CRNA's to practice safe anesthesia and pain management services in underserved communities.

His work has translated into transformational leadership in health education and legislative action. He is an esteemed Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and Fellow of the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology. Additionally, he is a distinguished member of the Miami-Dade College Alumni Hall of Fame and recipient of the FIU President's Council Real Triumphs Faculty Award, in recognition of his numerous contributions to the South Florida community.

Dr. Valdés holds a Doctor of Nursing Practice from the University of Miami and a Masters in Nurse Anesthesia from the Mayo School of Health Sciences Nurse Anesthesia Program. He has also served as president of the Florida Association of Nurse Anesthesiology and held leadership roles on various professional boards at the state and national level.

Dr. Valdés remains dedicated to community service, mentoring, and advancing healthcare policy, continually working to shape the next generation of healthcare leaders and ensure the continued growth and success of the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

Summer Class of 2025

Oseremi Amune

Gabriela Arencibia

Daniela Arrue

Nicole Avila

Richard Batista

Santiago Bravo

Javier Eduardo Cabrera

Camila Calderin Risco

Angie Candia

Wilmithe Wenda Cazeau

Jeremy Chavez-Alvarez

Vivianni Marie Costa

Amanda Cruz

Honiemae Pacardo Cuba

Brendt Joseph Delgado

Mya Jasmine Dennis

Marpha Derilus

Nicole Angela Doctura

Adriana Dominguez

Ajani La Fanya Dozier

Diana Dupelord

Diego Alejandro Espejo

Beatriz E Fernandez

Emily Marie Fernandez

Isabel Maria Fernandez

Isabella Garcia

Martha Gaytan

Anne Christie Gilot

Nicolas Gonzalez

Daniel Gonzalez Puig

Lilianne Anais Guerrero

Isabella Hernandez

Jenna Marie Hernandez

Natasha Hirsch

Iciana Jean-Louis

Sevara Karieva

Madeline Mae Kearns

Minjae Ko

Mena Krijestorac

Brianna N Lawson

Melissa Mcmurry

Gabriela Mendez

Paul A Miller

Yenisleisy Morales

Samirah Moro

Nicole Valeria Ospina

Ghysselle Perez

Paige Nyasha Pickens

Lizandra Pino

Anthony Pisani

Logan David Polanco

Leira Del Carmen Puente

Ashley Riley

Melanie Ann Rodriguez

Olga Marisol Rodriguez

Stephanie Rodriguez

Liz Ronda Hernandez

Isabella Laudencia Rubio

Cristy Catalina Salmeron

Melanie D Sandoval

Fabian Satchwell

Joniesha Summerset

Virgine Destiny Timothy

Michelle Urrieta

Alex Michael Velazquez

Nicole Alejandra Ventura De La Rosa

Paul Villanueva

Daniel Robert Weckel

Trinity Areana Wood

Message from the Summer Class of 2025

We are grateful for your constant encouragement and unconditional love.
Your support did not go unnoticed and will forever be valuable to our hearts.

State of Florida

The Honorable Ron DeSantis, *Governor*
The Honorable James Uthmeier, *Attorney General*
The Honorable Jimmy Patronis, *Chief Financial Officer*
The Honorable Wilton Simpson, *Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services*

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Scott Carr, *Director, Intercollegiate Athletics*

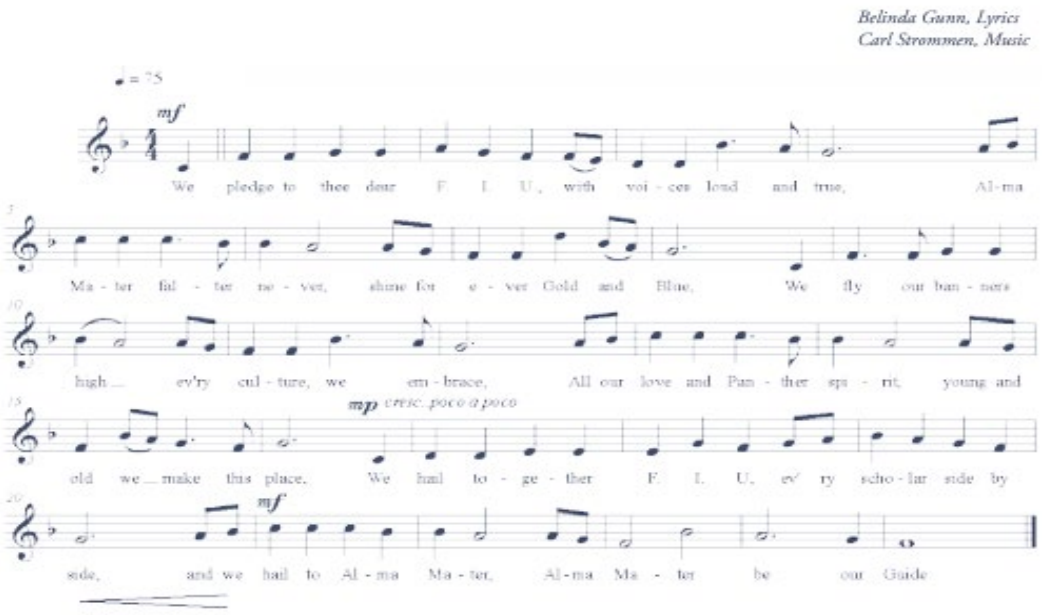
Carlos B. Castillo ’88, *General Counsel*

FIU Alma Mater

Composed by Belinda Kaitlynne Gunn

We pledge to thee dear F.I.U.,
with voices loud and true.
Alma Mater falter never,
shine forever Gold and Blue.
We fly our banners high,
ev'ry culture we embrace.
All our love and Panther spirit,
young and old we make this place.
We hail together F.I.U.,
ev'ry scholar side-by-side.
And we hail to Alma Mater,
Alma Mater be our guide!

FIU Alma Mater



FIU Nicole Wertheim

College of Nursing & Health Sciences

Florence Nightingale Pledge

(*Patterned after the original Florence Nightingale Pledge*)

With full knowledge of the responsibilities that I am undertaking,

I solemnly pledge myself to the service of

humanity and will endeavor to practice my profession with

consciousness and dignity.

I will maintain by all the means in my power to honor the noble

traditions of my profession.

The total health of my patients will be my first concern.

I will hold in confidence all personal matters coming to my knowledge.

I will not permit considerations of religion, nationality, race or

social standing to intervene between my duty and my patient.

I will endeavor to keep my professional knowledge and skills

at the highest level and give my support and cooperation to all

members of the healthcare team.

With full awareness of my qualifications and limitations, I

will do my utmost to maximize the potential of nursing

profession and to uphold and advance its standards.

I will maintain the utmost respect for humanity.

I make these promises solemnly, freely, and upon my honor.

Special Thanks To

FIU

Student Government Association