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**From the Dean**

This issue of the SHE Newsletter demonstrates the increasing activity of SHE faculty, students and alumni throughout the world. We are interested in expanding our presence in various international settings and in increasing the number of international students who are attracted to SHE. We have many faculty who have long-standing interests and activities in various parts of the globe as well as numerous international graduate students. This provides us with a good starting point to expand our international reach.



My recent participation in the World Association of Cooperative Education conference in Hong Kong allowed me to make connections with potential partners across the globe. I am especially interested in developing educational exchange programs for our students, both undergraduate and graduate. I envision 2-3 week educational experiences led by faculty where students can gain academic credit and learn about health practices in a culture new to them. I hope to make this a reality by June 2011.

Two of our faculty are highlighted in this issue: Val King and Susan Woskie. Val is the faculty advisor to the Student Nurses Without Borders (NSWB) group that traveled to Ghana over winter break. I encourage you to click on their blogs to read first hand some of their dramatic experiences. Susan Woskie used her sabbatical to lay the ground work for connections with Mahidol University in Thailand and will be starting an innovative research project in June.

Our students and alumni take their commitment to health and healing very personally. The NSWB group is highly motivated and dedicated to helping others. They were willing to take the plunge into unknown territory to help others. I'm sure they learned as much about themselves as they did about the people and culture of Ghana. Becca Taylor '05 demonstrates the impact of a personal commitment on the life of the children she helps in her role as a nurse aboard a Mercy Ship. She is definitely walking the talk.

I encourage each of you to reflect on your international experiences and how they impacted your life. Perhaps you can think of ways to share those experiences with our students or provide a venue for new international connections.

All my best,

**Shorrie McKinney**  
Dean  
School of Health and Environment  
University of Massachusetts Lowell

**Stories of Hope and Heartbreak from Ghana**

The Nursing Students Without Borders group returned from a 23 day trip to Ghana, Africa where they cared for people by teaching caregivers, treating patients and distributing more than 400 pounds of supplies. While this was Asst. Prof. Valerie King and alumnae Maura Norton's second trip to the region, it was the first for the ten students who volunteered for the service learning mission during winter break.





*In photo on right, Liz Long examines a child in Torkor. Left, King (standing on right) and the students give donations to children at an orphanage.*

In a personal account of their day-to-day struggles and moments of joy, the students and King each posted blog entries that describe both the hope and heartbreak of trying to do what they can to a region that needs so much.

[Read the Student NSWB Blog.](#)

[Read Valerie King's NSWB Blog](#)

Below is an excerpt written by Jody Roper describing how the experience solidifies her call to nursing and responsibility to the people of Ghana.

["Home at Last" by Jody Roper](#)



Ghana was a once-in-a-lifetime, eye-opening, and overall incredible experience. It has reaffirmed my calling to nursing. My heart broke almost daily when I observed the conditions Ghanaians live in; the quality of their air, the amount of litter on their streets/in their water, the lack of access to healthcare, the lack of resources nurses and doctors have to work with, the minimal exposure to even simple technology (washers and driers, dishwashers) that I take for granted daily...it was simply overwhelming.

I met up for drinks with some of the NSWB members last night, and they echoed my exhaustion, both mental and physical. We are all feeling emotional now, and I think it's because at some point we had to hold back/turn off emotionally while we were away. There was homesickness eating at all of us, poor nutrition and sleep deprivation, and on top of all this we witnessed so much need. In order to get through each day, we had to face our patient's problems one at a time and accept the fact that there was only so much we could do in that moment. Now that I am home, I feel I am faced with an even greater responsibility than I had while I was in Ghana.

I now recognize that educating the nurses of Ghana is more important than any blood pressure clinic, or day spent working in a hospital setting. While this interventions were important, it was in teaching our patients and colleagues that I think we made the greatest impact. With this in mind, next year's Annual National Nurse's Conference should be a priority, and it could easily be twice as big if it is better advertised than this year's was. Supply donations could be better organized now that specific needs have been identified, such as the need for alcohol swabs and a flip-flop drive. Money can be raised toward specific needs as well: anesthesia machines, blood bank refrigerators, maternity beds, bore holes for clean water, etc. It is going to be a very big year for NSWB.

## Ties to Thailand

To build an international program between UMass Lowell and Thailand universities, Prof. Susan Woskie of Work Environment traveled to Bangkok to work with colleagues at Mahidol University on planning for a grant that will start this summer. She led a day-long session for doctor of public health students on analyzing exposure data from epidemiologic studies.

Woskie also visited Khon Kaen University where she lectured to the Community Medicine Department graduate students on exposure assessment strategies for occupational and environmental epidemiology. She met with faculty and doctoral students as well as with the local head of the Cancer Registry.





Woskie spent her sabbatical in Bangkok at Mahidol University Faculty of Public Health as a Fulbright Scholar in 2007-08. She is developing stronger ties between UMass Lowell and Mahidol through student and faculty exchanges and joint research programs.

## Nursing Alum Serving on West Africa Mercy Ship

Becca Taylor, an '05 nursing alumnae, has been caring for people for six months in West Africa on the Mercy Ship, the world's largest charity hospital ship that provides health care to the poor in port areas around the world.

After graduating from UMass Lowell's nursing program, Becca worked at Massachusetts General Hospital in pediatrics before her dream of being a missionary nurse became a reality.



"It has been an amazing experience and God has been doing some amazing things in me and through me," says Becca via a recent email. "My heart is broken for all of my brothers and sisters in Africa and seeing all the health disparities they are faced with."

Even though Becca cared for kids from all around the world at Mass General, she'd never seen such extensive human suffering as in Western Africa. She treats people with "facial tumors in almost every place imaginable, cleft lips, cleft palates, burn contractures/releases which receive very large skin grafts, HIV, TB, malaria, severe malnutrition, cataracts, orthopedic deformities, and the list goes on and on."

With all the suffering she's encountered, Becca is hopeful. "Most if not all of what I have seen here is preventable. Most of these ailments could be stopped with simple education, health care and resources."

Becca is working with another Mercy Ship nurse on a grant to treat endemic Burkitt's lymphoma - the cause of some of the mouth tumors.



## Outreach for International Student Exchange Programs

To develop international exchange programs for UMass Lowell students, Shortie McKinney, Dean of the School of Health and Environment (right), attended the World Association for Cooperative Education Conference in Hong Kong.

The conference, hosted by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, provided Dean McKinney, Provost Abdelal, Dean Ting, Dean Carter, Pat Yates and Jed Wang an opportunity to present, meet and network with dozens of international universities, including the University of Macau.



## New Living Learning Community Offered to SHE Students

Students who live with others who are pursuing the same majors are more likely to graduate on time with higher grade point averages, according to research reports. That's the thinking behind

UMass Lowell's new Health and Environment Academic Living and Learning Community.



Beginning in the fall, School of Health and Environment students with similar interests will live on the same health profession floors of the recently renovated Fox Hall.

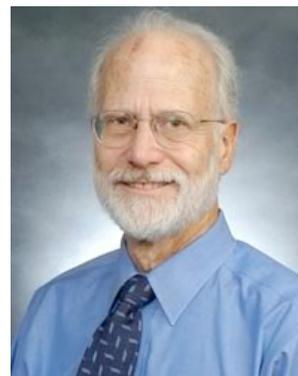
"It's been proven that students who live and study together are more successful which will increase our student retention rate," says dean of the School of Health and Environment Shortie McKinney. "With common academic goals, they can support each other and connect with faculty in a relaxed environment."

[Read more of the ENews story.](#)

## Wegman Named Chair of National Academy of Sciences Committee

Professor Emeritus David Wegman continues to be pursued by the National Academy of Sciences to chair committees addressing cutting-edge issues for human health.

The National Academy of Sciences, whose members serve as advisers to the nation on science, engineering and medicine, named Wegman chair of a new committee that will evaluate the grant selection process as well as the relevance and quality of funded research for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). The government institution awards more than \$100 million annually in research and training grants to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities from birth through adulthood.



As chair of the new committee, Wegman will lead the development of an overall framework and evaluation design that NIDRR will use to review and assess the outcomes of projects.

"It is an honor to be asked by the National Academy of Sciences to lead this effort to assess the relevance, quality and performance of grant projects in light of the current state of disability and rehabilitation research," says Wegman.

He continues to chair the Committee on Human-Services Integration, which is studying the role of human factors in home healthcare. The committee is preparing a report that will recommend strategies, methodologies and best practices for successful home-care practices.

## Student News

Congratulations to PhD student (and Adjunct Nursing Faculty member) Traci Alberti who was awarded a \$ 5,000 scholarship from the Tufts Health Plan Foundation. [See the article Wilmington Nurse Receives Scholarship.](#)

## Federal Stimulus Used to Train People for Green Jobs

The New England Consortium (TNEC) received federal stimulus funds to train workers for jobs that protect the public, employees and the environment from hazardous materials and waste.

The funds allowed TNEC to offer more health and safety training to prepare people, including UMass Lowell students, for green jobs and hire two new staff members - Luis Santos (right) and Susan Yuhas.

Santos participated in hazardous materials (HazMat) training at UMass Lowell in January 2009. At the time, The New England Consortium training team was so impressed with his leadership skills, that they decided to hire him as a trainer when stimulus funds became available.



"Luis' high energy and eagerness caught our eye," says Bridget McGuiness, lead educator of TNEC,

which is based at UMass Lowell. "His willingness to work as a team player convinced us that he would be a very effective trainer as well as a good role model for others."

Now a TNEC trainer, Santos recently taught a HazMat session on campus which consisted of leading students through simulated work tasks and mock incidents, complete with protection suits and oxygen tanks to emulate real-world situations.

"I'm very excited, especially in this economy, to have the opportunity to learn skills that prepare me as a teacher and trainer," he says.



## New Smart Classrooms Installed

A recent study revealed that eight out of 10 students want universities to overhaul traditional learning environments to include more technology and collaboration.

Thanks to \$750,000 in federal stimulus funds appropriated last year, UMass Lowell is currently installing 80 "smart classrooms" to help faculty explain complex topics to students by using all available media--access to the Internet, collaboration tools, video and audio.

With this upgrade, about 90 percent, or 150, classrooms on campus are "smart," or "technology-enhanced." Twelve new systems were installed in Weed Hall classrooms which brings the total to 20 SHE rooms.

The new systems consist of a podium with a computer, document camera, and DVD player as well as a projector and sound system installed in the ceiling. The document camera takes the place of the old-style overhead projectors and the DVD system is for use with instructional DVDs. Faculty can now use a "confidence" monitor to see what is being projected without turning to face the screen.

Sympodium systems, which consist of a special computer monitor and software that allows the instructor to "write" directly on the monitor using a stylus, were installed in the Weed lecture halls. Instructors can write either directly on the blank monitor or a blank Word document so that the system simulates a chalkboard, or they can write on their PowerPoint presentations in order to emphasize a point. This writing can be saved as a file and then distributed to students. The Sympodium takes the place of the older "Smart board" technology.

## New Video Calls for Green Chemistry Champions

A [new video](#) that features scientists from Nike, Staples and BWC Consulting, encourages companies to get involved with the Green Chemistry and Commerce Council, a group facilitated by Assoc. Prof. Joel Tickner who heads up the Chemicals Policy and Science Initiative at the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production.

The "GC3: A Call for Champions" 6-minute video highlights the benefits of working together to develop safer products using green chemistry and design for the environment methods. View the video to hear first hand from Joel Tickner, John Frazier of Nike, Inc., Roger McFadden of Staples, Inc. and Buzz Cue of BWC Pharma Consulting about why this work is critical.



**As Buzz Cue states "We are the generation that has to put the breaks on what has taken us on an unsustainable pathway. The clock is ticking."**

# Faculty and Staff News

## Publications

Futrell, M., Melillo, K.D., & Remington, R. (In Press). **Evidence-based guideline: Wandering.** Journal of Gerontological Nursing, 36(2).

Houde, S. & Melillo, K.D. (2009). **Caring for an aging population: Review of policy initiatives.** Journal of Gerontological Nursing, 35(12), 8-13.

Knight, M. & Coakley, C. (In Press). **Fall risk in patients with acute psychosis.** Journal of Nursing Care Quality, 25(3).

Knight, M., Adkison, L., & Kovack, J. (2010). **A comparison of multisensory and traditional nursing interventions.** Journal of Psychosocial Nursing, 48(1).

Lee, A.J. and Shepard, D.S., **Costs of Cardiac Rehabilitation and Enhanced Lifestyle Modification Programs,** Journal of Cardiovascular Rehabilitation and Prevention, 27(6):348-357, November/December 2009.

Lee, A.J., Strickler, G.S. and D.S. Shepard, Chapter 4-**The Economics of Cardiac Rehabilitation and Lifestyle Modification: A Review of Literature,** in Donald S. Shepard, ed., Lifestyle Modification to Control Heart Disease: Evidence and Policy, Sudbury, Massachusetts: Jones & Bartlett, 2010.

Mawn, B., Siqueira, E., Koren, A., Slatin, C., Melillo, K.D., Pearce, C., & Hoff, L.A. (2009). **Health disparities among health care workers.** Qualitative Health Research, 20(1), 68-80.

Greg Morose of the Toxics Use Reduction Institute authored the article ["The 5 principles of Design for Safer Nanotechnology"](#) that was published in the February issue of the Journal of Cleaner Production.

Work Environment Research Professor Cora Roelofs' work on nail salon workers' occupation health issues was cited in Utne Reader, [Ecofriendly Nail Salons: Color Me Nontoxic.](#)

Heleno Rodrigues Correa Filho, Luciana Cugliari, Aidê A. Coelho dos Santos Gaspar, José Fernando Loureiro, Carlos Eduardo Siqueira. **Epidemiological Surveillance of Informal Workers' Health in Two Cities in Southeastern Brazil: The Experience of the TRAPP-TRAPPURA Projects.** Int J Occup Env Health 16:36-43, 2010.

## Awards

May Futrell, Professor Emerita, has been selected for Living Legend Award through Massachusetts Association of Registered Nurses, nominated by former MS GNP graduate and MARN Officer, Myra Cacace, and Karen Devereaux Melillo.

Knight M. & Faberman J. Partners Health Care. Outstanding Performance: interdisciplinary research committee Co-chairs.

Assoc. Prof. Angela Nannini, has been selected for Excellence in Nursing Education Award through Massachusetts Association of Registered Nurses (MARN), nominated by former graduate students who are MARN members. She will receive the award at a banquet in April 2010.

Asst. Prof. Carlos Eduardo Siqueira received two awards by community groups--"The Seeds of Our Green Life" awarded by the Green Life Housecleaners Cooperative, 2009 and the "Jorge Fidalgo Community Service Award" by the Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS), 2010.

## Projects and Appointments

Assoc. Prof. of Nursing Ruth Remington was appointed to the MetroWest Commission on Healthy Aging. The Commission is formed to explore the dynamic health care needs of the region's elder population, and develop a roadmap to guide the MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation's funding priorities and strategies.

Various SHE faculty will participate as advisory board members on the project, **Healthy Diversity: Organizational staffing policies and practices to promote culturally relevant health care in community health centers,** with Prof. Meg Bond as principle investigator and Robin Toof and Prof. Laura Punnett as co-principle investigators. Members of the board include Asst. Prof. of Nursing Katherine Rosa; Craig Slatin, Chair of the Department of Community Health and Sustainability and Director of the Center for Health Promotion and Research; Trinidad Tellez, Associate Director of

Community Health Promotion, Lawrence Community Health Center; and Dorcas Grigg-Saito, Executive Director, Lowell Community Health Center and UMass Lowell Nursing Advisory Board Member. The project is funded in part by the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues.

### Book

O'Sullivan S and Schmitz T (2010), **Improving Functional Outcomes in Physical Rehabilitation**. Philadelphia, FA Davis.

### Panels and Presentations

Chair of Nursing Karen Devereaux Melillo served on the Expert Panel on Adult-Gerontology APRN Role Delineation competencies workgroup, January 7-8, 2010, Washington, DC.

Prof. of Clinical Laboratories and Nutritional Sciences Garry Handelman chaired a session on the theme of: **Dietary Sodium and other Factors Influencing Cardiac Function in Management of Hemodialysis**, at the 12th International Conference on Hemodialysis, New Orleans, Jan 21, 2010.

Asst. Prof. Katherine Rosa of Nursing will be presenting **Promoting Health by Finding Meaning in Relationship** at the International Association for Human Caring Conference, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota, June 2-5, 2010.

Asst. Prof. Valerie King of Nursing presented **Diabetes and the Role of the Nurse** at National Nurses Forum, Ho Ghana January 12, 2010 and **Assessment and Care of the Geriatric Patient** at the Kpando Health Center in Kpando, Africa on January 7, 2010

Prof. Geoff Phillips McEnany of Nursing presented at the Greater Lowell Health Alliance meeting on **Public Health Implications of Sleep Dysregulation**, Wednesday, January 13, 2010.

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