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The Flame 2013-14 Issue

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2014-15 Accelerated B.S.N. cohort pictured above with items from MCN’s history.
Message from the dean

This year we are celebrating 95 years (since 1919) of nursing and 15 years (since 1999) at Illinois State University! I remember I began my position as dean of this wonderful college the year of the 90/10 anniversary. I cannot believe all of the wonderful changes that have happened in five short years. We have had a big year as we completed the first year of the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) at Illinois State. We will also be welcoming five new full-time faculty this fall.

You may have heard of the changes at the University level. I’m thrilled Larry Dietz was named Illinoi State’s 19th president this past March. Provost Sheri Noren Everts was named chancellor at Appalachian State in North Carolina. (There will be a national search this fall for a new provost.) President Dietz asked me to serve as interim provost until the new provost is named, and I officially began that role on July 1. I am honored to help serve this incredible university. In this interim period, I appointed H. Catherine Miller as MCN’s acting dean. I am confident in our administrators, faculty and staff that MCN will continue to thrive.

Our Nursing Simulation Lab (NSL) continues to draw interest from political leaders, alumni and donors. We hosted Senator Dick Durbin and his wife, Shanon (who is a nurse), visited in March. The NSL was at the maximum capacity this past year with our increased enrollment and increased utilization of the lab. NSL staff have been incredible with all of the traffic that continues to go through the building. I would like to thank Jenn Mool, Isaac Akins, graduate assistants and lab assistants for all of their hard work to ensure our lab maintains the highest quality for teaching our future nurses.

The first floor of Edwards Hall has been renovated to facilitate more faculty offices and also the Office of Student and Faculty Services. We plan to move faculty and staff who were relocated to the Uptown Crossing building back to Edwards Hall by the end of summer.

One of the best things about my job is meeting MCN alumni and friends. Development Director Jenny Ward and I have had several alumni connections this past year. We also had our first student/alumni Mix and Mentor event in Naperville in April, and that was a huge success. I was also honored to visit former President of Menno College Hospital and MCN board trustee Bill Dunn last summer in Washington. I went with a camcorder in hand and recorded hours of conversation about the history of this fabulous college. We will be compiling his stories for our 100th anniversary, which is only five years away. Can you believe that?! We are already planning for a yearlong celebration in 2019. If you have stories and photos you would be willing to share, please see page 19 for more information about this project.

We are dedicated to educate exceptionally well prepared nurses who will lead to improve health outcomes locally and globally. We could not do this without your strong faith and generous support.

Janet Krejci, Ph.D., RN, NEA-BC
Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Dean Janet Krejci

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Senator Durbin visits Nursing Simulation Lab

Bill Dunn and Janet Krejci
Celebrating MCN’s 95th anniversary

There was a vision 95 years ago to establish for nurses a training school that would be recognized as one of the best in the nation. Mennonite Sanitarium Training School was founded on January 23, 1919. The vision continues today at Illinois State University’s Mennonite College of Nursing (MCN), where the long and rich history of values, education and service remains strong.

The first graduating class in 1922 had 15 students. Elva (Cullers) Carr was one of those graduates. In the book The Passing of the Flame, Carr talked about the uniforms students wore—a plain blue dress, black shoes with ties, black hose and a napkin ring. Her first year of nursing school cost $75. The head nurses and surgical supervisors were considered faculty, and doctors provided evening lectures. At the first commencement, Reverend Troyer gave each graduate a bible.

Carr held several nursing positions after graduation and was always proud of her association with the Mennonite Hospital School of Nursing. At the time she was interviewed for the book, Mennonite School of Nursing was in transition of changing from a diploma school to a College of Nursing. “My school was a good school in its day, and I am very proud that my school will now be the College of Nursing,” Carr stated. While she died in 1992 at the age of 96, her spirit of working hard as a nursing student and from the first graduating class continues in our students today.

There is so much history that two history books have been written. The Passing of the Flame covers 1919-1985, and The Flame Burns Brightly includes the important era from 1985-1995. There are plans to create another history book for the 100th anniversary in 2019. Following are just a few of the college’s highlights prior to joining ISU.

1902: Florence Burgess became the first superintendent.
1926: Troyer Memorial Nurses’ Home was dedicated.
1930: The board voted to require a four-year high school education for admission.
1945: The board approved the first student scholarship.
1946: Troyer Memorial Nurses’ Home was dedicated.
1950: The Master of Science in Nursing Program was approved.
1963: The first male student graduated.
1969: The admissions and financial aid offices were established.
1972: William Dunn publicly announced the establishment of Mennonite College of Nursing.
1980: Kathleen Hogan became director.
1982: William Dunn publicly announced the establishment of Mennonite College of Nursing.
1985: The last graduation ceremony for diploma students was held, as the first degrees from Mennonite College of Nursing were awarded.
1987: MCN was the first independent college of nursing to be granted initial accreditation by the NLN, which made it retroactive to June 15, 1985.
1988: The honor society had its first induction.
1992: The Candlelighting Ceremony was initiated.
1995: The Master of Science in Nursing Program was approved.
1999: Mennonite College of Nursing became the University’s sixth college on July 1.

During the past 13 years, the college has increased its undergraduate enrollment, added two sequences to the Master’s Program and created a Doctoral Program that includes a Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing and an online Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.), as well as an Accelerated B.S.N. option. This past May, the class of 2014 consisted of 101 bachelor’s degrees (including tradition-

al, accelerated and online RN/B.S.N. programs); 23 master’s degrees (including Family Nurse Practitioner and online Nursing Systems Administration); two Family Nurse Practitioner Post-Master’s Certificates; and four doctoral degrees.

What started out as a two-year diploma school that initially didn’t even have a building has grown into a respected college within Illinois’ first public university.

In 2011, the state-of-art Nursing Simulation Lab (NSL) was opened. The 10,000 square-foot facility provides students with real-life situations using high-fidelity patient simulators. Just a little different when students learned on their mannequin patient “Mrs. Chase.”

There were many traditions and celebrations established in the past, and many of those continue today: the Trans-cultural Experience, Sigma Theta Tau Honor Society, Candlelighting Ceremony, Student Nurse Association, and the Mennonite Nurses Alumni Association. The third floor of Edwards Hall is often referred to as the “Hall of History,” as it has displays of scrapbooks, photos, memorabilia and artifacts by each decade. There are also cases with old nursing uniforms, a cape and hat from Nurses’ Cadet Corps, and the walls are covered with composite photos of each graduating class.

Instructitional Assistant Professor and Transcultural Faculty Advisor Lynn Kennell started her career at Mennonite School of Nursing in 1979, and has seen many changes. When asked about MCN going from an independent college to joining Illinois State University, Kennell stated, “Initially the size of ISU was probably the most threatening thing to me. I was afraid we would lose our identity and the values and mission we stood for; but we have grown so much since joining ISU. We have established ourselves as an important part of the University, and that is indeed an exciting thing.” Kennell also stated how MCN is special because of the bond between students and faculty, and the camaraderie among the faculty, staff and administration. “We have an incredible commitment to education to be the best nurses and nurse leaders in the nation. The desire to be a college of integrity with high standards of respect for all persons is one of the principles on which we were built. The sense of community and caring that was at the foundation of our college in 1919 continues to live on.”

Kevin Lee ’87 is in the Accelerated B.S.N. program and will be graduating in August. His mother, Bonnie (Carmichael) Lee graduated from the Mennonite Hospital of Nursing in 1956. “I was well aware of the history of excellence in nursing education that the Mennonite College of Nursing is known for,” the younger Lee said. “In addition, the Mennonite College of Nursing was a natural fit for me because of my affiliations with Illinois State University and the Mennonite Church. The college was also a special place to me since mom was a graduate.” Lee talked about how intense the current 13 month Accelerated B.S.N. program, is with just a few breaks. However, he recalls his mom talking about when she was a student at Mennonite Hospital of Nursing. “Mom tells me that her program took three years to complete with only a few weeks-long breaks. They typically had to work split shifts in the hospital from 7-10 a.m., attend class, and then work again from 4-7 p.m. in the hospital. This sounded like a lot of work to me until she told me that her entire tuition bill for the three years was, as she remembers, $600!”

Lee also talked about his mom having fond memories of living in Troyer Hall, and working her way down to the lower floors as she advanced in the program. “I did not know until recently that her program at that time included a few classes at Illinois State, so she is also a Redbird,” he said. “Her mom, my grandmother, was also a student at Illinois State Normal University, receiving a teaching certificate in 1926. So we have three generations of history at ISU!”

As time goes on, MCN continues to grow and thrive. “MCN is only five years from celebrating its 100th anniversary. It is an exciting thing.” Kennell also stated how MCN is special because of the bond between students and faculty, and the camaraderie among the faculty, staff and administration. “We have an incredible commitment to education to be the best nurses and nurse leaders in the nation. The desire to be a college of integrity with high standards of respect for all persons is one of the principles on which we were built. The sense of community and caring that was at the foundation of our college in 1919 continues to live on.”

Kevin Lee pointing to his mother’s composite photo in Edwards Hall

To celebrate MCN’s 95th anniversary, the college is including a dedication to the history at each event in 2014. MCN certainly has been through several changes over the past 95 years, but the mission of “creating a dynamic community of learning to develop exceptionally well prepared nurses who will lead to improve health outcomes locally and globally—promoting excellence, research, scholarship and practice with a focus on the vulnerable and underserved—and being committed to being purposeful, open, just, caring, disciplined, and celebrative” remains strong.
Distinguished Alumni Award: Deborah Stenger ’73, B.S.N. ’01, M.S.N. ’06

Deborah (Finkenbinder) Stenger ’73, B.S.N. ’01, M.S.N. ’06 received the 2014 MNAO Distinguished Alumni Award. She received her diploma in 1973, her B.S.N. (RN/BSN program) in 2001, and her M.S.N. in 2006—all from Mennonite College of Nursing. She also received a Clinical Nurse Leader Certificate in 2008. Stenger was a part of the very first transcultural group to travel to Berlin, Germany.

Stenger’s 40-year work experience reveals a nurse leader who has progressively taken on various responsibilities from critical care nurse, charge nurse, supervisor, manager, patient coordination and resources specialist, all at what is currently known as Advocate BroMenn Medical Center.

In 2004 Stenger received the Nursing Leadership Award from BroMenn. Her love for lifelong learning resulted in her transitioning into education. She has devoted her time and energy to teaching and presenting at her alma mater since 2006.

Stenger’s accomplishments are numerous and range from planning Evidence Based Practice Conferences, to planning and implementing a Guided Imagery Program for Cardiac Surgical Patients, to presiding over Sigma Theta Tau International’s Xi Pi Chapter. She has two recent journal publications and more than a dozen podium and poster presentations.

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Illinois State University celebrated Founders Day on February 20, 2014. The annual event is a day of celebrations, from recognizing employees with milestone years of service to the Bell Ringing Ceremony, STATE Showcase displays, the convocation, and an Alumni awards dinner.

This year Mennonite College of Nursing had representation at several Founders Day events. Bell ringers included Associate Director of Technology Isaac Akins '00, '10; Assistant Dean of the Undergraduate Programs Dianne Clemens; first graduate of the Ph.D. in Nursing program Kari Hickey, Ph.D. '13; Mennonite College of Nursing President Emerita Kathleen Hogan, M.S. ‘72, Ed.D. ’85; Professor Caroline Mallory; and Clinical Practice Coordinator Nanette Marx.

Each year Illinois State’s Alumni Association proudly recognizes individuals who personify the University’s tradition as an environment for excellence. There are five award categories, including the E. Burton Mercier Alumni Service Award. It recognizes alumni who have done outstanding volunteer service and made contributions to Illinois State or the Alumni Association; or undertaken significant volunteer efforts in service to the community, state, country, or for an important social cause. President Emerita Kathleen Hogan represented MCN as a 2014 recipient of this award.

Hogan served MCN for 30 years. She provided vision and leadership as a professor, course chairperson, director of the Mennonite Hospital School of Nursing, founding dean of the college, and president and CEO of the Mennonite College of Nursing for nine years until her retirement in July 1999. Hogan remains actively engaged with the college, university, and community. After the Bell Ringing Ceremony, the college held a special luncheon to honor Hogan. Several faculty, staff, family members, and friends attended.

Another honor presented during the convocation was the University Research Initiative Award. It is presented to faculty who have initiated a promising research agenda early in their academic careers and within their first five years at Illinois State. MCN Assistant Professor MyoungJin Kim was one of the recipients. Since his appointment, Kim has authored 12 articles in refereed journals, published a statistics textbook for advance-practice nurses, given 24 national and international refereed presentations, and been an investigator or co-investigator on nearly $100,000 of external- and internal-funded research projects.

The Williams Outstanding Technology Service Award recognizes an academic professional or civil service member who has made an outstanding contribution to the University in the area of technology and service. Akins ’00, M.S. ’10, was the recipient. He leads the college tech team, manages technology support of all nursing faculty and staff, serves on the college’s information technology committee, and still devotes many hours in the Nursing Simulation Lab. It was a great day for MCN and we are not only proud of all of our award recipients, but we are also proud to be part of Illinois State University!
The Flame

The following notes are from May 2013–April 2014.

1952 Alice (Kumler) Deavers retired after working 57 years! She worked at BroMenn for 34 years and three years for a local OB/GYN.

1969 Charla (Wyse) Ruth is Division of Nursing chair at Iowa Wesleyan College in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.

1973 Patricia Galbraith recently retired as a nurse executive and home home health consultant.

1981 Mark Pelletier appeared in a 30-second commercial spot for MCN, which was aired in the Chicagoland area during the Illinois State football and basketball games. The video is also on the MCN homepage.

1991 Tammy (Koehler) Koszyk works at the Digestive Disease Endoscopy Center and is a certified gastroenterology RN. She married Dr. Phil Koszyk on August 5, 2012.

1993 Linda Shambaugh retired from St. Mary’s Hospital in Decatur after 25 years of service. She started as an L.P.N. in 1988, worked on adult and child/adolescent behavioral health units, and attained certification from ANCC. She now enjoys sewing/embroidery/quilting machine projects.


1995 Kristi (Neputy) Smith is a Family Nurse Practitioner for a neurosurgeon at Barrow Neurosurgical Associates in Phoenix, Arizona.

2002 Jeffery Pecoraro was appointed to the ANA Code of Ethics Revision Panel-Advisory Committee.

2004 Erica (Bond) Spangler completed her Family Nurse Practitioner degree at the University of Illinois in Peoria. She accepted a position within the Comprehensive Epilepsy Center at the Illinois Neurological Institute at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria, where she has worked for the past seven years as a registered nurse. She and her husband, Bryce, live in Washburn and have three children.

2009 Ann Sparks, B.S.N. ’04, M.S.N. ’12 accepted a position at the NU School of Medicine Division of Neurosurgery in Springfield. She is cRedentilated with both St. Johns Hospi
tal and Memorial Medical Center.

2009 Jenn (Grieder) Ford received her M.S.N. from St. Francis Medical Center College of Nursing, and completed the Clinical Nurse Specialist program in family-child nursing. She is the assistant patient care manager of general pedi-
tries at the Children's Hospital of Illinois.

2010 Jessica Moore, M.S.N. ’09, is program director for Ashland Family Health Center in Chicago.

2010 Elaine Smith won the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation New Careers in Nursing essay contest in January 2013. Her essay, Realizing the Dream, is on the NCN website and Facebook page.

2010 Lee (Murri) Arnould works in ICU at KSB hospital in Dixon. She has started the Adult Nurse Practitioner program at Northern Illinois University.

2013 Brian Martin accepted a position within the Comprehensive Epilepsy Center at the University of Illinois in Peoria. She is also an Oncology Certified Nurse.

2013 Emily Ruedi works in the emergency room at OSF St. Joseph Medical Center. She is a trauma nurse specialist, a certified wound nurse and is studying to take her certi-

fied emergency nurse test. She plans to pursue a graduate degree.

2012 Christina Block works at Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn. She is floating to med-surg, cardiac, and ortho-neuro floors.

2012 Emily Briggs works at Memorial Medical Center on the psychiatric floor.

2012 Delia Daly completed her first year at Rush in the OR. She mostly does neuro-surgery, but is floated to every spe-
cialty as needed.

2012 Natalie Fisher works at OSF Saint Francis in Peoria on the Adult Medical Specialty Unit. She did an externship in this unit, and last summer was shadowed by another extern. She is also a preceptor for students, and joined a Six Sigma Black Belt team.

2012 Mandy Keneppl works at Advocate BroMenn as a charge nurse.

2012 Alexandra Lehtinen is a traveling nurse. Her first assign-

ment was in the northern part of Washington. In January, she went to California, as many people move there for the winter season.

2012 Sarah Maurer works at OSF St. Joseph.

2013 Jessica (Clark) McKinley works in the medical/surgical unit and the critical care unit at OSF St. Luke’s Medical Center in Kewanee. She was also trained to be a charge nurse.

2013 Ashley Parks is an RN in Neuro/Trauma ICU at Riverside Medical Center.

2013 Katie Pede accepted a position at Rush Oak Park Hospital for its new grad float pool.

2013 Rachel Rymer works in the neurosurgery unit at North-
western Memorial (now Northwestern Medicine) in Chi-
cago. She is the representative for her entire division in a hospital-wide Shared Leadership Committee, the Engage-
ment Taskforce.

2013 Melissa Wolf works at Edward Hospital in Naperville on the medical/surgical floor.

Alumni notes

Jacki Lill is a traveling nurse working in Pueblo, Colo-
rado, on an advance telemetry stroke unit.

Maura McDonald earned her Orthopedic Nursing Certifi-
cation and is also a preceptor. She works at Carle Founda-
tion Hospital in Urbana in the emergency department.

Lauren (Kopie) O’Brien is a surgical/trauma ICU nurse at Memorial Medical Center. She is attending Goldfarb School of Nursing at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in the M.S.N. program, specializing as an acute care nurse practitioner.

Jana Benjey is a pediatric home health nurse in Livings-
ton, Texas.

Molly (Gienie) Ford married Trent Ford in August and resides in Bryan, Texas. She is a nurse in an oncology unit and plans to pursue her BSN to DNP degree.

Erica (Schick) McQueen married Eric McQueen in Sep-
tember and resides in Hudsomville, Michigan. She worked on a cardiac floor at Holland Hospital in Holland, Michigan.

Megan Mills is working at Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center on the stem cell/bone marrow transplant unit in Richmond, Virginia.

Allison Mortenson works on the med/surg floor at Mercy Regional Medical Center in Durango, Colorado.

Holly Parke is working outpatient at the Siteman Cancer Center in St. Louis, Missouri. She is also an Oncology Certified Nurse.

Emily Ruedi works in the emergency room at OSF St. Joseph Medical Center. She is a trauma nurse specialist, a certified wound nurse and is studying to take her certi-

fied emergency nurse test. She plans to pursue a graduate degree.

In memory...

Our sympathies go to the family and friends of the following: 48 Evelyn (Search) Bussone passed away July 5, 2013. 50 Laura (Hobrard) Larson passed away January 27, 2013. 53 Wilma (Marquis) Ulrich passed away May 20, 2012. 94 Ruth (Beyer) Rudolph passed away December 16, 2012.
MCN hosts Nurses Week

Sleep expert and alumna keynote speaker for MCN Nurses Week

Teresa Valerio, M.S.N. ’03, D.N.P., APN, FNP-BC, CBSTM, assistant professor and D.N.P. program leader at Mennonite College of Nursing and an expert in sleep disorders, was the keynote speaker for MCN Nurses Week. Valerio’s educational presentation, “Improving Sleep Health Across the Lifespan,” was held on April 22nd and offered 2.5 contact hours from the Ohio Nurses Association Approver Unit. She was also the guest speaker for the SNA’s Candlelighting Ceremony later that evening, inspiring students to consider opportunities to impact quality of care. On April 23 she held a community presentation “Sweet Dreams—How Can You Improve Your Sleep.” A reception followed. The McDowell Stafford events were sponsored by the Harold K. Sage Foundation Fund, the Illinois State University Foundation, the Marion McDowell Stafford Lectureship Series Fund, and MCN.

Other events during the week included an alumni/student social. The alumni panel included Alice Deavers ’52; Rachel Gawthorp, B.S.N. ’92; Katie (Varney) Merila, B.S.N. ’11 and current student in the FNP program; and Melinda Roth, B.S.N. ’03, M.S.N. ’13. The alumni discussed career opportunities, advanced education, graduate assistantships, and what to expect after graduation.

The week ended with two alumni events. The Golden Jubilee Celebration held on April 25 honored nursing alumni whose classes graduated 50 or more years ago. MNAO President Jenifer Patton, B.S.N. ’04, handed out 50-year class pins.

The MNAO awards and reunion banquet was the final event on April 26. Four awards were presented and milestone reunion years recognized. Alumni had the option to tour the Nursing Simulation Lab after the banquet.

Plans are already being made for MCN Nurses Week in 2015! See the calendar of events on page 22 for a list of events.

Teresa Valerio

Laura Mayer and Cristina Evans are students who work with Dr. Valerio and her research.

McDowell Stafford Child and Family lecture at the Alumni Center

Alumni Student Social – L-R: Rachel Gawthorp, BSN ’92, Melinda Roth, BSN ’03, MSN ’13, Katie (Varney) Merila, BSN ’11 and Alice (Kumler) Deavers ’52

Spring Candlelighting Ceremony

Golden Jubilee Celebration

Alumni touring the Nursing Simulation Lab after the banquet

MNAO Awards and Reunion Banquet – Distinguished Alumni recipient Deb Stenger with her husband, Steve, and their guests Jo and Ron Ropp.
Nursing students gathered April 10 at the Alumni Center looking very professional, as if they were getting ready for a job interview. As they were waiting for everyone to arrive, they chatted about their resumes and where they were going to apply for jobs.

A few months before, they had been invited to attend the first alumni/student event in Naperville to network with Mennonite College of Nursing alumni about job opportunities, their employment experiences, and tips for getting jobs in the area. The students boarded a shuttle bus. Alumni Relations Executive Director Doris Groves ’81 rode along. Alumni Relations and Star Uniforms sponsored the transportation, while Advocate Health Care sponsored the location and catering.

Meanwhile, MCN Director of Development Jenny Ward and Dean Janet Krejci traveled to Naperville with local alums to set up at Maggiano’s Little Italy restaurant with the help of Chicago-area alums. They expected around 20 alumni from the Chicago area to attend and mentor the students about finding jobs.

As the students and alumni arrived, they immediately started connecting and getting to know each other. The alums ranged from the class of 1954 to the class of 2013, and many in between. They worked at several Advocate hospitals (Christ and Lutheran General), as well as at Rush, Northwestern-Lurie Hospital, Edwards Hospital, Northwestern Community, St. Joseph’s Presence, OSF Healthcare, schools, outpatient centers, and long-term care facilities.

Advocate Health Care Systems human resources representative John Howlett answered student questions about applying and interviewing with Advocate.

“This was our inaugural event to bring students to the Chicago area to network with alumni,” MCN Dean Janet Krejci said. “We could not have done this without the incredible support from Advocate Health Care, Star Uniforms, and Alumni Relations. We plan to continue hosting student and alumni networking events in the future.”

As the event came to a close, students were still talking with the alums and contact information was exchanged. “Seeing our students and alumni connecting was so rewarding,” Ward said. “The variety of nursing professionals that attended this event demonstrated to the students the progression of a career and how a nurse can transition through many settings over the course of a lifetime. The alums expressed passion for the field of nursing and their nursing education.”

**Student and faculty honors and awards**

The following awards were presented at the commencement ceremony in December 2013.

- Dr. Herman Tiedeman Memorial Award
- Kaylene Becker
- Alumni Award for Clinical Excellence Award
- Katie Alex
- Senior Excellence Award
- Desiree Humley
- Kathleen A. Hogan Teaching Excellence Award
- Cathi Kaesberg
- Geriatric Nursing Excellence Award
- Lila Fehr

The following awards were presented at the commencement ceremony in May 2014.

- Dr. Herman Tiedeman Memorial Award
- Karina Ruiz
- Senior Excellence Award
- Joshua Schlager
- Geriatric Nursing Excellence Award
- Sarah Kutz
- RN/BSN Outstanding Achievement Award
- Ania Peak
- Accelerated Outstanding Achievement Award
- Kevin Lee
- Outstanding Graduate Student Achievement Award
- Joni Schankel
- Alumni Award for Clinical Excellence
- Sara Gorham
- Kathleen A. Hogan Teaching Excellence Award
- Diane Clemens
- Graduate Program Teaching Excellence Award
- Denise Wilson

**NCLEX Pass Rate**

The official pass rate for the 110 MCN students taking the NCLEX in 2013 was 97 percent! This is remarkable in and of itself but even more so because the passing standards were raised this past year. For 2013, the national passing rate dropped to 83 percent and the state of Illinois rate dropped to 85 percent. That means our MCN students ranked 14 percentage points higher than the national average and 12 percent above the average for Illinois. We must thank faculty members Cathi Kaesberg, Gail Petro, and Blanca Miller who drive the Success Plan and mentor students through this process.
Congratulations to the class of 2014!

The education you just completed at Illinois State provides the strong roots you will need to truly blossom in your careers. We encourage you to continue your education through graduate programs and other continuing education programs. We are here to help you continue your success in the nursing profession.

You are now part of our wonderful Alumni Network. We hope to see you at events, network with current students and give back to your alma mater. Go MCN Redbird Nurses!

Class of 2014

The green stoles represent students who traveled to Brazil.
Redbird nurse cares for Redbird patient

There will be a time in your life when you will need a nurse.

Jimmy Rosasco ‘13 knew he was going to have surgery, but he had no idea who his nurse would be at Loyola University Medical Center. When his family found out his nurse was an alum of Mennonite College of Nursing, it gave them a sense of relief—a Redbird taking care of a fellow Redbird.

Jimmy knew five years ago that he was going to need orthognathic jaw surgery, even after having braces and two expanders. He had to be put into braces six months before the surgery and had many appointments and tests beforehand. This surgery entails cutting out the upper teeth and gum area/upper jaw, shaving part of the sinus cavities and bone to realign, breaking the bottom jaw to fit into the new position of the upper jaw, and then screwing them together.

Jimmy’s surgery in February 2013 took seven hours, and there were complications. His left upper jaw continued to bleed, so the decision was made to keep him intubated and unconscious for an extra day and a half.

“He did not look good after the surgery,” said his mother, Trisha Rosasco. “He was extremely swollen, his mouth filled with gauze, a ventilator in his nose, tubes coming out of his mouth, and a compression bandage around his entire face, pushing the swollen area even more into the cheeks.”

The second day was long and excruciating for the family. It took from 6 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. to get him off the ventilator.

His nurse, Jennifer Mangiantini, B.S.N. ’07, took unbelievable care of him through it all. She also helped family members with their anxiety, accommodating his parents and sisters while he was in the ICU.

“She was extremely calm and kept me from losing it. Having a child, even though he was 22, on a ventilator looking so helpless and uncomfortable is the worst feeling I have known to date,” Trisha said.

“She gave exemplary care to our son. She made sure he did what he needed to do, and I appreciated how she handled herself and how she spoke with and cared for my son,” Trisha said. “We should have known she was an Illinois State alum because of how capable and intelligent she was.”

When Jimmy could finally talk and comprehend where he was, he found out both he and Jennifer were Redbirds. He was released from the hospital and although he is still healing, he feels great.

“I look forward to visiting Jen in the future as a fellow alum, instead of a patient,” he said.

Jennifer told the family that nurses see their patients at their worst in the ICU unit, and rarely get to see the good outcomes.

“Diane has been instrumental in ensuring excellence for the college. Students and faculty have found her assistance to be invaluable. She has worked tirelessly for MCN to obtain important resources,” MCN Dean Janet Krejci said. “The students, faculty, and staff at MCN and across the University are going to miss her when she retires. Her 23-year career with MCN and Illinois State is very much appreciated.”

“I feel fortunate to have been with Mennonite College of Nursing during the last 23 years, as it has been a remarkable journey,” Mather said. “Along the way, I continued to be impressed by the dedication and hard work of its administrators, faculty, and staff. Not only do they promote caring and compassion in the classroom, they demonstrate it in their personal lives.”

“I have gained much from this incredible group of people. The students have also been my teachers. I feel honored to have been a part of their lives by working with them, frequently through times of struggle, self-doubt and even tears, only to see them grow and graduate with hope and confidence,” Mather said. “It has been a wonderful experience.”

Nursing librarian Diane Mather retiring

A longtime friend and colleague of Mennonite College of Nursing, Diane Mather, is retiring from Milner Library at Illinois State University.

Mather is the librarian for nursing, as well as the departments of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Health Sciences.

Mather began her MCN career in the summer of 1991, when the college library moved from the lower level of Troyer Hall to the Physicians Office Building (then was renamed the Education Center) on Chestnut Street in Bloomington. When the college became part of Illinois State, Mather joined Milner Library.

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Share your story!

We are gathering stories for our website, publications, and the 100th anniversary. If you would like to submit a story for consideration, please contact MCN.

E-mail: amirvin@IllinoisState.edu
Illinois State University—MCN
Attention: Amy Irving
Campus Box 5810
Normal, IL 61790-5810

2013–2014 19
2013-2014 event highlights

Faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends participated in several events throughout the year. Below are some highlights of events held during the 2013-2014 school year.
Undergraduate programs

Traditional B.S.N.
Students who want a traditional four-year program are now directly admitted into the major from high school or may transfer into the program from other colleges.

Accelerated B.S.N.
Students who completed a non-nursing bachelor’s degree can earn a B.S.N. in 15 months.

Online RN to B.S.N.
Current RN’s can select either a full-time or part-time plan of study.

Graduate programs

Clinical nurse leader (CNL)
Prepares graduates to function as leaders within complex health care environments and emphasizes nursing leadership.

Family nurse practitioner (FNP)
Prepares graduates to function in an advanced practice role for direct health care services that integrate preventive and self-care measures.

Post-master’s FNP certificate
Prepares individuals who already hold a master’s degree in nursing to become licensed and to practice as family nurse practitioners.

Online Nursing systems administration (NSA)
Prepares students to function at executive levels. Specialty courses are offered online to allow the working nurse the opportunity to complete the degree with a flexible schedule.

Doctoral programs

Online Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.)
Prepares nurses with a blend of clinical, organizational, economic, health care improvement, and leadership skills to serve as clinical and administrative leaders in health care systems.

Ph.D. in nursing
Prepares nurses to serve the public by designing and conducting research on relevant clinical, educational, health systems, and health policy topics.
Alumni updates

We welcome updates from alumni for The Flame. We want to know about your activities, career news, family news, and other significant activities (weddings, births, honors and awards, promotions, changes in employment, personal accomplishments, etc.). We will also submit your information to Illinois State magazine. Please return this form to Illinois State University, MCN Public Relations Office, Campus Box 5810, Normal, IL 61790-5810, or email amirvin@IllinoisState.edu. Thank you for sharing your news!

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