Hunter-Bellevue Addresses Critical Nursing Shortage with Help of NYC Funding

The Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing has launched an intensive 14-month nursing program to help stem the critical shortage of nurses in New York City.

At a press conference at Bellevue Hospital on July 27, City Council Speaker Christine Quinn lauded the Hunter program – the Hunter-Bellevue Accelerated Second-Degree Pathway (A2D) – and announced a $500,000, five-year grant to CUNY nursing programs. The money will help fund A2D as well as other initiatives.

Hunter President Jennifer J. Raab pointed out that every year hundreds of students want to become nurses, yet Hunter-Bellevue has been unable to meet the demand. She called the new program a “great idea that now makes it possible to move career changers into nursing in a relatively short period of time.”

Kristine Gebbie, dean of the School of Nursing, called the new program a boon to Hunter as well as the field of nursing, saying that the grant “will allow us to expand Hunter’s programs.” She pointed out that “as these adult learners become RNs, they increase our ability to meet the nursing needs of the city and elsewhere.”

Designed for professionals changing careers, the A2D program is a 14-month baccalaureate nursing program rather than the traditional 22-month program. Candidates must have a baccalaureate from an accredited college with a minimum 3.0 GPA and have completed all science prerequisites.

Meet three Hunter students who chose nursing as a second career on page 5.

In announcing the $500,000 grant, Quinn stressed that there is an “urgent need” to address the nursing shortage. It is estimated that New York City will need 7,000 more nurses by 2020, yet 575 CUNY nursing applicants were turned away last year because of a shortage of nursing teachers. Another problem is that the nursing workforce is aging and must be replenished. Seventeen percent of New York’s 63,000 nurses are 55 or older.
It has been just a year since the School of Nursing became freestanding within Hunter College and since Kristine Gebbie became the acting Joan Hansen Grabe Dean. This new independence and leadership reflect Hunter’s commitment to easing the serious shortage of nurses in New York City and elsewhere. I am pleased to report that, even in this short time, the School, under Dean Gebbie’s strong leadership, has taken important strides toward fulfilling that commitment.

Message from the Dean

Hunter’s School of Nursing has entered its 55th fall semester, with 100 juniors on their way to becoming professional nurses. We have 17 A2D (Accelerated Second-Degree) students beginning their second semester, 15 students studying in the new Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL®) Program for master’s degrees, 94 new RN Pathway students, and more than 100 new graduate students. There are now more than 700 students studying nursing at Hunter!

Numbers aside, this promises to be an exciting year. We’ve welcomed a stellar group of new faculty, cut the ribbon on the Magnus Technology Classroom, and cut the virtual ribbon on the electronic hospital that houses the digital records for our programmatic clinical and experientially simulated patients in the nursing laboratory. The new A2D Pathway moves motivated, qualified students who already have one bachelor’s degree into a compressed program suited to these adult learners, allowing more new nurses to graduate each year. At the graduate level, our partnerships with practice sites across New York City will become even stronger with the CNL® option. And, the first students in the joint Queensborough/Hunter AD/BS option have enrolled this year at Queensborough.

By educating outstanding nurses, we increasingly complement the contributions to nursing knowledge generated by faculty scholarship. New grant projects are being undertaken by faculty, individually and in partnership with our Well-Cornell Clinical Translational Science Center colleagues. Through this partnership, core and supplemental funds are helping us to expand our knowledge as well as recruit more high-quality individuals into nursing careers. Funding from research grants and cooperative agreements to the School to hire additional faculty and staff to oversee the training of a new generation of nursing leaders.

The program is partnering with two of New York City’s largest hospital systems: the municipal Health and Hospitals Corporation and the U.S. Veterans Administration. The program, which leads to a master’s degree, will consist of 500 hours of clinical training in the hospitals where the nurses who enroll in the program work.

The fact that the CNL® candidates will be educated in their workplaces is a break from the usual practice, according to Professor Kathleen Nokes, director of the program. Associate professor Marita J. Gilmartin serves as the graduate specialization coordinator for the CNL® program, providing on-site workshops for clinical partners, advising students and ensuring the curriculum is in accordance with the guidelines of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and the Board of the Clinical Nurse Leader concept.

“Our goal,” Nokes and Gilmartin explained, “is not just to prepare Clinical Nurse Leaders, but to also improve the quality of care in healthcare settings. Structuring the program so that it takes place in the nurses’ hospitals allows us to do both. They get practical, hands-on training, and their patients get improved care. It’s a win-win situation for everyone.”

The School has embarked on an exciting new chapter in its long and distinguished history. All of us at Hunter appreciate your interest and we welcome your continuing involvement and support.

Jennifer J. Raab
President, Hunter College

Beloved Professor Honored with Memorial Gift

Joseph Magnus, widower of beloved Nursing School Professor Margaret Magnus, posed a special challenge to the school last spring. He would donate $10,000 in honor of his late wife if the school would match the gift.

The responses came swiftly. Saying that he had been inspired as a student by Professor Magnus, Manuel C. Co Jr. (BSN ’89, MSN ’97) and Joseph Magnus (seated) added, “Professor Magnus was not only a respected member of the nursing informatics community but a special mentor. A technology classroom dedicated to her will keep that memory alive.”

Magnus, who died in 2007, taught at Hunter from 1970 to 1995 and was associate dean from 1982 to 1983. She was a pioneer as well as a highly respected instructor in the field of informatics, which melds computer science and information technology with the theories and practice of nursing.

Co credits Magnus with inspiring him to pursue a career in the field. He is now director of nursing informatics at New York University’s Langone Medical Center and an adjunct lecturer at Hunter-Bellevue.

Joseph Magnus said he initiated the gift to carry on his wife’s legacy. “She loved the school, she loved teaching, and she loved her students,” he said.

“She was a remarkable woman,” recalled Sue Neville (BSN ’68,MSN ’72), a former student. Neville, who taught at Hunter from 1972 to 2005 and was undergraduate director of nursing from 1998 to 2005, is currently the chair of nursing at New York Institute of Technology. “She had great insight into the relationship between research, theory and practice in nursing,” Neville said. “She was ahead of the game.”

Kristine M. Gebbie, the Joan Hansen Grabe Dean of the School of Nursing, called the Magnus family gift and the matching donations from Co and other alumni a great benefit to the school.

“They allow us to honor a greatly respected member of the Hunter faculty,” Gebbie said. “The 21st century demands nursing education that is technologically savvy and uses the best of what is available to prepare students. Dedicating this contribution to technology honors Dr. Magnus and extends our capacity to educate nurses for the future,” said Gebbie.

$1M Grant Will Strengthen Innovative Training Program

The School of Nursing won a $1 million federal grant for its pioneering Clinical Nurse Leader program. The CNL® program is designed to strengthen nursing care in safety-net settings — hospitals and healthcare facilities that treat the uninsured and under-insured.

The three-year federal grant will enable the School to hire additional faculty and staff to oversee the training of a new generation of nursing leaders.

The program is partnering with two of New York City’s largest hospital systems: the municipal Health and Hospitals Corporation and the U.S. Veterans Administration. The program, which leads to a master’s degree, will consist of 500 hours of clinical training in the hospitals where the nurses who enroll in the program work.

Kristine Gebbie, DrPH, RN
Joan Hansen Grabe Dean

Message from the President

Though the challenges to our next generation of Hunter nurses will be complex, the education gained here more than extends our capacity to educate nurses for the future,” said Gebbie.

By educating outstanding nurses, we increasingly complement the contributions to nursing knowledge generated by faculty scholarship. New grant projects are being undertaken by faculty, individually and in partnership with our Well-Cornell Clinical Translational Science Center colleagues. Through this partnership, core and supplemental funds are helping us to expand our knowledge as well as recruit more high-quality individuals into nursing careers. Funding from research grants and cooperative agreements to the School to hire additional faculty and staff to oversee the training of a new generation of nursing leaders.

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Why Three Students Chose the Fast Track to Nursing

The School of Nursing’s dedication to raising standards of care is reflected in the wide-ranging research pursued by faculty members. Three current projects hold out the promise of medical breakthroughs.

Challenging Stereotypes Of Depression in Koreans

The prevalence of depression among Korean immigrants in New York is disturbingly high — nearly twice that of the general U.S. population — according to a study led by Dr. Kunsook Bernstein, assistant professor and coordinator of Hunter’s Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Program.

Dr. Bernstein’s survey was the first scientific look at this subject in nearly 10 years, a significant gap in light of the upswing in Korean immigration to New York during the past decade. The city is second only to Los Angeles among American cities in the size of its Korean community.

The incidence of depression among Koreans was 13.2 percent, compared with 7.66 percent in the general population. The finding — while consistent with past surveys — has prompted Dr. Bernstein and her team to plan further studies on barriers to acculturation, and potential interventions.

The results also indicate that many past theories about depression in Korean Americans are incorrect. For example, there was no significant correlation between age and depression, a finding at odds with previous claims that depression occurs more frequently in older Asian immigrants.

The study was funded by the Beautiful Foundation USA, a Korean organization, and the Clinical Translational Science Center, a multi-institutional consortium that is based at Weill Cornell Medical College and includes the Hunter College School of Nursing and the Hunter Center for Study of Gene Structure and Function.

A Potential Breakthrough For At-Risk Hispanic Women

Trying to prevent HIV infection among Hispanic women between the ages of 15 and 22 is a daunting challenge, but a 10-year-long research project led by Professor Carol Roye may have found a key.

Among the biggest hurdles to protecting this vulnerable population, Roye reports, is that effective education involves interventions by clinicians, but workers in busy clinics have little time for personal sessions.

Roye, who is director of Hunter-Bellevue’s Center for Nursing Research, developed a video to teach young women that they must insist on condoms even if they used another form of birth control. She then researched whether the video alone was enough. Not surprisingly, the video without counseling was not nearly as effective as the video with it. Still, Roye notes, “The counseling demanded too much provider time to be practical.”

Next, a counseling segment was added to the video — and that appeared to make the difference. In fact, a pilot clinical trial found that “the enhanced video was more effective at promoting condom use than the original video plus counseling.”

Roye has applied to her funder, the National Institute of Nursing Research, for a grant for a full clinical trial. If the early results hold up, she says, “Clinicians and health educators will have a brief, effective intervention to promote condom use by sexually active adolescents.”

Study May Point the Way To Nursing Home Reform

Why do some nursing home populations suffer from higher rates of pressure ulcers — skin wounds caused by lying in bed for prolonged periods? Professor Steven Baumann is using a $2,600 CUNY grant to analyze a national nursing home data base and find out why.

Baumann has a theory that, if supported by the study’s results, will make a major contribution to the quality of nursing home care.

He is looking not only at the physical condition of patients who suffer from pressure ulcers, but also their mental state. “Depression may be the key,” Baumann says. “People with positive outlooks get up and do things. Bored, depressed people just lie in bed, and that’s when the ulcers develop.”

Baumann will apply next year for a $150,000, three-year grant to run a full study. His results may have a big impact on the growing national movement to change nursing homes from large, impersonal institutions into small, home-like settings where patients are encouraged to pursue life-enhancing activities like growing flowers, keeping birds and caring for pets.
Meet Our New Faculty

The Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing is pleased to welcome seven new faculty members this fall. These individuals bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise with them, and have been named to a number of key appointments.

Iyabode Alfred
After teaching at Hunter-Bellevue as an adjunct professor for the past year, Iyabode Alfred has been appointed an assistant professor starting this fall. She has been with the Visiting Nurse Service of New York for the past six years, serving most recently as staff development and quality manager. In that capacity, she was responsible for the design and implementation of clinical initiatives and training programs — mainly to enhance the ability of home care intake nurses to transition patients from temporary healthcare settings back into their communities.

Alfred has extensive professional nursing experience, as a managed care/HMO specialist, a nursing supervisor for a temporary healthcare settings back into their communities. In that capacity, she was responsible for the design and implementation of clinical initiatives and training programs — mainly to enhance the ability of home care intake nurses to transition patients from temporary healthcare settings back into their communities. She received her MSN from the University of Phoenix and her BSN from New York University.

Mattia J. Gilmartin
Mattia J. Gilmartin joins the Hunter-Bellevue faculty as associate professor. She returned to the United States after holding a post-doctoral appointment at Cambridge and a faculty post at INSEAD's Healthcare Management Initiative in France. She has published in leading nursing and health care management journals, including Nursing Administration Quarterly, Healthcare Management Review, the Annals of the Academy of Management, and Leadership Quarterly.

Her academic credentials include a PhD in nursing administration from the University of Virginia and an RN and MSN/MBA degrees from the University of San Francisco.

Christine Cutugno
Christine Cutugno joins Hunter as an assistant professor. Most recently, she was administrative director of a large critical care division at St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center in Paterson, N.J., where she was responsible for four ICUs and three step-down units.

She earned a PhD in nursing from NYU, an MEd in nursing from Columbia University Teachers College, and a BSN from Cornell University. She frequently contributes to a monthly column in The American Journal of Nursing.

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David M. Keepnews
David M. Keepnews, an expert on healthcare systems and health policy, joins the faculty of Hunter-Bellevue as an associate professor after serving as editor-in-chief of the quarterly journal Policy, Politics & Nursing. He previously taught at Adelphi University, the University of Washington and the University of Massachusetts-Lowell, and has worked extensively in the healthcare industry and for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Keepnews earned a PhD from Brandeis University's Heller Graduate School, a JD from Hastings College of the Law, an MPH from the University of California-Berkeley and a BS in nursing from the University of San Francisco. He was awarded the prestigious New York State Nurses Association’s 2009 Media Award, which he received in October.

Diana J. Mason
Diana J. Mason, the new Louis and Rachel Rudin Foundation Professor of Nursing, an endowed chair, to the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing. Dr. Mason will also serve as the director of the Center for Health Media and Policy at Hunter, a new initiative.

Her academic credentials include a PhD in nursing education in the New York metropolitan area and nationwide.

Mason joins Hunter from the American Journal of Nursing, where she was editor-in-chief for the past 10 years. Under her leadership, the journal received awards for editorial excellence and was selected in 2009 by the Specialized Libraries Association as one of the 100 most influential journals of the century in biology and medicine — the only nursing journal to receive this distinction.

Recently, Mason was appointed to the National Advisory Board of the Kaiser Health News (KHN) organization, sponsored by the Kaiser Family Foundation. KHN provides in-depth coverage of health policy, news stories, interviews and multimedia content through its website. For over 20 years, Mason has been a producer and moderator of “HealthStyles,” a popular live weekly radio program that airs on WBAI in New York City.

Bill LaRock
Bill LaRock comes to Hunter as an assistant professor, having spent the past four years in the mostly rural areas of Rwanda and South Africa, training nurses in the care and treatment of people with HIV/AIDS. For most of his career, he has worked with underserved homeless and indigent populations in urban settings in the United States and Africa. LaRock will teach in the graduate division, working specifically with adult nurse-practitioner students.

He holds a DNSc from Columbia University and an MSN from the University of California-San Francisco. He is a member of numerous professional nursing organizations as well as the HIV Academy of Medicine.

Patricia J. Moreland
Patricia J. Moreland joins Hunter as an assistant professor of nursing from Western Connecticut State University, where she taught in the undergraduate pediatric program from 2004 to 2009. She is also a consulting professor for the Catholic University of Ghana.

Her extensive international experience includes doctoral dissertation research on HIV-positive women in Rwanda and a year providing medical care in rural Guatemala. Moreland is currently a doctoral candidate in the DNSc Program at Columbia University. She received her MSN from Columbia and her BSN from Western Connecticut State.

Diana Mason Named the Rudin Professor of Nursing — a Newly Endowed Chair

Hunter is pleased to welcome Diana J. Mason, the new Louis and Rachel Rudin Professor of Nursing, an endowed chair, to the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing. Dr. Mason will also serve as the director of the Center for Health Media and Policy at Hunter, a new initiative. The Louis and Rachel Rudin Foundation is a leading supporter of medical and nursing education in the New York metropolitan area and nationwide.

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Mason is the lead co-editor of the award-winning book “Policy and Politics in Nursing and Health Care,” now in its fifth edition, and has written a number of other books as well as peer-reviewed articles and research studies published in nursing and health-related journals.

The recipient of many awards and honors, including an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Long Island University, Mason holds a PhD from New York University, an MSN from St. Louis University, and a BSN from West Virginia University School of Nursing.

President Jennifer J. Raab said, “We are deeply grateful to the Louis and Rachel Rudin Foundation for endowing this chair and making it possible for Hunter to acquire the extraordinary talents of Diana Mason. The Rudins are one of New York’s great families, and the support the Rudin Foundation gives to medical and nursing education is making a profound difference in healthcare in New York and across the nation.”
Three Nursing Alumni Named to Hunter Hall of Fame

Jane Jeffrie Seley (MSN ’98), a nurse practitioner at New York Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, is a nationally recognized leader in diabetes education and clinical management. She was appointed in 2006 to the National Academies of Practice as a Distinguished Practitioner of Nursing. She has mentored countless nurses and teaches at New York University and Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing.

Maureen O’Shaughnessy Kennedy (BSN ’71) worked in Bellevue Hospital’s Emergency Department after graduating from Hunter. Through the years, she has worked as a clinical nurse specialist, taught as an adjunct, and developed educational programs and conferences. She is now editorial director for the American Journal of Nursing, the leading nursing journal worldwide. Under Kennedy’s leadership, the publication has won many distinctions.

James Winkler (BSN ’78) has demonstrated leadership as a clinician, administrator, and entrepreneur. After a stint in the military, Winkler was a New York City firefighter during the 1970s. He entered the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing and went on to the burn unit at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center. Over time, he has specialized in burn care, published scholarly papers, and presented at academic conferences globally. Winkler and his wife, Mary, operate a health care data-processing business.

Alumni Reminisce at Reunion ’09

Class of ’69 (l. to r.) Ronnie Scheder Weber, Kathleen Deluca, JoAnn Barreggine, Diane Vigliarolo, and Maureen Murphy Goodwin remember their days as Hunter nursing students at their 40th reunion. They are joined by Hunter President Raab.

Graduates of the Class of 1974 reunite at the Hunter Alumni Birthday Luncheon.

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The 50th anniversary of the first graduating class of the School of Nursing was celebrated at two major events this past spring: the HBSON annual Spring Forum and the Hunter College Alumni Luncheon at the Grand Hyatt Hotel.

The Spring Forum, held April 1st at the Brookdale campus, was attended by students, alumni, former faculty and representatives of our clinical partnerships. Presentations focused on the history and plans—present and future—for the school. In addition, research posters by faculty and students were on display and a festive reception for more than 200 people followed.

The Hunter College alumni luncheon was a great success, attended by many 1959 class members as well as a large group celebrating milestone anniversaries. The afternoon concluded with President Raab’s presentation of a commemorative plaque to Dean Gëbbie. A presentation with wonderful photos of the first graduating class and faculty from throughout the years was shown at both events. The CD of the presentation will provide many hours of enjoyment and can be purchased for $10. To obtain a copy, please send a check to me, made out to the Alumni Association of Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing, 425 East 25th Street, New York, NY 10010.

Did you get a promotion, a new job, start your own business, or retire? Send your news and updated e-mail address to Rhena Montero at rmontero@hunter.cuny.edu.

Tell us what you’ve been up to.

Update from the Alumni Association President

I hope you all had a good summer. I’d like to share with you the following message about our recent 50th anniversary celebrations from Dr. Diane Rendon, former director of the School of Nursing and newly elected vice president of the Alumni Association.

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– Dr. Diane Rendon

Three nursing alumni were inducted into the Hunter College Hall of Fame: Maureen O’Shaughnessy Kennedy (BSN’71), Jane Jeffrie Selsey (MSN’78), and James Winkler (BSN’78). Their work is outstanding and it is being recognized. Congratulations to all of us at the School of Nursing!

We look forward to an exciting year.

Kathleen Nokes
President, Alumni Association

Sandra Turner (BSN ’59) is a child psychia- trist at Harlem Hospital. She attended medical school in Mexico after working for 14 years as a nurse in New York City.

JoAnn Barreggine (BSN ’69) is a coordinator of the Certified Nursing Assistant Program at Westminster Community College at the Ossining Extension Center. She earned her master’s in health education from Lehman.

Kathleen De Luca (BSN ’69) is a nursing faculty member at Westminster Community College. She earned her master’s degree in nursing from NYU and a post-masters degree in nursing education from Mercy College.

Maureen Murphy Goodwin (BSN ’69) is an educator for the Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland.

Virginia D’Alloa O’Halloran (BS’60, MS’66) teaches at Cape Cod Community College’s Department of Nursing.

Diane Vigliarolo (BS ’69) is the education coordinator for the Visiting Nurse Service of New York. Her son, David Bauer, is a 2005 graduate of Hunter College High School, a 2005 Intel Science Award winner, and a 2009 Rhodes Scholar.

Ronnie Scheider Weber (BSN ’69), a retired nurse practitioner in women’s health, continues to work on a per diem basis.

Jane Ellen Cleary Barr (BSN ’74) is director of wound healing at Long Island Jewish Medical Center.

Theresa Ratafzzi Burke (BSN ’74) is a geriatric nurse practitioner with the Visiting Nurse Service of New York.

Susan Carr (BSN ’74) works for Take Care Health as a nurse manager of an employee health unit with over 3,000 employees.

Sarena Felicita Chiock (BSN ’74) is a nurse manager at Putnam Hospital Center’s Emergency Department in Carmel, New York.

The South Florida Hospital News celebrated Nurses Week in May and honored Jessi M. Colín (BSN ’74, MSN ’80) in its salute to nurses across the United States. Colín, a registered nurse, professor and director at Barry University’s College of Health Sciences, was appointed by former Governor Bob Martinez to the Florida Board of Nursing and currently serves as vice-chair of the Board and chair of the education committee of the Board of Nursing.

Robin Gallay Fenn (BSN’71) recently retired from teaching at Ohio State University following a stroke.

Barbara LoCascio Gay (BSN ’74) is a board-certified nurse informaticist at Long Island Jewish Medical Center.

Kathleen Hannahan Heslin (BSN ’74) is a board-certified occupational health nurse, case manager, and a certified legal nurse consultant.

Eva Johnson Kevenseny (BSN’74) works at Queens Hospital Center as a nurse manager in a maternal child health program.

Elizabeth Lee (BS’70) completed her doctorate in nursing at the University of Connecticut in May 2009.

Marie-Helene Mahen Loolland (BSN ’74) is an adult nurse practitioner at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in pre-surgical testing. She previously was the nurse leader in the ICU. She is a past president of the NY-ANCC Chapter and treasurer of the Greater New York Organization of Nurse Executives.

Denice Lugten (BSN ’76) has spent over 33 years in healthcare and is board certified in advanced nursing administration. In 2002 she was selected as the executive director of the Nurses Association of the Counties of Long Island, District 14 of NYSNA. She is also the legislative district coordinator for NYSNA to Assemblyman Robert Sweeney. She has received numerous awards, including the Distinguished Community Health Service Award and the 2007 Nurses Association of the Counties of Long Island’s Presidential Citation Award.

Mary Buckley McCormick (BSN ’74) is a school nurse in Paterson, New Jersey. One of her two daughters is also a nurse.

Karen Wojcik O’Kane (BSN ’74) is vice president of continuing care at Brookhaven Memorial Hospital Medical Center. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Home Care Association of New York State.

Lois Annman Stockler (BSN ’74) works full-time as a neonatal nurse practitioner at Greenwich Hospital.

Mary Baranowska Walsh (BSN ’74) is vice president and CNO at Beth Israel Hospital. Last year she was inducted into the Hunter College Hall of Fame.

Geraldine Tammanza Jack (MSN ’96) is retired from practice but volunteers with Birthright of Peconic, a non-profit organization providing services to pregnant women in need. She attends the Center for Creative Retirement at Long Island University.

Diane Maydick Youngberg (MS ’97), a student at Teachers College, Columbia University, is completing her doctoral research on quality of life in individuals with permanent ostomies.

Catherine Farrell Smith (MS/PNP ’99) is working in a family-practice office, but will be relocating to western New York State to be close to her grandchildren.

Raymond Zalabari (MSN ’04) has started his own web-based business that allows patients to make appointments, get referrals, request prescription refills, ask questions, obtain results, and pay their medical bills.

Tell us what you’ve been up to.

Did you get a promotion, find a new job, start your own business, or retire? Send your news and updated e-mail address to Rhena Montero at rmontero@hunter.cuny.edu.
Five Hunter nursing students were chosen from more than 400 national applicants as winners in the prestigious Alex Hillman Family Foundation Nursing Scholars Program. The students – Ian Anderson, Wa Chan, Edwine Etienne, Anthony Ferrara and Man Yin Choi, who all graduate in June ’10 – joined 21 other students from across the country as summer interns at Lenox Hill Hospital.

The Hillman program gives its scholar-interns a two-month opportunity to practice intensive, hands-on nursing. Their clinical work is supplemented by lectures on topics ranging from diabetes and cardiac medications to navigating the job market after graduation. The students usually work three 12-hour days each week to prepare them for the shifts they may work as full-time nurses.

Ian Anderson was assigned first to the Ambulatory Post-Anesthesia Care Unit and then the Cardio-Thoracic ICU. He was responsible for assessing patients, checking vital signs and helping post-op patients with eating and regaining mobility. “This was a very, very valuable experience,” he said. “You can’t come close to working with patients like this in a school setting.”

Wa Chan spent the summer in the medical-surgical unit learning some valuable practical lessons while sharpening her bedside skills, from how to manage her time in a hectic workplace to the most effective ways to interact with nurses, doctors, technicians and patients. One lesson that stands out: “Sometimes with patients, you have to be very firm.”

Edwine Etienne also worked on the medical-surgical floor, taking part in the admission and discharge process and administering IVs and other surgical follow-up procedures. She called the Hillman internships “an excellent program,” adding, “The nurses really prepare you for working in the field.”

Anthony Ferrara worked in the Cardio-Thoracic ICU, his first choice. He was impressed with the appreciation the hospital showed for the Hillman Scholars. “The individual attention I received from the nurses and the breadth of this experience will make a dramatic difference in my adjustment to whatever job I get after graduation.”

Man Yin Choi spent her first four weeks in the post-cardiac catheterization unit, and her second four weeks on a general medicine floor. She called it “an eye-opening experience” that “taught me things I could never learn from any textbooks.”