



Shining a Light on  
HEALTH INEQUITIES &  
**CANCER**

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Nurse researchers are helping vulnerable  
populations battle the deadly disease



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## DEAN'S LETTER

*Fall 2021*

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Throughout the past two years, the University of Kentucky College of Nursing has been like the rest of the world. We have faced adversities the likes of which no one has seen and also grown in ways we could have never imagined. We have learned many lessons, including how to focus on what is truly important—which for the College is reaffirming our commitment to helping heal, inspire hope and transform communities.

**In this seventh edition of Engagement, many of our stories highlight just that: Our nurses' commitment to positively impacting communities.** Our feature series, "Shining a Light on Health Inequities," shows how six UK College of Nursing researchers are focused on helping underserved communities by combating the scourge of cancer. Whether it is through prevention or treatment, our researchers are tackling cancer from an array of angles—from improving air quality to tobacco cessation to improving oncology patients' financial literacy—all with the common thread of helping marginalized populations.

We are also making an impact in communities through clinical practice. In "A Small-Town Clinic With Progressive Care," see how the College's Phyllis D. Corbit Community Health Center in Wilmore, Kentucky, is helping provide quality care to local residents but also to niche communities of care like LGBTQIA+ patients and those seeking mental health and wellness treatment.

As always, our College remains optimistic and is focused on the future of nursing. And for us, that is a story rooted in the past and present, as we see our former students turning into nurse leaders and mentors for the next generation of nurses. Follow professors Dr. Vicki Hensley and Dr. Morgan Chojnacki in our "Fostering Future Nurse Leaders Through Pediatrics" story, as they seamlessly pair clinical and classroom time to guide and train students through one of their most difficult courses.

**No matter what the future holds, the UK College of Nursing is ready.** As nurses, we are thoughtful, determined, caring, and above all else—resilient. We will step up to any challenge and lead the way through any storm. We are the Big Blue Nursing Nation, and we will always stay committed to our tradition of nursing excellence through practice, policy, education and research.

Please enjoy Fall 2021 Engagement and join us on our journey to help heal, inspire hope and transform communities.

Health and happiness always,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janie Heath".

**Janie Heath, PhD, APRN-BC, FAAN, FNAP, FAANP**  
Dean and Warwick Professor of Nursing





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#4

DNP PROGRAM  
AMONG PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

8,000+  
UK COLLEGE OF NURSING  
ALUMNI

30  
UK COLLEGE OF NURSING  
FACULTY MEMBERS  
ARE PRACTICING IN A  
*clinical setting*

AVERAGE  
NCLEX  
*pass rate*  
98%

OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS

AMERICAN NURSING ASSOCIATION

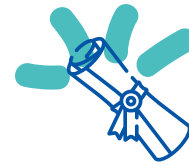
*Living Legends*

MURIEL A. POULIN | 2012

CAROLYN A. WILLIAMS PHD, RN, FAAN | 2017

JUANITA FLEMING PHD, RN, FAAN | 2004

7 RESEARCH  
TEAMS/  
CENTERS



\$223,000  
IN SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED FOR 2020-21

4 Alumni  
*who are*  
DEANS OF COLLEGES

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Marla J. De Jong

PhD, RN, CCNS, FAAN | PhD 2006

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA  
MEDICAL CENTER

Juliann G. Sebastian

PhD, RN, FAAN | BSN 1974 & MSN 1978

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN—FLINT

Cynthia McCurren

PhD, RN | PhD 1992

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

Rosalie O. Mainous

PhD, APRN, FAANP, FAAN | PhD 1996

14<sup>th</sup>  
NIH FUNDED  
NURSING  
RANKING

AMONG PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

\$36.2  
*million*  
IN ACTIVE RESEARCH  
& TRAINING AWARDS

# AWARDS & HONORS RECIPIENT LIST

*Congratulations!*

3

## 2020-21

### UK COLLEGE OF NURSING STUDENT AWARDS

Taylor Ann Davis Award  
Fall 2020: **Menji Kim**  
Spring 2021: **Lindsey Osbourne**

Sigma Theta Tau International, Delta Psi  
Chapter, Senior Nurse  
Fall 2020: **Amy Nielsen**  
Spring 2021: **Lily Silverstein**

College of Nursing Alumni Association's  
Florence Nightingale Award  
Fall 2020: **Juliet Medley**  
Spring 2021: **Julia Drago**

Baptist Health Nursing Leadership Award  
Fall 2020: **Nic Alford**  
Spring 2021: **Colin Goodfellow**

UK Excellence in  
Nursing Care Award  
Fall 2020: **Allie Law**  
Spring 2021: **Hannah Wourms**

UK College of Nursing Faculty Award  
Fall 2020: **Menji Kim**  
Spring 2021: **Lindsey Osbourne**

Carolyn A. Williams Award 2021  
**Chin-Yen Lin PhD, BSN, RN**

UK College of Nursing  
Alumni Award (PhD) 2021  
**Martha M. Monroe PhD, BSN, RN**

UK College of Nursing  
Alumni Award (DNP) 2021  
**DeAnna F. Hamilton**  
DNP, APRN, AGACNP-BC

Sebastian/Stanhope Award 2021  
**Holly R. Chitwood DNP, MSN, APRN,**  
FNP-C, AGACNP-BC

## 2021

### UK COLLEGE OF NURSING CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Louise J. Zegeer Award  
**Victoria Hensley PhD, APRN-CPNP**

Gloe L. Bertram Award  
**Brenda Ghaelian**

Employee of the Year  
**Carol Simpson**

Excellence in Graduate Teaching Award  
**Angela Grubbs, DNP, APRN, NP-C**

Excellence in Part-Time/Adjunct/  
Voluntary Teaching Award  
**Monica Adair, RN, BSN**

Excellence in Support of the  
College of Nursing Award  
**Miranda Hines, associate director,**  
distance learning administration

Diversity and Inclusion Champion Award  
**Lovoria Williams, PhD, FNP-C, FAANP, FAAN**

Excellence in Graduate Precepting Award  
**Roslyn Young, MSN, APRN**

Excellence in Undergraduate  
Unit/Agency Award  
**Albert B. Chandler Hospital,**  
Pavilion H, Sixth floor

Excellence in Clinical Practice Award  
**Leslie Scott, PhD, PPCNP-BC, MLDE, CDCES**

Excellence in Undergraduate  
Precepting Award  
**Lexie Wheeler, RN, BSN**

Excellence in Engagement for Research  
Based Team Members  
**Pat McGuire**

Excellence in Research/Scholarship  
**Zim Okoli, PhD, MPH, MSN, RN, NCTTP**

Excellence in Service  
**Hartley Feld, PhD, MSN, RN, PHCNS-BC**

Dean's Puma Award for Faculty Excellence  
**Hartley Feld, PhD, MSN, RN, PHCNS-BC**  
**Lynn Kelso, MSN, APRN, FCCM, FAANP**

Dean's Puma Award for Staff Excellence  
**Kevin Garland**  
**Jason Harris**

## 2020-21 FACULTY & STAFF AWARDS

American Psychiatric Nurses Association  
2021 Psychiatric Nurse of the Year Award  
**Evelyn Parrish, PhD, PMHNP-BC, FAANP**

Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing  
**Camille Burnett, PhD, MPA, PHNA-BC, RN,**  
BSN, DSW, CGNC, FAAN

**Sharon Lock, PhD, APRN-BC, FNAP, FAANP,**  
FAAN

**Zim Okoli, PhD, MPH, MSN, RN, NCTTP, FAAN**  
**Lovoria Williams, PhD, FNP-C, FAANP,**  
FAAN

Fellow of the American Association  
of Nurse Practitioners  
**Lacey Buckler, DNP, RN, ACNP-BC,**  
NE-BC, FAANP

**Leslie Scott, PhD, PPCNP-BC, MLDE,**  
CDCES, FAANP

Fellow of the American  
College of Endocrinology  
**Ty Borders, PhD, FACE**

Friends of the National Institute of Nursing  
Research (FNINR) Faye Glenn Abdellah Award  
**Ellen Hahn, PhD, RN, FAAN**

FNINR Welch-Woerner Path Paver Award  
**Misook Chung, PhD, RN, FAHA, FAAN**

2021 Global Korean Nursing Foundation's  
(DHKF)—USA Duck Hee Kang Mentor Award  
**Misook Chung, PhD, RN, FAHA, FAAN**

Kentucky Nurses Association  
2020 Nurse Researcher of the Year  
**Zim Okoli, PhD, MPH, MSN, RN, NCTTP, FAAN**

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
Health Policy Fellow—Class of 2021-22  
**Kristin Ashford, PhD, WHNP-BC, FAAN**

Southern Nursing Research Society's  
2021 Outstanding Minority Health  
Researcher of the Year  
**Ana Maria Linares, DNS, RN, IBCLC**

University of Alabama School of Nursing's  
70 Visionary Leader Award  
**Sheila Melander, PhD, APRN, ACNP-BC,**  
FCCM, FAANP, FAAN

UK Office of the Vice President of  
Research's Staff Excellence Award  
**Angela Knapp**

UK's Center for Clinical and  
Translational Science Mentor Award  
**Debra Moser, PhD, RN, FAHA, FAAN**

UKHC Academic Clinical Partnership  
Award of Excellence—2021  
**Hartley Feld, PhD, MSN, RN, PHCNS-BC**

United States Breastfeeding Committee's  
2021 Cultural Changemaker Award  
**Ana Maria Linares, DNS, RN, IBCLC**





# APPOINTMENTS, PROMOTIONS & TRANSITIONS

*Congratulations!*

## FACULTY PROMOTIONS



**Cathy Catlett**  
DNP, RN  
Assistant Professor  
Clinical Title Series



**Candice Falls**  
PhD, MSN, ACNP-BC, CVNP-BC  
Assistant Professor  
Special Title Series



**Holly Gray**  
DNP, RN  
Assistant Professor  
Clinical Title Series



**Angela Hensley**  
DNP, APRN  
Associate Professor  
RN to BSN Track Coordinator



**Zim Okoli**  
PhD, MPH, MSN, PMHNP-BC,  
APRN, NCTTP, FAAN  
Professor with tenure



**Tricia Rogers**  
MSN, RN  
Lecturer  
Lecture Title Series



**Stephanie Steele**  
DNP, BSN, RN  
Lecturer  
Lecture Title Series



**Jessica Thompson**  
PhD, BSN, RN  
Lecturer  
Lecture Title Series



**Jessica Wilson**  
PhD, APRN, BSN, RN  
Director of Professional  
Development



**Lovoria Williams**  
PhD, FNP-C, FAANP, FAAN  
Tenured, Associate Professor

## FACULTY APPOINTMENTS



**Kaitlin Voights Key**  
PhD, RN  
Post-doctoral fellow



**Chin-Yin Len**  
PhD, RN  
Post-doctoral fellow

## STAFF PROMOTIONS



**Michele Gulley**  
Graphic Artist



**Heather Robertson**  
Director, BH WELL Executive  
Operations



**Jesse Stallworth**  
Director of Instructional Design  
and Curriculum Development

## STAFF APPOINTMENTS



**Megan Combs**  
Program Manager Associate,  
BREATHE



**Destiny Cozart**  
Research Assistant, CHANGE



**Erika Karle**  
MS, CHES  
Research Coordinator, CHANGE



**Shaun Ketterman**  
Assistant Dean of Academic and  
Student Affairs



**Kyle Kuykendall**  
Program Coordinator



**Hadley Sensing**  
Academic Advisor



**Kate Youngen**  
Research Program Manager,  
RUHRC

#### NOT PICTURED

**Julia Cecil**  
Research Manager, RUHRC  
**Danielle Yearby-Walker**  
Data Management Analyst, RICH Heart

*We wish our other colleagues well  
as they transition to new opportunities:*

#### FACULTY

**Kacy Allen-Bryant**, MSN, MPH, RN

**Camille Burnett**, PhD, MPA, APHN-BC, BSN,  
RN, DSW, CGNC, FAAN

**Judith Daniels**, PhD, APRN, BSN, RN, *retired*

**Nicole Garritano**, DNP, APRN, CPNP-AC

**Carole Haurylko**, BSN, RN, *retired*

**Melanie Hardin-Pierce**, DNP, APRN,  
ACNP-BC, RN, *retired (31 years)*

**Laura Hieronymus**, DNP, MESEd, RN, MLDE,  
BC-ADM, CDCES, FADCES

**Patricia Howard**, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN,  
*retired (28 years)*

**Lynn Jensen**, PhD, APRN, RN, *retired (20 years)*

**Wanda Lovitz**, MSN, APRN, RN, *retired*

**Deborah Reed**, PhD, MSPH, RN, FAAOHN,  
FAAN, *retired (27 years)*

#### STAFF

**Hazel Chappell**, *retired (24 years)*

**Nicholas Conley**

**Brenda Ghaelian**, *retired (39 years)*

**Karen Minton**, *retired (40 years)*

**Joanne Davis**, *retired (40 years)*

## DELTA PSI CHAPTER

*Sigma Theta Tau International*

### 2021 INDUCTEES

Kacie Lynne Albertsen	Allison Jannett
Courtney Madison Alexander	Mari Ariana Johnson
Haley Alexander	Kerrie Elizabeth Kocs
Emma Bilberry	Sarah Levato
Nicole Brumfield	Kelsey Michael
Mackenzie Carlin	Erin Marie McCoy
Tabbatha Jean Carver	Hannah Mosier
Emily Ann Dammeyer	Stanley Parker
Sara Janice De La Rosa	Kendall Lee Pfister
Emma Doherty	Natalie Kettelle Porter
Agnes Dotse	Diamond Rochelle Posey
Allie Elizabeth Farmer	Danielle Prewitt
Cailyn McKenna Fuller	Allison Burger Reynolds
Carly Gessner	Leah-Rose Charlotte Reynolds
Laurie Gloyd	Rita Faye Reynolds
Colin Gregory Goodfellow	Natalie Seroka
Tasha Groves	Marissa Bethany Smith
Lauren Alexandra Guilfoil	Lynsey Tyree
Ashley Elise Hall	Alexandra Walker
Mackenzie Haste	Alonna Walker
Natalie Jo Hawes	Matthew Wallace
Olivia Grace Helmer	Alexandra Marie Westley
Brennah Elizabeth Hunter	Kaley Nicole Willett
Obinna Chimdindu Ilochonwu	



#### *In memoriam...*

*As a College, we mourn the loss of UK Nursing professor and alumni **Peggy El-Mallakh, PhD, RN**, who passed away April 11, 2021. We are grateful for her service and offer our sincerest condolences to her family, friends and colleagues.*

# Special RETIREMENTS

FEATURE

The University of Kentucky College of Nursing is proud to honor the 11 employees who have retired from the College during the past year, with special recognition for the eight faculty and staff members who each had more than 20 years of service at the College. These eight distinguished employees have a combined 249 years of service at UK and we thank them for dedicating their careers to the College and advancing excellence in nursing practice, research, policy and education.

*Congratulations to all of our 2020-21 retirees and best wishes for a happy retirement!*

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Years of service reflect the number of years each retiree worked for UK, the majority of which were spent with the College of Nursing.

## Congratulations! RETIREES



# 40

years

**JOANNE DAVIS**

Assistant Dean of Academic  
and Student Affairs

“It has been a privilege to share life for almost 35 years. You have been gracious and supportive; made me think and helped me grow stronger. This has not been just a job but a chance to work together toward a goal of sending out nurses who will reflect the values that make this a special place. *Thank you.*”

—JOANNE DAVIS



# 40

years

**KAREN MINTON**

Associate Dean of Finance  
and Administration

“I’m so grateful for the opportunities and many friendships over the years that I would not have had if I hadn’t worked in this nurturing environment. The College has seen me through literally half of my life—32 years! The people here have supported me through the most difficult times and celebrated with me for the best. I really couldn’t ask for anything more out of the place that I worked.”

—KAREN MINTON





**27** years

**DEBORAH REED**

PhD, MSPH, RN, FAAOHN, FAAN  
Professor

“ I have enjoyed my years at UK and the College of Nursing, fulfilling a program of research and service aimed to improve the lives of farmers, ranchers and their families. My motto has always been, **‘Your day is worthwhile when you make God smile.’** I hope my time at UK has resulted in a lot of smiles, and a few nudges! ”

—DR. DEBBIE REED



**20** years

**LYNN JENSEN**

PhD, APRN, RN  
Associate Professor

I wish you enough sun  
*to keep your attitude bright*

I wish you enough rain  
*to appreciate the sun more*

I wish you enough happiness  
*to keep your spirit alive*

I wish you enough pain  
*so that the smallest joys in life  
appear much bigger*

I wish you enough gain  
*to satisfy your wanting*

I wish you enough loss  
*to appreciate all that you possess*

I wish you enough hellos  
*to get through the final good-bye*

They say it takes a minute  
to find a special person,  
An hour to appreciate them,  
A day to love them,  
*And an entire life to forget them.*

—DR. LYNN JENSEN



**28** years

**PATRICIA HOWARD**

PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN  
Professor

“ While everyone has different career aspirations, I believe we all share the common goal of finding purpose and fulfillment in what we do. The UK College of Nursing was the place for me to realize those goals. I am so grateful for the honor of serving with colleagues who had similar passions as mine—to promote the health and wellness of others through excellence in nursing education, practice and research. I’m proud to be a part of this College community and know that it will continue to be a special place for others with a passion for nursing and service. ”

—DR. PATRICIA HOWARD



**39** years

**BRENDA GHAELIAN**

Director of Instructional  
Design and Curriculum Development



**31** years

**MELANIE HARDIN-PIERCE**

DNP, APRN, ACNP-BC, RN  
Associate Professor



**24** years

**HAZEL CHAPPELL**

Director of Professional  
Development





WRITTEN BY  
Holly Rudolph

PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
Shaun Ring Photography

# *A Small-Town Clinic* **WITH PROGRESSIVE CARE**



Dr. Anthony Carney  
Amy DelRe  
Dr. Sharon Lock  
Dr. Lori Fugate





Main Street in downtown Wilmore, Kentucky.

**It's a small-town clinic with just a few rooms, named for a physician from an era when house calls were common. What you'll find inside, though, is remarkably progressive.**

The Phyllis D. Corbitt Community Health Center in Wilmore—completely staffed by faculty of the University of Kentucky College of Nursing—now is a lifeline for those struggling with depression or anxiety, and where LGBTQIA+ patients can find specialized care and an understanding ear.

The primary care center has come a long way from its opening in 2015.

“We started out as a limited services clinic treating colds and sprains because at the time it was the quickest way we could get up and running,” says Sharon Lock, PhD, APRN-BC, FNAP, FAANP, FAAN, who is the center’s director and the assistant dean of faculty practice at the UK College of Nursing. “We had a lot of help from people at UK HealthCare to figure out how to make that all happen.

“After about two years, it became clear, though, that if we were going to make it, we needed to offer primary care services, as well.”

Today, five faculty members, who are also advanced-practice registered nurses (APRN), work in the clinic at least one day a week, and each is typically matched with a student from the College.

### **SERVING BOTH A COMMUNITY AND UK**

The center first opened to provide an opportunity for faculty at the UK College of Nursing to practice, Dr. Lock says.

“At the time, I was the coordinator of the family and nurse practitioner track for UK, and it was extremely difficult to do clinical placements because you’d think you had a student placed and then something changed,” Dr. Lock says. “We wanted a facility where we knew we would have a place for students while also serving the community.”

“The opportunity just sort of fell into our laps,” says Amy DelRe, the center’s practice manager, who has worked for the College of Nursing since 2005. “Dr. Lock had wanted this for years, and one day we got a call from the owner of a building in Wilmore, who saw my name and phone number on the university’s website.”

The building had been the family practice of **Dr. Phyllis Corbitt** for more than 40 years until she retired in 2013 at the age of 89. Corbitt, who died in 2017, dreamed of serving as a missionary in Africa, and while a student at Asbury College, discovered an interest in medicine. She graduated in 1952 from Vanderbilt Medical School as the only woman in her class. After working around the world—from Belgium to the Democratic Republic of Congo—Corbitt returned to Kentucky and opened the Wilmore clinic in 1970.







## where to FIND US

UK College of Nursing Phyllis D.  
Corbitt Community Health Clinic

317 E. Main St.  
Wilmore, KY 40390  
859-858-0339



The building needed extensive renovations, and DelRe notes it took two years of planning from the time they first saw it until they were able to open the clinic. But the rent was reasonable; there was a pharmacy next door; and the residents of Wilmore had been missing a convenient place to find care since Dr. Corbitt retired.

Several visits to the UK surplus warehouse later, the facility was ready to open in the summer of 2015, albeit on a shoestring budget.

In 2018, the center began offering comprehensive health care for people of all ages, or “those taking their first breath until their last breath,” as DelRe says.

### SEEING MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS EVERYWHERE

As the center expanded the type of care it provided, the need for practitioners grew. In 2018, the staff expanded with the addition of Lori Fugate, DNP, APRN, FP-C, WHNP-C, PMHNP-BC, an assistant professor at the UK College of Nursing.

Dr. Fugate has worked as a family and women’s health nurse practitioner for 15 years. While providing primary care services

in Wilmore, she and Dr. Lock soon realized many patients needed a different type of care than she could provide.

“I returned as a student to the College to earn my post-graduate psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner certificate program of study when I realized there was such a great need for behavioral health services—here, anywhere—and in a town this small, they would have a long wait to see a behavioral health specialist,” says Dr. Fugate.

While Dr. Fugate completed the 18-month program of study, Dr. Lock and DelRe negotiated to lease an apartment upstairs from the clinic for additional office space. On a typical Wednesday, Dr. Fugate now sees between eight and 10 behavioral health patients in the upstairs office, an atmosphere that is more casual and less clinical.

“With the right medication and the right dose, you can see improvement in six to eight weeks. It’s amazing to see. Now when I see the patient back and they’re doing better—oh, my gosh, I get goosebumps!”

Dr. Fugate says as the clinic continues to grow, she hopes it will eventually provide care for substance abuse.

### AN ALLY TO THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

The next step forward for the center came in 2020, with the arrival of Anthony Carney, DNP, APRN, CCRN, FNP-C, an assistant professor and two-time graduate (BSN 2014, DNP 2019) of the UK College of Nursing.

Dr. Carney says the clinic has allowed him to treat a group historically underserved by the medical community.

“There have been numerous health disparities with the LGBTQIA+ community in terms of mind, body and spirit.

Screenings are delayed, usually because of fear or distrust, and there are increased rates of depression, anxiety and substance-use disorders,” he explains.

Dr. Carney has been focused on caring for a diverse population since college, when he was mentored by Keisa Fallin-Bennett, MD, the director of UK HealthCare’s Transform Health Services, a resource that meets the unique health needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals.



“The patients who come to me for Transform Health needs are incredibly excited to have health care that’s sensitive to their needs, especially patients who are there for gender care. It’s a big life decision to come out to your provider, to say you have issues with gender dysphoria or with your sexual orientation.”

—DR. ANTHONY CARNEY

“The patients who come to me for Transform Health needs are incredibly excited to have health care that’s sensitive to their needs, especially patients who are there for gender care. It’s a big life decision to come out to your provider, to say you have issues with gender dysphoria or with your sexual orientation.”

Dr. Carney says he sees about one patient per week from the LGBTQIA+ population.

“This particular type of care is not that common outside of major metropolitan areas, so it’s very exciting to offer it in Wilmore. The entire staff is on board, which I love, and it’s been an overwhelmingly positive experience for everyone so far.”

Dr. Carney has helped work with undergraduate nursing students on special considerations for the LGBTQIA+ population,

such as pronoun usage and screenings. He eventually would like to start training other providers across the state to offer inclusive care that is sensitive and comprehensive.

“Right now, I just look forward to coming into the clinic every Wednesday,” he says.

### WHAT’S NEXT IN WILMORE

The center has continued to adapt according to the community’s needs. At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the clinic began offering telehealth visits for the first time.

“When COVID came, we were just hitting our stride. Now, though, we are back to pre-COVID levels of visits,” Dr. Lock says. More than 1,600 visits were billed in 2020. The staff also now includes a registered nurse to assist with patients.

In 2021, the clinic has made a significant investment in connecting to the same system for electronic health records used by UK HealthCare. For patients, it will mean access to information and a portal that’s easier to use.

Like Dr. Lock and the rest of the staff, Dr. Fugate says the clinic has been good for Wilmore and rewarding for everyone working at the clinic.

“Here in Jessamine County, we don’t have the public transportation you’d find elsewhere, so many of our patients actually walk here from their homes,” Dr. Fugate explains. “They’re very thankful we’re here.” ■

LEARN MORE  
*about*  
**UK HEALTHCARE’S  
TRANSFORM  
HEALTH CLINIC**







**12**

WRITTEN BY  
Rena Baer

PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
Shaun Ring Photography



*Shining a Light on*  
HEALTH INEQUITIES &

# CANCER

Nurse researchers are helping vulnerable  
populations battle the deadly disease







*Kentucky is* #1  
IN THE COUNTRY FOR  
CANCER MORTALITY

**Kentucky is a beautiful state known for its rolling hills, horses, bourbon and basketball. But beneath those hallmarks lie some grim health numbers that the University of Kentucky College of Nursing is working hard to change. In tandem with UK HealthCare's Markey Cancer Center, the College of Nursing is conducting research looking at health inequities and cancer in the state and finding ways to better reach underserved communities with prevention, screening and treatment interventions.**

"We have some pretty dark statistics in Kentucky regarding a lot of things, but specifically cancer," says Dr. Mark Evers, director of Markey Cancer Center. "Kentucky is No. 1 in the country for cancer incidences per population. It's also No. 1 in the country for cancer mortality. And a lot of people don't know that."

While a lot of people might be unaware of those facts, they weigh heavily on the minds of the College's nurse researchers, many of whom went on

**KENTUCKY IS**  
**#1**  
in the country for  
*cancer incidences*  
per population

to earn their PhDs in an effort to discover the best ways to effect change and improve the health and lives of Kentuckians.

They are using evidence-based interventions to engage underserved Kentucky communities, many in Markey's catchment area, from the inside out rather than the outside in. This means meeting with residents in places that are more convenient and comfortable, such as local churches, and involving key community members who can help build trust and maintain initiatives.

"We tailor interventions to meet the specific needs of underrepresented populations and to make sure there's effective community engagement in these projects, so that the needs and the interests of the communities are being met and the research is not an investigator-driven process," say Dr. Tom Kelly, associate dean for research at the UK College

**50** *of the* **54**  
counties in Eastern Kentucky  
**ARE IN THE LOWEST**

**10%**  
of economic  
indicators  
in the U.S.

of Nursing. "And not only do we have to develop interventions that work in the clinics at the university, but we also have to understand what the barriers and challenges are of taking that evidence-based intervention and using it in, say, Hazard."

Dr. Evers says taking these interventions into communities—particularly those in Appalachia, where cancer rates are even higher—is key.

"Many of the communities are very rural, and the terrain is not so conducive to folks getting in a vehicle and driving to Lexington," he says, adding that 50 of the 54 counties in Eastern Kentucky are in the lowest 10% of economic indicators in the U.S.

"These are some of the poorest counties in the country, and some folks can't afford the gas to get here. So, we have to figure out how best to take prevention and screenings to them. And that's what we are doing, which I think is pretty unique, and it has certainly served as a model for other institutions around the country as well."

# *community-based* **INTERVENTIONS**

Dr. Lovoria Williams knew from her earliest memories that she wanted to be a nurse. Growing up in western Kentucky, she had watched her parents battle chronic illnesses and noted disparities even as a child. "I saw my mom suffer with diabetes and its complications and then die relatively early from colon cancer; my dad, had a long smoking history and eventually died from COPD. Also, growing up in the Black church, I noticed the high obesity prevalence and witnessed people become ill during worship due to having chronically poor health."

As a nurse, she more distinctly recognized the role social determinants play in health disparities. "Where we live, work, and play are major health influencers and predictors of health status. We most often see these negative social determinants among marginalized communities, such as communities of color.

"That's why I decided I wanted to earn my PhD, so that I could do community-based interventions to really work with communities to identify and address these health needs," says Dr. Williams, who along, with doing diabetes research, has gone on to become Markey's assistant director of cancer health equity. Her job, she says, is to make sure that Markey's initiatives are approached with a health equity lens and attentive to the needs of all of Kentucky's diverse populations.

"My role with Markey came from the research I've done in communities that suffer from health inequities," she says. "One of the first things I did was examine Markey's partnerships and projects through an equity lens, to ensure that all of the state's varied populations are represented.

"A lot of our work has been in Appalachia due to the disparate population, but we also need to be sure that we are reaching the Latin community, migrant farmers, African Americans, rural black communities and rural white communities," says Dr. Williams.

"I think that it starts with our leadership acknowledging that their perspective may not be as broad as it should be, and we do better by having diversity at the table," Dr. Williams noted. "We need to be able to say: 'We're doing great in this area, but we're really missing an opportunity here and how can we address it?'"

African Americans  
have the  
**HIGHEST DEATH  
RATE & SHORTEST  
SURVIVAL**  
*of any*  
racial/ethnic group  
for most cancers

---

**"Where we live, work,  
and play are major  
health influencers and  
predictive of health  
status; we see these  
negative social  
determinants often  
among marginalized  
communities, such as  
communities of color."**

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**LOVORIA WILLIAMS,**  
PHD, FNP-C, FAANP, FAAN  
Associate Professor and Endowed Research  
Professor in Cancer Health Equity





# lung cancer RADON

**2** RADON IS THE *2<sup>nd</sup>* leading cause OF LUNG CANCER IN THE U.S.

**“I’ve always loved cancer nursing, but over time I’ve realized so many cancers could be prevented.”**

**1** OUT OF *every* **15** HOMES in the U.S. is estimated to have **high radon levels**

**STACY STANIFER,**  
PHD, APRN, AOCNS  
Assistant Professor

**Dr. Stacy Stanifer has been working with cancer patients throughout her career. “I’ve always loved cancer nursing,” she says, “but over time I’ve realized so many cancers could be prevented.”**

This prompted her to return to the UK College of Nursing for her PhD and led to her interest in lung cancer and radon. “Most people don’t realize what a threat radon is. Radon is responsible for nearly 22,000 lung cancer deaths annually and is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. When you have exposure to both radon and tobacco, you have a 10-fold greater risk of developing lung cancer. Because of Kentucky’s radon risk potential, high smoking rates and lack of smoke-free laws, we have the perfect storm for the over-representation of lung cancer,” says Stanifer, a member of the UK College of Nursing’s BREATHE Team and Markey’s Cancer Prevention and Control Research Program and Lung Cancer Translational Research Group.

**“Thankfully, there are ways to reduce exposure to radon. Yet many Kentuckians either can’t afford the cost of radon mitigation or don’t have access to certified radon mitigators,” says Dr. Stanifer.**

In an effort to reduce the incidence of lung cancer, she is reaching out to health care providers, particularly in underserved areas, to encourage practitioners to talk with patients about radon and recommend they test their homes.

In addition, the BREATHE team is working to identify opportunities that would make mitigation affordable and available for everyone. For example, Dr. Stanifer received a grant to increase access to radon services for rural Kentuckians. The grant supports two home construction professionals in becoming certified in radon measurement and mitigation. The individuals were recruited from rural counties that are currently without radon mitigation services. The grant will evaluate how radon services were integrated into their current business plan and track mitigation efforts.



# *smoking* CESSATION

**As a psychiatric mental health nurse early in her career, Dr. Amanda Fallin-Bennett quickly noted the disproportionate number of smokers in residential substance abuse treatment programs.**

Over time, she also came to realize that nicotine addiction often exacerbated patients' issues, leaving them short on money for necessities and wreaking havoc on their health.

Dr. Fallin-Bennett is trying to change these negative outcomes through smoking cessation programs aimed at residential treatment programs. Similar to the general population, most people want to quit, she says, but in that stressful environment, evidence has shown a more tailored approach is necessary.

"It's becoming more and more common and more recognized for smoking cessation to be offered during residential substance abuse treatment," she says. "But for a long time, there were persistent myths that if you try to stop smoking while you're in treatment, you might be more likely to return to use of substances. Through extensive research, we now know that's not true. In fact, if anything, quitting smoking actually improves your likelihood for a long-term and sustained recovery."

Dr. Fallin-Bennett also works with residents in rural areas that are more prone to smoking, such as LGBTQIA+ youth and in rural areas, especially in the South, which has been slower to adopt anti-smoking legislation and higher tobacco taxes, both of which have been proven to reduce smoking rates.

She helped write a grant that is comparing 50 rural municipalities across four Southern states, only half of which have smoke-free ordinances, to determine what factors lead to successfully enacting smoke-free laws. By using an evidence-based approach, she is hoping to help create a roadmap to more smoke-free communities, and in turn, better health.

**LGBTQIA+**  
young adults are

**2X**  
more likely to  
*smoke*

**25%**

OF PEOPLE IN  
CENTRAL APPALACHIA

**SMOKE**

*-compared to-*

**16%**

IN NON-APPALACHIAN  
REGIONS

*up to*  
**87%**

of people in treatment for  
substance use disorder smoke

**AMANDA FALLIN-BENNETT, PHD, RN**  
Assistant Professor





# RURAL

*underserved*

**Dr. Ty Borders says throughout his career he has been particularly interested in the differences between how residents of cities and rural areas access health care.**

Adult cancer survivors who  
**DISCUSS FOLLOW-UP CARE**  
with health care professionals:

**14% vs 20%**  
**RURAL URBAN**  
*survivors*

---

**“If we can figure out how to improve the organization and delivery of health care, we can improve the health of these populations.”**

---

Primary care patients who receive  
**COLORECTAL SCREENINGS**

**62% vs 71%**  
**RURAL URBAN**

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**TY BORDERS, PHD, MA, MS**  
Professor and Director of the Rural and Underserved Health Research Center

“If we can figure out how to improve the organization and delivery of health care, we can improve the health of these populations,” he says.

Oftentimes, people assume residents of rural areas have a tougher time accessing health care. Dr. Borders notes that this is not always the case. Sometimes, difficulty finding care close to home may depend more on their specific condition, such as colon cancer, the third-leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States.

Dr. Borders is currently involved in a new research study with the American Board of Family Medicine on colorectal screening.

“They have a very unique data set in which they collect information from several hundred family physician practices across the nation about their patients receiving recommended services, including colorectal screening,” he says. “So we’re currently working with ABFM to examine rural and urban differences in whether patients receive recommended colorectal screening.”

The focus is on family practices. “We didn’t really have very good information from actual family care practices about the degree to which their patients are receiving recommended cancer screenings,” he said.

Dr. Borders is also involved in research on follow-up care among cancer survivors and whether there is a difference between that care in rural and urban areas.

“We are looking at what kind of care people are receiving after they complete their cancer treatment, whether surgery and/or chemotherapy, because there are recommendations about continual follow-up services to monitor and protect patients and potentially detect whether cancer has returned,” he says. “And also to make sure people have adequate access to other types of services, such as those related to pain or psycho-social services related to their cancer or their cancer treatment.”



# *Financial* INEQUITIES

When Dr. Jean Edward immigrated to the United States as a 17-year-old from Sri Lanka, she envisioned “a rosy, free world where everyone was kind to one another and got along.” But she quickly realized how inequity permeated the fabric of American life, starting with skin color and reaching into many aspects of society.

After she started her career as a nurse in critical care, Dr. Edward saw how these inequities affected the health care system, especially access to care and affordability, and she wanted to do something about it. She noted the particular difficulties faced by cancer patients, who often must undergo long, expensive treatment and frequently have to stop working or cut back on their hours. The same is often true for their caregivers.

“There’s a direct link between financial hardships and mortality that is seen more frequently among our cancer patients compared to those with other chronic illnesses, because cancer is one of the costliest diseases to deal with,” says Dr. Edward. “It’s a concept called financial toxicity, and we need to do more about it.”

Dr. Edward, who is also a member of the College’s CHANGE research team, is currently working on implementing two different financial navigation programs for hematology oncology pediatric patients at the Kentucky Children’s Hospital DanceBlue clinic and adult patients at Markey Cancer Center.

“Our DanceBlue clinic program also incorporates a medical-legal partnership, which allows us to help address financial, social and legal needs of our patients and their families,” she says. “Both of these programs allow us to see the immediate impact our social, financial and legal services will have on patient lives. And there’s nothing more rewarding than that.”

CANCER PATIENTS ARE ABOUT

# 2.5X

*more likely to*

**DECLARE BANKRUPTCY**

than those without cancer

**COSTS OF CANCER CARE**  
were an estimated

# \$158 *billion*

in 2020

**“There’s a direct link between financial hardships and mortality that is seen more frequently among our cancer patients compared to those with other chronic illnesses, because cancer is one of the costliest diseases to deal with. It’s a concept called financial toxicity, and we need to do more about it.”**

**JEAN EDWARD, PHD, RN, CHPE**  
Assistant Professor







# cervical CANCER

“Many people don’t have what they need to attain their **full health potential.**”

## CERVICAL CANCER SURVIVAL RATES

BLACK WOMEN **58%**

*compared to*

WHITE WOMEN **67%**

**ADEBOLA ADEGBOYEGA, PHD, RN**  
Assistant Professor

**Growing up in Nigeria, Dr. Adebola Adegboyega saw a lot of disparity rooted in social, economic and educational status. These disparities were further driven home when she became a medical lab scientist involved in HIV prevention, screening and counseling.**

“There was a lack of access even to basic infrastructure among the population that I worked with,” she says.

When Dr. Adegboyega came to the United States to study nursing, she noted similar societal disparities, “Many people don’t have what they need to attain their full health potential.”

Her research is focused on trying to change that. She is on the UK College of Nursing’s CHANGE Team and a member of the Cancer Prevention and Control Research Program at Markey, as well as a mentee member of the Translation on Research Interventions into Practice, Population and Policy Leadership (TRIPPLE) Team Alliance.

She is currently looking at cultural attitudes and behaviors related to cancer screening in an effort to understand how to best reach underserved populations with cancer screening and prevention tools.

Dr. Adegboyega is researching attitudes, knowledge and behaviors around HPV vaccination in a pilot study in Lexington, Kentucky among young adult African American and African immigrant populations. “It is difficult for these populations to get vaccinated when many of them don’t know about it in the first place,” she says.

HPV is the most common sexually transmitted disease and can lead to several different kinds of cancer, including cervical cancer, the rates of which are higher in Kentucky and among African Americans than the national average. The goal is to use this information and work within communities to increase awareness, education and HPV vaccination rates. “I’m trying to find out things that are missing so we can try and create programs to fill those gaps,” she says.

Dr. Adegboyega is also studying attitudes toward cancer screenings and prevention among African American and sub-Saharan African women in Kentucky, which will help in developing a strategy to approach cervical cancer screening. Part of that strategy will include training women within these communities to provide support to their peers to encourage regular screenings. ▣

20

MAKING AN IMPACT  
*Through Research*

**\$36,237,181**

THE COLLEGE'S CURRENT ACTIVE  
RESEARCH & TRAINING AWARDS TOTAL

\*Totals include the lifetime award amount for the referenced active sponsors // direct and indirect costs as of June 30, 2021

### KRISTIN ASHFORD

RESEARCH INTEREST  
**MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH  
OBESITY RISK REDUCTION**

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES  
Ky. Cabinet for Health and  
Family Services, NIH-NIDA R34

TOTAL AWARDS  
**\$901,500**

### MARTHA BIDDLE

RESEARCH INTEREST  
**CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH:  
SECONDARY PREVENTION OF  
CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE**

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES  
CON Pilot, UK CCTS Pilot

TOTAL AWARDS  
**\$37,000**

### JANIE HEATH

RESEARCH INTEREST  
**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
& INTERVENTIONS FOR TOBACCO-  
DEPENDENT POPULATIONS IN  
ACUTE & PRIMARY CARE SETTINGS**

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES  
AARP/RWJF

TOTAL AWARDS  
**\$50,000**

### KAREN BUTLER/ELLEN HAHN

RESEARCH INTEREST  
**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH  
NURSE TRAINING**

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES  
NIOSH

TOTAL AWARDS  
**\$628,358**

### JAN FORREN

RESEARCH INTEREST  
**PERIANESTHESIA NURSING**

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES  
ASPEN

TOTAL AWARDS  
**\$10,000**

### MISOOK CHUNG

RESEARCH INTEREST  
**CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH: CHRONIC  
PATIENTS AND CAREGIVERS**

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES  
CON Pilot,\*Multi PI NINR

TOTAL AWARDS  
**\$10,000**

### JEAN EDWARD

RESEARCH INTEREST  
**EQUITABLE HEALTH CARE ACCESS  
AND DISPARITIES RESEARCH**

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES  
CON Pilot, ACS IRG, RWJF,  
CCSG Supplement

TOTAL AWARDS  
**\$594,268**

### AMANDA FALLIN-BENNETT

RESEARCH INTEREST  
**TOBACCO POLICY AND  
SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES  
CON Pilot, NCI,  
UK CHET Pilot

TOTAL AWARDS  
**\$1,239,236**

### JENNIFER MILLER

RESEARCH INTEREST  
**PALLIATIVE NURSING AND  
CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH**

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES  
UK CCTS Pilot

TOTAL AWARDS  
**\$25,000**

### DEBRA MOSER/MISOOK CHUNG

RESEARCH INTEREST  
**CARDIOVASCULAR AND  
CEREBROVASCULAR HEALTH—  
RISK SELF-MANAGEMENT**

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES  
NIH-NINR, PCORI

TOTAL AWARDS  
**\$5,516,707**

### JULIE MARFEL

RESEARCH INTEREST  
**NURSING LEADERSHIP, RURAL  
HEALTH, FARMER STRESS AND  
NURSING WORKFORCE ISSUES**

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES  
State of Kentucky

TOTAL AWARDS  
**\$118,181**

## CAMILLE BURNETT

RESEARCH INTEREST

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT,  
HEALTH DISPARITIES AND  
VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

Federation of Virginia  
Foodbanks, UK CHET Pilot

TOTAL AWARDS

**\$115,000**

## LEE ANNE WALMSLEY

RESEARCH INTEREST

ADULT LEARNERS AND  
EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

UK Women and Philanthropy

TOTAL AWARDS

**\$50,000**

## ANA MARIA LINARES

RESEARCH INTEREST

INTERVENTION TO ENHANCE  
BREASTFEEDING AND  
OBESITY RISK REDUCTION

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

UKCTS, CON Pilot

TOTAL AWARDS

**\$42,000**

## TY BORDERS

RESEARCH INTEREST

RURAL HEALTH RESEARCH

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

HRSA

TOTAL AWARDS

**\$2,800,000**

## GIA MUDD-MARTIN

RESEARCH INTEREST

CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH,  
DIABETES AND THE  
FAMILY STRUCTURE

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

NINR, NIH OD,  
OBSSR, CCTS

TOTAL AWARDS

**\$5,119,663**

## ELLEN HAHN

RESEARCH INTEREST

TOBACCO POLICY AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

NIH-NIEHS (P30 and R01),  
KDPH, UK CCTS, Interact for  
Health (Subawards), State  
Medicaid Grant, Radon

TOTAL AWARDS

**\$11,770,839**

## STACY STANIFER

RESEARCH INTEREST

AVOIDANCE OF CIGARETTES &  
REDUCING EXPOSURE TO RADON  
& SECONDHAND SMOKE TO  
PREVENT LUNG CANCER

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

Conference of Radon  
Professionals

TOTAL AWARDS

**\$4,150**

## SHARON LOCK

RESEARCH INTEREST

NURSE TRAINING

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

HRSA

TOTAL AWARDS

**\$1,770,319**

## ZIM OKOLI

RESEARCH INTEREST

TOBACCO POLICY AND  
SUBSTANCE ABUSE

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

Kentucky Cabinet for Health  
and Family Services

TOTAL AWARDS

**\$1,000,747**

## DEBORAH REED

RESEARCH INTEREST

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH—  
KENTUCKY FARMERS

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

Hillman Foundation

TOTAL AWARDS

**\$200,000**

## ADEBOLA ADEGBOYEGA

RESEARCH INTEREST

WOMENS HEALTH AND  
CANCER DISPARITIES RESEARCH

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

NCI

TOTAL AWARDS

**\$782,440**

## LOVORIA WILLIAMS

RESEARCH INTEREST

DELIVERING INTERVENTIONS TO  
REDUCE HEALTH DISPARITIES  
AMONG MINORITY AND MEDICALLY  
UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

NIDDK, UK VPR Pilot

TOTAL AWARDS

**\$2,991,335**

## ELIZABETH SALT

RESEARCH INTEREST

CHRONIC PAIN  
MANAGEMENT

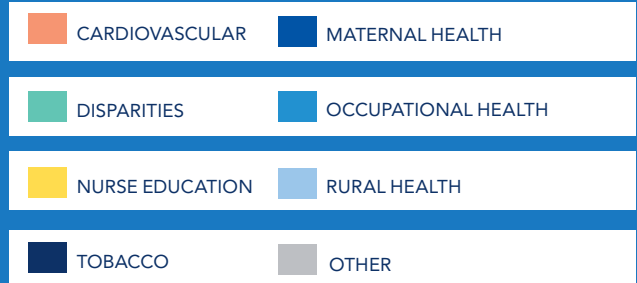
PRIMARY FUNDING SOURCES

Pfizer, CCTS, CON Pilot

TOTAL AWARDS

**\$460,438**

Our faculty research investigators advance nursing science by promoting preventive health education and health care interventions for individuals, families, communities and populations through a diverse array of research initiatives. **These initiatives aim to reduce burdens associated with the most common health problems in Kentucky and the nation.**





# *Local Partnerships Impact* **LATINX COMMUNITY'S HEALTH**



Virginia Cruz  
Gypsy Lopez-Ramirez  
Dr. Gia Mudd -Martin  
Rosa Martin  
Jackie Arakaki  
Herlinda Martinez





**When Gia Mudd-Martin, PhD, MPH, RN, first graduated with her nursing degree, she spent several years in South America and saw firsthand the valuable role that community health workers have in improving health. In poor areas with limited resources, these laypeople were trained to reach out and educate community members on certain aspects of health.**

The experience convinced her to bring the concept home and earn a PhD so she could demonstrate its effectiveness and initiate community health worker programs in the United States. As an associate professor at the UK College of Nursing, Dr. Mudd-Martin has teamed up with stakeholders in central and eastern Kentucky Latinx communities to address prevalent health issues, including COVID-19 and the high rates of type two diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Members of the Latinx community in Lexington, Kentucky first reached out to Dr. Mudd-Martin for her expertise in reducing these prevalent diseases. She began researching their root causes and introducing interventions to support healthy lifestyles.

“For example, if someone doesn’t have a good pair of tennis shoes, we will talk to them about affordable shoe options,” she says. “We’ll talk about healthy activities that they can incorporate into their

lives, such as adding in a morning walk to their daily routine. It’s about providing realistic options, solutions and resources.

“Our interventions have proven successful not only because of *what* information we are offering but also *how* the information is being delivered—through trusted members within the community,” says Dr. Mudd-Martin.

**“ This type of community-based research is effective because it is not someone from academia saying, ‘let’s go into the community and test this intervention’; this was developed with and for the community. And it will stay with these communities long after we finish the study itself.”**

Though COVID-19 temporarily slowed this research, it also presented new opportunities to educate, build trust and provide health-related resources in the Latinx community.

Dr. Mudd-Martin and her team supported community health worker outreach efforts during the pandemic through a partnership with the Foundation for Latin American and Latinx Culture and Arts (FLACA). Those efforts included educating

community members about COVID-19 and how to access available resources such as food, face masks and financial support.

The team also collaborated with Rosa Martin, project director of the Corazon de la Familia study and former president of FLACA, to establish the Latinx COVID-Response Coalition.

The coalition consists of several impactful community stakeholders, including the local health department and Lexington Mayor Linda Gorton’s office, and was instrumental in educating the community about the COVID-19 vaccine and facilitating vaccine access.

“Our work through the coalition has helped us establish trust in the community, which is necessary for authentic community engagement down the road,” said Dr. Mudd-Martin.

She says the coalition will continue to focus on increasing the community’s access to health care and health education.

“Especially with new emerging COVID-19 variants, we know that vaccinating the majority of the Latinx community will remain our most urgent priority as we continue to help improve and protect the community’s overall health and wellness needs through local partnerships and outreach efforts.” ▣



WRITTEN BY  
Lynn Davy

PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
Shaun Ring Photography &  
Pete Comparoni

# *At the Center of Kentucky's* **COVID-19 VACCINE EFFORTS**

Nadja Nelson  
Dr. Hartley Feld  
Nidhi Patel







**Hartley Feld, DNP, RN, NE-BC was responsible for filling volunteer vaccinator spots at Kroger Field—the state’s largest vaccination center.**

The University of Kentucky’s Kroger Field became the epicenter of the state’s COVID-19 vaccination efforts in January 2021 when UK HealthCare moved beyond frontline medical staff members and began vaccinating educators and the elderly.

The shift in focus necessitated a massive influx of volunteers, including dozens of vaccinators—people with the ability to administer an intramuscular vaccine and do so quickly and safely. The person in charge of leading operations for the UK College of Nursing’s volunteer roster for Kroger Field COVID-19 Clinic was Hartley Feld, a global public health expert and assistant professor.

“Hartley was there from day one, and although she’s got a million-and-one other things going on with her teaching and research, she never says no,” says Dr. Gwen Moreland, chief nurse executive at UK

HealthCare. “Honestly, we wouldn’t have been able to do what we did without her help and the many student and faculty volunteers she brought from the College of Nursing.”

UK College of Nursing Dean Janie Heath recruited Dr. Feld to serve as a volunteer liaison for Kroger Field not long after Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear announced that the state would begin vaccinating the general public. Due to the sheer number of people who needed vaccinations, Beshear asked faculty, staff and students in the Colleges of Nursing, Medicine, Health Sciences, Dentistry and Pharmacy to help with vaccination efforts. Feld says she was eager to get involved.

“Like a lot of people, I was ready to put the pandemic behind me,” she says. “It felt remarkably productive and meaningful to be so involved with the Kroger Field vaccination effort—the largest vaccination center in the state.”

The immense size of the football stadium, which seats 61,000, made it the perfect location for socially distanced vaccination

stations, and the large parking lot made it easy for people to park their vehicles and access the vaccination center. Many people who came to Kroger Field to get their vaccination drove from other parts of the state, sometimes traveling several hours one way.

“The stories you’d hear from people who got vaccinated is something that I wasn’t prepared for, but it became one of the big draws for many volunteers, including myself,” says Dr. Feld.

“You would hear stories from grandparents who were finally going to be able to meet a new grandbaby or from people who could finally check off a trip from their bucket list. Some just wanted to hug and socialize in person; some were in tears talking about the relief of fear and burden being lifted from their daily lives.”

**Dr. Feld was honored for her vaccination clinic efforts at 2021 UK HealthCare’s Nursing Excellence Award Ceremony by receiving the UKHC-UKCON Academic-Clinical Engagement Award.**

DID YOU KNOW?  
KROGER FIELD  
*seats*  
**61,000**



First **6 weeks**  
(JAN. 19–MARCH 2, 2020)



**450**

FACULTY, STAFF & STUDENTS  
from the UK College of Nursing

VOLUNTEERED  
**3,500+**  
hours

ADMINISTERED  
**21,000+**  
COVID-19  
vaccinations

## A HERCULEAN EFFORT

When Dr. Feld first started recruiting College of Nursing volunteers for Kroger Field, it was on a small scale, but as site activity ramped up, she was responsible for assuring 20 volunteer vaccinators four days a week, Tuesday through Friday, and 10 vaccinators on Saturday (the site is closed Sunday and Monday).

“It’s an amazing operation, especially considering that not one person waited for more than 30 minutes to receive a vaccine,” she says. “There were days when we had 4,000 people come through the doors, and they all left with a vaccination.”

Besides organizing volunteers from the College of Nursing, Dr. Feld and colleagues from the College of Public Health created tutorials and refreshers on how to give a deltoid intramuscular injection properly. She shared these training materials with her counterparts in the colleges of Dentistry and

Medicine. Dr. Feld said the tutorials helped volunteers feel confident on their first day at the vaccination site, including nursing students.

“Because of the pandemic, some of [the nursing students’] clinical opportunities had been scaled back,” says Dr. Feld. “So, it was great for them to have this opportunity. I think a lot of them just appreciated the human contact.”

Students also learned about interprofessional teamwork between doctors, dentists and pharmacists, as well as a bit of pandemic history. Patients of a certain age often asked for their COVID-19 vaccine to be administered in the same spot as their smallpox vaccine. It’s easy to tell where people had their smallpox vaccine because of the small scar on their arm. Younger nursing students didn’t have these scars because they were never inoculated against smallpox, which was eradicated in the U.S.

“Students realized that this was a huge moment in history, and they were proud to be a part of it,” says Dr. Feld.

Nadja Nelson was one such student. Nelson is assisting Dr. Feld with a project that is taking a closer look at sudden infant death syndrome

in Ecuador. Nelson says Dr. Feld encouraged all of her students to volunteer at Kroger Field.

“Professor Feld is hands-on and very encouraging to all of her students,” says Nelson, who is earning her bachelor’s in nursing. “I think it’s admirable that she signed up to help with the vaccination clinic, especially knowing how busy she is with her teaching and research.”

## THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THE JOB

Dr. Feld has long been admired for her dedication to nursing and to helping those around her. Dr. Moreland, who worked with Dr. Feld as an OB-GYN nurse when the two women were first starting out, isn’t surprised that Dr. Feld stepped up to help with the vaccination process.

“It made sense to all of us that the College of Nursing should be involved once the decision was made to expand the vaccination effort,” says Dr. Moreland, who works with hospital officials and others to coordinate UK HealthCare’s vaccination efforts. “Hartley and her volunteers have been front and center from the beginning.”





Although other health care colleges have also participated in the vaccination effort, the College of Nursing provided volunteers every day and hosted several “mega days,” when they would assign even more volunteers than usual. Dr. Feld estimates that approximately 450 volunteers from the College of Nursing—students, faculty and staff combined—volunteered more than 3,500 hours to vaccinate 21,000 Kentuckians in the first six weeks of Kroger Field’s clinic operations.

The mix of professionals from different ends of the health care spectrum also helped to forge new connections and respect. And it has shown everyone the power of human generosity and teamwork.

“Who’s going to tell the stories that will need to be told about the COVID-19 pandemic?” asks Dr. Feld. “Our students will tell that story, and what a story to tell.” ▣



# *Tobacco Treatment Certification:* **100 PERCENT ONLINE, AT YOUR OWN PACE**

“A majority of tobacco users want to quit, but the reality is that more than 50 percent of people try without any help, and only five out of 100 succeed that way.”

—DR. AUDREY DARVILLE

**3**  
COURSES

**27**  
hours

**30**  
MINUTE BLOCKS

**100%**  
online

For over a decade, nurse researchers with UK College of Nursing’s BREATHE (Bridging Research Efforts and Advocacy Toward Healthy Environments) team have been changing the landscape for treating tobacco-dependent populations. This includes stepping up to create accredited training programs to teach providers how to effectively treat tobacco dependence.

BREATHE’s Tobacco Treatment Specialist (TTS) certification program is the first and only accredited tobacco cessation training program developed for participants to complete 100 percent online from anywhere in the world, at their own pace. The program consists of 27 hours of content divided across three courses that will train providers on how to best help tobacco users quit.

“A majority of tobacco users want to quit,” says course director Audrey Darville, PhD, ARPN, NCTTP, FAANP. “But the reality is that more than 50 percent of people try without any help, and only five out of 100 succeed that way.”

Tobacco is an extremely addictive substance that can take time to quit rather than a single decision to go cold turkey, she adds. “People who try to quit abruptly often get extreme nicotine withdrawal and cravings, which commonly leads to relapse. Our program trains providers on the best evidence-based treatments to help tobacco users successfully quit.”

The course subjects are delivered in 30-minute blocks that build on each other and are aimed at keeping participants engaged. “We’ve intentionally varied the program’s course content so that participants aren’t just sitting around watching video after video,” said Dr. Darville.

The TTS training also includes instruction on how providers can promote and sustain their own tobacco treatment programs, including how to optimize payments and reimbursements.

At the end of the training, Dr. Darville conducts an hour-long simulated patient-provider scenario, where participants get to practice their counseling skills and put everything together.

“The varied course structure, scholarship opportunities, access to instructors and learn-at-your-own pace nature makes our program stand out amongst the rest,” says Dr. Darville. “And most importantly, once completed, providers are well-equipped to offer the tools necessary for tobacco users to successfully quit and live longer, healthier lives.”



**LEARN MORE**  
*about the program, education requirements & how to enroll*





IN THE SPOTLIGHT  
*Undergraduate Student*



*Maggie*  
**NOSEK**

TRADITIONAL BSN STUDENT

**Maggie Nosek, senior BSN student and U.S. Army ROTC cadet, knew she wanted to become a nurse after experiencing a collapsed lung and the subsequent partial removal of her lung prior to college.**

Nosek feels at home in the University of Kentucky College of Nursing because she values the program's holistic approach and the personalized care instructors take to ensure student success.

Nosek chairs the Undergraduate Activities and Advisory Council (UNAAC). As class officer, chair-elect and now chair, she has assisted with class officer elections, new student orientation, COVID-19 vaccination clinics, community donations, and promotion of student involvement through social media. Nosek's most notable effort, however, has been developing a peer mentorship program that offers support to fellow nursing students.

"As a first-year nursing student, I remember how terrified I was," she says. "I wish I had someone to easily ask questions of, get advice from, or get tips on upcoming exams. These are all reasons I wanted to start the mentorship program."

Paula Kral, MSN, RN, CHSE, a UK College of Nursing senior lecturer and faculty advisor of UNAAC, says she believes

the mentorship program will help students cope with the stress of studying, working and dealing with the pandemic.

"Surviving the College's rigorous academic program and the demands of health care work in general can be difficult," says Kral. "This program has the potential to provide a much-needed support system."

Nosek was first drawn to the University of Kentucky for collegiate cheerleading. Her time as a cheerleader provided her with opportunities to connect with alumni and learn how to communicate effectively.

The University of Kentucky's ROTC program has also helped prepare Nosek for her future. She has been featured as Cadet of the Week and attributes ROTC with teaching her mental toughness, time management, discipline and resourcefulness. She says she starts each day eager to lead and take on new challenges.

"I wouldn't want to be a part of any other program—the College of Nursing is my family forever." ▣

  
**30**

WRITTEN BY  
Rena Baer



## *The Gold Standard:* **UK COLLEGE OF NURSING RECEIVES CCNE ACCREDITATION**

**When faculty and staff at the University of Kentucky's College of Nursing receive emails from their colleague Dr. Evelyn Parrish, it is more than likely she needs something from them. And that something usually is not little.**

As the College's assistant dean of accreditation and strategic outcomes, Dr. Parrish has the responsibility of shepherding documentation from faculty members and staff to demonstrate the College's programs are meeting rigorous national standards put forth by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and other accrediting agencies.

**“Without accreditation we wouldn't have jobs because we wouldn't have students,”** says Parrish, PhD, APRN, PMHNP-BC, FAANP.

CCNE is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education to accredit nursing programs at the baccalaureate, master's and doctoral levels, including programs offering distance education. It is critical for programs of nursing to meet accreditation standards for students to receive federal funding for financial aid, advance their degrees and be competitive in the job market.

“When you are officially recognized as an accredited entity, especially by a gold standard like CCNE, that really sends a powerful message to the public,” says UK College of Nursing Dean Janie Heath, PhD, APRN-BC, FAAN, FNAP, FAANP. “Just like a ‘Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval,’ it is saying that CCNE ensures the quality, integrity and effectiveness of nursing programs.”

Accreditation is also a time to embrace how a college can do better, she adds. “The culture has evolved over the years from focusing on finding even the slightest deficits to supporting opportunities for improvement and advancement with quality nursing education and program effectiveness.”

And while there is a high standard and expectation for successfully passing CCNE accreditation at UK's College of Nursing, it's still a significantly time-consuming endeavor. Extensive self-evaluation and preparation is required for the three-day site visit, which is conducted by a team of evaluators comprising of nursing-related professionals and educators.

Measures to prepare for the 2021 CCNE virtual on-site evaluation and written self-study submittal began in October 2019. The process involved an in-depth review of each of the programs and the



“When you are officially recognized as an accredited entity, especially by a gold standard like CCNE, that really sends a powerful message to the public. Just like a ‘Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval,’ it is saying that CCNE ensures the quality, integrity and effectiveness of nursing programs.”

—DR. JANIE HEATH, UK COLLEGE OF NURSING DEAN &  
WARWICK PROFESSOR OF NURSING

tracks within the programs to assure each of the four standards prescribed by CCNE were being met. Within each one of those standards are six to nine additional key elements, or subcategories, that have to be met as well.

In addition to the CCNE accreditation, the UK College of Nursing has just undergone its first full accreditation for its Clinical Simulation and Learning Center by the Society of Simulation in Healthcare (SSH) to make sure best practices are being followed.

“This past year was my first time doing multiple accreditations in one semester, not to mention against the backdrop of a pandemic. It was challenging to say the least but also fun,” says Dr. Parrish.

Despite preparing for simultaneous reviews and dealing with COVID, everything worked out well.

CCNE evaluators found no deficiencies in the College of Nursing’s programs.

“Our CCNE evaluation exceeded even my high level of expectations. We received 100 percent compliance and zero deficiencies,” says Dean Heath. “I’ve been in academic nursing for 45 years and know how rare of an outcome that is.

“If I sound like I am excited about, it’s because I am. I am just so proud of our college—the faculty, staff and students that made this possible. I tell everybody this all the time: My philosophy is we treat every day as if we are hosting an accreditation site visit. Our college’s standard of excellence stands strong, and we will continue to strive toward being the best of the best.” □

Dr. Evelyn Parrish





WRITTEN BY  
Lynn Davy

PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
Shaun Ring Photography

*Fostering Future Nurse Leaders*  
**THROUGH PEDIATRICS**



Dr. Vicki Hensley  
Dr. Morgan Chojnacki



Vicki Hensley, PhD, APRN-CPNP, and Morgan Chojnacki, DNP, APRN, CPNP-PC, are proud of their roles as nurse leaders in the field and in the classroom. As assistant professors at the UK College of Nursing, both teach a pediatrics course that is so intensive, many undergraduates say they invest more time in preparing for it than their peers who are studying in graduate-level programs.



Fortunately for students, Dr. Hensley and Dr. Chojnacki understand the stress and anxiety that can come with tackling new material, so they balance rigor with support and compassion. As former University of Kentucky College of Nursing students themselves, both Dr. Hensley (BSN 2000, MSN 2005, PhD 2015) and Dr. Chojnacki (BSN 2009, DNP 2015) also recognize the value of fostering confidence and leadership characteristics within the clinic and classroom settings. They each greatly benefited from their experiences as students and want to “pay it forward” by mentoring the next generation of pediatric nurses and nurse leaders.

More nurses are taking on leadership roles because their expertise and management abilities are needed to ensure positive patient outcomes and improve professional collaborations. Nurse leaders are nurses who want to tackle complex patient care issues or who want to focus on high-level organizational and administrative challenges.

“The nursing profession is changing, and more and more nurses recognize that **they need to be part of the decision-making process, for themselves, their teams, and their patients,**” says Dr. Chojnacki.

Nurses are more empowered in the workplace, and a big part of this is because of their education, which makes them more confident. I push my students in the classroom because I want them to be confident; I want them to lead.”

### IT ALL STARTS IN THE CLASSROOM

“Hensley and Chojnacki are very popular professors,” says Dr. Kristin Ashford, associate dean of undergraduate faculty and interprofessional education affairs at the UK College of Nursing. “Students appreciate them for their depth of knowledge, especially in pediatrics, and their clear commitment to student success.”

Both professors go out of their way to support students, including sending them personal messages

of encouragement or congratulations and meeting with them to review test questions and answers. Hensley is known to pass out candy to students before grueling exams and gives them scratch paper with positive affirmations printed on them.

“I feel that it’s my job to mentor my students and to meet them where they are at the time,” says Dr. Hensley. “Through my teaching, I promote critical thinking and reasoning skills and help them believe in themselves so they can move to the next level.”

Both professors are also products of the UK College of Nursing. Dr. Hensley received her bachelor’s degree in 2000, her master’s in 2005, and her Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing in 2015. Dr. Chojnacki received her bachelor’s degree in 2009 and her Doctor of Nursing practice degree in 2015. Besides her full-time teaching responsibilities, Dr. Chojnacki is also a pediatric nurse practitioner at the Kentucky Children’s Hospital’s Adolescent Medicine Clinic.

Dr. Hensley served as a mentor to Dr. Chojnacki during her early studies, and the two colleagues continue to support one another in their professional lives.





“Coming through a difficult course and difficult clinical situations sets our students up for success because it gives them a lot of reassurance. They start to think of themselves as nurses, not nursing students. They feel their nursing brains developing, and they feel more confident about their abilities.”

—DR. VICKI HENSLEY  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, UK COLLEGE OF NURSING





“What students gain in the pediatric nursing course is invaluable, even if they don’t end up being pediatric nurses,” says Dr. Hensley.

“A student going into mental health nursing told me that he refers back to his pediatric experience to remember what he learned about the importance of connecting with a patient. The course helps every student to become a well-rounded nurse.”

Nursing students take a foundational course in pediatric development and health promotion in their sophomore year and a second pediatric course their junior year. Both courses are rigorous, and Drs. Hensley and Chojnacki are clear that they expect students to not only learn how to care for children and advocate for them but also to teach parents and guardians how to care for children after they leave the hospital or examination room.

This educational element is just as critical as medicine and medical interventions, and it’s also the cornerstone of creating nurse leaders.

Student Katelyn Agdanowski is part of Dr. Chojnacki’s clinical group and is also in her nursing practice intern program. “Professor Chojnacki has helped me to grow as an individual and as an aspiring nurse leader by showing me the importance of serving as a patient advocate and by serving as the last line of defense for our patients to make sure no errors are made in their care,” she

says. “I am incredibly grateful to work with her and have her as a mentor because she has so much experience working with patients and is a true pediatric nurse through and through.”

Dr. Chojnacki connects with students who want to excel. She chose the University of Kentucky for her nursing studies because she knew she would be challenged. “I knew I wanted to care for people but that I also wanted to make a difference,” she says. “Going through the undergrad program at the College of Nursing prepared me to be an excellent nurse, but it also provided me with experiences and insights that set me ahead of many of my peers.”

Looking back, Dr. Chojnacki says that an experience she had working as a research intern with Dr. Kristen Ashford also helped her to realize that she wanted to be more than a nurse; she wanted to be a nurse leader.

“Because of that research internship, I was able to make connections in an obstetrics unit at UK HealthCare; and after graduation, I was hired to work in that same unit,” she says. “I loved working in that unit, and it’s where I realized that I wanted to go back to school so that I could diagnose and prescribe.”

## CONFIDENT STUDENTS = CONFIDENT LEADERS

As part of their pediatrics course, Drs. Hensley and Chojnacki also lead clinicals, during which they encourage and push students to engage in conversations with pharmacists and physicians.

Although students are hesitant to speak with people they see as superiors, the professors urge them to speak up.

“I am notorious for pushing students to call the pharmacy to question a dosing issue,” says Dr. Chojnacki. “I stand next to them when they make the call because they feel so much pressure; they know that a patient’s life is on the line.”

The ability to question and even challenge another member of the health care team is crucial in nurse leadership roles, so Drs. Chojnacki and Hensley insist that their students experience the tension of the moment.

“Coming through difficult courses and clinical situations sets our students up for success because it gives them a lot of reassurance,” says Dr. Hensley. “They start to think of themselves as nurses, not nursing students. They feel their nursing brains developing, and they feel more confident about their abilities.”

Both professors hope every student who comes through their pediatrics course leaves it feeling motivated to do bigger things and to hopefully tackle nurse leadership roles at some point in their career.

“I encourage students to seek leadership roles so that they can make the changes they want to see,” says Dr. Chojnacki. “I tell them that when they have a seat at the table, they can influence decisions and make meaningful impacts on the lives of their colleagues, patients and families.” □



## Dawn PROFIT

BSN, RN, CGRN & PhD STUDENT

As medical procedures become less invasive and more advanced, Dawn Profit, BSN, RN worries that patients' social and psychological needs may be left behind.

"Interventional endoscopy is relatively easy" for medical professionals, says Profit, a staff development specialist at UK HealthCare. "And it's wonderful for the patient in that it's minimally invasive and often outpatient. But that doesn't change the fact that patients could end up with a concerning diagnosis and a very poor prognosis, and their psychosocial needs may not be fully met."

That concern for the emotional well-being of patients who could be facing a cancer diagnosis is what drives Profit's doctoral research project at the University of Kentucky College of Nursing. She is studying preprocedural anxiety among 90 patients undergoing advanced endoscopy procedures at the hospital to identify.


"If anxiety gets very high, it can really affect how patients sedate, or they may be more prone to infections and increased pain," Profit says. "If we can identify those patients on the front end, we could look for more specific interventions," such as including the services of nurse navigators and pastoral care.

Profit had originally planned to study endoscopy patients diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. When the

coronavirus pandemic delayed her project and led to changes in the referral process, she expanded her research to include a broader group of interventional endoscopy patients.

She also added the pandemic to the list of possible predictors of anxiety, incorporating a new research instrument, the COVID-19 Anxiety Survey (CAS), along with the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS).

"Dawn's project concentrates on improving the experience and decreasing the anxiety around endoscopic procedures that are anxiety producing on their own, but that are even more anxiety-producing because they may result in a diagnosis of cancer," says Debra Moser, PhD, RN, FAHA, FAAN, and Linda C. Gill Professor of Nursing. Dr. Moser, also assistant dean of the UK College of Nursing's PhD program, is advising Profit on her research.

"We're getting so good at these endoscopic procedures," Profit says. "I just want to be sure we do the best we can for the patient's psychosocial needs, as well." 





IN THE SPOTLIGHT  
*Graduate Student*

37

WRITTEN BY  
Lynn Davy

PHOTOGRAPH BY  
Shaun Ring Photography

*Ben*  
**HUGHES**

BSN, RN & DNP STUDENT

Ben Hughes, BSN, RN, is one of a handful of UK HealthCare professionals who manages a full-time job and family responsibilities while also pursuing his DNP Executive Leadership degree at the University of Kentucky College of Nursing.

He has been able to excel at his job and schoolwork in a year when the COVID-19 pandemic put extreme pressure on those in the medical field—and especially those in care environments with a high volume of coronavirus patients.

“I’m not sure how I’ve managed to juggle it all, but I can tell you that the College has been very flexible, and even the dean has reached out to see how I was doing and if she could do anything to help support me,” says Hughes, a 25-year health care veteran who is director of the Medical Intensive Care Units and Medicine Service Line at UK HealthCare.

During the past year, Hughes was responsible for overseeing all inpatient COVID-19 operations, and he led his team through challenges with personal protection equipment, pandemic patient care and new hospital regulations. His work life was chaotic, but he was still able to show up for classes and get his scholarly reading done, in large part thanks to weekends (his three teens sleep late so he can get schoolwork done) and professors who understand the demands of his job.

“The College of Nursing and UK HealthCare are like one big happy family,” says Hughes. “My direct administrator as well as her administrator have also gone through the DNP program, so they understand the commitment, and both are highly supportive.”

Hughes chose the MSN-DNP Executive Leadership program because he wants to be an even better nurse leader. When communicating with his team at UK HealthCare, he focuses on listening to their concerns and finding solutions. When he hits a wall with work or school, he seeks advice from other leaders within the organization.

UK HealthCare sets a high bar for patient care, and so the medical center encourages high performers such as Hughes to seek advanced degrees. The medical center pays for most of Hughes’ educational costs. “The hope is that if the institution invests in a person, that investment goes back into the institution to improve patient outcomes,” says Hughes. “I have only good things to say about the DNP program and how it’s helped me to reach my next career goal.” □

DNP



FALL 2020 / SPRING 2021  
—HIGHLIGHTS—

COLLEGE of NURSING  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARDS (CONAA)  
*winners*

**NIGHTINGALE AWARD**

**Julia Dragoo** (BSN 2021) &  
**Juliet Medley** (BSN 2020)

**CAROLYN A. WILLIAMS AWARD**

**Chin-Yen Lin** PhD, BSN, RN (PhD 2021)

**SEBASTIAN STANHOPE AWARD**

**Holly Chitwood** DNP, MSN, APRN,  
FNP-C, AGACNP-BC (DNP 2021)

**PHD ALUMNI AWARD**

**Martha Monroe**  
PhD, BSN, RN (PhD 2021)

**DNP ALUMNI AWARD**

**Deanna Hamilton** DNP, APRN,  
AGACNP-BC (BSN 2018, DNP 2021)

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY 2020  
LYMAN T. JOHNSON AWARD RECIPIENTS

**TORCH BEARER**

**Danielle Duncan** (BSN 2020)

**TORCH OF EXCELLENCE**

**Delanor Manson** (BSN 1976)

**2021**

*Congratulations New Alumni!*



*On May 14, 2021, we welcomed*

**186 GRADUATES**

**TO THE BIG BLUE  
NURSING NATION FAMILY**

147 BSN

34 DNP

5 PHD



*Enjoy*  
**OUR NEW ENGAGEMENT  
ALUMNI UPDATES!**

This is our chance to highlight our incredible alumni who have done great things this year.

**2010s**



**Payton Novak** (BSN 2019) received the 2021 UK HealthCare's Nursing Excellence—Nightingale Preceptor Lamp Award.



**Renee Strohmeier** (BSN 2019) received the 2021 UK HealthCare's Nursing Excellence—Diana Shappley Excellence in Neuroscience Nursing Award.



**Erica Michelle Steffen** (BSN 2015), became a flight nurse for PHI Air Medical in London, Kentucky.



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## UK COLLEGE OF NURSING ALUMNI CONTACT

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### 2000s



**Kristin Ashford, PhD, WHNP-BC, FAAN (PhD 2007)**, became a 2021-22 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Fellow.



**Hartley Feld PhD, MSN, RN, PHCNS-BC (MSN 2007, PhD 2018)**, received the 2021 UK HealthCare's Nursing Excellence—UKHC-UK-CON Academic-Clinical Engagement Award.

### 1990s

**Dr. Theresa Kessler, PhD, RN, ACNS-BC, CNE (PhD 1994)**, was named a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing.



**Cynthia McCurren, PhD, RN (PhD 1992)**, was appointed as dean of the School of Nursing at University of Michigan—Flint in March 2021.



**Zim Okoli, PhD, MPH, MSN, PMHNP-BC, APRN, NCTTP (BSN 1999, MSN 2002, PhD 2005, MPH 2005)**, became a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing.



**Evelyn Parrish, PhD, APRN, PMHNP-BC, FAANP (MSN 1997, PhD 2008)**, was named the 2021 Psychiatric Nurse of the Year by the American Psychiatric Nurses Association.



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### 1980s



**Karen Hill, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, FACHE, FAAN (BSN 1987, MSN 1991, DNP 2010)**, retired in July 2021 as the chief operating officer/chief nursing officer for Baptist Health Lexington. She received the DAISY Lifetime Achievement Award, which recognizes nurses who have devoted their life's work to the compassionate care of others.



**Tonda L Hughes, PhD, RN, FAAN (MSN 1989)**, received the 2021 University of Illinois Chicago's Distinguished Alumni Award.



**Dr. Tukea Talbert, DNP, RN (BSN 1989, MSN 1994, DNP 2006)**, was appointed to the UK College of Nursing Dean's Advisory Board in May 2021.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Alumni updates are submitted by alumni and are not verified by the editor. While we welcome alumni news, *Engagement Magazine* is not responsible for the information contained in these submissions.

VISIT THE UK COLLEGE OF NURSING'S ALUMNI PAGE



*Let us know about it!*

**Are you a University of Kentucky College of Nursing Alumni?**

**Do you have a new job/ appointment? Award? Degree?**

Visit the UK College of Nursing's alumni page to submit any news or updates you have related to your nursing career—


[uky.edu/nursing/alumni](https://www.uky.edu/nursing/alumni)





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The University of Kentucky is committed to a policy of providing opportunities to people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.

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Morgan Chojnacki (BSN 2009, DNP 2015)

Amanda Fallin-Bennett (BSN 2007, MSN 2009, PhD 2011)

Hartley Feld (MSN 2007, PhD 2018)

Lori Fugate (BSN 2006, MSN 2008)

Vicki Hensley (BSN 2000, MSN 2005, PhD 2015)

Ben Hughes (MSN-DNP 2021)

Gwen Moreland (BSN 1987, MSN 2010, DNP 2016)

Maggie Nosek (BSN 2021)

Evelyn Parrish (MSN 1997, PhD 2008)

Dawn Profit (BSN 1992)

Stacy Stanifer (BSN 2001, PhD 2020)





*Diana J.*  
**WEAVER**

PHD, RN, FAAN  
MEMBER OF THE DEAN'S  
ADVISORY BOARD

# WHY DO I *Give?*



“I give because it is a privilege—a way to support others in their pursuit of a career that gave me so much. I love being a nurse; it has given me purpose, fulfillment, and opportunities in life that I could have never imagined.

As one of seven children to parents who did not finish high school, I grew up with very humble means. When I graduated from high school, my older brother gave me \$300 that he earned as an Air Force officer to help me pay for my first year of nursing school. Without that gift, I would not be where I am today, and I want to pay that forward to others. **Giving, no matter your means and no matter the amount, can truly make a difference in someone's life...that is *Why I give.*”**



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“My role with Markey came out of a combination of all the projects I’ve ever done in communities that suffer from health inequities. A lot of our work has been done in Appalachia for obvious reasons. It’s a very disparate population, but we have to be cognizant of the fact that we’re the University of Kentucky, and we need to make sure that we’re addressing the [cancer-related] needs of every population in the state.”

—LOVORIA WILLIAMS, PHD, FNP-C, FAANP, FAAN  
Associate Professor and Endowed Research Professor in Cancer Health Equity