

UCLA SCHOOL OF NURSING HEROES

SPECIAL EDITION
SUMMER 2021



UCLA SON students, faculty, staff, and alumni reflect on 2020.

UCLA School of Nursing



THIS MAGAZINE ISN'T LIKE THE PREVIOUS MAGAZINES YOU'VE RECEIVED FROM US.

USUALLY, AROUND THIS TIME, WE WOULD HAVE STORIES ABOUT SCHOLARSHIPS RECEIVED AND AWARDS WON. WE WOULD SHARE NEWS ABOUT STAFF AND FACULTY PROMOTIONS, FUNDED RESEARCH, AND PICTURES OF HOSTED EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

BUT THIS MAGAZINE WILL BE DIFFERENT; BECAUSE THIS YEAR HAS BEEN DIFFERENT.

WE ARE HIGHLIGHTING SOME OF THE MANY CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING COMMUNITY OVER THE LAST YEAR AND A HALF. ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW, STUDENTS, ALUMNI, FACULTY AND STAFF SHARE THEIR REFLECTIONS ABOUT HOW THE PANDEMIC AFFECTED THEIR LIVES PERSONALLY, PROFESSIONALLY, ACADEMICALLY OR ALL OF THE ABOVE.

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THIS ISSUE OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING MAGAZINE, AS TOLD BY OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY...IN THEIR OWN WORDS.

UCLA School of Nursing



WE DID IT! WE ENDURED. We continued to provide excellent nursing education to the next generation of nurses, leaders and scholars. We never stopped. Who would have thought when we all went home in March of 2020, that teaching remotely would last over a year? It was a year we never anticipated. Fortunately, to be a nurse means always being ready for the unexpected.

In this final year of my deanship, we are ending the second year of a global celebration of nurses, extended by the global pandemic. UCLA nurses have been at the forefront of the pandemic by helping with vaccinations, contact tracing, and caring for patients affected by COVID-19 and their families. Our scientists and doctoral students responded to the constraints of the pandemic by making dramatic changes in their data collection and research design to move their science forward. We learned a new vocabulary: Zoom, un-mute, blursday, social distancing, essential workers...and remote learning. We learned that pulling together as a community via Zoom or through frequent check-ins was critical to our well-being. We appreciated the expanded role of simulation in nursing education. I am so proud of the entire UCLA School of Nursing community for getting us through this tumultuous year.

While fully remote, we obtained our accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) after an entirely virtual visit. We continued our robust diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programming to give needed space to the critical and ongoing conversations around race and health disparities that were amplified over the last year. We are committed to making a difference. We welcomed a new Associate Dean for DEI, Professor Roberto Lucero, who will help lead these efforts. We continued teaching, learning, and researching to improve the health and lives of Californians and the neighborhoods in which we all live.

More students than ever before applied for our nursing programs. Our graduate programs advanced four spots to #16 on The US News and World Report list, #7 among public schools of nursing. We even completed a national search for the next School of Nursing dean, fully remote! Dean Lin Zhan will begin her tenure in August, 2021.

Yes, this has been a year of challenge. But it has also been a year of opportunity. Every generation of nurses faces challenges and opportunities. The graduates of today will need to lead the efforts to address the pressing need for health equity, disparities, and social and racial injustice in our communities. There will be new health issues in the aftermath of the pandemic that will affect the increasingly diverse and aging population in our state. The pandemic also taught us about the power of telehealth to extend our reach to communities.

I want to acknowledge the tremendous contributions of our brilliant faculty, our incredible staff, our bright and devoted students as well as our very supportive network of alumni and friends. As we close out the 2021 academic year, as well as my tenure here, I am convinced that our best days are yet to come.

Thank you for the honor and privilege of serving as the seventh dean of the UCLA School of Nursing.

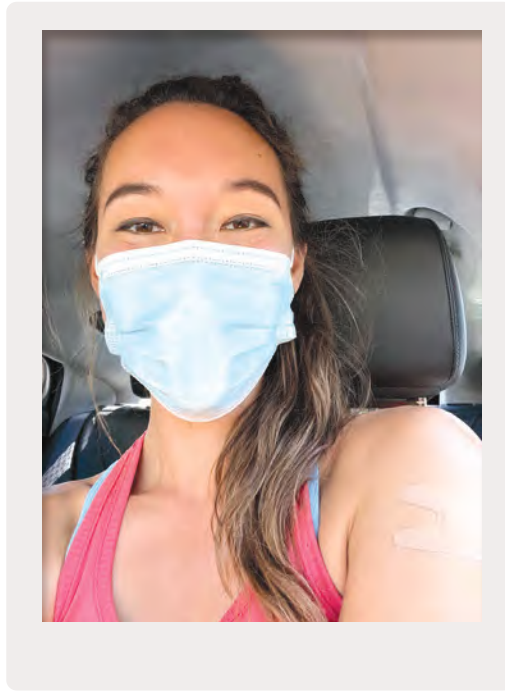
I hope you enjoy this poignant and personal issue of our magazine.

Linda

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**Linda Sarna, PhD, MN '74,
 RN, BS '69, FAAN**
 Dean and Distinguished Professor
 Lulu Wolf-Hassenplug Chair





LAST SUMMER, I SIGNED UP AS A VOLUNTEER for the Pfizer/BioNTech phase 3 COVID-19 vaccine trial. I followed vaccine development closely in 2020, but hadn't considered participating personally until I got an Instagram ad recruiting participants. After I read about the study, I decided to sign up. As it was a double-blind trial, I didn't know whether I received the actual vaccine or the placebo. But it seemed important to me to contribute in this small way to finding a vaccine that could end the pandemic.

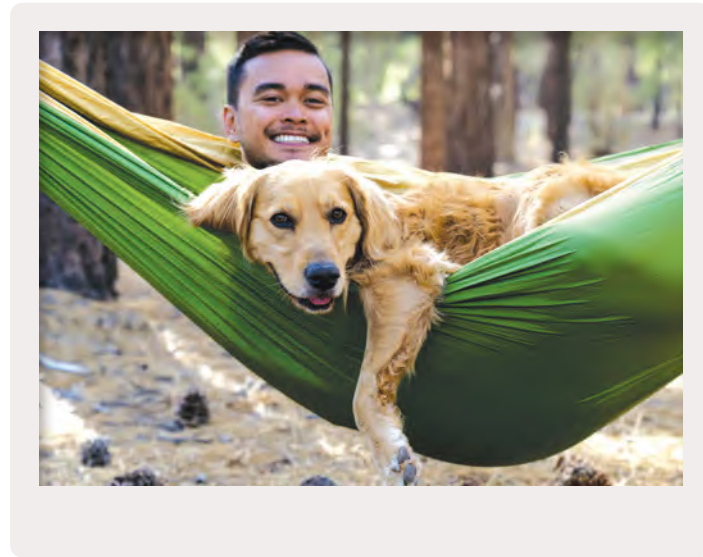
It was hard for me not to know whether I got the actual vaccine or the placebo. As a practicing nurse, it would have meant a lot to me to get the active vaccine, and I really, really did not want to be in the placebo group. However, after my second injection, I had a lot of side effects (fever, chills, headache, muscle pain) that gave me a strong suspicion that I had received the true vaccine. This was confirmed when the vaccines were finally authorized for emergency use, and I was unblinded from the study.

I wanted to help nurses and physicians prepare to have conversations about the COVID-19 vaccines and their side effects with patients, so I wrote about my experience in the trial in a perspective published in JAMA Internal Medicine in December 2020. I had the opportunity to talk with several media outlets about my experience and later helped give COVID-19 vaccines in Los Angeles. Now I'm conducting research on vaccine confidence and hesitancy among healthcare workers and families of children with autism and developmental disabilities. From being a trial volunteer, to giving vaccines as a nurse, to studying vaccine uptake as a researcher, it has been very meaningful to play this small role in helping to end the pandemic. The importance of nursing in a pandemic context — from patient care to public health to science and research — cannot be overstated. Our profession is the backbone of healthcare and public health.



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Kristen Choi, PhD, MSN, RN
Assistant Professor



WORKING AT THE UCLA SCHOOL OF NURSING REMOTELY during the pandemic has been, to say the least, interesting. While it has been great to stay connected to our alumni and donors via Zoom calls, it has presented a unique set of challenges. *“Will Spectrum Internet be out today? How come my software won’t load today? I keep talking while the mute button is on!”* However, these challenges are trivial compared to the work I’m doing at home and knowing it is impacting the lives of our nurses working on the front lines today battling this pandemic.

At the onset of COVID-19 in the spring of 2020, we were agile in our response with fundraising, quickly setting up a Crisis Support Fund. We raised more than \$35,000 from over 100 alumni and friends, which benefited our APRN students working tirelessly on the frontlines of the pandemic. It was fulfilling to know that we were doing our part in supporting our nurses/nursing students and having an impact on the global health crisis, even if it was a small dent. Additionally, we planned virtual Zoom events and mixers, helping our alumni feel connected while we couldn’t interact with our friends, networks, and communities, and even launched a new iteration of our Alumni Board of Directors.

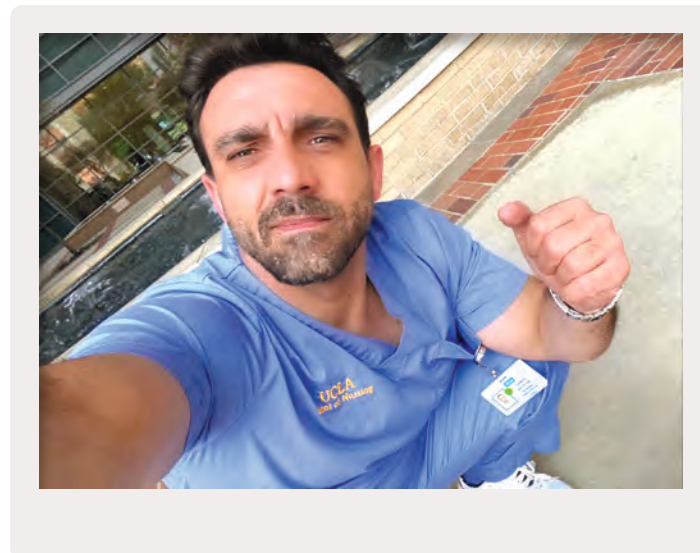
As we all got into a rhythm of working from home through the rest of 2020 and into 2021, it was important for me to also practice self-care and mindfulness, which many of our nursing faculty advocate for today. It was important to have weekends just be weekends and explore Mother Nature (sustainably). The candid photo you see above is of me and my dog, Jake, on a weekend camping trip. He has been a great furry companion during these times.

I look forward to seeing how our lives will continue to evolve through 2022 and how my role in the school can continue to help support our outstanding nurses and healthcare professionals!



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Jonathan Adrias
Director of Alumni Relations
Associate Director of Development



AS THE PRESIDENT OF MEN IN NURSING AT UCLA, I believe it is an essential part of our mission to give back to our community and our team is always looking for volunteering opportunities. I moved to the US from Moscow in 2011 after a career as a professional dancer. Without any English and any real plan, my circuitous path to nursing school would not have been possible without many people who helped me in different ways, from lending me a couch to sleep for a night to giving me advice on the next steps in my career. Now that I am in a position where I can help, volunteering has become a priority. During COVID-19, we tried to pull together as a group to be where our community needed us the most. While volunteering for Venice Family Clinic (VFC), I learned that it was a full-service clinic run entirely by volunteer medical professionals. During COVID-19, I reached out to VFC to offer our help with their vaccination drive and I am glad to say that more than 40 students and alumni volunteered. Nursing is not just a job you choose, it is a calling, and we must take action and meet the challenge that these difficult times present to us.

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Armen Akopyan, BS '21
Chapter President,
UCLA Men In Nursing (2019-2021),
AAMN Outstanding Student 2020
Award Honoree





SO WHEN THE PANDEMIC HIT AND THE SHUTDOWN OCCURRED, all teaching was conducted remotely using Zoom. As an extrovert and a very social person, it was tough; I'm used to chatting informally with students and learning about their goals and dreams. I teach pathophysiology, a difficult subject for nursing students. I have always incorporated humor and enthusiasm in my lectures and often share stories to underscore difficult concepts and help make the material relevant to clinical experiences. Engaging students, developing relationships with students, providing on-the-spot mentoring, advice, encouragement, and support is something I strive to do for all levels of students. But doing this as a small talking box on Zoom is challenging! My TA and I decided that we needed to help students get to know us as people (not just as talking Zoom boxes). We needed to incorporate something lighthearted and fun into the remote pathophysiology courses. We started "Get to know Dr. BBJ and Attallah" sessions and theme days. During the "Get to know Dr. BBJ and Attallah" sessions, we shared professional and personal experiences in the first 5 to 10 minutes of class. Themes included "wear your favorite face mask," "sunglasses," "Bruin spirit," "Disney Day," and "Cardigan Day," sometimes with theme music. We also practiced patience and flexibility. For example, students were not required to turn on their videos (although they were encouraged to do so!) as some students were sharing internet service with other family members or attending class in their kitchens or bedrooms. We also reached out to any student who did not attend class to check if they were experiencing any difficulties. Open office hours allowed students to talk about their goals and their lives as well ask questions about course content. These strategies did not eliminate the loss of seeing students in person or having them drop by my office to see what I had on my snack cart or the informal questions that often lead to advice and mentoring, but they did help to engage students. As for myself and my TA, they helped us too!

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Barbara Bates-Jensen, PhD '98,
MN '92, RN, WOCN, FAAN
Professor



“
AS NURSES, WE ARE
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TO THE CHALLENGES WE FACE DAILY.”

**Paul Boy, MSN, MPH, AGACNP-BC,
AGPNP-C, PCCN, PHN, PhD Class of 2024**
PhD DEI Representative



THE ONSET OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC COMPLETELY CHANGED MY WORLD as a working nurse practitioner and as a student. It was surreal to have been accepted to one of the most competitive PhD programs in the country here at UCLA — my excitement was mixed with trepidation just like any student starting a new academic path. However, the COVID-19 pandemic altered the world and changed school instructional flow and work responsibilities for healthcare workers. During COVID-19’s initial phase, we had little information and lots of fear as we treated patients. The tension of the pandemic immensely affected my work and made me question if going to school is feasible. We received news of online instruction for our doctorate studies. I felt uneasy about synchronous and asynchronous learning during a pandemic. I wondered, “*Will this all work?*”

As nurses, we are all adaptable and malleable to the challenges we face daily. Thankfully, online learning, while discovering how to find the Zoom link and how to share screen almost weekly, became a second nature. We are trained to face challenges and become more inspired to persevere in spite of these challenges. Online learning took a bit of time to get used to but it worked — our cohort was able to participate in discussions, do presentations, and upload academic papers just like in a classroom setting. My cohort was able to keep up with the academic rigor of the program in an online setting. We were able to do our biostatistics classes and lab work online as well as do Zoom meetings to talk to other professors and potential academic dissertation committee members. In fact, online learning made it easier to access individuals and resources to help shape our dissertation. Learning online is a doable modality that should be considered for working professionals as it has shown to be effective, especially during a pandemic.

I HAVE BEEN A NURSE IN THE PEDIATRIC INTENSIVE CARE UNIT at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles for the past five years. You could say I am used to caring for critically ill children, but this year felt so different! Our CHLA PICU has been the main pediatric COVID ICU for Los Angeles County since the onset of the pandemic. It has been difficult to witness firsthand so many healthy children contract COVID or MIS-C (a severe pediatric inflammatory condition linked to COVID-19). Still, I am lucky to be a part of an incredible team of expert healthcare professionals who tirelessly and selflessly dedicate themselves to their patients. Many of these children required breathing tubes and ventilators, vasopressor and sedation drips, feeding tubes, and continuous dialysis for their COVID-related multi-system organ failure. Unfortunately, some of them now have lifelong complications from the virus.

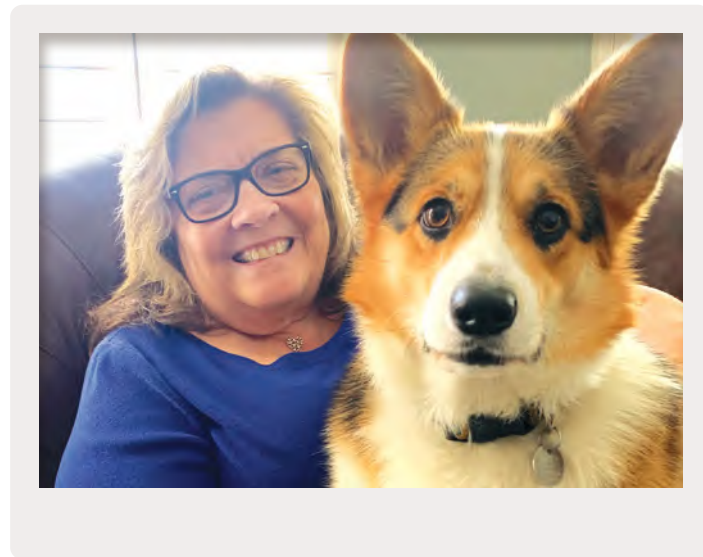
One of the hardest things about this year for me personally was the fear of the unknown. I was constantly terrified about somehow bringing the virus home from work to my loved ones. However, this year has taught me the importance of slowing down and taking a deep breath during difficult times to reflect on the many blessings in my life. I have been able to spend more time with my family (socially distanced, of course, before vaccines!), explore more of the outdoors, and take more time for myself than ever before.

I am currently finishing up my first year in UCLA’s Dual Acute Care and Primary Care Pediatric Nurse Practitioner program. I have had the opportunity to provide COVID vaccine education during my clinical rotations. Since the beginning, I have been a fierce vaccine advocate and I love sharing my experiences about getting the vaccine and caring for COVID patients and their families. I am optimistic that life will return to normal soon and it is exciting to see more and more children going back to school and doing well. There were many days when I felt hopeless, frustrated, and exhausted, but I will never forget my experiences working on the front lines during these unprecedented times.



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**SINCE THE BEGINNING,
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Erin Burgos, RN, BS ‘16, CCRN, CPN, MN Class of 2022



WHEN WE WATCHED THE DISEASE SPREAD IN CHINA and then Washington and Northern California, I hoped that it was well controlled and wouldn't spread to Southern California. That hope was certainly dashed in early March, when the first patient came to Harbor UCLA Medical Center. By the time we received our first patient, we had met for several weeks to discuss how an older hospital with few ICU isolation rooms could handle a pandemic.

Years ago, I attended a White House Pandemic Task Force meeting at the Endowment Center in Los Angeles. I had a binder that covered what to expect, including school closures, mandatory mask-wearing, etc. I was not expecting the fear I could see in my staff's eyes when they shared their concerns about enough personal protective equipment (PPE) and their concern for their health and potentially exposing their family.

I rounded multiple times a day and put my day job on hold for over a year. The patients kept coming and at one point, we had 200% of our ICU census. We also had physicians helping us with tasks because there were not enough nurses to go around and we were on Team Nursing at times. The physicians helped with proning, transporting patients, and assisting with basic care when they were in the room.

I was proud to represent nursing in interviews with CNN, ABC, CBS, NBC, and The Today Show even though I had worked so many days in a row and I was physically and emotionally exhausted. I was concerned about what nurses were experiencing as they alone accompanied patients at the end of life. I am so proud of the nursing staff but concerned about their well-being in the future because of the impact of this experience.

When I learned that I was the Distinguished Alumni of the Year for UCLA School of Nursing I was proud and humbled. There are so many outstanding alumni who have gone to UCLA School of Nursing, and I was one of many. I am very proud to be a two-time Bruin who was accepted into and completed the programs twice. My accomplishments have not been individual accomplishments, but are because I recognize the value of a team. I am very grateful to the SON, and I am proud to have been chosen.

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Nancy Blake, PhD '12, MN '89
Chief Nursing Officer
LAC + USC Medical Center
2021 Distinguished Alumni Award Honoree





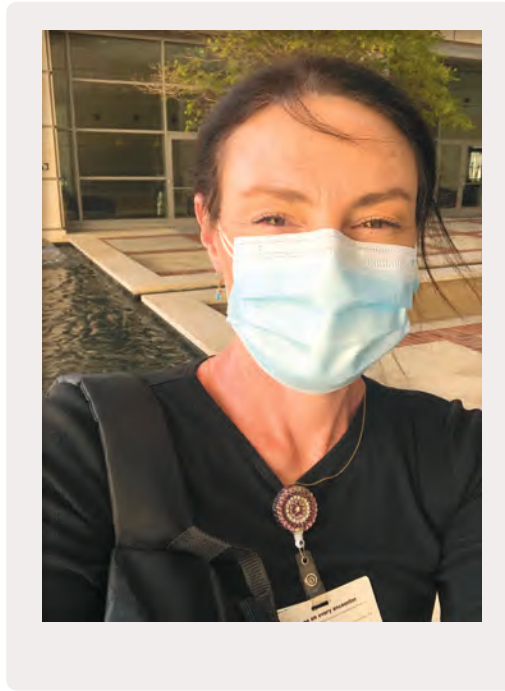
THE PAST YEAR HAS BEEN VERY CHALLENGING FOR MOST OF US IN HEALTHCARE due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Working in an infectious disease/HIV clinic as a nurse practitioner, I have seen how the pandemic has prompted much fear and anxiety among the LGBTQ+ community and our patients living with HIV/AIDS. Our patients are scared to see us in the clinic for their follow-up or go to the laboratory for their tests. Some of my patients taking Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) have stopped taking it because they stopped having sex. Despite the pandemic and social distancing, unfortunately, there are still people contracting HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Some of my patients have lost their jobs and health insurance due to the crisis, which added more stress.

Initially, I was fearful of contracting COVID-19 at work due to a lack of personal protective equipment. I was scared of bringing it home with me and infecting my older parents, who live with me, especially my mother, who is battling pancreatic cancer and on chemotherapy. It has been tough on our mental health, but we are challenged to end the pandemic as nurses and frontline workers. I ended up volunteering as a clinical trial participant in the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine last summer. I was told that I received the actual vaccines in the trial and not the placebo before it was approved by the Food and Drug Administration for emergency use. I have given online presentations on COVID-19 emerging treatments and clinical trials locally and abroad for the past year. I also have been a COVID-19 vaccine advocate among my patients, family, and friends. I encourage and recommend everyone to get the vaccine. We are now seeing the light at the end of this nightmare as more people are getting vaccinated. The COVID-19 pandemic may have interrupted our work in HIV, but our work in ending HIV/AIDS is not done.

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Harold Sarmiento, MSN '16, APRN, AGPCNP-BC,
DNP Class of 2022
Infectious Diseases NP KP LAMC





AS A NEW FACULTY MEMBER, one of the greatest professional challenges I faced was teaching my first large lecture course just a week after the stay-at-home orders were implemented. While trying to adapt the course material for remote learning, I myself became ill with mysterious symptoms that landed me in urgent care just days before the first class. I received IV fluids and medications, but no real answers. Just discharge paperwork that simply read — YOU MAY HAVE THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS. In those early weeks, testing was extremely limited and because I was not experiencing known symptoms, I was not tested.

On the first day of class, I knew I could not begin the course content without acknowledging the massive changes and uncertainty affecting us all. I asked students about the impact of the pandemic on many aspects of their lives in order to better support them as their teacher. I was deeply moved by the stories they shared. Many had left campus to return home. Some had parents who were losing their jobs and businesses; others had family members working in hospitals and other essential services on the front lines; one had already lost a family member. Many were worried about finances and income loss. Some were questioning their career choice and expressed fears about completing their clinical rotations. I was reminded of my own experience as a college student in NYC during 9/11, remembering the struggle to “keep calm and carry on” in my studies, how far away from my family and alone I felt, and how sad and bleak the world seemed. I tried to support my students from afar — through Zoom — and let them know that, even though I didn’t have all the answers, we were in this together. Meanwhile, I was adjusting in my own life with my two young children at home, wondering what was happening and struggling with virtual schooling. Once vaccines became available, I volunteered in the clinic to help that effort. I administered a vaccine to one elderly woman who had walked more than a mile using a walker to receive hers. When reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic, the early phases are already growing blurry, and I can’t believe these students are now graduating. I am beyond proud of their dedication and hope to someday meet them in person!



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Eden R. Brauer, PhD '16, MSN '09, RN
Assistant Professor



THEY SAY WORKERS BECAME 40% MORE PRODUCTIVE DURING COVID. Maybe it's a myth. For me, it was true. First, you eliminate commute time. Then you stare at half-written manuscripts. Eventually, you turn on the computer as soon as you wake up and turn it off at bedtime. There's not much to interrupt your day. Thanks to Zoom, you're never lonely and your living room is filled with colleagues, a new cast each hour.

"I can work anywhere," I tell my friends. I used to say that and mean a coffee shop or an airport. But now I mean at home. I submitted a grant on influenza and COVID-19 vaccination among people with disabilities in hopes of decreasing respiratory deaths. I published an article on health-related quality of life, another one on humanizing the healthcare of people with disabilities, and a study of parents' flashbulb memories of their child's diagnosis with Down syndrome and their sense-making afterward. A banner year of productivity for me, a spotlight of attention on disparities and dignity of people with disabilities.

I worked a little frantically, sensing a whiff of looming catastrophe at every turn. The scale and scope of all things broken towered over us all. Consoling myself with the familiar rhythm of work, I fell into bed exhausted every night. In sleep, my soul haunted the rivers of Montana in the dream world. Solace in the smell of sage, the muscle memory of fly line spooling. Both remembrance and anticipation.

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Lauren Clark, PHD, RN, FAAN
Shapiro Family Endowed Chair in
Developmental Disabilities Studies,
Professor



“ I’M IN AWE OF THE MAGNITUDE OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES...”

Mary Cadogan, DrPH, GNP-BC, FAAN, FGSA
 Program Director, Advanced Practice
 Adjunct Professor

I AM PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF THE ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSING PROGRAM (APRN), in which registered nurses return to school for an advanced practice degree of nurse practitioner or clinical nurse specialist. These students spend significant time in offsite clinical placements. When the pandemic hit, I started receiving constant cancellations or suspensions of student placements.

This is problematic as students need to complete a certain number of hours to earn eligibility for national certification. Yet smaller clinics, and even whole organizations, continued contacting me to say they could no longer take our advanced practice nursing students. We had to identify those sites still accepting students and ensure that students nearing graduation could complete their required hours. Working with faculty, I scrambled to place all our second-year students — who have three full clinical days to schedule, often at three separate sites — in available and suitable placements. In many cases, we had to prepare the students urgently to use telehealth to meet expectations for virtual visits.

The competing demands on our advanced practice nursing students were extraordinary. As practicing nurses, they were asked to work extra hours in very challenging situations because of COVID. Some had family members who became ill and/or school-age children suddenly at home. I’m in awe of the magnitude of their responsibilities; their willingness to go above and beyond in caring for their own patients while trying to meet school requirements; and the kindness they showed to one another during an extraordinary time.

I’m proud to say all our 2020 second-year advanced practice nursing students completed the hours required to be eligible for certification and graduation. And the first-year students, who experienced practically their entire time in the program during the pandemic, completed their hours this year. That cohort just graduated in June. I’m retiring after 27 years with the School of Nursing, the last four of them in my current role. It’s been particularly rewarding to have helped make these accomplishments possible for our students during an unprecedented time.



I NEVER THOUGHT HEALTHCARE WORKERS WOULD EXPERIENCE SOMETHING LIKE COVID-19

in our lifetime. Working in the emergency department, we’re used to moving large volumes of patients and caring for them in short periods of time, but this was different.

Our patient surges came in waves: first in the summer, and the worst of it beginning in November. We had established protocols that we were following, but we didn’t have enough staff. There were many nights when we were out of ratio (California has safe nurse-patient ratios) because we simply didn’t have the staff to care for everyone. By December, we were absolutely physically and mentally exhausted. The pandemic had taken its toll on us.

Once the vaccines came out, many of us volunteered at vaccination sites and tried our best to recruit others to get vaccinated. I received my first dose in December of 2020. After being vaccinated, I felt like a weight had been lifted off of my shoulders. I just spent a year worrying if I was going to get COVID and bring it home or give it to someone I loved.

Witnessing the resilience of my coworkers has been astounding. After the year we have all endured, it’s amazing to continue seeing them suit up and show up. Even those who have had COVID continue to come to work and care for patients and share their stories, providing hope for us all.

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Benjamin Cioppa, MSN ‘19, MHA, RN, CNL, PHN





PRIOR TO THE PANDEMIC, MY TEAM AND I HAD LOFTY GOALS for spring/summer 2020. We planned on hitting the pavement and recruiting throughout the Southern California and Los Angeles area, participating in high school, community college and university/nursing fairs, as well as hospital visits. When forced to move immediately into remote recruiting, we saw it as an opportunity to cast the net at an even bigger pool of prospective students.

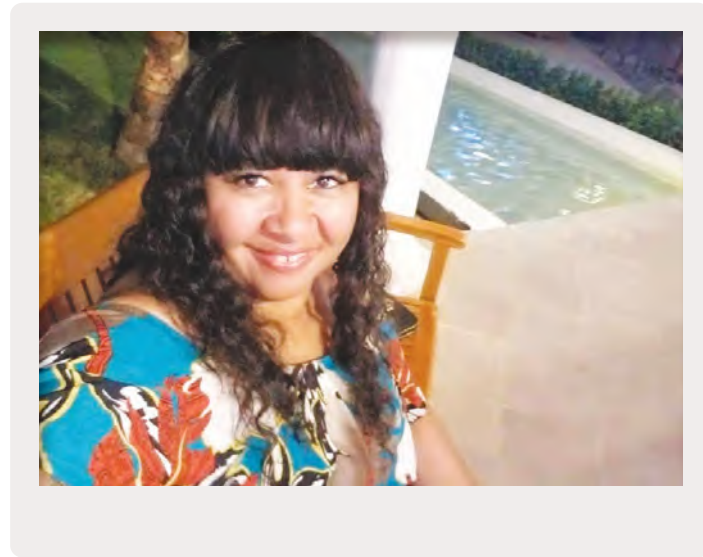
As we maneuvered through the first six months of the pandemic, many high schools and community colleges started offering virtual college fairs. We decided to register for over 60 college fairs throughout the fall, from Northern and Central California down to San Diego. As excited as we were to open our computers and get on Zoom, we experienced many schools canceling the events due to the inability to have Zoom licensing, students not having internet/computer access or Zoom capabilities, and low student sign-up. It was disheartening and a wake-up call to see the disparities many students faced and continue to face when it comes to access and the ability to learn remotely.

Leading up to the application deadlines for fall 2021 admissions, we were unsure of how many people would apply to our nursing programs. I am happy to say that application numbers increased in both the pre- & post-licensure programs. The pandemic opened the world's eyes to the profession of nursing and the courageous and heroic effort nurses displayed in one of the most difficult times in our history. Seeing people wanting to become nurses and/or further their nursing careers is a testament to the selflessness and bravery of this profession. I am happy to say that we completed fall 2021 admissions and accepted the world's best nursing students. We now know that my team's hard work (Jeimy Gama and Nataly Ascencio) paid off. Recruiting during the evening and weekends shows the dedication we have to make the UCLA School of Nursing one of the top nursing schools in the world.



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Mark Covin
Director of Recruitment, Outreach & Admissions



THE BEGINNING OF THE PANDEMIC WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE UNKNOWN. For so many years, UCLA did not support many flex schedules or remote work. Then, in a matter of 48 hours, the entire university was closed and everyone was remote. We found ourselves in uncharted waters.

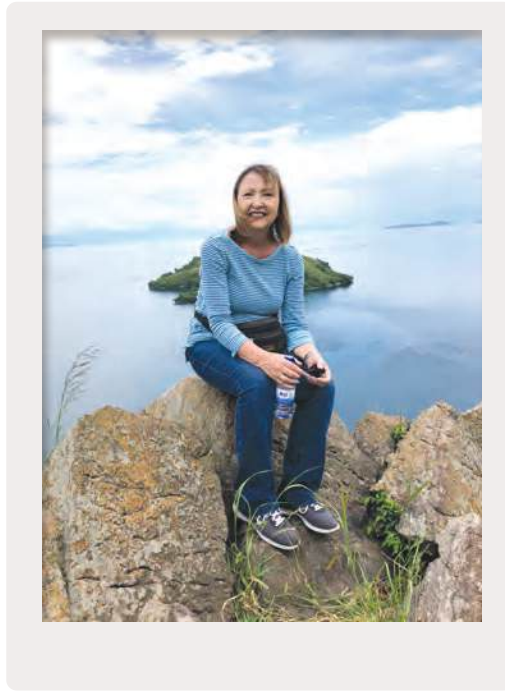
In the days soon after, we were faced with connecting with every faculty, staff, and student remotely. We had to determine such things as whether everyone had computers for working remotely, whether they had video cameras and sufficient internet connections, especially if others at home were also working or learning online. There was so much added to the daily operations of the School of Nursing as well as the university. After scrambling to get connected remotely, we all hunkered down in our homes, trying to stay safe and support each other with the work that still needed to be done. The most important work was supporting graduating nurses in joining the workforce. Six weeks into the pandemic, as I was doing everything to keep my family safe from COVID, I was hit with one of the toughest losses. I suffered the loss of my life partner (not to COVID). Suddenly, COVID was not at the forefront of my mind, but surviving the quarantine was.

I continued to work and kept in mind my role and the needs of School of Nursing operations. I would approve people coming to campus, such as staff for mail distribution, faculty for teaching classes, and faculty and students for clinicals. We followed the forever-changing LADPH protocols for density and allowable activities. I submerged myself in my work at home without setting foot on campus for months. The first day I visited my office, it looked like the apocalypse had hit. Everything was as it was in March 2020, when we all packed up and went home. So many who were here at the beginning of the pandemic are only a part of our memory now. As we start to come out of COVID hibernation with the world opening up, we are forever changed. No one is the same as we were at the beginning of the pandemic. We are resilient and have survived the hardest journey we have ever faced.



“
...WE ARE
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NO ONE IS THE SAME AS WE
WERE AT THE BEGINNING
OF THE PANDEMIC.”

Sheila Davis
Assistant Dean of Administration
Human Resources Director



I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT FRIDAY THE 13TH (MARCH 2020) WOULD NOT BE LIKE ANY OTHER FRIDAY. I was leaving the building to go to an afternoon meeting. I saw the Dean and told her, “I’ll be back in a couple of hours.” She asked me where I was going and I replied, “to an NCSP Scholars meeting.” She said, “No, no one is permitted to meet face to face anymore.” Apparently, I was living comfortably in my bubble of security and lack of concern over a looming pandemic. Just a few short days later, the entire state was shut down, including UCLA. We pivoted nearly overnight to Zoom classes and Zoom meetings. Clinical research came to a standstill.

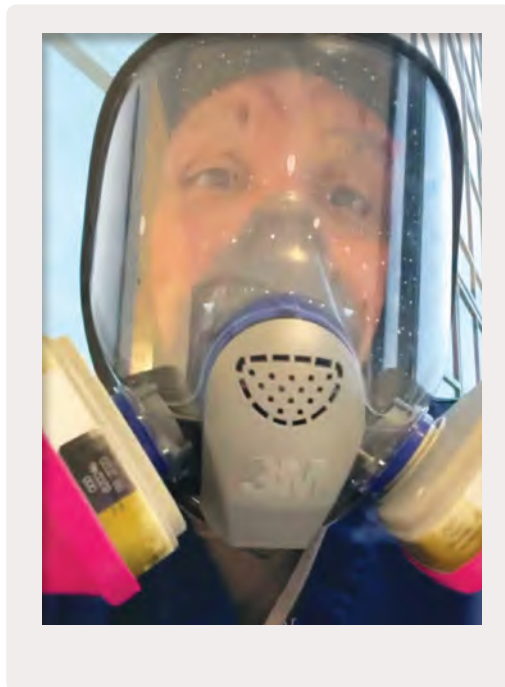
Perhaps most challenging and discouraging was the isolation, especially for a new faculty member who was just getting to know everyone in the school. The closure brought many new responsibilities, new task forces, town hall meetings, and business continuity plans. To support the new cutting-edge research proposals related to COVID, I was invited to join the COVID-19 Scientific Prioritization and Feasibility Committee. We began reviewing COVID grant submissions every Thursday afternoon to prioritize the use of clinical and biological data being collected by the Health System and CTSI. We continue to meet, and through the committee, I have made new friends and developed new collaborations.

I am so proud of how our faculty have pivoted to virtual research when possible and continued to submit new grants, some related to the pandemic. I am most proud of our ability to seamlessly transition to Zoom classes and witness the success of our students through these challenging times. This spring, when I mentioned to my class that I missed being in the classroom, a student responded, “But Dr. DeVon, we are in a classroom.” It was like a jolt of electricity. Yes, it didn’t matter that we were physically separated. We created a new type of community that facilitated learning and connection — what a great reminder of what a privilege it is to teach and discover new knowledge through research.

“ WE CREATED A NEW TYPE OF
**COMMUNITY THAT
FACILITATED LEARNING
AND CONNECTION...**”

Holli DeVon, PhD, RN, FAAN, FAHA
Professor & Associate Dean for Research
Audrienne H. Moseley Endowed Chair in Nursing





FRIGHTENED. EXHAUSTED. CONFUSED. Responsibility. Is that a word? Even if it's not, I was feeling it. Intubating a patient in the parking lot of my hospital because even the hallways were full while that patient was on a heparin drip is simply something I'll never forget. That was the same day our facility reached the grim milestone of having more than 100 patients hospitalized with COVID. I was telling families their loved one had just died, being asked by the media to educate viewers about COVID and give a sense of what it was "really" like on the inside, supporting my family through our own COVID crisis, and constantly worrying about not getting infected, all before noon.

It's hard to describe what it was (is) like being on the front lines. I tried desperately not to bring COVID home with me from the hospital literally and figuratively. Though my partner is the most amazingly supportive human on earth, no one "gets" what those of us on the front lines went through unless you lived it yourself. My UCLA nursing family was there when my mental and emotional health was at its worst. Each of us from the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) 2020 inaugural cohort experienced the unfathomable magnitude of COVID in our own way. Not only did we finish our scholarly projects and dissertations virtually in the middle of a pandemic, but we continued working full-time as hospital administrators, Geriatric, Pediatric, Family, and Acute Care Nurse Practitioners, operations wizards, testing gurus, command center comrades, rapid response renegades, and job titles no one even had a name for yet. But more importantly, we were each other's emotional support system — a system without which we would have never made it through the pandemic.



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NOON.”**

James Simmons, DNP '20, MSN, RN, AG/ACNP-BC
Hospitalist NP, TV/Radio/Social Media Medical Contributor,
CDC HIV Prevention Ambassador



“
I DID NOT BACK DOWN FROM ANY COVID-19
SITUATION BECAUSE I REALIZED THAT
**IF WE DON'T DO IT,
THEN WHO WILL?”**

Roosevelt Davis, MSN '18, RN

THE PANDEMIC WAS A WORLDWIDE DISASTER, and being a nurse during that time just proved that we had to adapt to another situation, another patient, another diagnosis that we weren't prepared for. But we first responders — nurses, doctors, RTs, EMTs, firefighters, police officers, janitorial services, etc. — were ready to work together to help make a difference for our community and especially for our loved ones.

During that time, I was working in the CVICU at Children's Health Orange County and part-time in-home health. I did not back down from any COVID-19 situation because I realized that if we don't do it, then who will? I found myself being an active voice in the community. I helped educate close friends and family on the facts and ongoing research of the virus itself, the effects it has on the human body, and about the vaccines because there was and still is so much false information out there. We are still learning and gaining knowledge from research every day. Also, in the hospital, I had COVID patients to care for and had to gear up with PPE. At times, I found myself filling the role of a designated PPE nurse (someone specifically assigned to a COVID room to make sure everyone who goes in and out dons appropriate PPE and takes it off safely to protect themselves and others). I'm happy to have made a difference in the world during the pandemic.

I WORK AS AN ICU REGISTERED NURSE. ICUs cater to the sickest COVID patients in the hospital. As a person who is immunocompromised working during the pandemic, it affected me emotionally. It gives me a great sense of professional duty to work. I am inspired by my fellow nurses who continuously show up for work every day and willingly work to help in whatever ways they can. However, our job has significantly changed since the pandemic started due to shortages in staffing and PPE and the high death rates we see every day. It also has given us a feeling of social isolation due to the fear of transmitting the virus to our own family. We have to do a daily survey to watch for COVID symptoms as nurses cannot work if we have any symptoms. This current situation sometimes gives me a moral or ethical dilemma, having to choose between coming to work to help out or stay at home because of the fear for my own and family's well-being. Having said that, COVID has proven that nursing is about adapting to any situation. As a nurse, I take pride in nurses' important role as front liners of the healthcare system.



“
**COVID HAS PROVEN THAT
NURSING
IS ABOUT
ADAPTING
TO ANY
SITUATION.”**

Maria Conrica Dawis, MSN '21



WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WOULD HAPPEN, BUT WE KNEW WE WOULD NEED TO RESPOND.

Our staff met the challenge head-on — and I'm so proud of their dedication to public health, to finding solutions, and to providing incredible care to our patients.

After we had to eliminate visitation, our information systems professionals came up with a one-touch technology to enable patients to connect with their families using bedside tablets. It is inspiring to see our nurses incorporate this technology into patients' daily routines.

One nurse on our COVID-19 unit actually stopped the medical team from extubating her recovering patient while she ran to get the tablet. She dialed his wife and set up the tablet so that the first thing the patient heard as he roused was his wife's voice, and the first thing he saw was her smiling face.

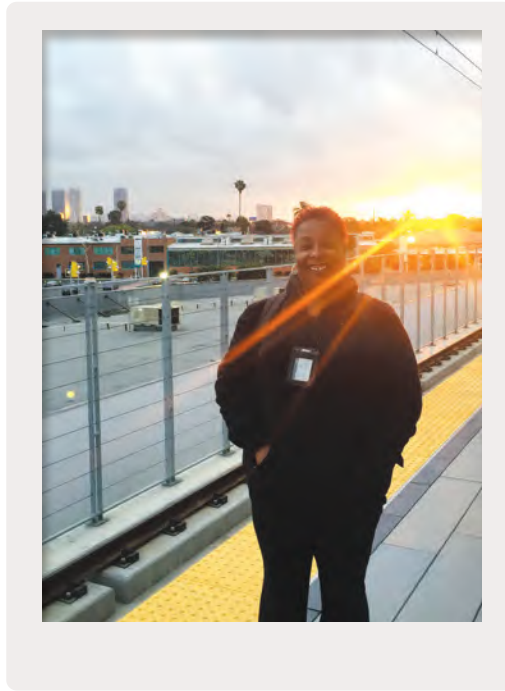
It was a stressful time, of course. One of our infection prevention specialists summed up the most important thing about stress: Don't worry about what you can or can't control — focus on where you can make a difference. A few other things that helped are lessons I learned as a kid: Be kind; share with others; be honest (especially if you're not sure); and, as Mr. Rogers used to say, "find a helper." These practices, good self-care, and comfortable shoes make anything possible.

I hope we continue to push for change. Trying to maintain the status quo is crippling — let's challenge ourselves to make the changes we've always dreamed about, not only for healthcare, but also for communities at large.



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**Karen Grimley, PhD, MBA, RN,
NEA-BC, FACHE**
Vice Dean, UCLA School of Nursing
Chief Nursing Executive, UCLA Health



IN ALL MY LIFE, I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD BE IN A PANDEMIC. I know they happen in other places and happened here at home, but to actually be in one is scary. My office supports the faculty, makes sure deliveries are taken care of, and keeps the school building going. We literally make sure the lights are on. So we had to come in person just like the other frontline workers, although the four of us took turns by week. It was kind of creepy with so few people there. When someone actually came by the office, I wanted to jump two feet in the air. At first, I hoped not to run into other people because I did not want to risk getting COVID. Eventually I was glad to see people and not feel so alone.

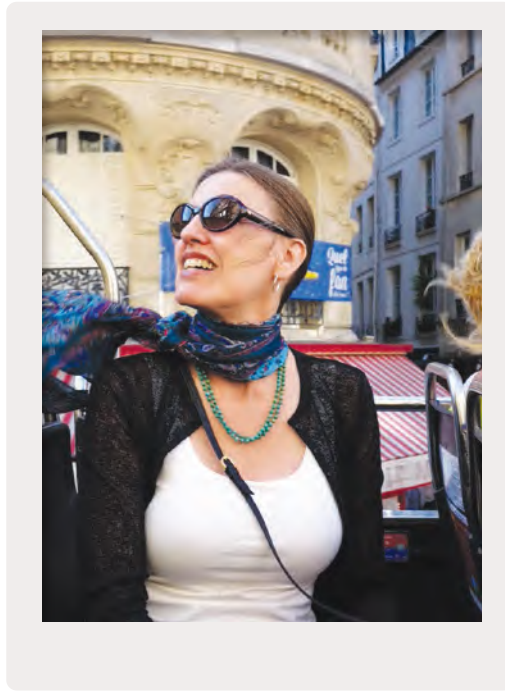
On the weeks I worked from home, I made myself get dressed as I would if I were in the office. It made the time feel more normal. Working from home is great. I thought it would be hard with distractions like neighbors, TV, and family, but I was more productive and got things done faster. Not having to commute was a big part of that. I take two buses and the train to get to work, which can take an hour-and-a-half. I was worried about being so close to other people during my commute, so I started taking Uber or getting rides from my sister. I also kept up with my racewalking, participating in virtual competitions while walking in my own neighborhood. Normally, I'd be walking with hundreds of people.

Like everyone else, I was done with 2020 and looked forward to 2021. The new year started out great. I am one of two winners of the annual Golden Bruin Staff Award. It was presented to me virtually by Dean Linda Sarna and Assistant Dean of Administration and Human Resources Director Sheila Davis. That was a great surprise for me. I feel like my work is shining through. And in April, I received my 25 years of service award. So this year started off well and I hope it just keeps getting better.



“
MY OFFICE SUPPORTS THE
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GOING.”**

Zoe Taylor
Program Administrative Specialist
Golden Bruin Award Honoree



MY WORK AT UCLA GIVES ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE AN IMPACT every day in a variety of ways. Thanks to the virtual environment, these opportunities continued during the pandemic. For example, I was able to hold six sessions in the last year to help unpack the question: “How do we conduct anti-racist research?” using the Public Health Critical Race Praxis Model. The six virtual presentations were provided here at UCLA as well as nationally to postdoctoral fellows in nursing and medicine from six universities through the National Clinician Scholars Program.

Despite the pandemic, my research also continued. My study team and I worked together to recruit Spanish speaking Latinas to participate in our Hollywood-quality, story-based transmedia web-app intervention, a pilot Randomized Clinical Trial designed to enhance mental health and connect Latinas to needed care. In addition to our partners at multiple AltaMed clinics, new collaborators we gained during this time included Ventanilla de Salud at the Mexican Consulate in Los Angeles and Venice Family Clinic.

Recently, I joined another team in the UCLA Semel Institute to create a website to help Californians cope with stress during the pandemic. Our website, “Together for Wellness,” is part of the greater statewide “California Hope” project and features a wide variety of free mental health resources, in 10 languages, that can make a meaningful impact in daily life — not only during the pandemic but beyond.

To me, sharing resources and knowledge is like sharing keys to new worlds of exploration. As a teacher, I find that new understanding requires embracing our imaginations while being open to possibilities and tending to our inner ethical compass. These concepts are represented in the pendants on my necklace (see photo). They symbolize my values. I consider teaching to be a profound privilege and was thrilled this year to receive the UCLA Distinguished Teaching Award for Senate Faculty — Distinction in Teaching at the Graduate Level. Being the first UCLA Nursing School faculty member to receive this award is a tremendous honor.



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I WAS ABLE TO HOLD SIX SESSIONS
IN THE LAST YEAR TO HELP
UNPACK THE QUESTION:
**HOW DO WE
CONDUCT
ANTI-RACIST
RESEARCH?”**

MarySue Heilemann, PhD, RN, FAAN
Professor
UCLA Distinguished Teaching Award for Senate Faculty, 2020



WITH THE SUDDEN TRANSITION TO TELECOMMUTING DUE TO COVID, it became critical to acquire proficiency and agility with online programs. The Student Affairs Office had to innovate and enhance different modes of communication for our students while acclimating to remote work. There was no precedent for this, so collaboration and information sharing were pivotal.

We transitioned key student events, traditionally held in-person, to virtual platforms. Such events included Bruin Day Welcome, freshmen/transfer orientations, and new student graduate orientations. Attendance and participation increased because it was easier for students to get on Zoom versus commuting to campus — especially for those who live in other counties or even out of state!

I adopted numerous online tools to relay and collect information efficiently. Online cloud drives were established to provide incoming and continuing students with easy access to important, time-sensitive updates. Google Sheets were used for juniors to sign-up for appointment slots to swap out their campus ID badges for UCLA Health badges. Google Docs allowed me to create FAQ pages and other documents for students, minimizing the volume of emails they received, and collaboratively working within our team.

While remote work during the pandemic moved us away from the office physically, our team has availed ourselves to students and applied various techniques to connect with them. I've continued undergraduate advisement via email, phone, or on Zoom and set up open Zoom drop-in hours on Fridays for all students. It's always a pleasure when a student checks in for advisement during my online office hours!

My colleagues and I have worn several hats as, intermittently, we had to be our own children's TAs and technology troubleshooters. Juggling various roles has been challenging at times but so rewarding. I am beyond grateful for my colleagues and the opportunity to work with such talented students. I take great pride in the work I do as part of the Student Affairs team in the School of Nursing at UCLA!

“ I AM BEYOND GRATEFUL FOR MY COLLEAGUES

AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH SUCH TALENTED STUDENTS.”

Janet Kang

Pre- & Post-Licensure Student Services Coordinator
2021 Golden Bruin Award Honoree





...I KNOW THAT WHEN CALLED TO BE A NURSE,
**IN THE MOST HUMAN,
 EMOTIONAL, AND CRITICAL
 WAYS, I SUCCEEDED.”**

Soraya Setareh, MSN '19, RN



AT THE ONSET OF MY NURSING CAREER, I expected a substantial learning curve. Hired on as a new grad in the float pool, I put my adaptability to the test: every day a new unit, a new preceptor, new skills, and a new way of thinking. It was stressful and very exciting. What I did not expect, however, was that I would start my career during a pandemic and jump into crisis nursing. While being titled “a hero” boosted my morale, it was not how I envisioned the start of my career. Learning under these circumstances short-circuited my training and changed the platform upon which we all — even the seasoned nurses — were doing our jobs.

But one thing I had that many nurses at the time did not have was the personal experience of surviving COVID.

Despite my novice status, this made me shine. I became a model of survival to my COVID patients who were terrorized by the media’s worst-case scenarios. The world and people’s emotions about the virus were in fear and chaos. What I found was that, in the eye of the hurricane — aka the COVID units — I felt calm and resilient. With COVID protocols in place, we were encouraged to cluster care, minimize ins/outs, and leave our work phones outside patient rooms. This meant fewer distractions and afforded me focused time with patients. Challenges to providing care in this new normal were not lost on me: the physical and emotional isolation in a negative-pressure room; the dehumanizing aspect of caregivers donning head-to-toe PPE; and standing in as “family” to adhere to a no-visitor policy while family members exchanged last words over FaceTime. These experiences left an indelible imprint on how I’ve come into my own as a nurse. And while I continue to fine-tune and improve a multitude of necessary skills, I know that when called to be a nurse, in the most human, emotional, and critical ways, I succeeded.

WHEN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC FIRST STARTED, I THOUGHT IT WOULD ONLY LAST A FEW MONTHS

and decline with the warm summer weather. I did not think it would impact our lives for years. The seriousness of this situation hit me when our professors at the UCLA School of Nursing told us the campus was being shut down and courses would transition to virtual learning platforms. It was spring quarter of 2020, and I was in my first year of the PhD program. I was scared and anxious about what would happen next, wondering: *How long will this last? Will this virtual learning platform work for me? Will the quality of my learning experience as a doctoral student be affected?* I completed my bachelor’s and master’s degrees at UCLA with 100% in-class learning, so online learning was a totally new experience. I love the beauty, serenity, and academic camaraderie of the UCLA campus and felt sad that the campus had to shut down. I had to quickly embrace a new learning experience and shift my mindset from the classroom setting towards a chaotic home learning environment. My home environment was typical of most, with frequent interruptions from package deliveries, noise from trash trucks and my dog’s occasional barks, as well as my adult son’s requests for assistance with various situations. Initially, it was so overwhelming I felt like taking a leave of absence. The spirit of defeat settling in my soul. Fortunately, I have this inner drive that loves a challenge and will not give up until the goal is completed. Also, seeing my professors and cohort members remain so calm, supportive, and driven, truly inspired me to keep going. Their resilience was AMAZING and CONTAGIOUS!!! I could not give up because we were a team and they were counting on me to stay focused. The entire experience of learning via Zoom during the pandemic helped me to discover the perfect formula for creating more balance and serenity in my life. My perfect formula is the four P’s: Prayer, Patience, Priority and Physical activity. I use this daily formula to keep myself focused on the goal of achieving my PhD in Nursing.



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 AND COHORT MEMBERS
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 SUPPORTIVE, AND DRIVEN,
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Virginia Watters, MSN '02, BS '92,
 PhD Class of 2023
 2021 Jonas Philanthropies Scholar





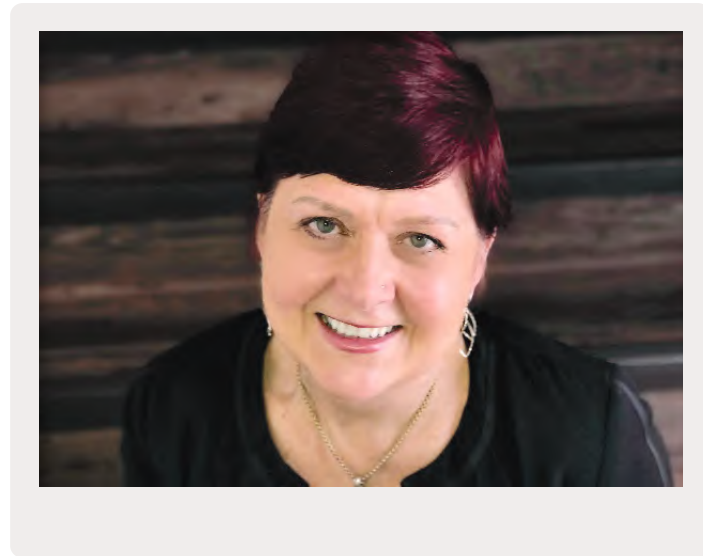
MY EXPERIENCE DURING COVID HAS OFFERED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR DEEPER REFLECTION

about the fragility of life, meaningful living, and combating structural racism. I am grateful for so many aspects of my life, including the continuing health of my family members, having meaningful and fulfilling employment, and the contributions of healthcare professionals and others working on the front lines to care for those infected with COVID-19. I am deeply saddened by the continuing racism in our country that has created the health inequities experienced by Black, Indigenous, and other peoples of color and increased their vulnerability to COVID-19. In my position at UCLA School of Nursing, I have worked virtually with members of the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) leadership team and the DEI Council during the pandemic. We have designed and sponsored educational programs and other activities to support our students, faculty, and staff; these include our Caring and Sharing forums for students and Zoom webinars focused on COVID-19 in relation to health inequities and racism. I have lived in a bubble with my husband for the large part of this pandemic while appreciating a meaningful professional life in a virtual world. I have found that exercising online, walking regularly, and cooking help to reduce my stress.



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THE FRAGILITY OF LIFE,
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RACISM.**”

Deborah Koniak-Griffin, EdD, RN, FAAN
Research Professor of Nursing (Emerita)

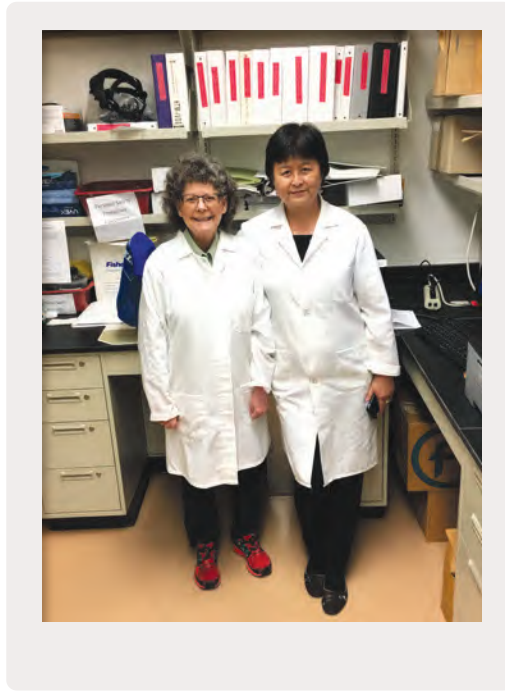


AS A TRIPLE BRUIN AND MEMBER OF THE FIRST DNP COHORT at UCLA SON, I was most comfortable leading from the front. When COVID hit, I felt like I was playing catch-up to evolving evidence. Despite leaving the bedside a decade ago to expand my nursing skills into process improvement and project management, I knew that I could still give an injection, and I wanted to be part of the solution to reduce the impact of COVID. I signed up as a volunteer to administer vaccinations at the Forum even before receiving my own. I saw the disparate effects of COVID on black and brown communities, and I thought this was a perfect location to support those populations. Over my two days, I gave 150 vaccinations to primarily white English-speaking folks driving high-end vehicles. I reminded myself that all lives are valuable and reflected on the privilege that comes with access; having a car, Wi-Fi, and assistants to monitor for open appointments. I was also reminded of the faith the public puts in nurses to console, coach, and educate as I engaged with a large group of often frightened individuals who also wanted to be part of the solution. These two days also reinforced the work that needs to be done at a system level to level the playing field in healthcare delivery. My two days of volunteering at the Forum top a long list of proud moments over my nursing career.



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POPULATIONS.”

Cheryl Le Huquet, DNP '20,
MSN '12, RN, BS '10
NE-BC Project Manager
Operations, UCLA Health



MARCH 10, 2020: CHANCELLOR'S EMAIL ARRIVES announcing that in order to limit the spread of COVID-19, "In-person classes are suspended effective tomorrow...transition to online, remote teaching." Dean Sarna huddles with School of Nursing academic program directors to discuss and facilitate the "how." What happened next with School of Nursing faculty, staff, students and the community, still gives me goose-bumps. Those experienced with online teaching, Zoom, headsets, bandwidth, modems, home-office, yoga, meditation and stress reducing exercises all reached out and began sharing, tutoring and buddying-up. Throughout the transition, we kept in touch and supported each other. We figured out the "how" and made it happen and never lost sight of the "why."



“
WE FIGURED OUT THE
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“WHY.”**

Wendie Robbins, PhD, RN, FAAN, FAAOHN
Professor
Audrienne H. Moseley Endowed Chair



EVERYTHING HAPPENED SO FAST. I remember my last day on campus was Monday, March 15th, and UCLA leadership told us that we would work remotely until the end of the spring quarter. Then it became the end of the year. Finally, we heard that we would be returning to campus during the fall of 2021. I like working remotely, especially since I am the only person home during the day. I feel for those who are trying to juggle work and family. I am only sharing my house with a pit bull named Tupac.

By May 1st, our clinical rotations resumed. We were fortunate that we had access to UCLA Medical Center. Our class of 2020 completed all course requirements, including clinical hours, and graduated on time. None of our graduates failed a course or needed an incomplete grade.

We had faculty with family members who got COVID. We had students who got COVID and needed to miss class due to quarantine. We had students who were dealing with depression and isolation during the pandemic. We always tried to give students assignment extensions and other support during this time.

Although our students were grateful to practice at the hospital, many were afraid of contracting COVID on the medical units. During the end of 2020, hospitals again suspended some of the rotations. Because of our excellent relationships with our clinical affiliates, we were granted priority to complete hours. Our faculty and students were very eager to participate in the vaccine clinic. Many volunteered multiple shifts to give shots at the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center.

On May 25th, the world witnessed the murder of George Floyd. Within a few days of the video surfacing, we saw mass demonstrations worldwide seeking racial justice. Our DEI Council hosted an event addressing "Sharing and Caring." This forum allowed our students to express their anger over discrimination and the murder of black people at the hands of white police officers. We needed to be sure we provided our students with support and encouragement.

Things now seem to be returning to normal. Our class of 2021 graduated on time and I am optimistic they will pass the NCLEX exam to fill the shoes of many nurses who have retired from the profession. Admissions applications are high, which is an indication that people still desire to enter nursing, considered to be the most trusted profession.

“
THIS FORUM ALLOWED OUR
**STUDENTS TO
EXPRESS THEIR
ANGER OVER
DISCRIMINATION.**”

Anita Bralock, PhD '03, MN '91, RN, CNM
Program Director for Prelicensure Programs,
Adjunct Associate Professor





“
**ALTHOUGH I FACED STRUGGLES AND
 HARDSHIPS DURING THIS PANDEMIC,
 UCLA SCHOOL OF NURSING MADE
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 MEMORABLE
 EXPERIENCE.”**

Anjali Kumar, BS Class of 2022

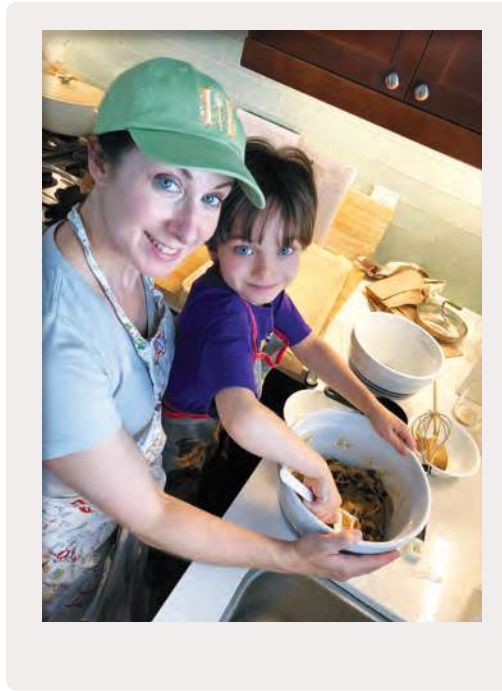
AS A THIRD-YEAR NURSING STUDENT, I am doing my clinical training at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center. Here, I work alongside other healthcare professionals to provide treatment and alleviate patient suffering during this pandemic. Initially, I was scared about putting my life at risk. However, I also felt proud knowing that I am making members of my community feel comfortable, safe, and secure. One of the most memorable job responsibilities I had was to administer COVID vaccines. This pandemic has damaged our country; we have lost family members, houses, jobs, and more. Nonetheless, I am grateful for this platform where I am part of the front line working to get things back to “normal.” Although I faced struggles and hardships during this pandemic, UCLA’s School of Nursing has made the journey an amazing, memorable experience.

STARTING A PHD PROGRAM, let alone one at UCLA, was something I was not expecting to be doing during 2020, especially during a pandemic. I am more accustomed to the typical in-person classroom-style learning. This experience was challenged by the whole online learning platform we had to start using during fall. At that time, I did not know what to expect out of it. I had my doubts about whether I would be engaged and motivated to take classes at home. I also considered myself someone who learns best in a group setting where we can freely exchange ideas. My fears were unfounded and my hopes were met with flying colors. My classmates were all in the same boat as I; we were craving personal interaction. But through the innovations of the online world, we were able to do so seamlessly. It really felt that we were all still connected despite being miles away from each other. The professors, who were all rock stars in their careers and research, quickly adapted and learned with us as we navigated online learning. Overall, we did our best to adjust and adapt to the current situation. If given a choice now, I would still definitely choose the online option for classes. Aside from avoiding the heavy LA traffic, it provides us graduate students, an opportunity for flexibility to balance life and school work more efficiently.

“
**MY FEARS WERE
 UNFOUNDED AND
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 FLYING
 COLORS.”**

Paolo Roca, MSN, RN, PHN,
 PhD Class of 2024





THE PANDEMIC CREATED SOME SPECIAL CHALLENGES FOR THE STUDENT AFFAIRS OFFICE.

Prior to the work-from-home order, we had been discussing innovative ways to make the office more efficient and provide better service to students, alumni, and faculty. What started out as pipe dreams suddenly became necessities. Student records and petitions were paper documents that were now locked in our offices. Our database management system could not be accessed from our home computers. The Student Affairs Office has spent the last year talking with other entities on campus and working with the School of Nursing administration to modernize our practices. We began using Google Suite and Box to collect information from students. We will soon be adopting a new web-based database for student records, which will take the place of paper files. Students and their advisors will have access to parts of their records through this system. We are adopting an online petition process that will obviate the need for paper petitions and multiple emails about the status of the petition. Lastly, we have started Zoom drop-in hours for students to ask questions of Student Affairs staff.

The last year brought disappointment to students who could not celebrate their graduation in Royce Hall as we have done for so many years. My team and I worked tirelessly with a designer and a production team to create a virtual commencement that would be both stylish and meaningful. We did the same for our Advanced Practice White Coat Ceremony. Fortunately, we were able to celebrate the Class of 2021 at an in-person event coupled with a virtual ceremony.

This past year has brought numerous challenges but also exciting opportunities that we are looking forward to bringing to fruition.

“
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Shelli Shepherd
Director of Student Services





TO WATCH PROFESSOR LYNN DOERING MOVE THROUGH HER DAY IS LIKE WATCHING BALLET.

She moves with grace, flowing from space to space, group to group. She makes difficult moves look easy, pirouetting through faculty discussions about innovation in nursing education, and then sliding into a student mentoring session. When she glides into the classroom to explain a difficult cardiovascular concept, people listen. Her explanation of biologic mechanisms and patient emotions floats into the room, trailing enlightenment like a cool mist.

This is where we make a mistake. What Lynn does is not easy — she just makes it look easy. After years as the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs, Lynn made important decisions to secure the best for UCLA nursing students. She retained excellent faculty, negotiated clinical placements, and created the best learning environments. In 2020, her careful plans for a well-earned retirement hit the bumpy road of the pandemic. In a snap, her sedate waltz toward her last day at work turned into a frantic polka.

During the past year, Dr. Doering assembled a team of talented faculty to prepare the accreditation report for the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. They showed the off-site accreditors the school through video and shared students' papers and care plans in a virtual resource room. The School of Nursing passed with the highest marks. At the same time, she partnered with clinical agencies to place students in clinical settings during the worst months of the outbreak. Balancing student safety with the priority of learning-while-doing in an epidemic, she modeled grace under pressure.

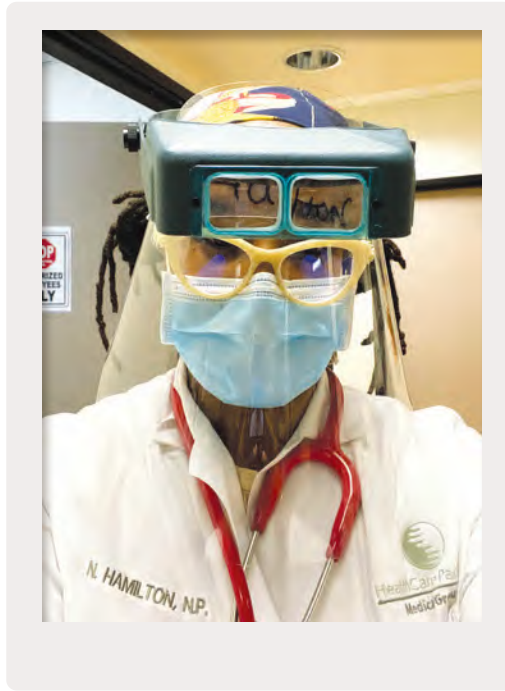
Lynn's wit, style, and poise exemplify her leadership in nursing and her legacy at UCLA.

— Lauren Clark

“
THE SCHOOL OF NURSING
**PASSED WITH
THE HIGHEST
MARKS.**”

Lynn Doering, PhD '94, MN '86, RN, FAAN
Associate Dean, Academic and Student Affairs,
Professor





COVID 2020-2021 HAS BEEN A TIME OF DYNAMIC TRANSITIONS. I had to make sure that students were ready to care for patients using telehealth and ensure that student researchers continued with their projects in a virtual format as well as change course content and delivery to meet the needs of our new normal.

My research had to adjust as well. As a researcher, I focus on potential biological underpinnings of triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC). Among women, one of the most concerning diagnoses is that of breast cancer (BC). Due to the success of endocrine therapy, deaths among women with breast cancer have markedly declined. The women who have benefited most from advances in endocrine therapy are those with estrogen receptor-alpha (ER-alpha) positive BC, while women with TNBC continue to account for almost half of all breast cancer deaths. This disparity is concerning because those most often diagnosed with TNBC are women in their reproductive years and/or women who are diverse ethnic minorities. Women with TNBC cannot be treated with current endocrine therapies, and though initially responsive to chemotherapy, they frequently experience early relapse and metastasis.

At the beginning of this COVID adventure, I was working personally with breast cancer patient community groups, collecting information and data on their treatments, the impact of TNBC on their physical and mental health, and gleaning information on their gaps in treatment. Due to COVID restrictions, I had to change in-person meetings to Zoom meetings, where I learned that many patients had to delay treatment due to COVID. This delay heightened the stress already experienced by the women. To date, most of the women have resumed treatment, but some cannot help but wonder if their outcomes could have been different if there had not been a break in their treatment regimen.

Keeping a balance during this COVID reality has often resulted in having no balance at all. Instead, I have had to adjust to the free fall of this strange roller coaster, trusting that at the end of all the twists, turns, and hard stops, we will safely arrive at the platform to exit a ride we were not prepared for, but nonetheless wiser for the experience.

“
KEEPING A BALANCE DURING THIS COVID REALITY HAS OFTEN RESULTED IN
HAVING NO BALANCE AT ALL.”

Nalo Hamilton, PhD, MSN, WHNP/ANP-BC
Associate Professor





WORKING THE COVID-19 FLOOR HAS BEEN A ONCE IN A LIFETIME EXPERIENCE that I lived through in two very different ways. As an actress on the TV show “Grey’s Anatomy,” I played a nurse in Hollywood’s version of the COVID-19 floor. And as an RN, I experienced the brutal and intense reality of working on the COVID-19 floor at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center. I genuinely appreciated the opportunity to do both.

I have two family members with auto-immune diseases, motivating me to protect them at home and help patients suffering of COVID-19 at work. By rigorously planning and deciding to isolate myself in a hotel room or RV to protect my loved ones, I was able to be available for my mother and daughter at home as well to the patients affected by the SARS-CoV-2 virus at work. My two “girls” were my inspiration to go out there and help those in need, to do exactly what we were taught at UCLA School of Nursing: Take care of others and be a humble servant of my community.

Feeling like I was in a complete war zone reminded me of the outstanding mentors and professors at the UCLA SON who instilled in us the passion to give and to lose ourselves in the service of others — to care for the sick and save lives, one patient at a time. Flashbacks of sleepless nights, anxiety, and fear of the unknown, of the IV pumps beeping, isolation rooms, patients crashing, chest pumping, and patients being intubated at bedside will haunt me for the rest of my life. I will always remember the happy tears of success in bringing Code Blue patients back to life and sad tears for those who didn’t make it. I am humbled, honored, and thankful for what the COVID-19 experience has meant to me and the lessons it has taught me as a nurse and as a human being.

“

I AM HUMBLLED, HONORED, AND THANKFUL FOR WHAT THE COVID-19 EXPERIENCE HAS MEANT TO ME AND THE LESSONS IT HAS TAUGHT ME AS A NURSE AND AS A HUMAN BEING.”

Laura Tiu, MSN '10, RN, ONC, CNL, PHN





“
WITH OUR RESEARCH PROJECT FINDINGS, I HOPE TO PAVE THE WAY FOR INCREASING MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR NURSING STUDENTS AND DECREASE THE STIGMA AROUND MENTAL HEALTH.”

Cecilia Jardon, BS Class of 2022
 BS DEI Representative, Nursing Fraternity President 21-22

TRANSITIONING FROM IN-PERSON CLASSES TO ZOOM was a change that we all had to adapt to as students. At first, I found that it was convenient since I could hop off my bed into my chair and open up my laptop. As months passed during the pandemic, I began to realize I missed the social aspect the UCLA School of Nursing brought for me. Having to be away from my family and friends began to take a toll on my mental health. I got busy with being involved in organizations and councils, but it didn't seem to help. Slowly, I felt isolated from the world and my loved ones due to the pandemic. I began to think that many other nursing students might be feeling the same way as I did. With my personal experiences, I knew that I wanted to look more into how the pandemic affected other nursing students. For that reason, I reached out to Dr. Kristen R. Choi, a professor at the SON. Dr. Choi and I began to discuss the importance of mental health, which led to the beginning of a research project. We investigated how the pandemic impacted nursing students at UCLA. With our research project findings, I hope to pave the way for increasing mental health resources for nursing students and decrease the stigma around mental health.

AS A FIRST-YEAR UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENT, all my classes were completely remote due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Virtual anatomy and chemistry classes were very informative but lacked engaging visuals and hands-on application. It was difficult to form connections with peers and faculty, and I felt isolated from UCLA's culture. However, I knew I still wanted to get involved in SON and learn more about oncology nursing and research, so I reached out to SON faculty member, Dr. Eden Brauer to see if I could assist with one of her projects. Although I was off-campus due to remote learning, Dr. Brauer was eager to have me involved. I enrolled in the N196 research apprenticeship course, where Dr. Kristen Choi and Dr. Brauer virtually taught me introductory R programming, variable analysis, data visualization, peer review tactics, and how to prepare a scientific abstract and conference poster. Our research, which was virtually presented as part of UCLA SON Research Day 2021, is about perceived social isolation in head and neck cancer survivors. We examined the relationship between sociodemographic & treatment characteristics and measurements of perceived social isolation. As a result, we identified subgroups of cancer survivors with a higher risk of social isolation that may require intervention or additional social support services, all remotely.



“
...WE IDENTIFIED SUBGROUPS OF CANCER SURVIVORS WITH A HIGHER RISK OF SOCIAL ISOLATION THAT MAY REQUIRE INTERVENTION OR ADDITIONAL SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES, ALL REMOTELY.”

Bryan Koh, BS Class of 2024

AT THE UCLA SCHOOL OF NURSING, STUDENTS KEEP PACE WITH THE CHANGES AND CHALLENGES OF PROVIDING HEALTHCARE IN THE 21ST CENTURY BY FOSTERING AN ATMOSPHERE OF LEARNING THAT HAS EARNED US A NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING, RESEARCH AND CLINICAL PRACTICE.

YOUR GIFTS TO THE SCHOOL OF NURSING INNOVATION FUND GREATLY BENEFIT OUR STUDENTS, COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITIES BY PROVIDING LEADERSHIP WITH IMPORTANT RESOURCES FOR URGENT PRIORITIES AS THEY ARISE. YOUR GIFT TO THE UCLA SCHOOL OF NURSING, WHETHER TO THE INNOVATION FUND OR TO A SPECIFIC AREA OF STUDY OR RESEARCH, HAS A LASTING IMPACT. THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF THE UCLA SCHOOL OF NURSING FAMILY, AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT – PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT WAYS

TO SUPPORT THE SCHOOL OF NURSING,

PLEASE CONTACT AMY DRIZHAL, DEVELOPMENT & ALUMNI RELATIONS AT

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