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We are proud to introduce our very first edition of the Maurine Church Coburn School of Nursing alumni newsletter. This is the first of many to inform you of the progress of the school and other news as it relates to your career and your nursing school alma mater.

Our rich history

The Maurine Church Coburn School of Nursing, at Monterey Peninsula College (MPC), is a nationally accredited school established in 1982. It is supported through the proceeds of an endowment gift to Community Hospital Foundation from the Maurine Church Coburn Charitable Trust. Maurine Church Coburn was the widow of the late S.F.B. Morse, founder of Del Monte Properties in Pebble Beach, who was instrumental in providing the site for construction of the new Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula (Community Hospital) in 1962. The school was started as a unique public-private partnership between Monterey Peninsula College and Community Hospital in response to a shortage of nurses on the peninsula.

All faculty are employees of Community Hospital, and both entities equally share the cost of the school, thereby ensuring quality healthcare is maintained on the Monterey Peninsula.
A BSN in our own backyard

A long-awaited option for baccalaureate completion in our region has finally materialized. The Monterey Peninsula has joined the nationwide effort to support the Institute of Medicine’s recommendation to dramatically increase the number of BSN-prepared nurses in the workforce. CSU Monterey Bay now offers the ADN-to-BSN program as a full- or part-time option through its extended education system. The program includes coursework in health policy, genomics in aging, research, informatics, sociopolitical nursing, and community health nursing. The extended education format is intended to pay for itself, and regular tuition is $350/unit. But before sticker shock takes over, know that the advantage of this format is that the nursing program can expand or contract as needed. That way, we can keep pace with demand without the usual process delays inherent in college-wide schedule-planning. That means courses will be available when you need them.

A recent gift by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Cislini provided a tuition subsidy for a group of Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula nurses to try out the program by taking the required Chronic Care Management course right at the hospital through CSUMB’s Open University. The hospital arranged for a reduced tuition rate and classroom space, with the first class launched in the fall of 2014. Students may complete up to 24 of the required 50 units by attending Open University before admittance to CSU Monterey Bay.

If the CSU Monterey completion program interests you, please contact Marianne Hultgren, DNP, RN, CNE, at nursing@csumb.edu or (831) 582-5330. If you are a Community Hospital employee, you may be able to use some of your educational funding toward the expense.

Maurine Church Coburn School of Nursing (MCCSN) received recognition by the National Student Nurses’ Association (NSNA) as a Stellar School at the national convention in Nashville in April 2014. The NSNA Stellar School Chapter Recognition Program recognizes NSNA school chapters that demonstrate ongoing involvement in NSNA, including a strong commitment to shared governance and professional development of their students and faculty. Membership in the state and local nursing student organizations enrich and augment the nursing curriculum to help students internalize core concepts of professionalism. The MCCSN chapter of the California Student Nurses’ Association (CNSA) has participated in the legislative process since 1999 and has submitted numerous resolutions in support of evidence-based practices to include in the nursing curriculum, many of which have been accepted at state and national levels. The most recent resolution was accepted at the fall 2013 state convention, “In support of increased awareness and optimal management of monitoring systems and their alarms,” authored by Melissa Sadowsky, MCCSN Class of 2014.

The ongoing accomplishments of MCCSN students are possible, in large part, because of the diligent support of the faculty and administration toward nursing professional development. The CNSA faculty adviser, Sue Hanna, completed the Leadership University course for consultants and advisers. NSNA recognized Monterey Peninsula College for its strong support for the professional development of nursing students, as well as the embodiment of an exemplary code of academic and clinical conduct. The college made a firm commitment to fund student participation by offering a series of one-unit nursing courses in professional Skill Development. The courses provide

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Class of 2014 CNSA leaders with faculty advisor, Sue Hanna (far right).
Experiential learning through simulation

Why simulation? Because the only source of knowledge is experience.
ALBERT EINSTEIN

Gone are the days when learning occurred mostly passively, in a classroom with a lecture and a handout or PowerPoint. These techniques are still useful, but they do not result in the experiential learning that high-fidelity simulation provides so well.

MCCSN has received gifts from the community to integrate clinical simulation into the curriculum. In 2007, Community Hospital received a gift of $117,000 made in support of the remodeling of a room to create a clinical simulation center. It now houses two adult, one pediatric, and one infant mannequin. In 2013, with grants from the Barnet-Segal Charitable Trust and the Carpenter Endowment, the lab now has the hardware (and soon the network connection) to document on the electronic health record system used at Community Hospital and to use barcode technology for medication administration. All students are scheduled for a defined number of regular clinical experiences in groups in the clinical simulation center. The scenarios are chosen to match course outcomes and to promote mastery of client need categories on the NCLEX test plan. Students function as a team, caring for the patient, while the faculty assumes a variety of roles to simulate a hospital environment.

Students today embrace technology readily, network with others to receive and process information quickly, and put that information to immediate use. High-fidelity simulation provides experiences that not all students might have the chance to participate in during a clinical shift, either because the opportunity did not present itself, or because their role was necessarily limited, as with a critical change in condition. The simulation lab is a safe place for nursing students to acquire valuable experience without putting patients at risk. They can "be the RN," and if a student makes a mistake, it's on a mannequin, not a real patient. Students are able to practice using various methods, learn from their mistakes, and improve their techniques. In much the same way that Captain Sullenberger performed the "miracle on the Hudson" after many hours of flight simulation, MCCSN's simulation program can help best prepare students to provide safe patient care to increase positive patient outcomes.

Following the simulated clinical experience, a debriefing provides an opportunity to review performance.

"By providing opportunities to review events and make visible their meaning, debriefing offers a way to draw out student thinking and help students develop their complex decision-making skills," says Patti Nervino, MS, MSN, RN, simulation coordinator for MCCSN. “While reflecting is thought to be an innate learning experience, not all learners do it consistently or thoughtfully enough for it to be a significant learning event. Thus, facilitating reflection through debriefing is essential for helping students get the greatest benefit when simulation is used.”

National and regional competitions
MCCSN students have participated in national and regional simulation competitions, showing off their skills in teamwork, evidenced-based decision-making and patient-centered care, most recently at the CAE Cup in San Francisco in June 2013.
How is MCCSN measuring up lately?

In April 2013, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) implemented a new test plan and increased the passing standard for nursing graduates. As a result, NCLEX pass rates decreased by an average of 7.3 percent nationwide. MCCSN graduates have continued to perform at or above state and national averages, with the NCLEX 2013 pass rate at 96 percent as compared to the national rate of 90 percent (see graph 1 below). The 2014 data is not yet complete, but numbers are reported early in the calendar year for all California pre-licensure schools on the Board of Nursing web site, www.rn.ca.gov.

The economy has been a concern to everyone since 2009, and new graduates are no exception, as job openings continue to be few and competitive. But MCCSN grads continue to find employment at rates consistently above the state average. Employment data is compared against a statewide survey of new graduates each October by the California Institute for Nursing and Health Care. The 2013 survey indicated that a majority of new nurses were employed, with 59.3 percent working in their first job as an RN, and 40.7 percent indicating they were not yet working as a RN. These results provide evidence that a greater percentage of newly licensed nurses are working as an RN as compared to each of the three prior-year sample survey findings, which found 57 percent working as an RN in 2010 and 2011, and only 54 percent working as an RN in 2012.

Upon annual survey, 82 percent of MCCSN’s 2013 grads were employed as RNs within 6–12 months after graduation (see graph 2 below). The largest number of MCCSN graduates over the past 4 years find their first RN position in long-term care (39 percent), followed by hospital/acute care (36 percent). Others are employed in community-based healthcare agencies such as home health, non-acute care hospitals, clinics, infusion, free-standing outpatient surgery, and endoscopy centers. Of the employed graduates, 70 percent remain in Monterey County.
It takes a village

As an alumnus, you probably have vivid memories that nursing school is hard work. With the median age of students in most classes between 32 and 35, many MCCSN students juggle the demands of family, full-time school commitments, volunteering for a variety of community outreach activities, and a “little bit” of paid work on the side.

Yet MCCSN students are fortunate to pursue their education in a community that supports them with generous scholarships to defray the true cost of their investment, which is not only tuition and books, but also lost income. During academic year 2013–14, MCCSN students were awarded a total of $283,478 in scholarships. Nearly 75 percent of that amount was awarded by the Community Hospital Auxiliary. Students also received generous scholarship assistance from the Ralph Knox Foundation (which has contributed approximately $200,000 in support to 100 students since 2004), the Bliss-Sward Nursing and Forestry Scholarship Fund, and numerous individual donors.

The Trattner scholarship is just one example of the generosity of the Monterey Peninsula community. In 2007, the Kathleen Kinsler Trattner Trust made a generous gift to Community Hospital Foundation, establishing an endowed scholarship of $24,000 to be awarded to a student of the MCCSN. The scholarship commemorates the life of Kathleen Kinsler Trattner, a longtime resident of the Monterey Peninsula and an associate member of the Auxiliary for 11 years. The scholarship recognizes academic excellence and family circumstances impacting financial need.

The 2013–15 recipient, Jennifer Caldwell, is in her third semester of the program. As a single parent, she maintained a 3.95 GPA at Monterey Peninsula College throughout her prerequisite coursework, while supporting herself and her daughter with three part-time jobs. She has maintained her excellent grades in nursing school, and serves on the multimedia resource committee — giving back to the school the generosity she has received. Students like Caldwell will give to the community a hundredfold throughout their nursing career. The Monterey Peninsula is a wonderful village. Many thanks to our generous scholarship donors.

Stellar school (continued from page 3)

support for students to search the literature using the college library databases, as well as the Community Hospital medical library to develop their resolutions for nursing issues. The nursing Learning Resource Center (LRC) is staffed with nursing faculty 24 hours per week to assist students in refining their ideas and discussing their relevance to clinical practice.

The MCCSN chapter of CNSA received a state award in October 2013 for Best Community Service for its robust participation in RotaCare, a free medical clinic in Seaside, which relies on weekly student participation to triage and treat the many underserved patients who use services there. Nursing students assist with vital signs, assessment of chief complaint, and health teaching. The population served at RotaCare is diverse, mostly low-income, and largely dependent on the clinic as their only source of accessible continuing healthcare. MCCSN students volunteer for this community-based care every Wednesday evening.

The chapter won another state award in fall 2013 for best Breakthrough to Nursing Program for Health Care Career day on campus, attended by 75–100 local high school students. At the national level, the MCCSN chapter received the 2011 award for most outstanding school newsletter, The Central Line.

The MCCSN faculty and administration are honored by the many achievements of student cohorts who have participated in NSNA. Strong skills in problem-solving, political process, and patient advocacy are much enhanced with NSNA membership. Only 23 schools in the country have received the Stellar School distinction; 20 of them are BSN programs, and only 2 of the 23 are in California.

“We are proud of the success and accomplishments of MCCSN for our community and our employees,” says Terril Lowe, vice president of nursing at Community Hospital.
A bit of nostalgia…remember this face?

Isn’t it fun to find out what happened to your classmates and instructors, where they are employed, and what accomplishments they’ve made? We want to hear about your career achievements and important life events to share in future issues. Meanwhile, you may want to know what became of one of your instructors like Samar Hage, RN, BSN, MSN.

Meet MCCSN alumna Casey Morgan, class of 2011

It’s been a long journey to her current position as an embedded care manager for Community Health Innovations (CHI), and Casey Morgan has seen many changes in the delivery of healthcare over her varied career at Community Hospital. Morgan began as a diet clerk in 1987 and worked supportive roles in Information Technology and Patient Access. Morgan finds great fulfillment and variety in her current nursing role at CHI as she educates patients, reduces risk, and manages care for patients with chronic conditions. She brought to nursing a belief that illness is a reflection of overall wellness. The whole person is involved, not merely their physical symptoms. She helps her patients live well by empowering them with knowledge and decision-making tools.

Morgan was among the wave of new nurses known as “recession grads.” She knows too well the difficulty presented by leaving her non-clinical position at an acute-care hospital to find a full-time position elsewhere as a registered nurse to gain much needed bedside experience. She worked at Pacific Grove Convalescent Hospital for one year to hone her geriatric skills and followed that with home care at the Visiting Nurses Association, where she continues to work as a per-diem RN. Morgan has been with CHI, a Community Hospital Foundation subsidiary, since October 2013.

Morgan encourages current nursing students to remain determined to fulfill their goals, make a plan, and stick to it. She thanks her academic adviser, Sal Cardinale, for recommending the nursing profession. She attributes her determination and love of nursing to her two daughters, who taught her what it means to truly care for others.

Samar Hage is among the earliest faculty who shaped the foundation, culture, and curriculum of MCCSN. Hage became a nurse educator in 1986 after completing her BSN and MSN at San Jose State University. She embraced the values of her parents, who were teachers, as she has been an MCCSN instructor for most of her career. As first-level coordinator, she manages the countless details of launching beginners into their first nursing experiences, a task that can test anyone’s patience. Yet Hage exudes grace and calm, a nurturing and inspiring presence in the lives of so many new students, whom she has influenced over the years to deepen their understanding of the role of the nurse. Hage exemplifies her definition of professional nursing in the way she respects her students, teaching them to care for themselves so that they can care for others.

Hage’s excellence as a nurse educator has been recognized when she was twice named Statewide Nursing Student Advisor of the Year by the California Nursing Student Association.

This year, Hage celebrates her 30-year anniversary as a Community Hospital employee and instructor at MCCSN.
Giving back

Maurine Church Coburn School of Nursing and its graduates have been successful, thanks to the generous donations of community members and our graduating students like Casey Morgan. To maintain our nationally accredited, award-winning program and scholarships, we invite our graduates and those who believe in advancing healthcare education to join us in investing in the future of quality healthcare on the Monterey Peninsula to the program.

**To donate to the Maurine Church Coburn School of Nursing contact:**

Community Hospital Foundation  
(831) 625-4506  
www.chomp.org  
Email: robin.venuti@chomp.org.