



The Methodist Alumni Connection

Winter 2011

Alums in the Spotlight

We love spotlighting our alums for their accomplishments, but many do not receive the recognition they deserve because we just don't know about them. Thanks to those alums who took the time to submit information about their classmates and friends! Share career highlights by contacting Denise Carlson, Director of Alumni Relations at (800) 793-3964, (402) 354-7256 or Denise.Carlson@methodistcollege.edu.

Graduation ceremonies were held August 22nd for those participants in the AgeWISE nurse residency program which focuses on caring for aging patients who may be facing end-of-life issues. The AgeWISE program promotes the crucial role nurses play in making the hospital experience better and safer for older patients. Methodist Hospital was chosen as one of only six hospitals nationally as a pilot site for the program. Alums graduating from the program included **Diane Benshoof '76, Melanie Jamison '84, Stacie Miskie '97, Mary Mitchell '72, and Vici Sortino '84.**

The 2011 March of Dimes Excellence in Nursing Awards Dinner was held on November 10th at the Embassy Suites in LaVista. Our congratulations to the following alums who were nominated for this prestigious award: **Deborah A. Andersen '91, Cheryl Bohacek '10, Josh Hall '03, Michelle Kwasnieski '85, Donna Myers '79, Kay Ryan '72, Kathy Smith '81, Kim Varon '82, and Brenda Wallingford.** Alumni award recipients were among the top 27 nurses in Nebraska and Southwest Iowa. They included: **Jodi Gute '00, Helen Jackson '81 & '98, Mary Killpack '67, and Susie Ward '00 Honorary.**

Darcie Consbruck '10 was the September recipient of the Methodist Hospital 8S T.O.R.C.H. Award. A graduate of our Accelerated Nursing Program, she went above and beyond in caring for a dying patient and his family. Because the patient was an avid Snickers fan, Darcie proposed a morning Snickers toast. She gave each family member a candy bar and then melted one and placed some on the patient's lips. Although he did not open his eyes, he licked his lips and smiled. He died a peaceful death that evening. Darcie helped the family to create a loving memory – A perfect example of our starfish story – she *"made a difference for that one."*

The DAISY Award is a nationwide program that rewards and celebrates extraordinary skill and compassionate care given by nurses every day. **Katie Doty '07** recently received this prestigious award. She is a nurse at Children's Hospital and Medical Center in Omaha.

At the August 25th Association meeting we sadly bid goodbye to **Chris Hamilton '10 Honorary.** Formerly the program director for NMC's Respiratory Care Program, she has moved to Nashville, Tennessee, where she is an instructor for the Cardio-Respiratory Care Sciences bachelor degree program at Tennessee State University. On November 22nd she was named the interim Director of Clinical Education for the Program.



Chris Hamilton '10 Honorary

John Jarosz '04 has been appointed as the new Respiratory Care Program Director. He has been at the College for 11½ years and has been a classroom and clinical instructor guiding the way for students to become skilled respiratory therapists. John is also currently serving as a member of the Nebraska State Board of Health for Respiratory Care.



John Jarosz '04

Christin Nott '11, a May graduate of our Respiratory Care Associate degree program, was awarded the NBRC/AMP William W. Burgin Jr., MD Education Recognition Award through the American Respiratory Care Foundation for a paper she submitted. Her trip to Tampa, Florida, and conference registration were paid and she received her certificate and \$2,500 at the opening ceremonies of the International Respiratory Care Congress held in November.



Marilyn Valerio '02 Honorary

Marilyn Valerio '02 Honorary was honored with the Outstanding Achievement in Nursing Award from the Nebraska Nurses Association, District #2. Marilyn serves as the Associate Dean of Nursing at NMC with plans to retire in the spring.

Gina Wagner '83 & '91 was recently promoted to Full Professor at NMC. She teaches in the Division of Arts and Sciences and has been with the College for 20+ years.

Class Notes

Go to www.methodistcollege.edu/alumniinfo to submit your news, change of address, etc. Or call Denise Carlson, Director of Alumni Relations, at 402-354-7256 or 800-793-3964 – she would love to hear from you!

Congratulations to Tanya Shubert '10 - our winner of this issue's \$50 gift card! Send in your Class Note update and be entered in the next drawing! The lucky recipient will be announced in the spring newsletter!

1940s - 1970s Where are you?

1980s

Schmaderer, Dawn (Baumert) '81 – and her husband, Ronald, live in West Point, Nebraska. In August, she graduated from Methodist's RN to BSN program. Dawn is a cardiovascular case manager at Fremont Area Medical Center.

Powers, Paige (Senn) '86 – and David live in O'Fallon, Missouri, where she is an RN in case management.

1990s

Martin, Christa (Kuehler) '96 – was previously in the U.S. Navy and now practices as a pediatric nurse practitioner. She lives in Greencastle, Pennsylvania.

Strahm, Jill (Kadereit) '98 – writes, "I graduated from NMC's RN to BSN program in August of 2011. I live in Council Bluffs, and am blessed to continue staying home with my 3 children, and also babysit my beautiful niece Sophia full time. I am excited to return to the nursing field when my youngest enters kindergarten next fall. I am considering continuing my education in the future, but for now I am thoroughly enjoying spending time with my family after working on my BSN the past few years. I would love to keep in contact with fellow '98 Jennie grads!"

2000s

Ellett, Christine (Vendetti) '00 – and Jason reside in Omaha with their family. The latest addition is **Brianna Rose** born on August 3, 2011.

Rohlfesen, Dorothea (White) '01 – has been employed at the Nebraska Medical Center for 10 years. She is currently a stroke case manager. Dorothea and Matt live in Omaha.

Christensen, Holly (Siverly) '02 – writes, "Craig and I had a daughter, **Carly**, in April of 2011. I am enjoying my position as a Family Practice Nurse Practitioner at Myrtue Medical Center in Harlan, Iowa."

Schnell, Annette (Muller) '02 – and Stan reside in Gretna, Nebraska. She writes, "We welcomed our first child, **Grace Kathryn**, on June 6, 2011. I continue to work at Children's Hospital & Medical Center where I am a Clinical Nurse Specialist on the intermediate care floor.

Jackson, Reagan (Smith) '02 – obtained her MSN from the University of Phoenix in 2008, and is currently working on her Doctorate in Nursing Philosophy (Ph.D.) from the same university. Previously a clinical nurse educator, she is now a vocational nursing instructor. She and Sean reside in Murrieta, California.

Yetmar, Stefani (Swartzendruber) '05 – writes, "I previously lived in Arizona for 4½ years. We moved to Carroll, Iowa, one year ago and I work as an oncology nurse at our outpatient infusion center. I have been married for 5 years. We have two girls – Caitlin (4), and Mackenzie (3)."

Bear, Kara (Belt) '06 – is a PICU nurse where she met Daron, a respiratory therapist. They were married on October 8, 2011. The couple resides in Gilbert, Arizona.



Daron and Kara Bear '06



Class Notes



Pflanz, Breanne (Ruh) '06 – writes, “Since graduation I got married, had a baby (**Katie** born on Dec. 16, 2010), graduated with my Masters in Nursing, and got my APRN in Women’s Health. I worked Labor and Delivery at Bergan Mercy for 4½ years until I graduated with my MSN. I am currently teaching at an associate degree nursing program in Omaha.



Katie Pflanz

Adkins, Diana '08 – a BSN grad, and her husband, Larry, reside in Millbrook, Alabama.

Price, Kristin (Koehler) '08 – is a graduate of our Diagnostic Medical Sonography program. She writes, “My husband and I were married on September 10, 2011, back in our home town area of Northeast Nebraska, at Cuthills Vineyard. We currently reside in Lone Tree, Colorado, where I am doing ultrasounds at Invision Sally Jobe in Denver and Chad is working as a project engineer for Baker Concrete.”



Chad and Kristin Price '08

Grundmann, Hilary (Caudillo)'08 – married Jason on 11/11/11. She has practiced as a behavioral health nurse and is currently adjunct faculty for NMC. She is pursuing her MSN at the College.

Ryan, Mari '08 – is a graduate of our Masters in Health Promotion program. She is currently CEO of Advancing Wellness and was recently appointed as Board Chair of the newly founded Worksite Wellness Council of Massachusetts. (To learn more go to wwcma.org) Mari lives in Watertown, Massachusetts.



Jason and Hilary Grundmann '08

Swinarski, Vicki '08 – resides in Indianapolis, Indiana, and practices as an RN.

Bizeau, Courtney (Wiles) '10 – was married to Josh in September. She writes, “We bought our first house. I work as a surgical/trauma nurse at Cheyenne Regional Medical Center, in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Carnahan, Katie (Grace) '10 – married fellow classmate, **Ryan'10** on June 11, 2011. Residing in Bellevue, they both currently work at Methodist Hospital.

Kerby, Tressa '10 – lives in Omaha where she practices as a NICU RN.

Shubert, Tanya (Hinrichsen) '10 – graduated with her BSN on May 7, 2010 and was married only a few weeks later on May 29. She and Brent reside in Falls City, Nebraska, where she works at a rural hospital, Falls City Community Medical Center, doing ER, OB and Med Surg.

Hansen, Leann (Tauanuu) '11 – writes, “Life is wonderful - getting married and graduating in the same week was crazy. I love working nights at Methodist Hospital on 6N (cardiac). Otherwise I’m just enjoying being able to read real books, take naps, and have a social life again!”

Spicka, Ashley '11 – graduated from our Accelerated Nursing Program and is currently practicing as an RN. She lives in Friend, Nebraska.

Vorthmann, Nicole '11 – writes, “I’ve been working at Jennie Edmundson Hospital in Council Bluffs since June and am really enjoying my new job as an RN!!!”



Josh and Courtney Bizeau '10



Ryan '10 and Katie '10 Carnahan



Aaron and Leann Hansen '11

In Loving Memory

The Alumni Association makes a \$25 donation to the Methodist Hospital Foundation in memory of each deceased alum. Please notify Denise Carlson, Director of Alumni Relations, by phone at (800) 793-3964 or (402) 354-7256 or e-mail at Denise.Carlson@methodistcollege.edu. You may also send obituary notices to her at Nebraska Methodist College – The Josie Harper Campus, 720 North 87th Street, Omaha, NE 68114.

Mae Belle (Flint) Freed '39
Lucille (Harden) Freer '41
Donetta Hooksta '71
Cindy (Young) Costantinou '78



Lucille Freer '41

You may not have known Lucille Freer's name, but she is easily recognizable as she attended the reunion banquet and Christmas party each and every year. In June, she celebrated her 70th reunion. Her smiling face and gentle soul will be greatly missed at alumni events. Lucille's family has directed memorials to our Alumni Association; they will benefit our *Spirit of Caring Scholarships*.

Your 2011-2013 Advisory Council

The Advisory Council works directly with the Director of Alumni Relations. While it is always our goal to make decisions at our regularly scheduled meetings, at times actions must be made between meetings. When it is not practicable or reasonable to call an Association meeting, the Advisory Council may transact business on behalf of the Association.

Alums self nominated and the following were elected to the Advisory Council at the August 25th meeting: **Cathy Barnes '73, Zoy Blair '59, Danielle Brazzle '10, Sheila Brown '04, Jane Covington '10, Katie Doty '07, Carol Evans Lynch '74, Roberta Frazey '56, Virginia Graham '56, Robyn Hall '99, Betty Moerke '81 & '91 Ashley Robertson '11, Terra Spiels-Garst '03 & '06, Ruth Stufft '56, Sue Wulf '74.** Danielle was ratified by the members and will serve as our secretary. Per our by-laws the College president appoints five Presidential Appointees. They include **Molly Atherton '09 Honorary, Kris Hess '06 Honorary,** Kayla Johnston, **Sarah Shomshor '06,** and Pat Sullivan.

As you can see by the graduation years of the Council members new grads are actively involved in our organization. Our Association is clearly growing! Won't you join us?



Back Row: Roberta, Carol, Zoy, Ruth, Sue, Danielle, Terra, Sheila, Virginia.
Front Row: Robyn, Betty, Jane, Ashley, Katie.
Not pictured: Cathy Barnes

Celebrating 120 Years

We are rapidly approaching the close of our 120th year anniversary and a year-long celebration of this remarkable milestone. I firmly believe that the six deaconesses who joined together in 1891 to form the Methodist Hospital School of Nursing would be quite proud of the growth and accomplishments during these past 120 years. I am very pleased that during these 120 years our focus has remained on the holistic development of our students. I am proud of our faculty and staff who invest in each and every student to create the most positive learning environment possible. You, our alumni, represent the outcomes of our collective effort and contribute so positively to the Nebraska Methodist College brand and reputation.



Dennis A. Joslin, Ph.D., RN
Honorary Alumnus '99
President and CEO
Nebraska Methodist College

Nebraska Methodist College is on the right track for a strong and positive future of continued growth and diversification. Your individual and collective support of Nebraska Methodist College is greatly appreciated and I look forward to your continued support as we enthusiastically embrace our next 120 years.

I wish you and your loved ones a happy and healthy holiday season and a fantastic start to the New Year!

Charlotte Schultz Learning Commons Now a Reality

If I asked you to imagine the ideal environment in which to learn, relax and study while attending Nebraska Methodist College, I believe it would look very much like the new *Charlotte Schultz Learning Commons*.

Comfortable furnishings, computers for finalizing those important papers, movable furniture for students to gather in groups big or small, and a coffee bar providing food and drink, give students the optimal environment for learning.

As the Director of Student Personnel Services at Nebraska Methodist College for 40 years, Charlotte Schultz was very close with the students and understood the need for a place that students could gather. Thanks to your support and donations, her dream became a reality early this fall when the *Charlotte Schultz Learning Commons* opened in the Clark Center. Charlotte took a tour and loves how it meets her vision of bringing Nebraska Methodist College students together.

Methodist Hospital Foundation is so very grateful for those alumni who shared Charlotte's dream and made it a reality. The *Charlotte Schultz Learning Commons* truly is a place for students to grow, learn and become healthcare professionals. Thank you for helping us make a difference at your alma mater and in our community!

The continued success of Nebraska Methodist College and its students is dependent on YOU. What is YOUR dream for your alma mater? How would you like to help make it even better? Please call us at 402-354-4825 or visit the Foundation at

www.MethodistHospitalFoundation.org for more information about how you can make a difference at Nebraska Methodist College – The Josie Harper Campus.



Elizabeth Herbek
Director of Development
Methodist Hospital Foundation



Dennis Joslin '99, Charlotte Schultz '77, Kris Hess '06 - all Honorary alums

Photo Gallery



Many alums took advantage of the “Open House” format held on September 20th between the hours of 4 and 8 p.m. to visit the new Jean Schmidt Beyer Alumni Center. The wine and cheese reception – complete with cake – was a well-received new format for an alumni gathering and provided an opportunity to see our “new digs.”



A beautiful autumn day brought record numbers to the annual Vala's Pumpkin Patch Family Event on Tuesday, October 4th.



Alums, faculty, staff, students and their family and friends enjoyed the complimentary hot dogs, chips, beverages and s'mores provided by the Alumni Association then had fun with all Vala's has to offer.



Danielle Brazzle '10, Devin Holdorf '11, Amy Jameson (current NMC nursing student), Alyssa Evans '11

Photo Gallery



Des Moines, Iowa Alumni Gathering, clockwise from left: **Cori Peterson '09, Denise Carlson '93, Sue Wulf '74, Joyce Mueller '51, Micaela Hirsch '05, Sandra Guild '67, Kathy L'Estrange '68**

We've gone north to the Minneapolis area and south to the Kansas City area so it was time to head east for an alumni visit! On November 7th, Des Moines area alums met at the Cheesecake Factory for dinner, conversation and of course, cheesecake.

Are you interested in an alumni gathering in your area? If you are within a day's drive from Omaha, contact Denise Carlson at 402-354-7256 or 800-793-3964 to explore the opportunities.

Denise.Carlson@methodistcollege.edu



Ruth Stufft '56, Roberta Frazey '56, Virginia Graham '56



Mari Alice Christensen '55, Mary Mahoney, Jerry Mahoney '87 Honorary, Emiko Ward '58

The weather was cooperative for the Pumpkin Patch event, but Mother Nature certainly failed us the morning of the Annual Christmas Coffee & Connections brunch on Saturday, Dec. 3rd! Snow was predicted to begin at noon but was coming down heavily by 9:00 a.m. preventing many alums from attending. However, those that braved the weather enjoyed the complimentary brunch, entertainment by the Central High School Singers, and reconnecting with friends – all wonderful ways to kick off the holiday season.



It's Crafting Season and We Need Silent Auction Items

Baby it's cold outside and a great time for staying in to make your special crafts! Of course, if you are an alum living in "balmy weather" you still need to take time for your hobbies. So, get out the fabric, beads, or other supplies and whip up something for the 2012 Silent Auction. Themed baskets are also great additions for the event. Your donation is 100% tax deductible and all proceeds go to our *Alumni Spirit of Caring* scholarships for current NMC students.





Boots in the Ballroom!

We are returning to the ballroom of the "old campus" at 8511 Dodge Street for our 2012 Reunion Dinner. Mark Friday, June 1st on your calendar right away! Delicious catering by Texas Roadhouse with a reduced cost and casual dress - *you won't want to miss it!* Watch for further details in the spring issue.



SAVE THE DATE!
The 2012 Golf Tournament
will be held at Eagle Hills
on June 15th!



Don't forget to friend us on **facebook** at Nebraska Methodist College Alumni. Receive news updates, check for events and view event photos.

The Methodist Alumni Connection
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Best Wishes to you and yours for the New Year!

NMC can prepare you with advanced online degrees. Considering furthering your education? At NMC we offer online degree options in nursing and allied health with multiple start dates. Check out www.methodistcollege.edu/academicprograms to learn more.
Many of our students learn about Nebraska Methodist College by alumni sharing experiences with prospective students. Please refer students to NMC at 402-354-7200 or email admissions at admissions@methodistcollege.edu.

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