We believe nurses change the world

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) represents the highest degree in nursing practice. Graduates at OHSU receive additional preparation to expand their practice in breadth and depth. Coursework and mentorship facilitate leadership and practice-related scholarship and prepare leaders in a culture of innovation and inquiry.

Benefits of the DNP:
- **Practice-ready.** The OHSU DNP graduate is ready for practice as an APN in their specialty area.
- **Evidence-based.** The OHSU DNP graduate has a strong foundation in clinical and improvement science.
- **Future-focused.** The OHSU DNP graduate looks to the future and embraces emerging models of healthcare.
- **Leadership-oriented.** The OHSU DNP graduate is prepared for growth in health care leadership in a variety of diverse settings.

DNP specializations
OHSU SoN offers DNP degrees in the following specialty areas: Acute Care Nurse Practitioner, Family Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Anesthetist, Nurse-Midwifery, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, and Pediatric Nurse Practitioner. You can enter with a bachelor’s degree in nursing and graduate with the DNP degree. The curriculum is three years of full-time coursework.

Learn more about the DNP: [www.ohsu.edu/son/dnp](http://www.ohsu.edu/son/dnp)

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I chose to get my DNP because I knew it would equip me with the knowledge and skills to make the necessary system changes within health organizations. Not only would I be able to treat patients in the exam room, but from the population health perspective as well.”

**ROSA PHAM, DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE STUDENT**

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**Carol Howe Scholarship**

Katie Grinnell, a master’s student in the Nurse-Midwifery program, is the inaugural recipient of the Carol Howe Endowed Scholarship. Initially her academic focus was on human rights and social justice work, principally in New York City. Over time, however, Katie realized that her calling lay in supporting women through the journey of birth, and she decided to return to her Oregon roots and enroll in the Nurse-Midwifery program at OHSU.

What did receiving the Carol Howe Scholarship mean to you?
I was floored when I heard that I was the inaugural recipient of the Carol Howe Endowed Scholarship. Although I have lived and raised in Oregon, I have lived away for long enough that I am paying out-of-state tuition. Having this additional support is a big relief for me, and I am very grateful. Dr. Howe is known nationally as a change maker, and I hope that the scholarship will create a long line of agents of change in midwifery.

You will complete the program in June 2019. What are your plans for after graduation?
I would like to lay out a foundation of the full scope of clinical practice, probably within a hospital setting. I also see birth centers as having a significant role in achieving the Triple Aim of improved patient satisfaction at lower per capita cost while improving population health, and I am very interested in out-of-hospital births. Eventually, I would love to earn my Ph.D., to produce original midwifery science, and teach in an academic health care setting.

Anything else you would like to share?
The practice of nurse-midwifery is very fortunate to enjoy a high level of state support. Oregon’s open practice laws, the strength of the OHSU program, and the influence of the program in creating an optimal and progressive environment for the statewide practice of nurse-midwifery were all very compelling factors in my decision to apply to midwifery.

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**Frances Lee-Lin Scholarship**

Jennifer Weprin, Ph.D. student, received the Frances Lee-Lin award. Her dissertation is focused on understanding factors that influence parents’ intention to give the HPV vaccine (cancer prevention vaccine) to their children, specifically focused on parents in rural communities of Oregon. The HPV vaccination rates remain lower in these rural counties as compared to urban counties. She hopes to contribute to this field of science, with a goal of developing interventions to improve HPV vaccination rates in all adolescents living in Oregon.

What did receiving the Frances Lee-Lin Scholarship mean to you and the work that you hope to accomplish?
Dr. Frances Lee-Lin focused her research on underserved, underrepresented populations, believing in the importance of health and well-being in these communities. I hope to follow in Dr. Lee-Lin’s footsteps by gaining a better understanding of the factors that influence rural Oregon parents’ intention to give their children the HPV vaccine (cancer prevention vaccines).

Can you tell us a little about the research behind your dissertation?
Rural counties of Oregon have lower rates of HPV vaccination as compared to urban areas. This discrepancy, along with issues around healthcare access and limited resources, needs to be better understood. My ultimate goal, by focusing on parents’ intention, is to develop interventions to improve HPV vaccination rates and thereby reduce HPV-attributable cancers in the future.

Who inspires you?
I’m inspired by my classmates who show me the importance of moving forward even when minor setbacks happen. Their contributions to nursing science and research will change our world and I am grateful for their inspiration.

Anything else you would like to share?
I am so thankful for being chosen as the recipient of the Dr. Frances Lee-Lin scholarship, as this funding helps me to continue my doctoral education at OHSU School of Nursing. Weprin’s ultimate career goal involves research, teaching and advocating for cancer prevention and adolescent health through health policy at both the state and national levels.

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**Reunion save the date**

The 2019 annual reunion will take place on Sunday, June 23, 2019 at the Multnomah Athletic Club in Portland, Oregon. All are welcome, and invitations will be mailed to reunion classes and area alumni in April. For more information, please contact us at alumni@ohsu.edu.
Leading the way in population health

By Genevieve Long

Many aspiring nurses have a single image of their chosen career: standing at a patient's bedside or in a clinic, scrubs on, stethoscope ready. Very often, they are in a hospital.

Until recently, this picture represented 70 percent of nurses. But OHSU School of Nursing Dean Susan Docherty, M.P.H., R.N., associate professor and campus associate dean at the OHSU School of Nursing in Portland, says things are changing. “Fewer nurses work in acute care settings now, particularly as health care is becoming more community based and population health is the focus.” The OHSU School of Nursing is a leader in the profession's new focus on improving the health of populations through community care and addressing social factors such as access to healthful food and a safe environment.

Recently, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation identified the OHSU School of Nursing as an exemplar in population health education. The first phase of the RWJF project Population Health in Nursing utilized a survey of 150 schools, an interview and a site visit promising models of population health and practice related to improving population health. “OHSU was one of just six schools visited.”

“The United States has the world's most expensive medical care, but not the healthiest population,” says Bakewell-Sachs. “Nurses in the community are looking upstream, caring for people before they first see healthy behaviors and characteristics. They learn what affects their clients’ health throughout the curriculum, we have seen an increase each year in graduates seeking population health as their career.”

A visionary curriculum

The Oregon Consortium of Nursing Education curriculum has done much to connect students with Oregon communities. Some of the visionary founding faculty were “community health nurses to their bones,” says Peggy Wros, Ph.D., R.N., senior associate dean for student affairs and diversity. They determined that students should engage with the health care of underserved people and populations on OHSU’s 90,000-square mile campus, which encompasses the entire state.

“The traditional model for teaching public health has been to follow a community health nurse around,” says Wros. “But students get limited experience, and their impact is small.” The OHSU curriculum developed in 2006 focused on community placements where “there wasn’t always a nurse preceptor. This was pioneering work. We wanted to get students out to where people really live,” says Wros. “We gave them an opportunity to work in public health. The opportunity to work in public health made me say ‘Oh yes – this I like.’”

The next term, I had a community mental health placement. Connecting with people longitudinally cemented my interest in public health work.”

Nurse – Life experience wanted

Alice Kirby’s public health career has led her from Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Care in McMinnville, Ore., to Benton County, Ore., public health, to Lane County. “Public health nurses work with individuals, but the community is our patient,” she says. “If you don’t hear about foodborne illness or aren’t affected by communicable disease, we succeeded.” Kirby, who entered nursing school in her 40s, found that her previous career experience was valued. “I didn’t have to discard my expertise in project and programs management, information organization – OHSU was willing to help me use it.”

I-CAN shows what students can do

Keri Joyce was interested in public health nursing from the time she started school, but wanted to learn her options. “I have a sociology background, but I didn’t know what public health was really about until I started classes at OHSU,” she says. As a new nurse, she provided a range of services for Lane County, from investigating reports of communicable disease to giving vaccines and screening for sexually transmitted infections. She spent her interprofessional practicum with Lane County’s Communicable Disease section, where she now works. “I helped manage and organize a Hepatitis A vaccine clinic for the homeless population,” she says. “Eugene has a very large homeless population, and I gave vaccines and did other care in the local homeless camp.”

Joyce was engaged with OHSU Monmouth’s I-CAN – Interprofessional Care Access Network – leading the way at Lane County Public Health

The Communicable Disease section of Lane County Public Health boasts not one, but three OHSU School of Nursing graduates. Cindy Morgan, ’98, B.N., M.S.N., a graduate of the OHSU School of Nursing in Portland, is the nursing supervisor. Also on staff are Alice Kirby ‘14, B.S.N., R.N., and Keri Joyce ‘18, B.S.N., R.N., both graduates of the OHSU School of Nursing, Monmouth campus. Both focused as much as possible on population health took the opportunity to study population health and were hired by public health departments after graduation.

Community roots run deep

Cindy Morgan has devoted her career to community health nursing, from her first job in Oregon’s Coos County to years as a rural NP. “My cohort spent a term at the Washington County health department. We saw as many flu vaccines I became totally comfortable giving injections. I worked with families, made home visits, supported the communicable disease team and spent time with a school nurse.” Morgan entered nursing school unsure that she wanted to work in acute care. “The opportunity to work in public health made me say ‘Oh yes – this I like.’”

The next term, I had a community mental health placement. Connecting with people longitudinally cemented my interest in public health work.”

Ten OCNE Competencies Integrated in Nursing Practice

The Communicable Disease section of Lane County Public Health accommodates from 8 up to 24 students, eight students per term to work with health care and community agencies in each area. Partners include federally funded health clinics, community service agencies and sometimes dental or mental health clinics and coordinated care organizations.

Students in I-CAN participate in home visits and work with clients in older care facilities, schools, prisons, and more. They may work with clients who are visiting the emergency department often or cope with issues such as housing insecurity or mental illness. “Students begin to realize a complex life makes it hard for clients to manage their long-term conditions,” says Docherty. “They see everyone who serves these clients come together, and learn that nurses – and a team approach – are important. I-CAN is really sparking some of the students to do population health work.”

Students in I-CAN also participate in group projects with community stakeholders. For example, one group started a warming shelter in Polk County, Ore., which had no facility for community members who needed a place to get out of cold weather and where one person had died of exposure the previous winter. Another group in Southeast Portland has presented a bill to the Oregon legislature that would require prescriptions for non-English speaking patients to be labeled in their language of fluency. That project was sparked by the discovery that many patients could not read their medication bottles, resulting in costly medication errors. The OHSU-OSU College of Pharmacy, Legal Aid and the Oregon Health Authority all participated with I-CAN students in developing this project over two years.

Giving nursing students options

Given the excitement and rewards of working with people and populations in the community, why has it been a less popular employment choice for new graduates? Najar notes several factors. “Acute care nurses earn one-and-a-half to two times as much as public health nurses, and many students must pay off high loans. Some enjoy the faster pace of acute care, and the 12-hour days allow more time off between shifts.” She notes that some nurses pursue advanced degrees and practice in the community eventually. “Public health is where nursing got started and I think ultimately, it’s where nurses can make the most impact.”

Joyce’s mentor at Monmouth was Pati Warkentin, M.Ed., B.S.N., R.N., assistant professor of clinical nursing. She talked with Warkentin about her doubts about entering public health right after graduation. “It’s tradition that you need a certain amount of acute care experience first,” she says. “But Pati helped me understand it was possible to start immediately. She would phone calls when I was having a hard time, or be me drop into her office and bash things out. She was a driving force in helping me get where I am now,” says Joyce.

“Our nurses are prepared to go straight into the community at graduation,” says Docherty. “The evidence shows it. The agencies are agreeing. And graduates are increasingly going into advanced practice, including the family nurse practitioner role.”

Warkentin credits the carefully designed scaffolding of OHSU Nursing’s population health curriculum, from that first class in Health Promotion through the final Integrative Practicum with preparing graduates well. “With the intentionality of clinical exposure to population health throughout the curriculum, we have seen an increase each year in graduates seeking and obtaining employment in health-based nursing roles. She says. This growth is likely to place OHSU even further in the forefront of ‘upstream nursing,’ increasing the health of populations around Oregon and beyond.

OCNE curriculum integrates ten OCNE competencies that are included in each of the courses listed in the "S."