

Under Direction of New Dean, Nursing School Regains its Independent Status

Thanks to Hunter's ongoing commitment to solving New York's health crises, including the dire nursing shortage, the Schools of Nursing has become a freestanding school within the College after almost 35 years as a part of the School of the Health Professions. Dr. Kristine Gebbie, who served under President Clinton as the nation's first AIDS czar, is the School's dean.

The newly endowed deanship is a gift of Nursing School graduate Joan Grabe ('60), who is also an alumna of Hunter College High School.

In her new role as the acting Joan Grabe Dean of the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing, Gebbie plans to incorporate more of the latest health sciences technology into the curricula and to grow Hunter's nursing programs.

"There isn't any area of nursing practice that has enough nurses," she said. "Hunter is receiving record numbers of highly qualified applicants to its nursing program. The

challenge is to find ways to accommodate more faculty, specialized teaching labs, and students," Gebbie added.

Gebbie said she wants to increase the number of nurses with bachelor's degrees who go on to graduate-level health sciences studies and to raise awareness of the wide range of nursing careers. "The nice thing about a nursing degree is how flexible it is," she said. "You can work in a hospital, do research, move up in hospital management, or work as a visiting nurse for a public health department or a school. It's very intellectually demanding."

"This is an exciting opportunity to work with a school that is committed to the city of New York and to the 21st century."



Kristine Gebbie, acting Joan Grabe Dean of the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing

1987 by President Reagan, and she chaired the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Committee on the Prevention of HIV Infection.

"Under Dr. Gebbie's leadership, Hunter is well positioned to graduate the nursing professionals who will be the leading caregivers, administrators, and researchers of the future," Hunter President Jennifer J. Raab said. "The School of Nursing will benefit greatly from Dr. Gebbie's health policy expertise."

Gebbie said she's impressed by the Hunter community. "The students ask probing, forward-looking questions," she said. "I don't think it's going to be that difficult to find a path forward to an even stronger school."



Hunter alumna Joan Grabe

Gebbie comes to Hunter from Columbia University, where she served as the Elizabeth Standish Gill Professor of Nursing and the director of the University's Center for Health Policy.

Prior to her appointment as the federal AIDS coordinator, Gebbie was secretary of the State of Washington Department of Health. She was a member of the first Presidential Committee on AIDS, formed in



Message from the President

The 51st graduating class of the Hunter College School of Nursing will face a much different world than the first. In New York especially – where rates of obesity, diabetes, and HIV/AIDS are skyrocketing – quality healthcare has become both more vital and more difficult to obtain. The nursing shortage remains dire and the predictions bleak; it is estimated that by 2020, the U.S. will have a million fewer nurses than the number required to maintain basic healthcare standards.

Thankfully, predictions are not prophecy, and we at Hunter are confident that our School of Nursing, together with our forthcoming School of Public Health, will play a major role in solving the crisis in New York and influencing the healthcare system nationwide. In addition to once again having stand-alone status within Hunter, the Nursing School has recently increased its number of degree programs, expanded its use of technology and 21st-century resources, built collaborations with other schools and departments as well as major nearby medical and educational institutions, and re-invigorated its focus on minority education and outreach. We now train students at every level of their careers, from pre-professional baccalaureates to returning nurse practitioners. We will soon establish two new named faculty chairs, the Rudin Endowed Chair and the Hearst Endowed Chair of Clinical Practice. And leading all of this is our first Joan Grabe Dean of Nursing, the brilliant and accomplished Dr. Kristine Gebbie.

Patricia Sumers, one of the Nursing School's inaugural graduates, notes in the article on pages 4-5 that we did not just train our future nurses – we educated them. The same is true today, and that is why Hunter nurses are leaders in and of their profession. They continue to set the standard, and we are confident that they will be at the forefront in solving the challenges ahead. We are thrilled to congratulate the School on a half century of success and on the promise of an extraordinary future.



Message from the Dean

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

These first few months in the Joan Grabe Deanship at Hunter College have been an inspiration. The commitment of the faculty to preparing the nurses of tomorrow is outstanding. The energy and aspirations of our students take my breath away. The research agenda is still smaller than we hope, but growing. This is the place to learn 21st-century nursing, particularly with an emphasis on complex urban environments and diverse populations.

We are successfully recruiting new faculty with skills that expand our horizons. The number of applicants grows, and fortunately, we are able to increase the number accepted. A colleague's comment that "Everything we do in nursing should be done in service to practice," provides an excellent mantra for all of our efforts. Using technology just because it's the hot thing means nothing; introducing technology in nursing education to prepare students for tomorrow's technology-driven care makes all the sense in the world. Talk about diversity and health disparities comes all too easily; sending out graduates who have learned to use the strengths of diversity to reduce disparities is a contribution to a healthier tomorrow. Every class here uses the most current evidence about best practices; our research will contribute new knowledge and new applications of existing tools. For both teaching and research we are reaching out to care-giving partner organizations, knowing that working together we can do more than we can separately.

This is the 50th anniversary of our first graduating class. These Hunter nurses set the gold standard, but we have no intention of resting on their laurels. Hunter is going for platinum as we move into the second half of our first century. Watch us go!

The Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing

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Nursing School Integrates New Technology into Curriculum

To keep up with the growth of technology in the health professions, Hunter's School of Nursing has significantly expanded its own technology use and requirements. "We are committed to teaching our students that improving the quality of patient care and patient safety requires the integration of technology into the curriculum. At Hunter, it's not just an add-on," said Dr. Joyce Griffin-Sobel, acting assistant dean for curriculum and technology and director of undergraduate programs. "While it takes time and dedication to train staff and faculty to learn and use the new technology, the benefits to our students and the program are extraordinary."

Until recently, School of Nursing graduates entered the workforce with limited real-life clinical or technological experience. This is no longer the case, thanks to new technology like the high-tech nursing skills laboratory, an innovation that has drawn attention from medical and nursing schools around the city and promises to extend its influence nationwide.



Anne Woodstock-Wallace

The laboratory consists of several specialty labs, as well as rooms for instruction, demonstrations, and conferences. In the Joyce M. Hope Lab, ten patient bed units contribute to a hospital floor simulation, and in a nearby room, five fully-equipped patient stations add precision to a model of an ambulatory care unit. Seven fully-equipped assessment stations and a small conference area with complete Internet and AV instructional capabilities comprise the Viola Shiffrin Advanced Practice Lab. Three simulated patients return repeatedly for care: an adult male named "Laerdol SimMan," an unnamed five-year old, and "Noelle," an OB patient capable of giving birth.

The successful operation of the lab is due to the dedication of its manager, Anne Woodstock-Wallace, and computer specialist Marvin Sanon. Woodstock-Wallace oversees the lab's operations and is responsible for the simulated patients and creating the scenarios that replicate real-life hospital situations. "I produce the props, which include blood, wound discharges, and other bodily

fluids, so that our students can become comfortable in what can often be difficult situations at first," said Woodstock-Wallace.

Sanon said, "Seated behind a curtain, I provide the voice-overs in response to the students as they conduct their different procedures, which means

that I need to be knowledgeable about each of the scenarios so that I can respond realistically." Sanon also works the computer that controls the mannequin responses and vital signs.

Undergraduate students have one lab period per week. They prepare by reading articles and reviewing videos about their assigned scenario, one of 25 that include blood transfusion, cardiac arrest, wound care, childbirth, pain management, and more. The actual simulation – involving four students, an instructor, and Sanon's contributions – lasts about 15 minutes. Afterwards, students participate in a debriefing session with the instructor in which they critique their performance, ask questions, and explore alternate responses and solutions.

In addition to managing the mechanics of the simulation nursing lab, students are now required to use e-textbooks, a mock medical database system complete with patient "health records," and personal "digital assistants" that contain resources like drug fact sheets, a dictionary, and lab manuals. By availing themselves of these and other high-tech innovations, students are guaranteed technological competency upon entering the workforce.



Joyce Griffin-Sobel



Marvin Sanon

Hunter's First Nursing School Graduates Fondly



They met during the bustle of registration, but it was anatomy class that really brought Patricia (Patrizio) Summers ('59) and Cynthia (Mindheim) Lieberman ('59) together.

"We became friends over the dead cat," said Summers. Fifty-four years later, the two are still best friends.

They are also the unofficial record keepers of the first 25-member graduating class of the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing (then known as the Hunter College Basic Collegiate Nursing Program), which is celebrating its 50th reunion this year. Summers and Lieberman will join many of their classmates for a commemorative celebration at the School's Annual Spring Forum at Brookdale on April 1, in advance of Hunter's alumni weekend, a month later.

Though not every member of the class has kept in touch as regularly as Summers and Lieberman, they are all connected by a lasting bond. "It was a camaraderie," explained Lieberman. "Being the first [class], in a way you were different, but you were a kind of special different. Everybody knew everybody."

Summers and Lieberman enrolled at Hunter because it was one of the first schools to offer a 4-year baccalaureate in nursing with the

liberal arts requirements of a BS. "I wanted a college education," said Lieberman.

"I give Hunter a lot of credit," said Summers, who is also a graduate of Hunter College High School. Though determined since the age of six to become a nurse, she was reluctant to attend "one of those other" nursing schools because, she said, "I did not want to wear black stockings. So one day my father happened to be reading *The New York Times*, which he did every day, and he said, 'Patricia, look at this. They're starting a nursing program at Hunter.' It was just dumb luck."

Hunter also had the advantage of its price. "Can you imagine \$35 a semester?" said Summers, referring to the bursar's fee, Hunter's sole "tuition" at the time. There were no nursing textbooks yet, and all other books were lent by the College. "My biggest expense was my carfare," said Lieberman. "Cynthia lived in the country," said Summers. "She lived in Queens. To me, that was the country."

Though brand new and yet to be accredited, the School wasted no time establishing its no-nonsense credentials. Lieberman recalls a particularly vivid example of the rigors of the program. "When it came time for the anatomy final, we asked Professor Salmon what it was going to cover, and she said, 'Everything – but it's only nine questions.' The nine questions were: Describe the skeletal system, describe the digestive system...."

Some classes and clinical practice took place at Metropolitan Hospital on First Avenue. "That first summer, it was eight weeks every day all day," said Lieberman. "That was exhausting because there was no air conditioning. We had to be there at 8 o'clock in the morning, and you could not come in uniform. We had to change down in the basement in the locker room," recalled Summers.

"I left the house at 6 o'clock," continued Lieberman. "I didn't get home till 6:30 in the evening. Then you had homework. I used to do a lot of homework on the subway. And fall asleep on the 7 [train]."

"She was really smart, though," added Summers.

Both women expressed boundless praise for the original Nursing School faculty, but reserve particular esteem for Waleria Wysolovski. "Miss W. was a very firm, strict person, but she was very warm and very understanding," said Lieberman. "I remember that first summer I just couldn't get certain things straight. One morning she said very calmly, 'Cynthia, if you come in tomorrow and you don't know the signs and symptoms of digitalis toxicity and diabetic coma and insulin shock, you're in trouble.'"

First Graduating Class: Top row (l-r): Patricia (Patrizio) Summers, Barbara (Bigolski) Johnston, Catherine Ann (Burke) Duffy, Barbara Bernisen*, Elizabeth (Farese) Reilly, Sylvia Martin, Olga (Gorshkoff) Rawlings, Catherine Maria Doherty, Enna Crosman, Emiko Kashiwahara, Cynthia (Mindheim) Lieberman, Joyce (Mortensen) Hope* Middle row (l-r): Sandra Turner, Joan C. McDermott*, Lydia (Santamaria) Etkins*, Rosemarie (McLaughlin) Finn, Irma (Look) Wu, Juanita (Bermudez) Romano. Bottom row (l-r): Beverly (Ward) Johnson, Eileen (Barton) Augente, Bernice (Henenberg) Mandel, Iris A. Lubitz, Carol (Leuski) Chandross, Renee (Saracco) Grieger, Shirley (Abrahams) Whitney. Missing: Sister Dominica Hamisch
* Deceased

Recall the Fun and Challenges of their Student Days

“Digitalis toxicity!” interjected Sumers. “She was after a lot of us on that one.”

“The next morning,” continued Lieberman, “I came in, ran up to her real fast, closed my eyes, and said, ‘The signs and symptoms of digitalis toxicity are, the signs and symptoms of diabetic coma are...’ She was hysterical. You knew she meant business, but she could laugh.”

The new program was experimental in more ways than one. Rather than offer an old-fashioned apprentice-style education, Hunter demanded of its students broad scientific knowledge and critical thinking skills. “We were not trained,” said Sumers. “We were educated. Granted, we had to learn skills, but we were also taught to think and to assess. That was the difference.”

“It was OK to question,” said Lieberman. “It was your obligation to question.”

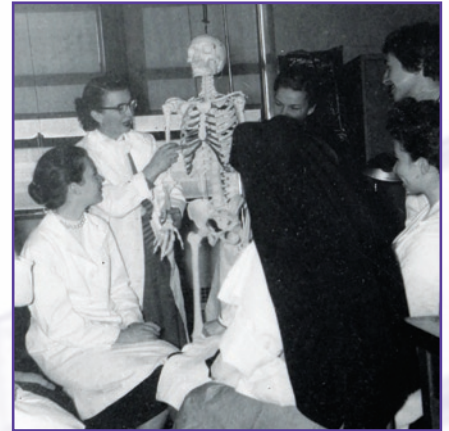
That approach instilled in both women a strong desire to keep learning and set the way for careers as educators as well as practitioners. “Because of nursing, I’ve had a very interesting life,” said Sumers, who also holds a master’s in nursing from Hunter, as well as a master’s in health services administration

from the New School and a certificate in legal nurse consulting from Hofstra.

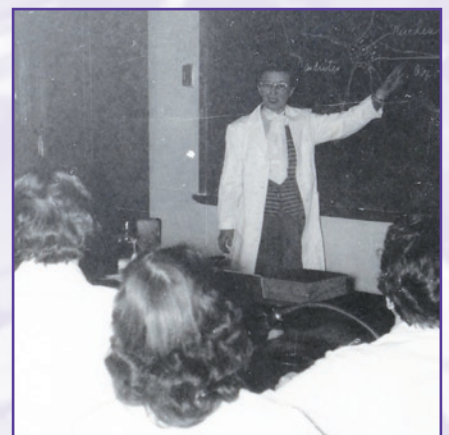
Lieberman began her career as a civilian nurse at St. Albans Naval Hospital and quickly moved to staff and then head nurse positions at Queens General Hospital. Like Sumers, she received a federal traineeship to earn a master’s, which she received from St. John’s University. Aside from three years Sumers spent teaching in Puerto Rico, both women dedicated their careers to serving the patients and teaching the future nurses of New York. “I have tremendous respect for the city and its health care and educational institutions,” said Sumers.

They also have countless memories of their Hunter days. “We used to go to parties at the hospital,” said Sumers -- though, Lieberman reminded her, always with a chaperone. Sumers brushed the comment away with her hand. “Oh, we had some good times with those medical students and interns! It wasn’t all work. There was some play.”

Lieberman retired in 1974 to marry and raise a family; Sumers continues to work one day a week as a supervisor at Lenox Hill Hospital. Though they acknowledge that the nursing profession has changed over the years, they remain immensely proud of Hunter’s role, past and present. “We received an excellent education,” said Sumers, “and I love the fact that Hunter is now offering doctorates. We have a reputation around the world, and it’s brilliant.”



Standing left to right: Joan Tarsney, Shirley Holzberg, Miss Brooks, Waleria Wysolowski, Clotilda Laudadio, Marie Polito, name unknown, Annie O’Shea & Larcie Davis.
Seated left to right: First Dean, Marguerite C. Holmes, & Miss Favreau



Faculty News

Visiting Research Fellow Helps Korean-American Women Battle Depression



Sunhee Cho

Dr. Sunhee Cho, a visiting postdoctoral research fellow from South Korea, is helping Korean-American women battle depression through “logo autobiography therapy,” a treatment that encourages the sharing of life stories through writing.

Shortly before her arrival at Hunter last summer, Dr.

Cho conducted a landmark study that illustrated the effectiveness of logo autobiography therapy in improving the mental health of wives of alcoholics. Her findings convinced her that logo autobiography could also have positive results with other populations, like immigrants, that face significant stress.

Dr. Cho learned about Hunter from Dr. Kunsook Bernstein, assistant professor and coordinator of Hunter's Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Program, whom she met at a conference in Korea in January 2008. Dr. Bernstein's participation in medical conferences in Korea has attracted several Korean visiting faculty members to Hunter, but Dr. Cho is the school's

first visiting postdoctoral fellow. She is being supported by a grant from the Global Korean Nurses Foundation for Nurse Practitioners.

Dr. Cho's clients come from church groups, Flushing Hospital in Queens, and the broader Korean community. They exhibit depressive symptoms common to immigrants, such as dissatisfaction with their new country, self-doubt, language and employment frustration, and feelings of isolation.

Logo autobiography encourages self-reflection. In six sessions, subjects are asked to write descriptions of their feelings and of significant relationships in their lives and then discuss their writings with Dr. Cho. This process often helps patients feel connected and move past their depression.

“My hope is that others in the mental health professions – nurses, social workers, psychologists – will begin to use logo autobiography in their treatment,” said Dr. Cho. “I believe that this therapy can be effective with other immigrant populations as well.”

Dr. Cho hopes to return in the fall as a student in Hunter's nurse practitioner program.



Kunsook Bernstein



Nickitas Named Distinguished Alum at Stony Brook

Hunter professor Donna M. Nickitas is one of two winners of the Stony Brook University School of Nursing's 2009 Distinguished Alumnus Award. Dr. Nickitas was selected from among 24 nominees for her “personification of Stony Brook's tradition of excellence through her outstanding achievements and noteworthy contributions to society.” She received her RN from Stony Brook in 1976. She is the graduate specialty coordinator of the MS/MPA Program at Hunter and the editor-in-chief of *Nursing Economics*.



Hunter's **Joseph P. Saladino** (center) posed with graduate students and faculty from the University of Tokyo School of Nursing, where he lectured in January. Saladino was invited to speak at several universities in Japan about the nurse practitioner certification process, scope of responsibility, and relationship to physicians. In appreciation, he was presented with the Tokyo Society of Medical Sciences Coat of Arms, shown here.



In Memoriam:

Sara P. Aronson, a Hunter alumna and former instructor at the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing, died on September 17, 2008. She was 74. She began her career in obstetrics at Beth Israel before joining the NYC Department of Health in pediatric care. A graduate of Beth Israel School of Nursing, she earned a BS from Hunter in 1964 and an MS from the

Columbia University School of Public Health. She joined the faculty of the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing as an instructor of community health nursing and was later appointed director of the RN Pathway Program, a position she held until her retirement in 1999. Aronson was the author of *Communicable Disease Nursing*. She served two terms as president of Alpha Phi, Hunter's chapter of Sigma Theta Tau, the International Honor Society of Nursing.

Contributions in Sara Aronson's memory should be made to the Hunter College Foundation, Inc., 695 Park Ave., Rm. East 1313, NY, NY 10065.

Class Notes



From the Alumni Association President

For 50 years, Hunter has educated professional nurses to meet the healthcare needs of New York City and beyond. Many of you have excelled and this excellence has been recognized by our esteemed reputation in the field of nursing and the number of alumni selected for the Hunter College Hall of Fame. Just last year, Marilyn DeLuca (BSN '71) and Mary Walsh (BSN '74, MSN '79) were given this prestigious honor and we have been alerted that three more School of Nursing alumnae will be named to the Hall of Fame in 2009. We're looking forward to celebrating with all the inductees on May 1, 2009.

I have proudly served as your president for three years. Active members can nominate themselves for office and we welcome your input. Your Alumni Association continues to work on your behalf, but we want to do more in the next 50 years! Please email me at Knokes@hunter.cuny.edu if you would like to become more involved in the Alumni Association.

With your dues we can provide additional support services for our nursing students. Dues forms are available at: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/nursing/alumni/contact.shtml>

Hope to see you soon.

Kathleen Nokes

1960's

Linda Yauch Reese (BSN '68) recently retired as associate professor from the Department of Nursing at the College of Staten Island. During her 37 years at the college, she served as both deputy chairperson and chairperson of the Nursing Department and as special assistant to the provost.

Veronica Dong Casey (BSN '68) is a proud new grandmother and a lactation consultant at the Center for Advanced Pediatrics in Darien, Connecticut. She also has returned to teaching Lamaze courses and is founder and primary principal of Connecticut Childbirth Education LLC.

1970's

Joan Heron (BSN '70) has written *Chai Budesb? Anyone for Tea? – A Peace Corps Memoir of Turkmenistan*, which describes her experiences as one of the first Peace Corps health workers in Central Asia.

Maureen Fitzgerald Murray (BSN '71) is the director of professional nursing practice for Bassett Healthcare, a rural teaching enterprise affiliated with Columbia University. The agency received magnet status in 2004 (only the second upstate agency to do so) and again in 2008 under the direction of Murray.

Linda Pizzirusso Ollis (BSN '71) works in the post-partum/nursery unit at Staten Island University Hospital and is the lactation consultant. She has been married for 37 years and has three children and two grandchildren. Her son Michael is serving in the United States Army in Iraq.

Elizabeth Hartmann Riley (BSN '72) teaches high school seniors to become certified nursing assistants at Blackfoot High School in Blackfoot, Idaho. She has taught there for nearly seven years.

Maureen Hoey Duffy (BSN '72) works for the New York State Department of Health Bureau of Home Care/Hospice Surveillance as the outcome assessments information set education coordinator. She provides regulatory surveillance for home health agencies in New York State.

Marion McEntee (BSN '73) has been promoted to lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves. She commands the 372 Minimal Care Detachment at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn. Her civilian position is assistant director of nursing at Menorah Home & Hospital, also in Brooklyn.

Joan Buono Velletri (BSN '75, MSN '85) was recently promoted to assistant vice president of nursing education/professional practice at Lutheran Medical Center. Her role has expanded from nursing education and orientation to professional nursing practice, oversight of regulatory requirements, and policy and standards maintenance. She recently hired three new graduates of Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing.

Gail Erlitz (BSN '76) is an informatics nurse analyst for the University Health Care System in Augusta, Georgia. She is implementing the Computerized Physician Order Entry program throughout the system. She and her husband, David St. Martin, celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary in 2008 and are the parents of 18-year-old twin sons.

1980's

Fay Procops Spragley (BSN '83) recently received a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. She is currently clinical coordinator and nurse practitioner at Palisades Medical Center in New Jersey and an adjunct professor at Borough of Manhattan Community College.

1990's

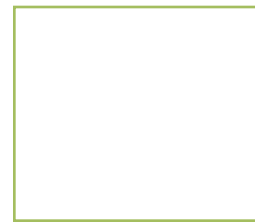
Elizabeth A. Kiernan (MSN '99) just celebrated 40 years with Project Renewal (formerly Manhattan Bowery Project), which provides homeless New Yorkers with help and resources to get their life on track. Kiernan is Project Renewal's associate director for quality assurance.

2000's

Michelle Lawrence (BSN '08), winner of the Ann Dillon Alumni Award for Caring, is working at Lenox Hill Hospital.

Stay in touch. Please send your updated e-mail address to Rhena Montero at rmonter@hunter.cuny.edu

In Memoriam: Lydia Santamaria Etkins (BSN '59) died on November 6, 2008. She suffered from multiple sclerosis for many years.



Celebrating 50 Years!

Nursing Students Provide Care in the Dominican Republic

Nineteen graduate students spent a week in the Dominican Republic in January, providing medical and nursing care to an underserved population. It was the second such trip arranged and led by Dr. Joanna Hofmann, coordinator of the Adult Nurse Practitioner (ANP) Program. The trip was organized through the New Jersey-based Foundation for Peace, which set up the daily clinics and provided housing and transportation. Phyllis Pass, a nurse practitioner at Lenox Hill Hospital, and Darcel Reyes, a graduate of the ANP program at Hunter, also participated; Reyes for the second time.

“Though I thought I would be doing something for the people I visited in the Dominican Republic, they gave me much more than I gave them,” said nursing student Sandy Levine.

One of the highlights of the trip was providing healthcare to prison inmates in San Pedro de Macoris. Catherine Valeros admitted being nervous about going into a prison in another country, but once there, she said, “I found myself sympathizing and caring for people who committed crimes. Surprisingly, the negative aspects of our setting rarely crossed my mind as I focused on providing the best possible care with the limited resources available.”

For Marleni Pina, the experience was eye-opening. “This trip allowed me to experience another culture on a first hand basis,” she said. “I better under-

stand the Dominicans living in the United States now.”

Perhaps Chantal Cayo summarized it best. “Providing a service and making a difference in the lives of those whose only means of payment is a smile and a ‘gracias’ or ‘que Dios le bendiga’ leaves one with a sense of purpose and the reassurance that all the hard work, sacrifice, two-minute cold showers, mosquito bites, empty toilet paper rolls, and education has not been time wasted.”



Graduate nursing student Lee Mitchell (center) is surrounded by fellow students and faculty in the Dominican Republic.