

# NURSING At HUNTER

FALL 2010

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## Panel of Experts Conducts Search For New Dean of Nursing

President Jennifer J. Raab has named a special search committee for the new Joan Hansen Grabe Dean of the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing, and the members include some of the most distinguished figures in the health field.

Dr. Neal Cohen, former New York City commissioner of health and mental health under Mayor Rudy Giuliani, is the chairman. Dr. Claire M. Fagin, former dean of the University of Pennsylvania's School of Nursing, is a consultant. Five faculty members and three nursing students serve on the panel. And a firm that has led talent searches for several prominent schools of nursing, Tuft & Associates, is supporting the committee's work.

In appointing Cohen – a Distinguished Lecturer in Hunter's Schools of Social Work and Public Health – President Raab noted that he has worked closely on the development of the new CUNY School of Public Health at Hunter



*Dr. Neal Cohen*

and collaborated with the nursing faculty and Dean Kristine Gebbie on interdisciplinary grants and projects.

Cohen said, "The dean search is especially critical to the continuing revitalization of the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing. Given the complexities of 21st century nursing and health care practice, the new dean will undoubtedly need to address the challenges and opportunities for collaborations in training, practice and research both within the Hunter community and with many of the area's large academic medical centers."

As commissioner, Cohen dealt with some of the most difficult health challenges in the city's and nation's history. Among them were the outbreak of the West Nile virus, a disease that had never before appeared in the Western hemisphere, the World Trade Center tragedy and the anthrax attacks mounted by a bioterrorist.

Dr. Fagin now serves as a consultant to foundations on national programs and educational issues. Her career has blended an interest in consumer health with professional health and nursing issues. Fagin said, "This is an incredible opportunity for Hunter's new dean of nursing. With Kristine Gebbie's extraordinary accomplishments, the stage has been set to move forward rapidly, and as a result, Hunter College and the School of Nursing will be ready to meet health care needs in the urban community. The support of President Raab will give nursing an opportunity to take its rightful place



*Dr. Claire M. Fagin*

in New York City's health affairs."

The five faculty members who will serve on the committee are, Dr. Diana Mason, Rudin Professor of Nursing; Professor Donna Nickitas, Graduate Specialty Coordinator; Professor Carol Roye, Assistant Dean and Director of the Center for Nursing Research; Nursing Instructor Joseph Saladino, and Gary Krasilovsky, Associate Professor and Co-Program Director of the health sciences faculty.

President Raab said the inclusion of a representative of health sciences was agreed on, after consultation with the nursing and health science faculties and with the approval of the Hunter College Senate, because health sciences is under consideration for inclusion in the School of Nursing.

The student members of the committee are Mimi Lim, Irene Odonkor, and Sheila Spencer.



## Message from the President

*A year ago, I stood alongside City Council Speaker Christine Quinn as we pledged to rapidly expand the number of New York's nurses armed with the best credential there is: a diploma from the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing. I am so gratified, therefore, that we will soon graduate the inaugural class of our Accelerated Second Degree Program – and that the incoming A2D class has increased by more than 50%.*

*This is just one of many of the School's recent accomplishments, which include the achievement of a new 10-year accreditation, the recruitment of exciting new faculty, the growth of the overall student body, and the nurturing of new and continuing partnerships in the world of health care. Chief among these is our partnership with Cornell and the Weill-Cornell Clinical and Translational Science Center, through which \$100,000 in research has been funded. In addition, members of our faculty are engaged in other NIH-funded research and in serious competition for foundation dollars, and 10 new pilot studies funded by PSC-CUNY are now underway. And, with the opening of the new CUNY School of Public Health at Hunter College just a year away, we continue to plan the addition of programs and collaborations that will make the School of Nursing an even more central and vital part of our college and city.*

*I know you join me in thanking Dean Kristine Gebbie for her invaluable leadership during this critical period. I invite all of you to work with the faculty and students on our newly appointed search committee, chaired by Dr. Neal Cohen, as they lead the search for the next Joan Hansen Grabe Dean of the School of Nursing.*

Jennifer J. Raab



## Message from the Dean

*While summer is often a time of academic quiet, that is certainly not the case for the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing! We have been celebrating the graduations of 101 BS and 40 MS students, as well as 33 AD nurses who earned BS degrees. We are experimenting for the first time with offering undergraduate Arts and Sciences courses on the Brookdale campus to make it easier for our RN Pathway students to complete needed pre-requisites and electives. Summer is also the final semester for our first group of accelerated second degree (A2D) BS students, and we expect to see 16 of them cramming for the NCLEX in the fall. For the fall semester, we have 115 juniors in the generic program, 25 A2D students, more than 100 RN pathway students, and nearly 200 new graduate students! Just keeping track of all of these eager scholars as they move through classroom and clinical settings pushes us to adopt more sophisticated databases and communications systems.*

*In addition, federal stimulus funding will allow us to provide five high school and two pre-nursing students with month-long research internships with members of the faculty to learn about the science side of a nursing career. We will also see in the coming year a completely new undergraduate curriculum and a new Doctor of Nursing Practice degree for adult, gerontology, and psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioners. Smaller changes will occur in the MS curriculum as more technology is incorporated.*

*Finally, as many of you know, my term as interim dean will expire at the end of the fall semester. I want to take this opportunity to let you know what a joy it has been to serve during this period of re-establishing the School of Nursing as an independent administrative unit of Hunter College. I want to thank the entire faculty, staff, and administration for their talent and support. And most of all, I want to thank the incomparable students and alumni, whose dedication to Hunter and to the people of New York will long continue to inspire me.*

Kristine Gebbie, DrPH, RN

## Hunter & Weill Cornell Team Up to Improve Health Care

Studies prove that integrated health care is best for patients. Unfortunately, integration remains more theory than reality because nurses, doctors, public health practitioners and social workers train and work independently.

To help shrink these boundaries, the School of Nursing has partnered with Weill Cornell Medical College to form ITEACH (Integrating Transdisciplinary Education at Cornell Hunter). The program will bring students from three Hunter schools – nursing, public health and social work – together with

medical students from Weill Cornell in a three-year project to increase understanding and collaboration among health practitioners.

ITEACH is “a revolutionary project,” according to Dr. Joyce Griffin-Sobel, assistant dean of the School of Nursing. She said, “We have educated nurses and doctors separately for years and expected them to work together, even though we know that there are inherent conflicts. This project helps break that down by exposing everyone to the full spectrum of care.”

The project is funded by a grant from the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation, which supports programs to improve the education of health professionals. When the project is fully operational – it is now in first-year planning – students from the four schools will organize into four- and five-member teams, learning to integrate their skills and cooperate across disciplinary lines. ITEACH also seeks to overcome health disparities created by cultural, ethnic, language and economic factors by drawing from a diverse student body with a high proportion of minorities.

## Foundations Work with Hunter to Close Nursing Shortage

Only 15 percent of community college nursing graduates go on for bachelor's degrees. As part of a nationwide program to improve this statistic, the School of Nursing is working with CUNY and Queensborough Community College to streamline the process by enabling students with associate degrees in nursing from Queensborough to enter Hunter's baccalaureate nursing program.

Overall funding for this national project, titled “Multi-Regional Model to Increase the Number of Baccalaureate Nurses in the U.S.” (RIBN), was awarded by the Partners Investing in Nursing's Future program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Northwest Health Foundation to the Jonas Center for Nursing Excellence in New York, which contributed matching funds to the project. These funds enable faculty at Hunter and Queensborough, along with faculty at Western Carolina University and AB Tech to develop and share strategies, evaluation tools, and faculty development ideas and

to obtain advice from a national team of experts.

The North Carolina schools add an urban-rural dimension in keeping with another RIBN goal – increasing primary care practitioners in minority and underserved communities.

Darlene Curley, executive director of the Jonas Center, said of RIBN: “It is an innovative career pathway for associate degree nurses to have the opportunity to immediately pursue a baccalaureate degree. Patients receiving care from baccalaureate-trained nurses have shown to have fewer complications, faster recoveries and lower mortality rates. Baccalaureate nurses will be better equipped to meet the increasingly complex medical conditions presented by our aging population, demands of new technology that require up-to-date skills, and innovative health reform providing the highest quality of care with the ability to control costs.”

The Jonas Center is the creation of Barbara and Donald Jonas, recipients



Barbara and Donald Jonas

of the Hunter College President's Medal. President Raab made the presentation at the January commencement, praising the Jonases' public-spirited generosity. Among their many gifts, the Jonases have given the Nursing School \$300,000 to acquire cutting-edge technology.

The two-year funding totals \$375,000: \$250,000 from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Northwest Health Foundation and \$125,000 from the Jonas Center for the New York academic partners.

### Dean Gebbie Honored for Valuable Contributions to Acute Care Nursing

Dr. Kristine Gebbie, the acting Joan Hansen Grabe



Dean, has won the prestigious GE Healthcare Pioneering Spirit Award from the American Association of Critical-

Care Nurses (AACN), the largest international specialty nursing organization. Presented at the 2010 National Teaching Institute and Critical Care Exposition in Washington this May, the award recognized Gebbie for her research in public health infrastructure and law and for the projects she led in emergency preparedness, competency-based education, public health practice, and nursing.

### National Public Health Society Awards Honorary Membership to Kristine Gebbie

Delta Omega, the honorary society in public health, has named Kristine Gebbie an honorary member – a tribute conferred on health professionals with exceptional qualifications who have attained national or international distinction in the field. She joins a list of distinguished honorees that includes Herbert Hoover and former U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher.

### Carol Roye Wins Journalism Award



Carol F. Roye has been named a second-place winner in the Opinion Category for the 2009 Sex-Positive Journalism Awards

(the “Sexies”) for her article “The Hymen Mystique,” published in *Women’s enews*. Roye’s article addresses the widespread confusion among adolescents regarding virginity and the traditional importance placed on virginity in many cultures around the world. Other winners have included writers from *The Nation*, *Time* and *The New Yorker*. Roye is assistant dean for research and director of Hunter’s Center for Nursing Research, with a practice in adolescent primary and reproductive health care.

### Diana Mason Receives Honorary Degree from WVU



Diana Mason, the Louis and Rachel Rudin Professor of Nursing and director of Hunter’s Center for Health Media and Policy, joined President Bill Clinton and former interim West Virginia University (WVU) President C. Peter McGrath in receiving an honorary degree at the WVU May commencement. Mason, a WVU alumna, received an honorary doctorate of science. She is the past editor-in-chief of the award-winning *American Journal of Nursing*; co-producer and moderator of *Healthstyles*, a weekly radio program in New York City, and a researcher and speaker in the field of nursing and health policy.

### Women’s Media Center Honors Barbara Glickstein

In recognition of the 30th anniversary



of Women’s History Month, Barbara Glickstein, co-director and co-founder of the Hunter College Center for Health,

Media and Policy was profiled in the Women’s Media Center’s series “30 Women Making History” as one of 30 extraordinary women. A feminist, nurse and writer, Glickstein provided the initial support in 1986 as producer and co-host of WBAI’s show *Healthstyles*, which presents information from front line health care workers and health advocates. She has reported extensively on sexual violence in Kenya and serves on the board of Project Keshar, an international women’s advocacy organization.

### Donna Nickitas Featured in Campaign for Nursing’s Future

Donna Nickitas, graduate specialty coordinator of the MS/MSPA program at Hunter, was selected by Johnson & Johnson, a major supporter of nursing scholarships since 2000, for the cover of the brochure on their new campaign, “Be a Nurse Educator.” Assistant Professor Judith Aponte is also featured in the brochure.



The campaign was launched last year in response to growing concern about the rising nursing shortage fueled by the approaching retirement of baby boomer nurses.

## After Earthquake, Hunter Team Responds to Haiti’s Health Crisis



Clockwise from top left; Carmelle Bellefleur, Joanna Hoffmann, Steven Baumann, and Yolanda Nazaire (head of School of Nursing in Port-au-Prince).

Even before January’s earthquake, Haiti had some of the world’s poorest health statistics. So when the nursing school in Port-au-Prince was leveled in the disaster, killing 92 students and many faculty members, the ramifications were severe.

The faculty at the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing recognized the impact of this loss and were determined to help the Haitian health community rebuild. Knowing that advanced nursing care is essential to the public health of any nation, they also saw an opportunity to help improve Haiti’s system of nursing education and thereby play a role in raising the country’s overall health profile.

In June, Professors Carol Roye, Steven Baumann, and Joanna Hofmann, along with School of Nursing alumna Dr. Carmelle Bellefleur, traveled to Port-au-Prince to learn more about the future of the demolished school. Their principal goal was to plan the development of advanced nursing training in Haiti, including baccalaureate and master’s-level programs. To initiate fruitful collaborations, they met with key nursing and health

officials, all of whom expressed eagerness to work with the Hunter team to develop baccalaureate-level nursing education.

The Hunter team is now part of a group of physicians and nurses from across the U.S. working to integrate health professions education into Haiti’s recovery process. They will continue to provide assistance as the leaders of Haiti’s nursing community take the next steps toward developing programs and curricula. “The trip to Haiti has, in many ways, changed our lives,” said Roye. “It is impossible to forget the dire need we saw. It is also clear that well-trained nurses can make a tangible difference in Haitian health care. We have committed ourselves to improving nursing education in Haiti, and it has become one of the focal points of our work.”

## High Schoolers Get a Chance to Tackle Nursing Challenges

This summer, seven students from Manhattan Hunter Science High School (MHS) and one Hunter College undergraduate conducted research with School of Nursing professors, culminating in formal poster presentations of their findings. The program was an integral part of the Community Engagement with Nursing and Science program (CENS), initiatives designed to promote awareness of careers in health care and provide training and opportunities for nursing research education, particularly in underserved areas.

For the students at MHS, a science-focused college-preparatory high school administered by Hunter College, the internship was revelatory. “It took a lot of time and effort, but the learning experience made it so worth it,” said Raychel Castillo.

Along with fellow research intern

Kendra Velazquez (pictured at right), Castillo worked with Dr. Judith Aponte on a project exploring diabetes in the Dominican community. They visited local health clinics, interviewed health care workers, and perused academic literature to understand why Dominicans and other Hispanic groups have high rates of diabetes. A major factor, they concluded, was discomfort and mistrust within the doctor-patient relationship. “There needs to be better understanding and communication,” said Castillo.

Aponte praised the students’ patience, energy, and personal skills. “At first, I was worried that it would be hard to keep them engaged in the project,” she said. “But they worked at a very high level throughout and did an excellent job.”

The other students worked on two

additional research projects: Dr. Mattia Gilmartin’s study on the turnover rates of nurses in intensive care units and Dr. Steven Baumann’s study on boredom among seniors living in nursing homes.

CENS is sponsored through the Clinical and Translational Science Center (CTSC), a consortium of Upper East Side biomedical institutions including Hunter College and led by Weill Cornell Medical Center. CTSC is the product of a \$49 million grant from the National Institutes of Health.



## Update from the Alumnae Association President



*It has been my privilege to serve as president of the Alumnae Association for the past four years. I want to thank you for the opportunity to work together to support the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing during these exciting times of change, and to welcome Diane Rendon (BSN '71) as the new president of the Alumnae Association. As most of you know, Dr. Rendon was director of the School for 11 years and on the faculty for 14.*

*I will forever be struck by the incomparable enthusiasm our School of Nursing graduates continue to show for Hunter. Let me give an example. During the recent accreditation visit from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, the gratitude that many of you expressed for the opportunities that your Hunter education provided were articulated in your passionate remarks and fierce advocacy for the School. The visitors were understandably impressed with the strong commitment of our alums. It is this spirit that continues to make Hunter unique and extraordinary.*

*Support from the Alumnae Association makes it possible to enhance the curriculum and further motivate our students with prizes and financial assistance. For example, this year we created an award in honor of Sara Aronson (BSN '64) for an RN Pathway student who demonstrates commitment to promoting the health of communities. The Ann Dillon Award for Caring is now given to a graduate student as well as to undergraduates in all three tracks. And we helped subsidized an undergraduate's participation in a lobbying day in Albany, an experience the student now treasures.*

*In today's complex economic and health care climates, it is more critical than ever that we continue to support these and other programs and activities.*

*If you are not already a dues-paying member of the Alumnae Association, we urge you to join us, and if you are, we gratefully welcome your continued support.*

Kathleen Nokes



*Class of '60 alumnae (from left) Rita Donnelly McGuire, Virginia D'Aloia O'Halloran and Ann Lembeck Smith enjoyed the benefits of Skype to see and chat with classmate Hannah Berliner, who now lives in Israel.*

### 1960s

**Barbara Krajchir Cuilwik** (BS '60) has retired from AT&T and is living in Cincinnati.

**Ellen Schloerb Edwards** (BS '60) is living in Mt. Laurel, NJ. She is working per diem at Virtua Hospital in Marlton, NJ.

**Mary Jane Burke Flynn** (BS '60) moved to Fredricksburg, VA, three years ago. Now retired, she had worked for Visiting Nurse Service of New York, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and, for 30 years, the Dominican Sisters Family Health Service.

**Joan Hansen Grabe** (BS '60) and husband Bill just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They spent part of the summer on Saranac Lake and are looking forward to celebrating their daughter's wedding in the fall.

**Rita Donnelly McGuire** (BS '60) retired after 38 years of practicing psychiatric nursing. She currently volunteers as a chaplain in a local hospital near her home in Croton-on-Hudson.

**Virginia D' Aloia O'Halloran** (BS '60) is retired and living on Cape Cod where she has been teaching

part-time at Cape Cod Community College since 2001.

**Ann Lembeck Smith** (BS '60) retired in 2008 as the administrator of a large long-term home health care program. She started Geriatric Day Care in Yonkers.

**Patricia Patrizio Sumers** (BSN '59, MSN '64), continues to work as a per diem assistant director of nursing at Lenox Hill Hospital. She still finds it fascinating and satisfying to plan interventions and solutions and see them implemented.

**Dorothy Hickey** (BSN '66) presented two posters at the 2009 International Council of Nurses in Durban, South Africa. One poster described her work as a nurse consultant for the Momentum project in New York City. The other was based on work with the Visiting Nurse Service of New York at the Penn South Program for Seniors.

### 1970s

**Ninfa Fiocca** (BSN '71) works for the Rye City School District.

**Maureen O'Shaughnessy Kennedy** (BSN '71) is interim editor-in-chief for the *American Journal of Nursing* and would love to hear from classmates. Ms. Kennedy was the keynote speaker for the School of Nursing's annual alumni meeting on September 23, 2010.

**Arlene Misik Johnson** (BSN '72) is looking forward to retiring after a 38-year career in nursing. She plans to travel, volunteer, and learn.

**Elizabeth Hartmann Riley** (BSN '72) lives in southeastern Idaho and is finishing her seventh year as a certified nursing assistant instructor at a local high school.

**Joanne Blatt Porcaro** (BSN '73) is part owner of Home Instead Senior Care in Indiana.

**Denice Raspa Lugten** (BSN '76) is executive director of the Nurses Association of the Counties of Long Island, District 14 NYSNA. She wishes her colleagues a productive and successful "Year of the Nurse."

### 1980s

**Helen Silberstein Werner** (MSN '80) has worked for the Veterans Administration Medical Center for 25 years

### In Memoriam

**Olga Gorshkoff Rawlings** (BSN '59) passed away on February 19. She was a member of the first graduating class of the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing.

Former faculty member **Gladys Torres** (BS '60) died in 2010.

**Mary Theresa O'Donnell** (BS '67), 83, died on March 2. She was born in

where she served as team leader/member on the Dysphagic Task Force for the office of the inspector general. Dr. Werner was awarded a PSC-CUNY grant to continue her research titled "Comparison of a Dysphagic Screen Conducted by Registered Nurses to Speech Language Pathologist's Bedside Evaluation." She is also studying lymphedema and breast cancer.

**Dorothy Calvani** (BSN '84) is director of patient services for Little Sisters of the Assumption, Family Health Services in East Harlem.

### 1990s

**Diane R. Maydick Youngberg** (MSN '97) recently completed her EdD at Teachers College, Columbia University. Diane's son, Connor Youngberg, graduated from Hunter on June 3, majoring in Italian and Japanese.



*Connor Youngberg, Hunter President Raab and Diane Madick Youngberg at Connor's graduation*

### 2000s

**Geraldine M. Tumminia Jack** (MSN '06) is a volunteer at Birthright of Peconic, Inc., a nonprofit organization that assists pregnant women in crisis. She oversees the training of new volunteers and continues to study at the Center for Creative Retirement, a program administered through Long Island University.

**Jennifer Persad** (MSN '08) is an adult and gerontological nurse practitioner. She owns a fitness center for women and girls that opened in May 2009. The center offers individual workout sessions and nutritional counseling and classes as well as blood pressure monitoring and health coaching.

**Graduate Farial Bacchus** ('10) serves as a nurse's companion at New York Presbyterian Hospital, where she tends to patients at risk of personal injury and suicide. A New York native of Guyanese descent, Bacchus decided to become a nurse after spending a summer volunteering at a hospital.

"All I knew after that summer was that nursing felt right," she said. "It's where I belong." Bacchus will pursue a career as an oncology nurse after completing the licensing process this fall. Though she plans to stay in New York, she says that the diversity of Hunter has inspired her to spend several years working overseas, particularly in developing nations.

*Farial Bacchus smiles proudly after the Nursing Convocation in June.*



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## Suzanne Boyle: Advisory Board Member With a Passion for Improving Nursing

“The key,” said Suzanne Boyle, “is learning what the students need and then developing ways to fill the gaps in their education.”

Boyle was talking about her role on the Hunter College Nursing Advisory Board, but her vision includes students at every level of the educational hierarchy. It is a subject on which she speaks with deep passion and impressive experience from her vantage point as Vice President for Patient Care Services at the New York Presbyterian Weill Cornell Medical Center.

“At New York Presbyterian,” she explained, “we probably hire more nursing graduates each year than any other institution in the city. But what we were finding was that before the year was over, about half of the new nurses had left. They simply were not ready for

the job. They were well educated, but they weren’t fully prepared for working at the bedside.”

In her determination to “re-invent nursing,” Boyle has found two important allies. One is the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation where she is an executive nurse fellow. The other is President Jennifer J. Raab, who recruited Boyle as a member of the Hunter Advisory Board in 2006 and who is, according to Boyle, “a kindred spirit on nursing education.”

Asked what she meant by “re-inventing nursing,” Boyle laughed and said, “We’re still figuring that out.” She listed some of the elements - “being more nimble in communications, being more innovative and forging new partnerships.”

Chief among these partnerships, she said, is a new relationship between academia and the medical community to bring nursing education in sync with real-life experience. Other potential partners include local communities, public health organizations, the business community and patients with chronic diseases “to help keep them healthy and prevent hospital re-admissions.”

Boyle brings an impressive background

to her mission. The span of her career includes clinician, educator, clinical nurse specialist and administrator. She is a widely published author, and she has won a long list of awards, honors and grants.

Her longest association before joining New York Presbyterian Weill Cornell was with the Yale School of Nursing where she earned her master of science in nursing in 1981 and her doctor of nursing science in 2002. She held a variety of senior positions at the Yale-New Haven Hospital, including Director of the Center for Professional Practice Excellence.

Boyle is optimistic about the mission she shares with President Raab of re-focusing nursing education. Part of her confidence is based on the changes she has already seen in the five years since she joined New York Presbyterian: “We’ve gone from about a 50 percent dropout rate to single digits in the last 500 nurses we’ve hired. No organization can afford to lose half its new hires.”

“In my view,” she added, “there is no better organization to work with on the reforms that must be made than the Hunter School of Nursing.”