

Beta Xi Newsletter

President's Message

Board Members

President

Cynthia Diefenbeck
cynthia@udel.edu
UD Counseling Center
UD School of Nursing

Vice-President

Gregory Cooper
gcooper@dol.net
Christiana Care Health
System

Treasurer

Pia Inguito
pia@udel.edu
UD School of Nursing

Secretary

Judy Herrman
jherrman@udel.edu
UD School of Nursing

First Counselor

Kathy Riley-Lawless
krl@udel.edu
UD School of Nursing

What a difference a few months makes! Here we are about nine months into my tenure as president, and I am excited by the progress we have made together. It makes me think of my first nursing job, and how it took several months before I felt like a "real nurse."

I am pleased to announce that our Strategic Plan 2006-2008 is well underway, many months ahead of International's time frame. I am excited about several new initiatives that we are in the process of launching. As part of our commitment to strengthen and expand the scientific basis of nursing via scholarship, we have recently established a collaborative relationship with the Nursing Research Apprentice Program at Christiana Care. As part of the program, Beta Xi Chapter provides financial support to the Nurse Research Apprentices. We have been working with Linda Bucher who directs the program. We are excited to see how our support enables participants to excel in the program.

Another strategic plan initiative is a renewed commitment to our Kids Into Healthcare Careers Initiative. Based on feedback from some of our newest members, we are expanding our focus to include efforts aimed at targeting "non-traditional" RN populations. We hope to involve our members in reaching out to minority and male youth in an effort to promote diversity in the profession. We envision reaching out to children via school career fairs and other community-based groups such as Boy Scouts. We are calling on any members with an interest in giving back to

the next generation to help us in this effort! Contact Karen Mastropolitto or Judy Herrman to get involved.

Our Membership Involvement Subcommittee, co-chaired by Elaine Burkett and Karen Avino, and supported by Colleen Davis Krett has been doing a wonderful job of keeping members connected. Growing from a suggestion by this group, we are exploring the possibility of hosting a Member Appreciation After-Work Get-together in the fall. We are thinking about having in at the Deer Park, a place full of memories for many! If you have any thoughts or suggestions related to this, I'd love to hear from you.

We hope to see you at the Spring Dinner Meeting on Monday, April 24th. We are very pleased to have Prudence Albright, Delaware's Director of Public Health Nursing, with us to discuss disaster preparedness in the state. Registration is open to the public. For more information, contact Greg Cooper.

Enjoy the changing seasons and I hope to hear from or see you soon!

Cynthia Diefenbeck

ATTENTION:

Please make sure to complete and return the enclosed ballot. Make sure that you are a part of the democratic process!!

STTI/DNA Research Day: Moving from No Research to Knowing Research!

By: Judy Herrman, Ph.D., RN

This 16th Annual Research Conference, a collaborative effort between 3 chapters of STTI and the Delaware Nurses Association, again demonstrated that nursing research is thriving in Delaware. The conference, held on March 3rd at the Cavalier Country Club, was themed, "Moving from No Research to Knowing Nursing Research." The day began with a historical look at nursing research presented by Dr. Jane Barnsteiner from University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Barnsteiner led participants through the past and present of nursing research and highlighted current initiatives impacting nursing practice.

The research concurrent sessions then provided glimpses of nursing research at all levels and in all specialties. Workshops including "Deciphering the code: Statistics in nursing research" and "Teaching nursing research" provided foundational skills for nurse researchers. Eight local nurse researchers presented their research as paper presentations, highlighting research happening right here in Delaware. Beta Xi members included Kathy Schell, DNSc, RN (innovative teaching in nursing), Melanie Chichester, BSN, RNC (thrombocytopenia in parturients), Diane Mick, PhD, RN (older adult ICU experiences), and Maureen Seckel and Rich Arbour (sedation assessment). Participants were able to discuss research issues at expert-led roundtables, including grant writing, children and research, qualitative research, creating posters, and others. The day ended with an informative panel of four nurse researchers who partner with academic and practice institutions and provide a link for nursing research activities.



In addition, there were 16 posters which spotlighted local research efforts, 12 posters were from nursing students, mostly from the University of Delaware! In fact three student posters were awarded with prizes of accomplishment, all from the UD....congratulations to the faculty and students who collaborated on such important projects! Exhibitors and support from the Delaware Nurses Association created a very valuable experience for those who attended. Dr. Carolee Polek and Lauren Bieri, UDSN, both active members of Beta Xi, won free registration for next year's conference! It was a day to be proud of nursing research and of the local professionals, at all levels, who strive to improve nursing practice through evidence and research.



Congratulations to all of the
University of Delaware
Nursing Students whose posters
were accepted for presentation!!



Beta Xi Chapter and Christiana Care Nursing Research Apprenticeship Program Announce New Partnership

Beta Xi Chapter recently initiated a partnership with the Nursing Research Apprenticeship Program at Christiana Care. Following discussions at our January 2006 Board and Committee Retreat, attendees were encouraged to establish the program as part of the 2006-2008 Strategic Plan.

Beta Xi is providing \$1,000 total annual support to nurses in the Nursing Research Apprenticeship Program at Christiana Care. The money will be allocated to the Apprentices by the Director of the Nursing Research Apprenticeship program and can be used for any of the following:

- Research Projects
 - Direct costs incurred (e.g., survey materials, equipment, printing, etc.)
- Research Dissemination
 - Poster preparation
 - Podium or poster presentation

The partnership is the result of Beta Xi Chapter's renewed commitment to supporting the evidence base of nursing as reflected in the 2006-2008 Strategic Plan.

In return, the recipients of the funds have the opportunity to present a poster or paper at a Beta Xi Chapter-sponsored event. No application is required if the project has been approved through the Nursing Research Apprenticeship Program and the Christiana Care Institutional Review Board. Funds will be made available April 1st of each year.

For more information on the program, please contact the following:

Contact Person (Christiana Care): Linda Bucher, D.N.Sc., RN (lbucher@udel.edu)

Contact Person (Beta Xi Chapter): Carolee Polek, Ph.D., RN (cpolek@udel.edu)



Beta Xi Members Are Making Headlines!

Congratulations to **Dr. Judy Herrman** on her acceptance into the Leadership Academy: Nurses Investing in Maternal-Child Health! The Leadership Academy is sponsored by the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International in partnership with the Johnson & Johnson Pediatric Institute. The 2006-07 Nursing Leadership Academy "is an 18-month, mentored leadership development experience designed to prepare and position nurses to influence prac-

tice and patient outcomes" (<http://www.nursingsociety.org/programs/mch.html>). Beta Xi Past-President **Dr. Amy Johnson** will be serving as Dr. Herrman's mentor.

Congratulations to Beta Xi members who will be presenting scholarship in Montreal at the Sigma Theta Tau International Conference: **Dr. Bethany Hall-Long**, **Dr. Carolee Polek**, and **Dr. Erlinda Wheeler**.

15th International Nursing Research Congress in Ireland

By: Amy Nagorski Johnson, DNSc, RNC

This 15th Annual Sigma Theta Tau International conference focused on Evidence-Based Nursing Practice from around the world. Nurses representing more than 20 countries presented their work during hundreds of quality educational sessions over several days in Dublin. Participants had the opportunity to examine current evidence on a variety of topics and discuss the effectiveness of evidence utilization strategies in evidenced-based practice during these sessions.

Beta Xi and the University of Delaware's International Programs sponsored the attendance of Amy Nagorski Johnson, DNSc, RNC at this important conference. Dr. Johnson presented her research study that described the effect of skin-to-skin holding premature infants on maternal breast milk production. The study findings were examined in relation to the current evidence on early breast milk feedings and use of maternal breast milk in the premature population. The session concluded with a discussion on strategies to implement skin-to-skin holding to support breast feeding.

Using Creative Writing and Art to Explore Students' Perceptions of Caring: Poster Presentation at the 15th International Research Congress in Ireland

By: Marianne Tallman, MS, RNCS

In July of 2004 Kathy A. Janvier, PhD, RN and Marianne Tallman, MS, RNCS with the help of a \$250 Grant from Beta Xi Chapter, attended Sigma Theta Tau International 15th International Nursing Research Congress in Dublin, Ireland where they presented the poster "Using Creative Writing and Art to Explore Students' Perceptions of Caring."

The poster explored students' perceptions of caring through creative writing. Associate degree nursing students in the final course of their program of study prior to graduation were asked to write or draw creatively, an original work describing the concept of caring. An interpretive phenomenology study of words and symbols appearing in students' work was conducted. Four common themes were identified: a human connection (communication, mutual touch, sharing of self, active listening), a moral imperative (empathy, trust, ensuring dignity/respect), a positive force (gift of joy, inspiring, harmony, strengthening), and a professional transformation (dedication, ethical practice, continued competence, commitment). The study concluded that creative writing and art can be

a catalyst to stimulate reflexive practice, students may benefit from teaching strategies that incorporate reflection and the themes identified are representative of the participants' lived experiences and perceptions of caring.



Congratulations to the Beta Xi Award Winners!

Each year on Honors Day Beta Xi Chapter provides several awards to undergraduate students in the School of Nursing. We are pleased to announce this year's winners.

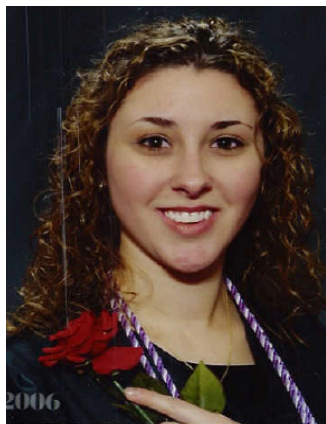
Thomas Bernadzikowski, RN, BSN, (pictured below) a Winter 2006 graduate of the Accelerated Degree Program, submitted the winning essay on the Importance of Research and Scholarship in Nursing and was awarded a \$750.00 scholarship to be used for tuition for a graduate course in nursing.

Two senior students who best represent the vision and mission of the honor society and who excel by integrating scholarship, knowledge, and technology into professional nursing practice were selected by fellow Beta Xi student members. Awards of \$150.00 were awarded to one traditional program senior, Lauren Bieri (pictured below) and one accelerated program senior, Ann Casswell (picture unavailable).

Junior Samantha Siegel (picture unavailable) and sophomore Sarah Robinson (pictured below) were each awarded a Book Award for \$250.00. All students will be officially honored during University Honors Day proceedings held on Friday, May 5th.



Thomas Bernadzikowski



Lauren Bieri



Sarah Robinson and Busisiwe, a young girl she worked with on a trip to Africa

The Leadership Intern Program is a Success!



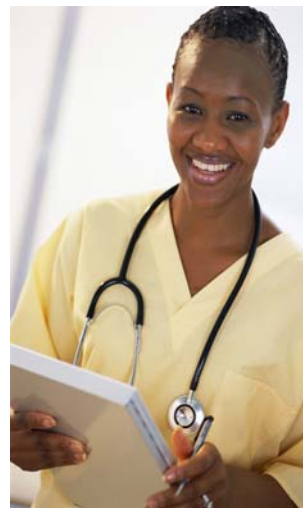
**Lauren Bieri, '06 BSN
Leader Intern**

Lauren Bieri, Spring '06 BSN, was selected in January as our first Leader Intern! Lauren is a dedicated student and volunteer. She has been very busy since January. Her projects center around technology and membership involvement needs. She has created a membership email list for new inductees, and is in the process of creating one that includes all active members. She developed a volunteer spreadsheet that provides a quick overview of areas of interest for all newly inducted members. Moreover, she assists with the creation and distribution of the newsletter and related mailings. In exchange for her participation Beta Xi is paying for her NCLEX and state board registration fees.

The Leadership Intern Program began last year. It provides one new member the opportunity to work closely with the leaders of the Beta Xi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International and develop leadership skills within the organization.

Research Funds Available

Beta Xi Chapter is eager to receive applications from nurses who are involved in research. Beta Xi is committed to providing financial support for research projects and the dissemination of research at conferences. Research grants are awarded twice a year, in March and November, and total up to \$750.00. Travel awards are also available, totaling up to \$250.00, and can be used for expenses incurred when presenting research. All interested applicants should e-mail Carolee Polek, PhD, RN at cpolek@udel.edu for application materials.



Beta Xi Appreciates its Committee Members

Leadership Succession Committee

Shelia Cushing - scushing@UDel.Edu
UD School of Nursing
Pamela Beeman - pbeeman@udel.edu
UD School of Nursing
Amy Johnson - ajohnson@udel.edu
UD School of Nursing

Membership Involvement Subcommittee

Elaine Burkett - eburkett@udel.edu
UD School of Nursing
Karen Avino - kavino@udel.edu
UD School of Nursing
Colleen Krett - cgdavis@nemours.org
Nemours/A.I. DuPont Hospital for Children

Governance Committee

Kathy Riley-Lawless, 1st Counselor, kr1@udel.edu
UD School of Nursing
Erlinda Wheeler, 2nd Counselor, ewheeler@UDel.Edu
UD School of Nursing
Gail Wade - ghwade@udel.edu
UD School of Nursing
Jennifer Lloyd - jenllyodrn@hotmail.com
Christiana Care Health System
Jennifer Saylor - J.Saylor26@verizon.net
Christiana Care Health System
UD School of Nursing

Past-President

Donna Mower-Wade, dmwapn@atlanticbb.net
Christiana Care Health System

Research and Awards Committee

Carolee Polek, Chair
cpolek@udel.edu
UD School of Nursing

Outreach Committee

Judy Herrman, Chair
Carolee Polek—Special Olympics
Cynthia Diefenbeck—Holiday Outreach
Donna Mower-Wade and Amy Johnson—Memory Walk
Karen Mastripolitto, kmastrip@dtcc.edu—
Kids into Health Care Careers
Delaware Technical Community College

Publicity Committee

Donna Mower-Wade (Newsletter)
Cynthia Diefenbeck (Newsletter)
Greg Cooper (Website liaison)
Paula Klemm (Website master)

Past-President's Advisory Council

Includes all of Beta Xi's Past Presidents

A Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International

Beta Xi Chapter
University of Delaware
School of Nursing
College of Health Sciences
Newark, DE 19716-3710



Sigma Theta Tau International

Calendar of Events

April 24, 2006

Spring Dinner Meeting
Nurse Leader Induction

May 31, 2006

Officer Transition Meeting

June 9-10, 2006

Special Olympics Summer Games—RN volunteers needed!

July 20 –22, 2006

17th International Nursing Research Congress in Montrel

October ?, 2006

Member Appreciation Happy Hour
Deer Park
Details TBA

November 17, 2006

Fall Induction Ceremony

Fall meetings dates/times TBA

Announcements

- Summer games for the Special Olympics are June 9 and 10th this year. We need RNs willing to work in the medical booth. Please contact Carolee Polek (cpolek@udel.edu) for more information.
- Remember to complete the enclosed ballot and return it by May 8th.
- Congratulations to Committee Member Jennifer Saylor on the birth of her second child, son Justin, and to Treasurer Pia Inguito on the birth of her third child, daughter Aili.
- Do you have a son or daughter in the scouts or who has a career fair coming up at school? Let us know! We are looking for ways to energize our Kids Into Healthcare Careers outreach program.