

## Managing the Pipeline: An Interview With Dean Sheila Haas On Preparing Nurses and Faculty for Tomorrow

### Executive Summary

- ▶ Common challenges faced by schools of nursing across the nation are explored in the context of uncommon and creative local solutions.
- ▶ Finding qualified faculty, creating partnerships, preparing nurses for tomorrow, promoting a diverse workforce, and supporting faculty are some of these universal challenges whose solutions must be discovered on the local level.



Alison P. Smith

As staffing coordinators across the country struggle to find enough staff to care for patients in the next 24 hours, schools of nursing struggle to find enough faculty to teach nursing students during the next semester. Our fondest wish has come true. Interest in careers in nursing has been renewed thanks to the efforts of giants like Johnson & Johnson through the "Campaign for Nursing's Future" and through

grassroots community efforts. We have successfully reignited interest and promise in the opportunities in nursing. However, just as the population of staff nurses ages, so does the population of nursing faculty.

In an interview with Sheila Haas, PhD, RN, FAAN, Dean of Loyola University Chicago's Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing, common challenges faced by schools of nursing across the nation are explored in the context of uncommon and creative local solutions. Dr. Haas has held her position as dean since 1999, and has served as faculty since 1978. In past professional activities, she has served as President of the American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing and of the National Federation of Specialty Nursing Organizations.

Like other schools of nursing, the Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing received over 850 applications for 125 freshman seats along with 350 applications for 60 accelerated BSN seats for the 2003-4 academic year. The school of nursing has two academic departments: health promotion, primary care, health systems, and dietetics; and acute, chronic, and long-term care nursing. Graduate programs include a dietetics internship and master of science in nursing (MSN), as well as

nurse practitioner, clinical specialty, and nurse administrator; and a doctoral degree in nursing (PhD). Certificates in spirituality and spiritual care, informatics, and nutritional counseling; and an accredited dietetic internship program are available along with several on-line specialty courses.

Loyola University Chicago is one of 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States. Over 7,500 undergraduate and 5,500 graduate students seek their degrees through nine schools and colleges: arts and sciences, business administration, education, graduate studies, law, medicine, nursing, social work, and adult and lifelong learning.

### Expanding Capacity

**AS:** The life of a chief nurse executive and the life of a dean of a school of nursing seem equally challenging today. What are the major challenges and opportunities that you face at Loyola?

**SH:** Finding qualified faculty to teach a growing student body remains our top priority. As you can see from our application statistics — 850 applications for 125 freshmen seats — demand far exceeds supply. Over the past 5 years we have pushed the limits of our program, expanding our freshman class capacity from 60 students in 1999 to the current capacity of 125. In Illinois, the student to faculty ratio is 1:10, but other regulatory agencies require a ratio of 1:8. This growth obviously requires the support of more faculty, but also of classroom capacity. In fact, we have just completed the expansion and update of our Clinical Simulation Learning Laboratory.

Just as we need to find creative ways to expand our core and upper-level class capacity, other departments of the university are affected by our expansion. Even though I may be able to create program capacity for an increasing Freshman class, I am also dependent upon other schools in the university to expand their capacity as these students require courses ranging from English to Biology.

### Finding Faculty

**AS:** How have you gone about expanding your faculty to support a growing student body?

**SH:** We pursue a whole range of efforts to fuel our faculty needs. Beginning with our undergraduates, we try to identify students with the academic and leadership abilities to become faculty. With a little courting, we encourage them to enroll immediately in the master's program and position them to serve in teaching roles in the learning lab as soon as possible. With this earlier exposure to the rewards of teaching, we hope to secure their interest in an academic career.

At the other end of the career spectrum, we have been successful in deferring the full retirement of emeritus faculty through creative arrangements. For example, one of our dis-

tinguished professors, Nola Pender, PhD, FAAN, retired to Florida. She continues to teach an on-line scientific writing course required of our doctoral students. Many of our master's students take the course as well since they have a requirement to publish. In this case and in others like it, we have captured the experience and wisdom of career academics.

### Creating Partnerships

**AS:** Has the universal shortage of nurses created opportunities for creative partnerships?

**SH:** Yes, we have found multiple health care agencies to join forces with us as they face and attempt to solve their staffing issues. First, when they provide a clinical instructor from their pool of nurse clinical specialists, nurse practitioners, and educators, they guarantee clinical experiences for 35 to 40 students at their institution. In turn, the institution has the opportunity to shape, evaluate, and ultimately recruit the students rotating through their facility. Second, many of our clinical partners are seeking Magnet status. They desire strong relationships with an academic institution and need a critical mass of bachelor's-degree prepared staff. The Magnet journey is also supplemented by access to nurse researchers.

In addition, we realize that health care organizations are looking for ways to augment their staff development efforts. We offer our faculty to provide seminars on clinical teaching, aligning faculty nurse researchers with staff nurses, and doing research grand rounds. We have also provided custom programs to address a specific need such as a critical care course, an operating room immersion course, and a "return to practice" course. We have created partnerships like this with a half dozen institutions in our area, from major academic medical centers to community hospitals.

Our faculty outreach efforts reach staff nurses as well as nurse leaders. We began hosting a breakfast for nurse executives on the topic of informatics. As a result, our faculty have served as consultants in local hospitals engaged in the selection and implementation of clinical information systems. These partnerships clearly benefit hospitals by providing expert guidance. At the same time, the faculty remains in touch with real world situations and are able to supplement their income.

**AS:** The clinical experience for students is clearly enriched by a faculty member able to navigate the clinical setting. Are there other benefits to having "local" faculty?

**SH:** In addition to getting "real experience," the students are oriented to the facility and have their competency validated in a manner compliant with hospital policy and regulatory requirements. At the conclusion of a fundamentals course, students are well prepared to work as nursing assistants or externs. The students achieve a level of comfort and familiarity with the facility and the health care agency has already invested in orientation and training.

### Preparing Nurses for Tomorrow

**AS:** How has your curricula changed to keep pace with the demands of nursing today?

**SH:** In the context of constant growth and development in our curricula, we remain focused on a key phrase, "to prepare nurses to lead extraordinary lives." This commitment stems from our service mission as a Jesuit university and from our high academic standards. With this foundation, we have expanded our programs to offer a full range of degrees and certification programs, from AD/BSN and accelerated options to PhD as well as all certification programs with the exception of anesthesia. We have also instituted standards in our master's program requiring a finance and a policy course.

Regardless of your career path, leaders need to be prepared for some inevitable challenges.

The Oncology Entrepreneur Clinical Nurse Specialist graduate major is a more specific example of our responsiveness to the changing demands of nursing. Given that cancer incidence is rising and our population is aging, the need for expert cancer care is at an all time high. With rapid changes in technology and treatment, cancer care is now being provided across the continuum. Through a \$895,000 3-year grant from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration, we established this new program. The curriculum spans prevention, early detection, and treatment as well as genetics and palliative care. In addition to developing expertise in the clinical aspects of oncology care, the program emphasizes the development of skills to create and support innovative care delivery models through leadership of multidisciplinary teams and management of the business aspects of health care delivery — from media to financial management.

This grant also has a major focus on implementing a four-part REAP framework, Recruiting and Education with Access of the Public to Health, an initiative to improve the representation of minorities in the workforce.

### Promoting a Diverse Workforce

**AS:** Is the school of nursing engaged in any other efforts to build a more diverse workforce to reflect the diversity of our population?

**SH:** While we are no where near as diverse as I would like to see our student body, we are committed to improving our demographics. We have just received a renewal on a grant for \$2 million over 4 years for MacNeal Scholars. The MacNeal Health Foundation provides funding for students from the Berwyn/Cicero suburbs of Chicago to earn BSN and MSN degrees. This community has experienced a rapid change in ethnic demography with a growing Hispanic population. This program has helped us to learn about the unique language needs of students who come from homes where English is not primarily spoken. We have also grown an appreciation for the interpersonal skills required on behalf of our students to navigate a transition into a workforce that is not yet diverse.

### Supporting Faculty

**AS:** What are the expectations of faculty in the context of this growing program?

**SH:** The demands on our faculty are significant. They are required to teach one theory and one clinical course each semester; however, we are decreasing the number of clinical teaching hours for any tenure line faculty so they have sufficient time to meet their research expectations. Like most universities, we do have a mix of full and part time, tenure and nontenure track faculty. However, we have an increasing demand for full versus part-time faculty due to the fact that full-time status has more desirable salaries and benefits. It is difficult to remain competitive with part-time salaries.

Our tenure requirements for nursing faculty are the same as those for other faculty of the university. The 6-year track requires that you secure funded research with publication by your mid-tenure review period. Also, our faculty must have their doctorate complete before beginning the tenure process. In the school of nursing, we have a research track and a clinical track for tenure.

**AS:** In light of the suboptimal funding of the Nurse Reinvestment Act, have your faculty felt any benefits from this national program?

**SH:** The faculty loan forgiveness aspect of the Nurse

Reinvestment Act has definitely benefitted our PhD candidates. Realizing that nursing faculty in other schools of nursing face similar PhD requirements for tenure, but don't offer PhD programs, we created a summer doctoral program. By structuring the program to meet full-time student requirements, our summer doctoral students can access this funding source to cover tuition and some living expenses.

### Parting Thoughts

**AS:** Do you have any words of wisdom to deans across the country as they face similar challenges?

**SH:** The challenges that we face are quite universal, but the solutions must be found on a local level. In the various partnerships and programs that I have described, each required a personalized solution matching supply and demand. Each community has a unique set of needs and cast of characters that need to be explored for synergies. Given the level of pressure that hospitals and schools of nursing all face, the possibility for win-win solutions exists and we have been fortunate to secure many of these arrangements with our partners.

---

### **Alison P. Smith is Assistant Editor, Nursing Economic\$.**

Reprinted from *Nursing Economic\$*, 2005, Volume 23, Number 1, pp. 39-41. Reprinted with permission of the publisher, Jannetti Publications, Inc., East Holly Avenue Box 56, Pitman, NJ 08071-0056. Phone (856) 256-2300; FAX (856) 589-7463. (For a sample issue of the journal visit the [www.nursingeconomic.net](http://www.nursingeconomic.net)).

## Critical Portfolio™ Replaces Costly Paper Process

Decision Critical, Inc. unveiled Critical Portfolio™, a solution aimed at the management and monitoring of professional portfolios, during the National Student Nurses' Association's (NSNA) 53rd Annual Convention in Salt Lake City, UT. Decision Critical was honored at an awards ceremony marking the 5th anniversary of the NSNA Leadership University Web site. During the ceremony, Kenneth W. Dion, RN, President and CEO of Decision Critical, announced that the Critical Portfolio was making its premier launch on [www.nsnaleadershipu.org](http://www.nsnaleadershipu.org).

Today's health care organizations are required to maintain professional portfolios in order to attain and keep Magnet Status. Most organizations still maintain portfolio records in hardcopy form. The first of its kind, this Web-based portfolio management solution provides health care organizations with a single, automated, and organized repository for all professional portfolios. The Critical Portfolio will replace existing hard copy processes with the ability to maintain, access, and report on portfolios electronically. The Critical Portfolio solution allows for personal, customized portfolios that can include all work history and education, selected committees and memberships, case logs and outcomes, certifications, skills, and training.

"The nurses' professional portfolio is the standard by which professional nurses and the organizations employing them will be evaluated. The current paper-based process for managing this documentation is a hassle for all involved. The Critical Portfolio will act as the online safety deposit box for all this documentation available anytime, anywhere. Additionally,

the Critical Portfolio will provide the owner with reminders of up-coming education, credential, and license renewal requirements," says Mr. Dion.

This newest solution is a part of the ongoing strategy of Decision Critical to provide flexible, scalable, and easily accessible competency management solutions designed to integrate easily into any existing IT environment. As such, the Critical Portfolio can seamlessly interface with Decision Critical's Enterprise Learning Management System or can be implemented as a stand-alone solution.

## 2006 APNA-Janssen Student Scholarship Program

Through the generous support of Janssen Pharmaceuticals, the American Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA) is pleased to announce the availability of scholarships for undergraduate nursing students to attend the APNA Annual Convention, which takes place in the fall of 2006. Deans and directors may nominate one or more exceptional student(s) from undergraduate nursing programs for the APNA-Janssen Student Scholarship Program. Through this innovative program, nursing students who demonstrate an interest in psychiatric mental-health nursing will be selected. Administration for the nomination and selection process is being coordinated by the National Student Nurses Association (go to PUBLICATIONS and then scroll to Awards).

A committee of distinguished psychiatric mental-health nurses and nurse leaders will assist APNA in the selection of the APNA-Janssen Student Scholarship winners. Selection is based on the criteria listed above, on the student's essay, the letters of nomination, and regional representation. The deadline for receipt of nominations is **Monday, February 6, 2006**. Candidates and the dean/director of the nursing program where the candidate attends school will be notified in April.

The application is available on [www.nсна.org](http://www.nсна.org)

## Fuld Trust Awards \$500,000 Grant To NSNA Foundation

The Foundation of the NSNA (FNSNA) is pleased to announce that it has received a \$500,000 grant from The Helene Fuld Health Trust, HSBC Bank USA Trustee, which will go toward a permanent endowment fund to provide financial aid for students enrolled in baccalaureate nursing programs. The fund, named the "Helene Fuld Health Trust Scholarship Fund for Baccalaureate Nursing Students," is the largest grant ever awarded to the FNSNA.

The Helene Fuld Health Trust is the nation's largest private fund devoted exclusively to nursing students and nursing education, with over \$130 million in assets and an annual grant budget of nearly \$6 million. In 1935, Dr. Leonhard Felix Fuld, a New York City editor, civil servant, and securities analyst, and his sister created a Foundation in honor of their mother, Helene, a health care crusader in the 1880s. Helene sparked Dr. Fuld's interest in public health, and in 1961, he redefined the purpose of the Foundation to "the improvement

*Once you have finished with this newsletter,  
please pass it along to share with a colleague or friend.*

# DEAN'S Notes™

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
Bellmawr, NJ  
Permit #58

Editor . . . . . Judith A. Tyler, MA, RN  
President, NSNA . . . . . Rebecca Wheeler  
Executive Director . . . . . Diane Mancino, EdD, RN, CAE  
Art Director . . . . . Jack Bryant  
Managing Editor . . . . . Carol Ford  
Graphic Artist . . . . . Bob Taylor  
Publisher . . . . . Anthony J. Jannetti  
Advisory Board . . . Barbara Chamberlain, MSN, APRN, BC, ANP  
Susan Stone, MSN, RN

**DEAN'S Notes** is indexed in Cumulative Index to Nursing & Allied Health Literature.

**DEAN'S Notes** is published five times a year (September, November, January, March and May) by Anthony J. Jannetti Inc., East Holly Avenue Box 56, Pitman, New Jersey 08071-0056. Telephone 856.256.2300. FAX 856.589.7463. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the express written permission of the publisher. Address changes should include mailing label and be forwarded to the publisher.

of the health and welfare of student nurses." In 1965, the Foundation was converted to the Helene Fuld Health Trust, and in 1969, HSBC Bank USA (formerly Marine Midland Bank) became its corporate trustee, which is responsible for overseeing and administering the Fuld Trust today. The FNSNA Scholarship Program awards thousands of dollars annually to deserving undergraduate nursing students who are recognized each spring at the NSNA Convention Annual Awards Ceremony.

## New NSNA Bookstore Sponsored by Barnes & Noble

NSNA is pleased to announce the NSNA Bookstore sponsored by **Barnes & Noble.com**. NSNA members receive an additional 5% off on all orders plus free shipping when you spend \$25 or more. The NSNA Bookstore features nursing and leadership titles and other eligible products such as college textbooks, music, videos, and prints and posters. To obtain the discount, purchases must be made on the NSNA Bookstore Web site linked to [www.nсна.org](http://www.nсна.org). A portion of sales revenue from the NSNA Bookstore will help fund nursing school grants in the Marilyn Bagwell Leadership Development Program.

## Faculty Fellowships Available for Graduate Study

Registered Nurses enrolled in graduate level, degree-granting colleges and universities in selected regions of the U.S. may be eligible to apply for a Promise of Nursing Regional Faculty Fellowship (PON Fellowship). The PON Fellowship is designed to assist RNs who are preparing for the nurse educator role to achieve their degrees. PON Fellowships, up to \$7,500 annually, may be applied toward tuition, academic fees, and books.

Funding for the Promise of Nursing Regional Faculty Fellowship Program is contributed by several hospitals and health care agencies, by Johnson & Johnson, and by national companies with an interest in supporting nursing education. The funds are raised at gala fundraising events sponsored by Johnson & Johnson. The Promise of Nursing Faculty Fellowship Program is administered by the Foundation of the National Student Nurses' Association (FNSNA), Inc.

Selection of Promise of Nursing Regional Fellowship recipients is based on academic achievement, financial need, commitment to nurse-educator role preparation, and plan to serve in nurse educator role upon completion of program.

### Eligible Regions for the Promise of Nursing Regional Faculty Fellowship Program

California, Florida\*, Tennessee, Georgia, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Texas\*, and Washington. Deadline is February 10, 2006. \*Please visit [www.nсна.org](http://www.nсна.org) (click on Foundation) for list of schools with eligible zip codes in these states; or call (718) 210-0705 Ext 111. For additional information, visit [www.nсна.org](http://www.nсна.org) and click on Foundation, or write to:

Promise of Nursing Regional Faculty Fellowship Program  
Foundation of the National Student Nurses' Association  
45 Main Street, Suite 606  
Brooklyn, NY 11201