

Cizik Nursing

UTHEALTH HOUSTON | THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER AT HOUSTON



2022 | 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Setting the gold standard for nursing
excellence since 1972

 **UTHealth Houston**
Cizik School of Nursing

50
YEARS

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CIZIK NURSING BY THE NUMBERS

U.S. News & World Report

In Texas
NO. 2

ALL RANKED PROGRAMS

Nationally

NO. 29
MSN

NO. 30
DNP

NO. 31
BSN

MSN and DNP ranked in 2023 Best Graduate Schools.
BSN ranked in 2022 Best Colleges.



Enrollment



1,602

As of Fall 2021

Degrees Conferred

426 BSN

31 DNP
Nurse Practitioner

248 MSN

16 DNP
Nurse Anesthetist

1 PhD



Fall 2020 – Summer 2021

First-Time Pass Rates (2021)

MSN Nurse Practitioner Program Certifications

FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER

100% ANCC

98% AANPCB

ADULT GERONTOLOGY
PRIMARY CARE NURSE PRACTITIONER

100% AANPCB

ADULT/GERONTOLOGY
ACUTE CARE NURSE PRACTITIONER

100% AACN

91% ANCC

PSYCHIATRIC/MENTAL HEALTH
NURSE PRACTITIONER

96% ANCC

Postgraduate APRN Certificate Program Nurse Practitioner Certification

FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER

100% AACN

ADULT GERONTOLOGY
PRIMARY CARE NURSE PRACTITIONER

100% AACN

ANCC: American Nurses Credentialing Center **AANPCB:** American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board **AACN:** AACN Certification Corporation

Nurse Anesthesia

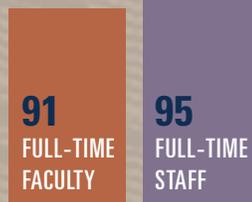
BSN-DNP



100%

National Certifying Exam (NCE) offered by
the National Board of Certification and
Recertification of Nurse Anesthetists (NBCRNA)

Employees



As of Fall 2021

NIH Funding

36th

Among Nursing Schools
Calendar year 2021



Scientific Publications and Presentations



Calendar year 2021

164
PRESENTATIONS

128
ARTICLES

8
BOOK CHAPTERS

RESEARCH EXPENDITURES

Fiscal year 2021



\$3,342,132

CONTRACTS AND GRANTS

Fiscal year 2021



\$3,070,924

UT Health Services



11,347

Patient Visits
Fiscal year 2021



 UTHealth[®]
Houston

Cizik School of
Nursing

50 YEARS

DEAN DIANE SANTA MARIA

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth Houston, I stand in awe of our predecessors who set such a high bar for nursing education, practice, and discovery. I am also honored and humbled to lead a magnificent team that carries on their legacy of innovation and excellence.

On August 28, 1972, the first 98 undergraduate students enrolled in Houston's brand new The University of Texas nursing school. Since then, we have conferred 13,487 degrees and certificates, with current enrollment exceeding 1,600. Our rankings among nursing schools receiving National Institutes of Health funding is on the rise, and U.S. News & World Report continues to rank our Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), and Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degrees first in Houston, second in Texas, and among the top schools in the nation.

More important than these numbers is the impact our graduates make as they build on a foundation of educational excellence. They serve as chief nursing officers within countless health care systems in the Texas Medical Center and beyond. They educate future nurses as faculty members and deans at universities across the nation. They make meaningful advances in nursing science, and they provide compassionate, high-quality health care for all at the bedside and in our communities.

Groundbreaking advancements of the past led to many of today's successes. For example, our faculty developed gerontological nursing as a center of excellence in the 1980s, and our nurse scientists today use our Smart Apartment to test technologies to help older people live independently. UT Health Services, founded in 1991, grew to become a model for nurse-managed clinics run by academic institutions. Its new location in the heart of the Texas Medical Center improves accessibility for Houston's diverse patient populations. The PARTNERS organization, founded in 1994 and solely devoted to supporting our school, has contributed more than \$15 million to scholarships, research grants, and endowed professorships. The forward-thinking technology incorporated into our building, which opened in 2004, enabled "distance education" of the day and positioned us well to facilitate hybrid educational models.

Along the way, our faculty and staff pioneered doctoral programs, offering the state's first DNP degrees and transitioning the early Doctor of Nursing Science to a Doctor of Philosophy in nursing. This year, for the first time, we are giving nurses with bachelor's degrees the opportunity to apply directly to our PhD program, and we have expanded DNP admissions to twice a year to help meet the growing need for advance practice health care providers in Texas and beyond.

In this issue of Cizik Nursing, you will read more about these milestones and how we are continuing the journey. I am particularly proud of the many ways we are identifying and addressing the needs of diverse and underserved populations through educational programs such as the poverty and vaccine hesitancy simulations staged this year. Also, our participation in the Texas Development Center for AIDS Research is expanding with multiple faculty members leading innovative HIV research studies.

The 50th anniversary of Cizik School of Nursing gives us a golden opportunity for reflection and renewal of our commitment to advancing high-quality health care for all. Here's to the next 50 years! I cannot wait to see what we accomplish together.



DIANE SANTA MARIA DNP, RN, PHNA-BC, FSAHM, FAAN

THE JANE AND ROBERT CIZIK DISTINGUISHED CHAIR
HUFFINGTON FOUNDATION ENDOWED CHAIR IN
NURSING EDUCATION LEADERSHIP
CIZIK SCHOOL OF NURSING AT UTHEALTH HOUSTON

1970s

LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR NURSING EXCELLENCE

In the 1960s and '70s, the times they were a-changing, and Bob Dylan's anthem of the time applied to nursing as well as to society in general.

Historically, nurses in the United States had been educated through hospital-based diploma programs. Houston had five diploma schools: St. Joseph's School of Nursing, Baptist Sanitarium (Memorial Hospital), Jefferson Davis Hospital School of Nursing, Methodist Hospital School of Nursing, and Hermann Hospital School of Nursing.

However, a move was afoot as early as 1948 to transition nursing education from hospitals to universities. The seminal "First Position Paper on Education for Nursing," published by the American Nurses Association in 1965, accelerated this shift. Hospital-based programs closed their doors, and university programs expanded.

What would become Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth Houston was established in March 1972, first as a clinical campus for the nursing school in Galveston. The following year, it officially became one of six locations within The University of Texas System, and the Hermann Hospital School of Nursing closed.

The school first set up offices at the nurses' residence at Hermann Hospital but did not stay there long. Before the first classes started, they moved across the street to the Hermann Professional Building Annex because their initial home was being torn down to make way for what is now McGovern Medical School.

"The annex was the garage, and we had first-floor classrooms, but they were on the Fannin Street side, and on the Main Street side were the administrative offices and library," the late Dorothy Otto, EdD, MSN, RN, recalled in a 2013 oral history interview for the Texas Medical Center's

Women's History Project. To get from one side to the other, nursing faculty and students had to walk through the parking garage. "We called the driveway Carbon Monoxide Lane."

Ten faculty members had been hired by July 1, 1972, with about two months to create the curriculum "We had the other UT System schools, so we borrowed from them," Otto said. Classes took place wherever space could be found within the Texas Medical Center or in a basement conference room. Faculty loaded overhead projectors and lecture materials onto carts and wheeled them to the place where a class was to be held on a given day.

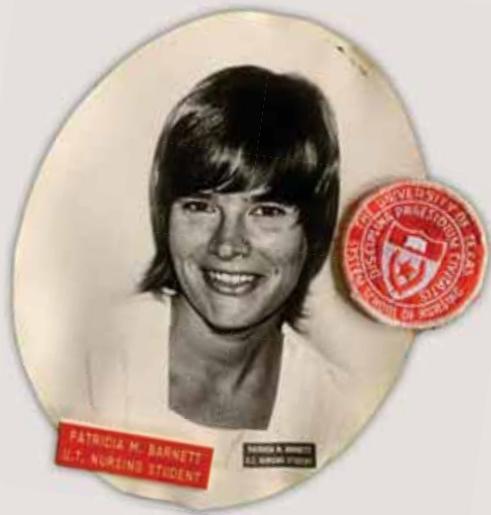
Ninety-eight students started the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program on August 28, 1972, and 86 would graduate in May 1974. They established the alumni association in 1975.

Early faculty members included (L-R) Dorothy Otto, Sylvia Leutz, Ana Valdez, Kathy Kurg, Barbara Sims, Angela Leal, Patti O'Kane, and Cheryl Levine.



That same year, the school moved to the Houston Main Building (formerly Prudential Building) at 1100 Holcombe Blvd., where it would remain for the next 30 years. Offices and classrooms occupied three floors of the building, and a swimming pool in the rear was quite popular among students.

Throughout the '70s, academic programs grew steadily. The same year the first BSN class graduated, programs in gerontological, oncological and psychiatric/mental health nursing were established as well the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program. In 1976, the first MSN students enrolled, and the nursing school became part of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. The creation of the nation's first emergency nurse practitioner program capped the decade in 1979.



“In 1972, our class entered the UT System School of Nursing in Houston with a newly formed faculty – in a newly formed nursing program – to study a new, holistically based curriculum. It was fresh, chaotic, and mind-boggling. We arrived with the greatest hopes and left with fond memories, appropriately terrified.”

— Patricia (Barnett) Barnes-Light, MSN, RN, PNP

1972



- The School of Nursing opens its doors in March at the nurses' residence of the Hermann Hospital, but soon moves into the Hermann Professional Building Annex.
- Elizabeth (Betty) C. Jones, PhD, MSN, RN, is named associate dean of the school.
- On Aug. 28, 98 undergraduate students are admitted into the BSN program.

1973



- The School of Nursing officially becomes one of The University of Texas System Schools of Nursing.

1974



- 86 students graduate with a BSN.
- The school moves to Houston Main Building at 1100 Holcombe Blvd.
- MSN degree program is established.
- Programs in gerontological, oncological, and psychiatric/mental health nursing are established.

1975



- The School of Nursing Alumni Association is formed.
- Dorothy Otto, EdD, MSN, RN, becomes acting dean.

1976



- The School of Nursing becomes a part of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.
- The first MSN students enroll.

1977



- Arlowayne Swort, PhD, RN, becomes dean.

1979



- Emergency Nursing Program is established.

ELIZABETH (BETTY) C.

JONES

PhD, MSN, RN

ASSOCIATE DEAN, 1972–1975



Dr. Elizabeth Jones at the nursing school's 35th anniversary celebration

For the first few years of its existence, the school operated as one of six campuses in The University of Texas System School of Nursing. Each location was led by an associate dean, and Elizabeth (Betty) C. Jones, PhD, MSN, RN, took on that role when the Houston school was founded in 1972.

Born in Fulton, Illinois, in 1920, Jones spent much of her early life in the Rio Grande Valley and West Texas. She received her BSN from Texas Christian University, MSN from The University of Texas in Austin, and PhD from Southeastern University.

Jones worked as a nursing supervisor for the City-County Health Department in San Angelo, Texas, where she also taught at the Shannon Hospital School of Nursing for eight years. She then became head of the Angelo State University nursing program when it was created in 1968. Her connection to UT began in 1971, when she was named assistant professor and coordinator for the UT System nursing programs statewide.

“Betty was a beautiful person, and she was very intelligent and a very strong woman,” said Marvin Hecker, whom Jones hired at the school’s founding to be in charge of audio-visual needs. “She was an activist for nursing and stood up for the school.”

Following her departure from Houston, she lived in Clinton, Iowa, from 1975 to 2003, where she was elected to three terms as mayor. She lived in Austin from 2003 until her death on Nov. 29, 2013.



DOROTHY OTTO

EdD, RN, ANEF

ACTING DEAN, 1975–1977



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No faculty member at Cizik School of Nursing stayed as long or is remembered by as many as Dorothy Otto.

She had already been teaching nurses in Houston for 14 years at Hermann Hospital before The University of Texas System opened its nursing school here in 1972. The school's history is inextricable from Otto's long and distinguished career. She was a founding faculty member, served as its acting dean from 1975–77, and continued teaching until her retirement as an associate professor in 2015.

Otto began her career as a nurse in McAllen, Texas, after earning her BSN from the University of Houston (UH) in 1954. She received her MSN from Texas Woman's University in 1971 and her EdD from UH in 1985.

She passed away Saturday, Jan. 4, 2020, and is remembered as an incredible mentor, colleague, and educator with a sharp sense of humor who lived with purpose. An ardent supporter of Cizik School of Nursing and a PARTNERS donor, the Dorothy A. Otto Award Fund was established in her honor and is given annually to an undergraduate student who excels as a role model of professionalism.



Dr. Dorothy Otto speaks at the school's 35th anniversary celebration.

ARLOWAYNE SWORT

PhD, RN

DEAN, 1977–1983



CIZIK NURSING | 50 YEARS



Dr. Arlowayne Swort, dean of the School of Nursing, poses with a plaque in February 1981.

The third leader of The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing, Arlowayne Swort, was born in Hondo, Texas, on December 9, 1922, and grew up in Oklahoma.

She served in the Cadet Nurse Corps during World War II, being admitted to St. Luke's Hospital School of Nursing in Kansas City, Missouri, on Sept. 13, 1941, and to the Corps on Oct. 15, 1943. She also attended the University of Colorado later in the decade. Swort lived in New York City in the mid-1960s and received her doctoral degree from the Teachers College at Columbia University in 1973.

During her time as dean, the UTHealth Houston nursing school became a Sigma Theta Tau nursing honor society member in 1982, created a Flexible Track program enabling nondegree registered nurses to earn their BSNs,

instituted distance-learning programs, and established the emergency nursing program.

After leaving the school, she received four National Institutes of Health Professional Nurse Traineeship grants. She was actively engaged in designing the graduate curriculum at Johns Hopkins University during the 1980s, where she was associate dean for graduate programs.

She died in Hondo on July 28, 2010.



THREE ORIGINALS

Two students, first male employee remember the '70s



Susan Irene Ebbs Fitcher
Alumna



Sheryl Gay Scoville Martinez
Alumna



Marvin Hecker
Original Staff Member

CIZIK NURSING | 50 YEARS

Faces come and go over the course of 50 years. Events that did not seem important at the time fade from memory. Searching for facts a half-century old can seem like panning for gold.

One particularly valuable nugget turned up in a Cizik School of Nursing storage room at the bottom of a box labeled "School of Nursing HISTORY": The late Dorothy Otto's 1972-73 directory. It lists names, addresses, and phone numbers for 94 students, 16 faculty members, and five staff members, most with accompanying photos. Three of these originals shared fond memories of the school's first year.

"It was exciting to be starting nursing school, and the medical center here in Houston was like a city within itself – just an exciting place to be," said alumna Susan Ebbs Fitcher, a member of the first class, which graduated with Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees.

"When I first got here, I walked around the medical center at nighttime," recalls Sheryl Scoville Martinez, Fitcher's former roommate. "I was just in awe of all of the knowledge and all of the medical stuff that was going on there."

Men were not very common in nursing schools at the time. The five male students in the first class included Gary Gray, who was going through the program with his wife, Linda.

Marvin Hecker was the only male employee during the three years he worked at the nursing school. A Rice University graduate, Hecker had switched his major from engineering to sociology about the time the de Menil family founded the Rice Media Center. This gave him the opportunity to work with all types of audio and visual equipment available at the time and to make several documentaries.

"IT WAS EXCITING TO BE STARTING NURSING SCHOOL, AND THE MEDICAL CENTER HERE IN HOUSTON WAS LIKE A CITY WITHIN ITSELF – JUST AN EXCITING PLACE TO BE."

— Susan Ebbs Fitcher, a member of the first class

When a seasonal job with the Harris County Department of Education came to an end, 23-year-old Hecker's boss suggested he apply at the new nursing school.

"I had an appointment with Dr. Betty Jones, the dean at the time. I walked in and she said, 'I understand you went to Rice. You're hired,'" Hecker recalls. "I knew nothing about nursing or education or anything. It turned out to be a great experience."

Hecker ordered and set up equipment and built a film and video library. Martinez recalls a work-study job in the AV center checking out cassette tapes and video players to her classmates.

However, Hecker generally remembers more details about life in the “garage” than the students do – they were too busy.

“The program at The University of Texas (at Houston) was very difficult. I did not see the light of day,” Fitcher said. She and Martinez remember writing long research papers on rented typewriters and spending many hours in Texas Medical Center hospitals. “I thought I was in medical school,” Fitcher added.

Hecker helped relocate the nursing school from the Hermann Professional Building Annex to Houston Main Building before taking a job in Austin with The University of Texas System School of Nursing. There, he worked to develop an AV clearinghouse for all six campuses of the school across the state. His job went away after the UT Board of Regents dissolved the System nursing school and transferred responsibility for nursing education to the universities in the various cities. However, he worked with Otto for a few additional months preparing for an international continuing education conference in Houston.

“We had some really talented faculty,” Hecker said. “At the nursing school, you had a lot of independent women, women who were professionals. But at the end of the semester, when everybody was moving out of their offices, they would come to me and ask me to help them carry their books to the car.”

After graduation, Fitcher completed a nursing internship at Hermann Hospital and then joined the U.S. Navy, working mostly in critical care. She took a break to raise her children, then returned to nursing in a pediatrician’s office, from which she retired in 2002. She now lives in Easton, Maryland, and has two daughters who have become nurses.

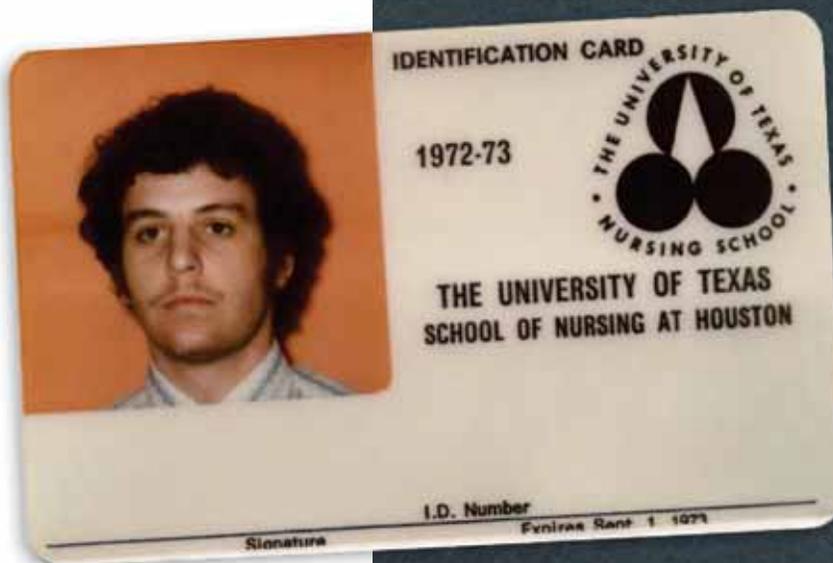
“IT ALL STARTED WITH THE NURSING SCHOOL.”

— Marvin Hecker, original staff member

Martinez started her career in a brand-new ICU unit at Ben Taub Hospital and later worked in home health before becoming a full-time mom. She says her nursing training has come in handy many times as a school volunteer and in her personal life. “You always have those nursing skills and knowledge with you,” she said.

Hecker found his next job doing AV work at the UT Medical Branch in Galveston. Through an only-in-Texas string of events involving Willie Nelson and an early model video projector stolen from one of the first Mr. Gatti’s pizza places, Hecker wound up going into business with a man who ran a TV repair shop from the back of a post office in Oak Hill, Texas. The business grew into a successful AV equipment and services company that set up conference rooms and classrooms throughout Central Texas. After selling the company in 1999, he served as a consultant and later worked with a simulation lab in Austin, where he learned not to call manikins “dummies.”

“It all started with the nursing school,” Hecker said.



1980s

GROWTH OF NURSING SPECIALTIES

The 1980s dawned with a small but determined team of faculty and staff, many of whom would grow not only nursing programs but their own families over the course of the decade.

Professor Vaunette Fay, PhD, RNC, FNP, GNP, joined the faculty in 1981 and retired in May 2022, making her one of the longest-serving educators at Cizik School of Nursing. She recalled that when she was expecting her youngest son in 1983, at least four of her colleagues were pregnant as well. Graduate faculty offices in the Houston Main Building (formerly Prudential Building) circled an open space with a large table where people would congregate for work, lunch, and mutual support.

“We were creating new courses, doing new things, writing grants. It was high energy,” recalled Professor Diane Wardell, PhD, WHNP-BC, who later

became the director of the women’s health nurse practitioner (NP) programs, the school’s first master’s-level NP program. The gerontological NP track soon followed, and Wardell and Fay would work together on developing the core NP curriculum.

Throughout the ‘80s, the school expanded and enhanced the BSN and MSN programs it had established in the ‘70s. At the undergraduate level, a “flexible” option was added to enable working RNs with associate’s degrees to earn their BSN.

A trend toward nursing specialization led to the creation of a variety of graduate programs focusing on specific patient populations. In later years, licensure standards shifted toward fewer and more general categories – such as including pediatric and women’s health in the broader family nurse practitioner certification. However, the focus

areas developed in the ‘80s would become integrated throughout the curriculum.

“We were on an upward trajectory every year,” said Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN, who led the school for 30 years beginning in 1984.

Two centers established during the decade also have evolved over the years and continue to support education, research, and practice. The Center for Nursing Research offers an array of services to help nurse scientists expand health care knowledge, and the Center on Aging ultimately became part of the UTHealth Houston Consortium on Aging, a collaboration among all six schools within the university.

Nursing student Anne Hord volunteered at the 1983 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo to help special-needs wranglers, like this young man.





“I believe the location of the school along with its partnerships with the Texas Medical Center and the faculty are to be credited for the confidence and success I feel in my profession.”

—Ingrid (Rodriguez) Gonzalez
BSN '89



“My sense over the years was always that we would do the very best we could, and we would be good at what we did, and that our graduates would be the best at what they were doing.”

—Professor Emerita Deanna E. Grimes, DrPH, RN, FAAN

1981



- Perinatal Nursing Program is established.

1982



- The Zeta Pi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau National Honor Society is granted to the School of Nursing.

1983



- Critical Care Nursing program is established.

1984



- Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN, is appointed dean.

1985



- RN-BSN Program is established.
- Nurse Anesthesia and Women's Health Care Nursing programs are established.

1986



- The Center for Nursing Research is established.

1987



- The Center on Aging is established.

COMMITTED TO CARING FOR OLDER ADULTS

The decades-long tradition of innovations at Cizik School of Nursing in caring for older adults took root in the 1980s and continues to grow along with our aging population's health care needs.

**“WE REALLY GREW GERIATRICS
WITHIN THE SCHOOL AND
ALSO WITHIN THE MEDICAL
COMMUNITY.”**

— Professor Vaunette Fay, PhD, FNP, GNP

Much of the school's advancement in this vital area can be traced to the formation of the Center on Aging in 1987. Linda Kaeser, PhD, RN, a noted expert in gerontological nursing and health care policy, came to UTHealth Houston from Portland State University in Oregon to lead the center, which fostered interdisciplinary education, community involvement, research, and advocacy to improve the quality of life of older people and their families.

Over the years, the center attracted substantial funding from government and philanthropic organizations as well as leaders in gerontological education, practice, and research. Among the first supporters was the Isla Carroll Turner Trust, which endowed a chair in gerontological nursing held by Kaeser.

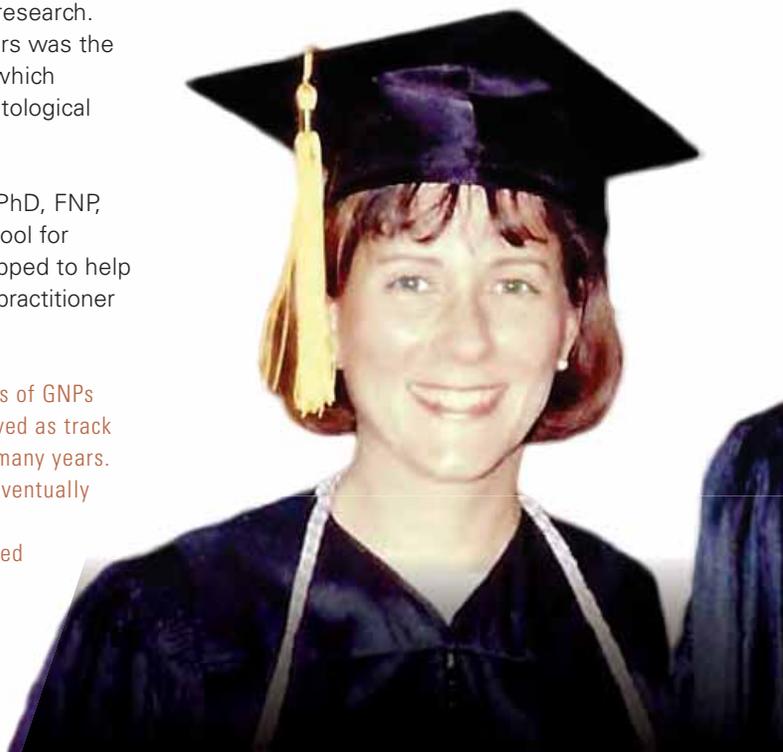
Professor Vaunette Fay, PhD, FNP, GNP, had been at the school for several years and was tapped to help develop a geriatric nurse practitioner (GNP) program.

“We graduated our first class of GNPs in 1988,” said Fay, who served as track director of gerontology for many years. The school's GNP program eventually became one of the nation's largest and was highly ranked by U.S. News & World

Report. Over the next two decades, Fay received a series of substantial grants from sources including the John A. Hartford Foundation and the Health Resources and Services Administration for gerontology education aimed at students, faculty, and practicing nurses.

“We really grew geriatrics within the school and also within the medical community,” Fay said.

The center's early goals extended beyond nursing education to touch many aspects of elder care in the





community. Ellen MacDonald, MSN, RN, joined the faculty in 1988 and called upon her administrative experience at a nursing home in The Woodlands to develop and direct a master's level long-term care administration program. She would also serve as program manager of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program, a federally and state-funded program administered through the Harris County Area Agency on Aging. Having both types of programs run by nursing schools remains quite unusual.

Subsequent leaders of the ombudsman program were Diane Persson, PhD, and Carmen Castro, DrPH, who is now administration manager for the Harris County Area Agency on Aging. Today, Chief Ombudsman Greg Shelley directs seven staff and 83 volunteer ombudsmen.

From the beginning, the center's strong commitment to multidisciplinary education stemmed from the belief that older persons with complex issues are best served by teams of professionals. In the 1990s, Kaeser, MacDonald, and Fay developed and

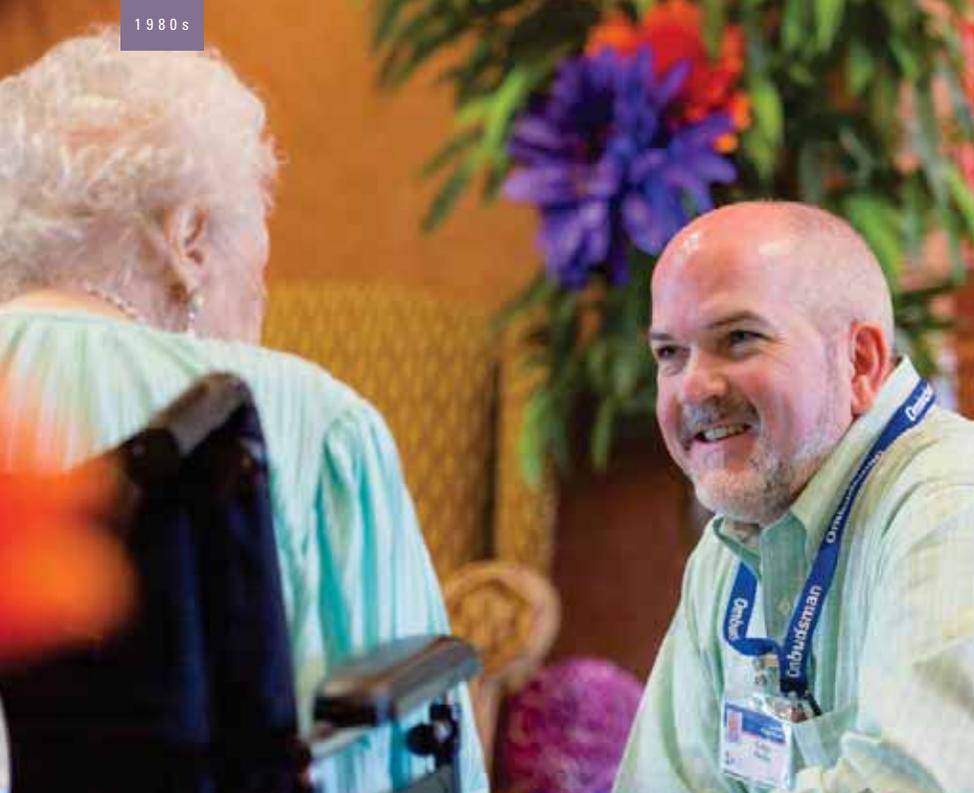
taught the first multidisciplinary aging course for nursing and public health students from UTHHealth Houston as well as social work students from the University of Houston.

With the Center on Aging's educational and community missions well established, Kaeser turned her attention to developing a robust research program. Professor Emerita Sharon Ostwald, PhD, RN, was recruited from the University of Minnesota in 1994 as the first associate director of aging research and first Theodore J. and Mary E. Trumble Endowed Professor in Aging Research, a position funded with the help of GNP graduate Mary Trumble. The center's collaborative focus appealed to Ostwald, who was the principal investigator of NIH-funded interdisciplinary research studies of persons with dementia and stroke and their families.

"When I came in the '90s, it was a very welcoming environment," Ostwald said. "I felt comfortable forging relationships in public health, medicine, and the institutions within the Texas Medical Center," she said.



(L-R) Maureen Stabile Beck, Mary Gleason, and Stacye Hansen Dick completed their GNP program in 1992. (Photo courtesy Vaunette Fay.)



Greg Shelley is program manager for the Long-term Care Ombudsman program.

“WHEN I CAME IN THE '90S, IT WAS A VERY WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT, I FELT COMFORTABLE FORGING RELATIONSHIPS IN PUBLIC HEALTH, MEDICINE, AND THE INSTITUTIONS WITHIN THE TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER.”

— Professor Emerita Sharon Ostwald, PhD, RN

Ostwald became the center’s director in 1996. She held adjunct appointments in UTHealth Houston’s schools of medicine and public health and was the Isla Carroll Turner Chair in Gerontological Nursing from Kaeser’s retirement in 1998 until her own retirement in 2012. During her 18 years with the Center on Aging, its research programs received substantial funding from federal, organizational, and private sources.

The center’s reputation and resources helped to recruit Nancy Bergstrom, PhD, RN, FAAN, from the University of Nebraska in 2000 to be its associate director of aging research, holding the Trumble Professorship. Bergstrom had worked with Barbara Braden, PhD, during years of testing the Braden Scale for Predicting Pressure Ulcer Risk (© B. Braden & N. Bergstrom, 1988), chaired two federal interdisciplinary panels creating the first guidelines on the topic, and obtained federal funding for a number of multisite studies. This work resulted in her induction to the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society’s International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame in 2010.

“The Center on Aging was a really interesting place with a number of ventures that were vastly different, all focused on aging from an interdisciplinary perspective,” said Bergstrom, who was impressed by the diversity of the center, the school, and the city. She succeeded Ostwald as the Center on Aging’s director from 2004 until her retirement in 2015.

After renowned gerontologist Carmel Dyer, MD, joined the faculty of McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston in 2007, Ostwald and Dyer collaborated on several federal and philanthropically funded geriatric education projects benefitting nurses throughout the community, as well as multidisciplinary students from UTHealth Houston and other local universities. Dyer also initiated the UTHealth Houston Consortium on Aging, which quickly grew its membership to more than 200 professionals representing various health care disciplines as well as community partners.

Dyer remained a driving force in promoting comprehensive, age-appropriate care for older adults until her death in May 2021 at the age of 62. She served as keynote speaker at the “Internet of Things and Aging in Place” gathering in January 2020 that marked the grand opening of Cizik School of Nursing’s Smart Apartment. This collaborative event with Rice University kicked off seed grant opportunities in the new Smart Apartment laboratory, where researchers use sensors, monitors, robots, and other innovative devices to identify and pilot technologies that can help monitor self-management of chronic diseases and frailty and detect health and behavior changes in aging and disabled adults.

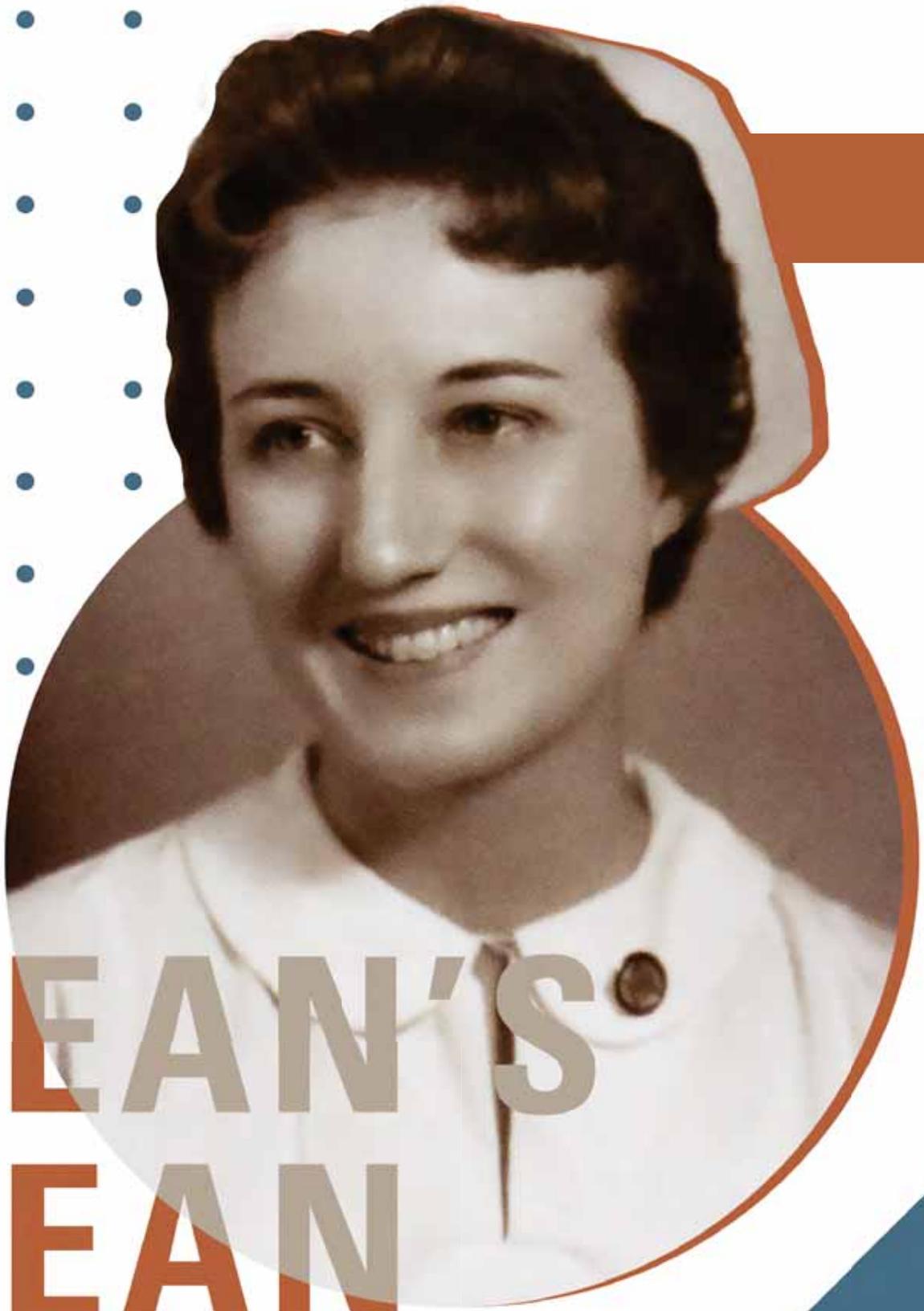
“The pandemic caused delays, but I am pleased to see the fruits of the seed grants paying off,” said Associate Dean for Research Constance Johnson, PhD, RN, FAAN. One example is the recent publication of a needs assessment related to development of a chatbot incorporating artificial intelligence to help older adults access medication information. The principal investigator is Kirk Roberts, PhD, assistant professor at UTHHealth Houston School of Biomedical Informatics, with three nursing faculty members serving as co-investigators.

“WE ARE HONORED, HUMBLLED, AND PRIVILEGED TO BUILD ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION, PRACTICE, AND RESEARCH LAID BY OUR PIONEERING FACULTY AS WE EXPLORE NEW FRONTIERS OF GERONTOLOGICAL NURSING.”

— Dean Diane Santa Maria,
DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN



Jennifer Beauchamp, PhD, RN, FAAN, is leading a pilot study in the Smart Apartment aimed at using facial and body-motion technology to detect psychosocial distress in stroke survivors and their informal caregivers.



DEAN'S DEAN

RECALLS THREE DECADES OF GROWTH



PATRICIA L. STARCK

PhD, RN, FAAN

DEAN, 1984–2015

Many of Cizik School of Nursing's successes over the past 50 years rest on the legacy of its longest-serving steward, Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN. In her 30 years at the helm, Starck elevated the school from "the best kept secret in the Texas Medical Center" to a nationally ranked leader in nursing education, practice, and research.

"She is a dynamo," said Associate Professor Barbara K. Bailes, EdD, RN. "She instituted a lot of innovations and moved the school forward faster than most leaders could."

Early inspirations

Starck grew up in Americus, Georgia, among a large, extended family with a tradition of sending boys to medical school and girls to nursing school. At the time, most nurses attended diploma schools within hospitals, but Starck understood the value of higher education. She started at the local community college, now Georgia Southwestern State University (whose alumni include Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter). She then earned bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing from Emory University in Atlanta.

"PAT STARCK NEVER TOOK NO FOR AN ANSWER."

— Professor Emerita Sharon K. Ostwald, PhD, RN



Dean Starck with her mentor Victor Frankl in 1984

Starck became interested in rehabilitation while still in nursing school. "It started with a cousin of mine who at age 17 became quadriplegic," she said. "That was devastating for him and his family. I saw what they went through." Between degrees, she worked as a rehab nurse for an insurance company, helping people with workers' compensation injuries.

These experiences led her to a lifelong research focus on ways to alleviate suffering, from both a physical and psychological standpoint. Her work focused on the undertreatment of pain and on logotherapy, a future-focused approach that helps people find meaning in life. She eventually received a lifetime achievement award from the Victor Frankl Institute, whose namesake pioneered logotherapy.

Starck turned to teaching after marrying Emory medical student Jim Starck. At the time, nurses needed only BSNs to teach in hospital diploma schools, but Starck pursued her MSN. For the next dozen years, she worked and taught in hospitals and colleges in Georgia, Florida, and Colorado.

"I really loved teaching because I quickly realized that if I'm a nurse, I'm affecting one patient at a time. When I am a faculty member and I'm teaching 20 students, I'm really affecting 20 students' future patients at a time," she said.

By the time she started working on her doctoral degree, Starck was the widowed mother of twin daughters in junior high. The three would study together over the dinner table in an apartment near the University of Alabama in Birmingham.

Excelling at jobs she didn't ask for

Twice in her life, Starck became a dean of nursing when she only aspired to be an assistant dean. The first was at Troy State University in Alabama, a small school with a big reputation for educating members of the military. She learned valuable lessons working among retired majors and generals, but by the time her daughters, Jaime Catherine and Patricia Ann, started college, Starck was ready for a new challenge.

"I really missed being where the clinical action was," she said. "I was tired of reading about medical discoveries in the paper and not being at the place where they were happening."

Starck again sought an assistant dean position to learn the ropes. However, Billye J. Brown, EdD, RN, then dean of The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing, encouraged her to consider the deanship in Houston. Starck decided to stop off on her way home from an interview in California.



Dean Starck with her daughters Jaime Schier (left) and Patty Griesedieck



Grappling with statewide austerity measures in the wake of property tax reforms, the California school she visited assigned her a dorm room for the night. UTHealth Houston put her up in a suite at the Shamrock Hilton. It was no contest. The family moved to the Bayou City, with mom at UTHealth Houston and the twins at Rice University.

“I really liked Dr. Roger Bulger, who was the university president at the time,” she said. “The nursing school, when I came, was not very well known. I think Dr. Bulger’s position was, ‘We have so much potential here. It’s not been activated.’”

Starck wanted to better integrate faculty and students into Houston hospitals, so expanding faculty practice became one of her first priorities. This helped faculty keep their skills sharp, provided access to patient populations for research, and offered more clinical placement opportunities for students.

“JUST RECENTLY, I ASKED A NURSE ANESTHETIST WHAT YEAR SHE GRADUATED, THEN ASKED, ‘DO YOU REMEMBER DEAN STARCK?’ AFTER AN ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE, I SAID, ‘WELL, THAT’S ME!’ I’M SO PROUD OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OUR GRADUATES ARE MAKING.”

— Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN

A home for nursing education

The need for a better teaching space also became clear early on. In the historic Houston Main Building, the nursing school occupied the fifth, sixth, and 15th floors, and that separation hindered unity.

Eventually, students presented a petition complaining about one particularly noisy and poorly air-conditioned classroom. Thus began the years-long adventure of designing the nursing school’s new home. Two architectural firms and many, many stakeholder meetings later, the eight-story structure designed specifically for nursing education opened in October 2004 at 6901 Bertner Ave. Built for the future – not only of nursing education but of sustainable construction – the “green” building earned LEED® Gold certification in 2009.

“This was the time when online education was just being whispered, so we were trying to predict what education would look like in the coming years for this building,” Starck said. “The things we did were cutting-edge in our classrooms. We had electrical outlets everywhere for students to plug in their computers.”

The building stands as a physical representation, but only one example, of Starck’s innovative mindset. Under her leadership, the school grew in size and stature, from offering only BSN and MSN degrees to a DNP, a PhD, and multiple specialty concentrations. In addition, the first nurse practitioner clinic, UT Health Services, was started and led for many years by Thomas Mackey, PhD, RN, FAAN.

“We had administrative support all the way down for trying things,” said Professor Emerita Sharon K. Ostwald, PhD, RN. “If we had an idea that seemed good, it would be supported and facilitated.”



Fighting for programs

However, advancements rarely came easily.

“One of the most important things for the school was our getting approval from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for our first doctoral program, and then for the DNP and the other programs,” Starck said. Despite fierce opposition at every turn, the nursing school prevailed with strong support from the physicians and other schools at UTHealth Houston.

“Pat Starck never took no for an answer,” Ostwald said.

Starck marks among her proudest accomplishments the successful matriculation of two cohorts of accelerated PhD students. To address the nursing shortage, more faculty were needed to educate more students. So, Starck and members of the school’s advisory council worked with local hospitals to secure funding to enable PhD students to go to school full-time and graduate in three years. The students committed to serve as UTHealth Houston nursing faculty for four years after graduation and to conduct research at the sponsoring hospital. They also brought students to the hospitals for clinical rotations. Each new PhD student who became faculty could support an increase in enrollment of 10 undergraduate students.

“This was a program we designed that was actually a win-win-win all the way around,” Starck said. Several of the students who earned their PhDs through that program still teach at Cizik School of Nursing today.

Starck served the wider UTHealth Houston community in her later years at the university. From 2011 to 2013, she wore two hats as dean of the nursing school and senior vice president for community affairs for the university. This assignment followed her success in establishing the PARTNERS organization, a committed group of volunteers who have raised money for scholarships, professorships, and research support as well as building and equipment needs for decades. Starck held the community affairs position temporarily until Kevin J. Foyle, MBA, was hired to lead the university’s development efforts.

Retirement?

In 2014, Starck announced her retirement from the nursing school but dedicated another two years to UTHealth Houston as senior vice president for interprofessional education. She led an initiative to bring students from the university’s six schools together for learning experiences that would help them function more effectively as integrated teams.

Starck still keeps very busy. She wrote a recently published book chapter on logotherapy and is putting the finishing touches on a novel based on family stories from the early 1900s.

One of her greatest joys is being cared for by UTHealth Houston nursing alums when she has encountered health problems.

“Just recently, I asked a nurse anesthetist what year she graduated, then asked, ‘Do you remember Dean Starck?’ After an enthusiastic response, I said, ‘Well, that’s me,’” the dean emerita recounted. “I’m so proud of the contributions our graduates are making.”

As in the days of her childhood, Starck is surrounded by close family. She, her daughters, and their husbands live in adjacent houses. The grandchildren who grew up running through their backyards are now grown, and Starck recently met her first great-grandchild.

The pandemic temporarily limited family interactions to phone calls and conversations through windows, but Starck has no complaints.

“I’ve got plenty of projects and things to do,” she said.

LEGACIES OF EXCELLENCE

As a part of our 50th anniversary commemoration, a few of our retired faculty members shared the stories of their careers in oral history interviews. Use the URLs or QR codes below to view each of them.



Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck,
PhD, RN, FAAN, led Cizik School of Nursing for 30 of its 50 years. Read about her many accomplishments and contributions to nursing education on page 18.
go.uth.edu/PatriciaLStarck



Professor Vaunette Fay,
PhD, RNC, FNP, GNP, retired May 30, 2022, after 42 years of educating students and faculty at Cizik School of Nursing. She is one of the first nurse practitioners in Texas and devoted much of her career to preparing nurses to provide compassionate care to older patients.
go.uth.edu/VaunetteFayRetirement



Professor Emerita Jane C. Meininger,
PhD, RN, FAAN, led the development of the school's first doctoral program, then a Doctor of Nursing Science degree, which admitted its first class in 1996.
go.uth.edu/JaneCMeiningerOralHistory



Marianne T. Marcus, EdD, RN, FAAN, taught nursing students at Cizik School of Nursing for 34 years and devoted her research efforts to substance use addiction and mindfulness-based stress reduction. She passed away on January 16, 2022.
go.uth.edu/MarianneMarcus



THE McCREA SISTERS

then and now

The Texas Medical Center feels like home to the McCrea sisters. The trio all graduated from Cizik School of Nursing in the 1980s, and today they work within walking distance of one another in the TMC.

First came Deborah “Debbie” McCrea, EdD, APRN, FNP-BC, EMT-P, who earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) in 1983. She would return to UHealth Houston three more times as a student and eventually become a member of the faculty.

1991-1993

THE UNIVERSITY
OF TEXAS
SCHOOL OF NURSING
AT HOUSTON

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER

“The best advice my dad gave me was, ‘They will always need nurses, even in hard times,’” said the oldest sibling, who is now an assistant professor teaching family nurse practitioner and emergency nurse practitioner classes in the Department of Graduate Studies. “I’m so glad I listened to him, plus my two sisters listened to him.”

Next came Celia McCrea Levesque, MSN, APRN, FNP-C (Class of ‘85), now a family nurse practitioner at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. Little sister Beverly McCrea, BSN, RN (Class of ‘89), works in the cardiac catheterization lab at Texas Children’s Hospital.

The three came from a health care family. Both parents were laboratory technicians, and their stepmother was a nurse. Their teenage summer jobs tended to be in hospitals, and they completed prerequisites at Houston Community College.

Debbie recalls being dropped off at the nursing school in the morning and sticking around all day until her father picked her (and later Celia) up after work.

“When we finished with classes, studying, or clinicals at one of the TMC hospitals, we would sit on the couches on the fourth floor and watch *General Hospital*,” she said. Once Debbie got a car, she would often drive her sisters to school.



The McCrea sisters (L-R: Beverly, Celia, and Debbie) pose with the sculpture that previously stood outside Houston Main Building, where they attended classes in the 1980s. It now stands outside MD Anderson’s Duncan Building, about a block from the present-day Cizik School of Nursing.

“At the time, you knew that you could walk right across the street to Methodist, Hermann, St. Luke’s, or MD Anderson. You might see Red Duke on the sidewalk,” Beverly said. “The clinicals we had access to couldn’t be beat.”

In those days, students would visit a clinical site the day before their rotation to pick out a patient, then go home that evening to do research and write a report about the patient’s condition.

“I would run to the unit as soon as they let us in to try to pick the most complicated patient,” said Celia, who considered becoming a physician but realized during her clinical rotations that a nursing career was her passion.

All three sisters believe in helping prepare the next generation of nurses. Debbie teaches full time, Celia serves as a preceptor for nurse practitioner students at MD Anderson, and while the specialization of Beverly’s work doesn’t give her as much access to students, she has precepted in the past as well.

“I FEEL SORRY FOR ANYBODY WHO DOES NOT HAVE A NURSING DEGREE, BECAUSE IT’S ONE OF THE MOST FLEXIBLE DEGREES OUT THERE. IF YOU GET TIRED OF DOING ONE THING YOU CAN TRY SOMETHING ELSE.”

— Debbie McCrea, EdD, APRN, FNP-BC, EMT-P (Class of ‘83)

1990s

G R E A T I D E A S W E L C O M E

UTHealth Houston School of Nursing was an exciting place to be in the 1990s. A passionate group of faculty and staff fearlessly explored new ideas while growing the school in reputation and enrollment.

The school added academic programs, opened a groundbreaking nurse-led clinic, gained the support of a fundraising group devoted solely to its success, and helped other nursing schools establish graduate education.

"It went from a small, clinically focused nursing school that was very well acknowledged within the state to one that developed a more national reputation," said retired professor Sharon Ostwald, PhD, RN. "Dean (Patricia L.) Starck was always an innovator."

"There was a lot of support for innovations and creativity," agreed Professor Diane Wardell, PhD, WHNP-BC. "If you could make it work, you could go for it!"

Wardell and Professor Emerita Joan Engebretson, DrPH, AHN-BC, RN, FAAN, became close friends and collaborators on a number of innovative projects, including development of the patented "Wee Thumbie" pacifier for low-birthweight babies.

Another groundbreaking milestone in the '90s was the creation of the state's first dual master's degree in nursing and public health, established by Professor Emerita Deanna Grimes, DrPH, RN, FAAN. She had joined the nursing school's faculty in 1977, five years after moving to Houston with her husband,

Richard Grimes, PhD, who took a position with UTHealth School of Public Health. The couple helped establish abiding links between the two schools located just across Grant Fay Park from each other. Their collaborations throughout the years included early AIDS research.

"I was teaching a night course for practicing nurses, and some of them started talking to me about weird conditions – skin lesions, infections that wouldn't heal," Grimes recalls. Her husband later received a Health Resources and Services Administration grant, and Grimes served as a co-investigator to support nursing education about HIV/AIDS.

The school's crowning achievement in the '90s was the establishment of its first doctoral program. Preparations started earlier, with Starck strongly encouraging most faculty members to earn doctorates. Since doctoral programs in nursing still were not terribly common at that time, some opted to earn terminal degrees in education, public health, or other related fields.

"To be on par with other university faculty, you need that doctoral preparation," Starck said.



Professor Emerita Janet C. Meininger, PhD, RN, FAAN, led the development of the school's first doctoral program, then a Doctor of Science in Nursing (DSN) degree. The proposal enjoyed strong support from The University of Texas System but struck out on its first at-bat with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in the 1980s. The second attempt succeeded in 1996, with UT System Chancellor Bill Cunningham, PhD, personally championing the cause. Lorraine Frazier, PhD, RN, FAAN, who would one day become dean of Cizik School of Nursing, supported the program's development and completed her MSN just in time to join one of the first classes of doctoral students.

Because strengthening the school's research resources went hand-in-hand with doctoral education, Professor Sandra K. Hanneman, PhD, RN, FAAN, came on board in 1996 as associate dean for research and evaluation. Planning was underway for the building that would become the school of nursing's new home nearly a decade later, and Hanneman advocated for incorporating laboratory space into the design. She also reorganized the Center for Nursing Research to provide robust support for students and faculty seeking grants and writing for publication.

"As your reputation grows for quality and productivity, you are viewed differently," Hanneman said. "Other schools were approaching us about collaborations, which enhanced our faculty's opportunities and productivity."

Before the new millennium arrived, the school would rise to 22nd among nursing schools receiving funding from the NIH, and its highly regarded nurse anesthesia program would be ranked eighth in the nation by U.S. News & World Reports.

1990



- Pediatric Nursing program is jointly established with Texas Woman's University, becoming solely UTHealth Houston's program in 2001.

1991



- UT Health Services clinic opens.

1992



- 13 students graduate with an MSN degree as part of an outreach program that results in The University of Texas-Pan American (now UT Rio Grande Valley) establishing its own master's program in 1994.

1994



- PARTNERS is established with Peggy Barnett as its first chair.
- Joan Engebretson, DrPH, RN, and Diane Wardell, PhD, RN, receive a patent for the first pacifier designed for low birth weight babies, branded "Wee Thumbies."
- Neonatal Nursing Program is established.

1995



- The first dual degree MSN-MPH program in Texas begins in Houston.

1996



- The Doctor of Science in Nursing (DSN) program is founded.
- Acute Care Nursing and Family Nursing programs are established.

1998



- Nurse Anesthesia Program is ranked 8th in the nation by U.S. News & World Report.

PRACTICING PRIMARY CARE

Nurse-led clinic sets the bar



Thomas Mackey, PhD, FNP, (right) helped establish the UT Health Services clinic.



(L-R) George Delclos, MD, PhD; Thomas Mackey, PhD; and Bob Bowman, assistant vice president for Auxiliary Enterprises

One night in 1990, Dean Patricia L. Starck woke up with idea of starting a nurse-led clinic. So recalls Professor Thomas Mackey, PhD, FNP, FAAN, who would go on to lead UT Health Services for 34 years.

The nursing school was fortunate to have Mackey on faculty. He had previously helped establish rural nurse practitioner clinics in Appalachia and Illinois, and before his 20th birthday, he was helping priests care for patients in the Congo following civil war. Mackey joined the UTHouston nursing school as an associate professor in 1989, teaching undergraduate courses.

University leaders traveled to Austin to make the case for establishing the new clinic, and approval came with the caveat that nurses would not charge for services.

"Everyone was worried, but I was not," Mackey said. "I said, 'We will hire a physician and bill through his name.'" That physician, George Delclos, MD, PhD, continues to serve as the medical director of UT Health Services to this day.

With an unrelenting focus on quality of care and patient safety, Mackey set out to build the clinic as a financially stable and sustainable business. "In about a year and a half, we became financially self-sustaining," he said.

Employee and occupational health services became the foundation of future growth. Mackey's early work in the Department of Family and Community Medicine



UT Health Services Director Joy Harrison, DNP, RN

at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston, as well as providing physicals to patients for the medical school's Fallace Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, attracted the attention of Bob Bowman, then the assistant vice president for Auxiliary Enterprises for UTHealth Houston. This led to a contract for UT Health Services to provide employee and student health services for the entire university. Many employees began to choose the clinic as their primary care provider.

The arrangement worked out so well that Mackey sought out contracts with other large employers in the Houston area to provide occupational and primary care health services.

"Those people came in for pre-employment exams, and they turned around and become primary care patients," Mackey explained. "UT Health Services became the model for academic nursing centers around the country because we were successful – we were financially self-sufficient and returned money to the school of nursing to further its academic mission."

Mackey stepped down as the clinic's director and the school's associate dean for practice in 2015, but his retirement is only partial. He continues to serve the clinic's largest occupational health contract with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. He travels all over the state from January to May each year providing annual health monitoring exams using a rented semitrailer with audiology, EKG, an exam table, and X-ray capabilities.

UT Health Services' tradition of clinical excellence continues under the leadership of alumna and Director Joy Harrison, DNP, RN, and Associate Dean for Practice and Community Engagement Leissa Roberts, DNP, CNM, FACNM.

Harrison's first task when joining Cizik School of Nursing in June 2021 was planning and implementing the clinic's move from the 16th floor of the University Center Tower, 700 Fannin St., to the ground floor of the UT Health Science Center Professional Building at 6410 Fannin St., Suite 100. The new location, which opened in March 2022, offers added conveniences such as valet parking, telehealth services, a pharmacy across the hall, and a METRORail stop across the street.

Routine primary health care offerings include yearly well-woman exams, immunizations, and diabetes and cardiovascular disease risk assessments. Occupational health services for UTHealth Houston and other Houston employers include preplacement services, audiology and vision screening, chest X-rays, EKGs, and immunizations. The clinic also remains the employee health hub for UTHealth Houston's 12,000+ employees.

"It is a great privilege to build on the innovative work of Dr. Mackey, Dr. Delclos, and the dedicated staff and nurse practitioners who established and grew UT Health Services over the years," Roberts said. "In our new location, we look forward to serving as a health care home for more patients and a workplace partner for more employers while providing clinical opportunities to Cizik School of Nursing students and faculty."



Chief Operating Officer of UT Physicians Andrew Casas, Leissa Roberts, Joy Harrison, and Cizik School of Nursing Dean Diane Santa Maria cut the ribbon on the new UT Health Services clinic.



P

ARTNERS

A legacy of giving

The advancement of nursing education, practice, and research takes a strong investment, so a fundraising organization formed in 1994 committed itself solely to helping fuel growth at Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth Houston.

CIZIK NURSING | 50 YEARS



Peggy Barnett founding chair of PARTNERS, Dean Patricia L. Starck, and Pam Wakefield in 1994



Keynote speaker Diane Sieg addressed resilience at the 2022 PARTNERS Spring Luncheon, which honored all nurses in the Texas Medical Center, who are the true heroes of the pandemic. Pictured (L-R) Kay English, Diane Sieg, Dean Diane Santa Maria, Sally Hartman Harvin, and Ellen G. Sheedy. English, Harvin, and Sheedy were co-chairs of the event along with Maria C. Pappas.



Faculty members who are advancing a wide range of research thanks to PARTNERS grants provided updates to organization members in January 2022. Pictured (L-R) are Nancy Willerson, Dean Diane Santa Maria, Stacey Crane, Maja Djukic, Jennifer Beauchamp, Nancy Guinee, Gloria Hill, and Robbie Prazak.

PARTNERS (Providing Advancement Resources to Nursing Education, Research, and Students) raises funds through membership drives and special events such as its annual luncheon. Since its founding, the organization has contributed more than \$15 million, directly and indirectly providing over 200 full-tuition scholarships, 63 faculty research grants, and four endowed professorships.

“PARTNERS is one of the big success stories of Cizik School of Nursing, and we are envied by most nursing schools in the nation,” said Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN.

In the early ‘90s, an advisory council member suggested that the school identify a group of women in the community who could help lay the groundwork for fundraising. The dean of nursing at The University of Texas at Austin visited to share that institution’s approach, but Starck and long-time supporter Margaret A. “Peggy” Barnett had other ideas.

As the founding chair of PARTNERS, Barnett recruited members as did subsequent leaders of the organization. “PARTNERS worked closely with the school to align funding priorities, and they have funded so many things at the school that continue to make such a difference,” Starck said.



Peggy Barnett, founding chair of PARTNERS, Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck at the PARTNERS Luncheon in 2019

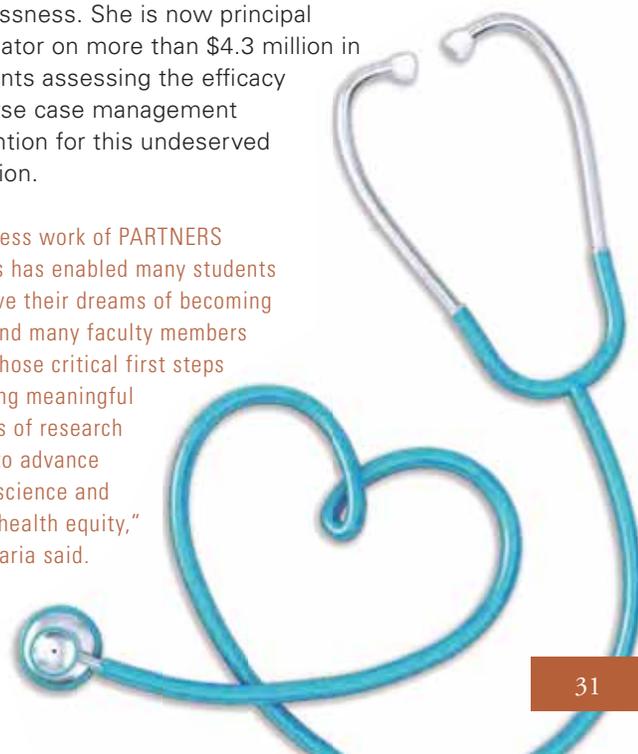
“PARTNERS IS ONE OF THE BIG SUCCESS STORIES OF CIZIK SCHOOL OF NURSING, AND WE ARE ENVIED BY MOST NURSING SCHOOLS IN THE NATION.”

— Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN

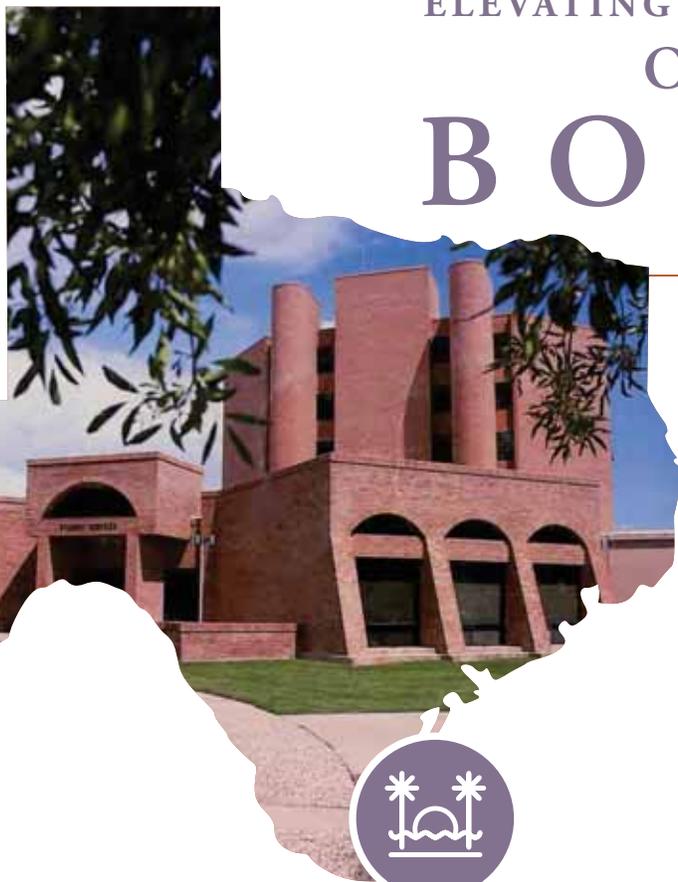
In many cases, PARTNERS grants have funded the preliminary work needed for faculty to successfully apply for larger awards, including multimillion-dollar grants awarded from the National Institutes of Health. The organization has also attracted several large planned gifts establishing endowments to support future scholarship and research initiatives.

Dean Diane Santa Maria, DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN, counts herself among PARTNERS’ beneficiaries. She received a grant from the organization in 2018 funding her research into HIV prevention among youth experiencing homelessness. She is now principal investigator on more than \$4.3 million in NIH grants assessing the efficacy of a nurse case management intervention for this undeserved population.

“The tireless work of PARTNERS members has enabled many students to achieve their dreams of becoming nurses and many faculty members to take those critical first steps in building meaningful programs of research needed to advance nursing science and achieve health equity,” Santa Maria said.



ELEVATING NURSING EDUCATION ON THE BORDER



CIZIK NURSING | 50 YEARS

UTHealth Houston leaders never forget that “T” is for Texas. At Cizik School of Nursing, that translates into a commitment to promoting high-quality nursing education throughout the state.

By the late 1980s, UTHealth School of Public Health had identified many health care gaps in the Rio Grande Valley, and the School of Nursing began offering continuing education to nurses in the region.

“We decided that the best way to make a contribution, rather than going down and giving direct health care and then leaving, was for us to help offer opportunities for their nurses to get further education so that there would be sustainability,” said Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN.

The Texas Legislature initially funded a monthly continuing education (CE) program, and Gwen Sherwood, PhD, RN, FAAN, who was director of CE, took charge of it in 1988. In the years that followed, she simultaneously led the school’s faculty practice.

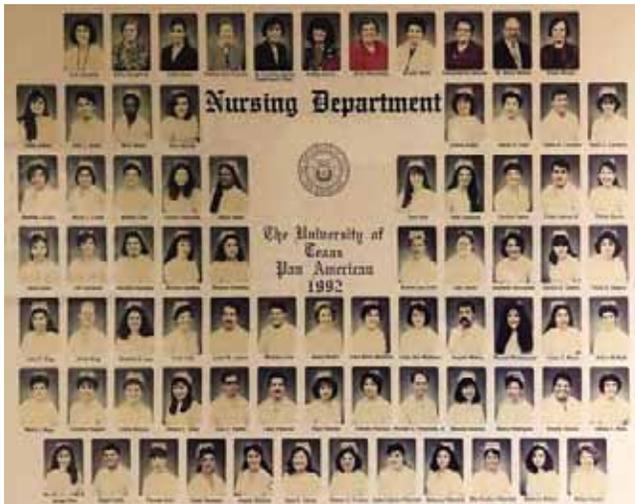
“We would recruit faculty members to go down and do a CE program in one city on Friday and another on Saturday,” said Sherwood, who retired from Cizik School of Nursing as executive dean in 2005 and later from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Nursing as associate dean for academic affairs. In addition to her academic

efforts, Sherwood helped UT Pan American establish its own chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing.

In 1989, Pan American University in Edinburg, Texas, officially merged with The University of Texas System to become UT Pan American. The School of Nursing in Houston received state and federal funding to help its sister institution to the south establish a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program the following year.

**“THE GRADUATES HAVE BECOME LEADERS
IN THE VALLEY, WHO HAVE SINCE BECOME
FACULTY.”**

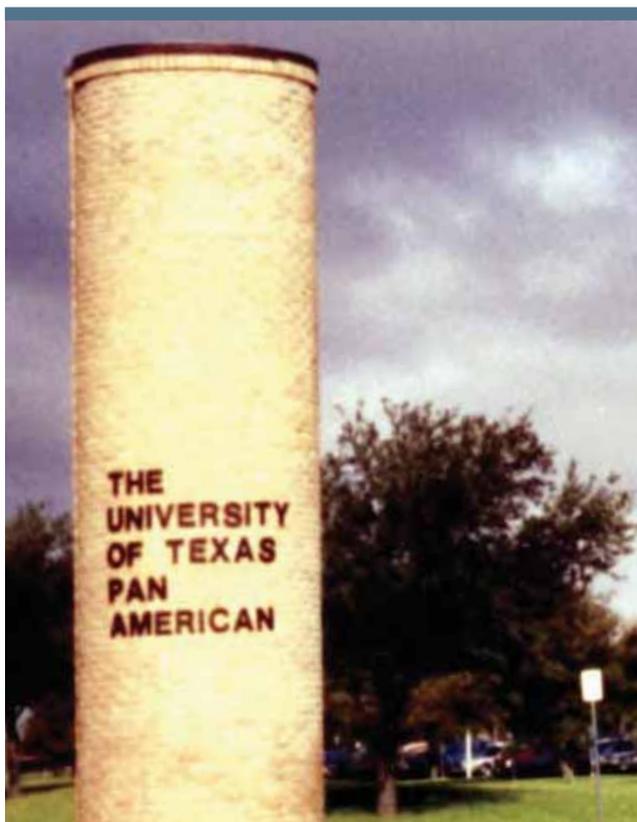
— Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN



“If it weren’t for their efforts, I think it would have taken much longer for us to establish our own graduate program,” said Professor Carolina G. Huerta, EdD, RN, FAAN. Huerta served as department chair of nursing at UT Pan American for 27 of the 50 years she has taught nursing.

Faculty members from Houston would travel to the Rio Grande Valley every week to teach students and mentor faculty. Huerta recalls many of them, including Joanne Hickey, PhD, RN, FAAN; Joan Engebretson, DrPH, RN, FAAN; Janet Meininger, PhD, RN, FAAN; Diane Wardell, PhD, RN; Miguel da Cunha, PhD; and Elias Vasquez, PhD, RN.

“Distance education then was getting on a plane and going down to teach on-site,” Meininger said. Sherwood traveled so much that she received personal Christmas cards from the car rental staff at the airport.



GWEN SHERWOOD, PhD, RN, FAAN



CAROLINA G. HUERTA, EdD, RN, FAAN

The first 13 Rio Grande Valley students to receive an MSN through the outreach program graduated from UTHealth Houston in spring 1992. Ultimately, 88 students comprising five cohorts would graduate from the Houston school before UT Pan American started its own master’s program in 1994.

“We were so proud of the way that worked,” Sherwood said. “We started this, but they just took the reins and ran with it.” The eager, motivated students inspired faculty, she added. “They saw what nursing could do for the people in the Valley. They were in it to really improve health care.”

Later, Cizik School of Nursing would help seed doctoral programs in the Rio Grande Valley and El Paso. Evolving technology by this time enabled delivery of some courses and continuing education sessions via satellite broadcasts.

“The graduates have become leaders in the Valley, who have since become faculty,” Starck said. “I think this was one of the educational innovations where we really made a difference in the state, and I’m very proud of what we did.”

UT Pan American has come a long way from offering associate degrees in nursing and an RN to BSN program. The university merged with the nearby UT Brownsville campus in 2012 to become UT Rio Grande Valley.

“We have grown so much, and we are getting our own DNP program in September 2022,” Huerta said.

“WE WERE SO PROUD OF THE WAY THAT WORKED. WE STARTED THIS, BUT THEY JUST TOOK THE REINS AND RAN WITH IT. THE EAGER, MOTIVATED STUDENTS INSPIRED FACULTY. THEY SAW WHAT NURSING COULD DO FOR THE PEOPLE IN THE VALLEY. THEY WERE IN IT TO REALLY IMPROVE HEALTH CARE.”

— Gwen Sherwood, PhD, RN, FAAN

2000s

EXCELLING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

High technology and high waters left their marks on Houston in the first decade of the new millennium. Cizik School of Nursing embraced the digital age within its new building designed specifically for nursing education, responded with a nurse's caring heart when disaster struck, and through it all, enhanced its educational and research programs.

The COVID-19 pandemic may have made Zoom calls commonplace, but in the year 2000, the ability to facilitate "distance learning" via real-time video and two-way communication required significant expense, equipment, and technological savvy. Cizik School of Nursing began employing such tools to reach students studying remotely in the 1990s and thoughtfully integrated video conferencing capabilities throughout its new building that opened in 2004.

The state-of-the-art technology in the nursing school's new home could be overwhelming at times. Professor Vaunette Fay, PhD, FNP, was assistant dean for e-learning and educational technology and worked closely with Janet Johnson, director of the Center for Education and Information Resources, to help faculty make the most of the new tools.

The internet transformed education and exponentially expanded the ability to store and share data. In the first half of the decade, the nursing school worked with the Texas Medical Center Library to pilot a digital document repository. Among the first additions to the Digital Commons were the scholarly works of Nancy Bergstrom, PhD, RN, FAAN.

Lorraine Frazier, PhD, RN, FAAN, then a postdoctoral fellow, served as the project director of Texas Medical Center Genetics (TexGen Research), an early biobank

collaboration of several institutions within the TMC. The center collected clinical data and biological samples from people being treated for cancer and cardiovascular diseases. The steadily increasing power, storage capacity, and connectivity of computer technology enabled more efficient digitization of vast amounts of patients' genetic data. Today, Cizik School of Nursing manages The University of Texas System Health Biobank Consortium under the direction of Associate Professor Jennifer S. Beauchamp, PhD, RN, FAAN.

Research at the nursing school grew and expanded on multiple fronts in the early 2000s. The \$2.2 million grant that Professor Sharon Ostwald, PhD, RN, received from the National Institute for Nursing Research in 2001 to study stroke survivors and their spouses represented the largest award the school had received up until that date.



2001

- U.S. News & World Report ranks the school's MSN program among the top 12% in the nation.
- Tropical Storm Allison floods the TMC, June 8-9.



2002

- Adult Health Nursing Program is established.
- 30 graduates are honored as Distinguished Alumni in honor of the school's 30th anniversary.



2006

- The DNP program is established.
- The PARTNERS endowment reaches \$1 million in funding. The first PARTNERS Professorship is established.

The late Professor Emerita Marianne Marcus, EdD, RN, FAAN, a much-loved faculty member who joined the nursing school in 1980, also had received a substantial federal grant by mid-decade. Along with Patricia Liehr, PhD, RN, and a few other faculty members, Marcus became interested in mindfulness meditation and applied it to her work with patients recovering from substance use. Marcus received a \$1.4 million grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse to apply these concepts at Cenikor, a two-year drug recovery program with which she had a long-established working relationship.

In addition, the nursing school played an important role in securing National Institutes of Health funding in 2006 to establish the Center for Clinical and Translational Sciences. Nursing faculty and researchers served in various leadership roles, and Frazier became director of the center’s biobank core.

Underpinning scientific advancements at the nursing school was the critical expansion of its doctoral programs. The establishment of the state’s first Doctor of Nursing Practice program in 2006 prepared graduate students focused on providing high-quality health care, influencing policy, and creating positive

changes in health care systems. The following year, thanks in large part to the efforts of Mara Baun, PhD, FAAN, the school’s Doctor of Science in Nursing degree that was established in 1996 became a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Nursing.

These high-water marks of education and discovery in the ‘00s were achieved despite a series of literal and unforgettable high-water events along the Gulf Coast region. When Tropical Storm Allison dropped three feet of rain on Houston in June 2001, the nursing school shut down for two days but escaped flooding that devastated other parts of the TMC.

Four years later, UHealth Houston set up a medical clinic in the George R. Brown Convention Center to care for the thousands of evacuees arriving in Houston from New Orleans and other Gulf Coast communities that were flooded and wind-battered by Hurricane Katrina. Volunteer nurses arrived from all across the nation to help, and Cizik School of Nursing Professor Elda Ramirez, PhD, ENP-BC, FAAN, and Susan Parnell, PhD, MPH, MSN, RN, supervised what may have looked like carefully controlled chaos.

“This was an unbelievable collaborative effort,” said Ramirez, track coordinator for emergency/trauma care. Parnell retired in 2020 as director of UT Health Services after working in the nurse-managed clinic for 25 years.

Almost as quickly as it had been set up, the clinic was broken down three weeks later. With Hurricane Rita approaching, the Katrina evacuees were relocated to other cities, and millions of people clogged highways leading out of Houston. Rita’s track ultimately spared the city but inflicted damage along the Texas/Louisiana border. In response, the school accepted five displaced nursing students from that region.

Cizik School of Nursing had much to celebrate by the end of the decade. In 2009, the first DNP cohort graduated, Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN, was honored for 25 years of service, and U.S. News & World Report rankings put the school in the top 5% of nursing schools in the nation. To help meet the ever-increasing need for nurses, the school was set to begin two new programs in the fall of 2010 – the Pacesetter BSN program and the Patricia L. Starck Accelerated PhD Scholars Program, for which \$2 million in philanthropic support had been raised.



2004

- The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Education and Research is founded.
- The new \$57 million School of Nursing and Student Community Center, 6901 Bertner Avenue, celebrates its grand opening.



2005

- The school opens the first biological sciences “wet” laboratory in a Texas nursing school.
- Hurricanes Katrina and Rita cause tremendous devastation along the Gulf Coast. UHealth Houston operates a comprehensive 24-hour emergency health clinic in the George R. Brown Convention Center.
- Nurse Leadership and Administration Program is established.



2007

- The Pre-Clinical Critical Care Laboratory is constructed.
- The title of the Doctor of Science in Nursing degree changes to the Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing. Previous doctoral graduates could request reissue of their diplomas.
- A time capsule is installed in the staircase leading from the café to the bookstore as part of the school’s 35th anniversary celebration.



2009

- \$2 million in gift funding is secured for a new Accelerated PhD Program.
- In May, the school graduates the state’s first nine students ever to earn the DNP degree.
- The building is awarded LEED® Gold certification by the U.S. Green Building Council.

DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE GRADUATES IMPROVE HEALTH CARE

The more than 400 alumni of the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at Cizik School of Nursing serve as chief nursing officers, informatics experts, nurse practitioners, deans of other nursing schools, and in a host of other leadership positions from the bedside to the boardroom.



The program's popularity continues to grow, which is good news for health care systems across Texas and the nation.

Professor Beth Ulrich, EdD, RN, FAAN, asked one of most recent classes to think about the number of patients whose care would be improved by their individual quality improvement projects. The number quickly added up to thousands," said Assistant Professor Kathleen Siders, DNP, FNP-C, who co-directs the DNP program with Associate Professor Lisa Boss, PhD, RN.

DNP pioneers

"I'm not a Texan by birth, but I know what is important to Texans. They like to be the first, and they like to be the biggest," said Professor Emerita Joanne Hickey, PhD, ACNP, FAAN, the architect and founding director of Cizik School of Nursing's DNP program.

Then-dean Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN, had a vision for helping nurses reach the pinnacle of their practice potential. She had been part of a national working group promoting DNP degrees as an alternative to research-focused PhDs.

"We envisioned the DNP as being a scholarly focus on the highest level of clinical practice," Starck said.

And, yes, Starck wanted UTHealth Houston's program to be the first in Texas. Hickey described Starck's skills at negotiation and persuasion as "incredible," and the dean emerita herself acknowledged she may have wielded them more than usual in building support for the DNP program among the nursing school faculty and in the state capital.



Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth Houston DNP Program Directors Dr. Kathleen Siders and Dr. Lisa Boss (standing) with Senior Administrative Coordinator Candiance Duplessis



BETH ULRICH, EdD, RN, FAAN



PROFESSOR EMERITA JOANNE HICKEY, PhD, ACNP, FAAN

"We believed that nursing as a discipline has some characteristics and competencies that are unique within the health care field," Hickey said. "Patients often tell things to nurses that they don't tell to other providers."

She and Starck worked together with a team of expert faculty and staff to design a program that would capitalize on and enhance the skills and abilities inherent to nursing and create greater opportunities for nurses to work collaboratively as indispensable members of health care teams and improve patient outcomes. They also pressed the then-novel idea of delivering most courses via distance learning.

"Anything online back then was definitely a new thing," Boss said. "Dr. Starck pioneered it in every way. Other DNP programs that came later really looked to her."

The moment of truth came in April 2006, when Starck and Hickey presented their plan to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Success was far from certain, but the board approved most aspects of the proposal, enabling UTHealth Houston to create the first DNP program in the state.

"I remember sitting next to Dean Starck," Hickey recalled. "She said, 'Now Joanne, when are we going to start this? It could be next year, in January.' I said, 'We are doing it this fall! We're going to do it before anyone changes their minds.'"

"WE BELIEVED THAT NURSING AS A DISCIPLINE HAS SOME CHARACTERISTICS AND COMPETENCIES THAT ARE UNIQUE WITHIN THE HEALTH CARE FIELD. PATIENTS OFTEN TELL THINGS TO NURSES THAT THEY DON'T TELL TO OTHER PROVIDERS."

— Professor Emerita Joanne Hickey, PhD, ACNP, FAAN

Getting started

Over the next few months, creating the DNP program became Hickey's full-time job. Her unusual background as a faculty member with a PhD who also maintained a clinical practice made her well qualified for the role.

One of the first people who joined her team was Senior Administrative Coordinator Candiance Duplessis, now a 33-year veteran of UTHealth Houston. The self-described "mother hen" of the DNP program prides herself on maintaining professional and personal relationships with students and graduates.

"We set the bar high," Duplessis said. "Our students graduate not just with a DNP in hand, but with an education. They know where home is – here," she added, ticking off a list of at least a dozen DNP graduates who are now members of the Cizik School of Nursing faculty, including Siders.

Duplessis is a champion and advocate for the students. If RNs receive pins when they become nurses, so should nurses who earn terminal degrees, she reasoned. So, she designed DNP pins for graduates. "They are given a pin by their advisor, and they wear it proudly," she said.

At first, only nurse practitioners (NPs) were admitted into the three-year, part-time program that was designed for working professionals and focused on nursing leadership. The first class of nine DNPs graduated in 2009. Within a few years, clinical nurse specialists became eligible, and several concentrations were added over time.

"WE SET THE BAR HIGH, OUR STUDENTS GRADUATE NOT JUST WITH A DNP IN HAND, BUT WITH AN EDUCATION. THEY KNOW WHERE HOME IS – HERE."

— Senior Administrative Coordinator Candiance Duplessis

DNPs today and tomorrow

Demand for Cizik School of Nursing's DNP program has soared, and students reflect the diversity of Houston and of Texas. Increased enrollment required significant updates to the program and an infusion of state-of-the-art resources – a huge project that faculty has undertaken with dedication and commitment.

Contributing to the growth are changes to national standards and requirements for NPs. Since more clinical hours are needed to become NPs, many students choose the BSN to DNP programs now available as an alternative to pursuing master's degrees.

"NPs 20 years ago were taking care of more common health issues – cold, flu, coughs, blood pressure, etc.," Siders said. "Today, we are taking care of complex diseases and complex patients with numerous comorbidities. Our level of responsibility has risen, and with that, our education needed to as well."

Cizik School of Nursing's BSN to DNP Nurse Anesthesia program was established in 2014. It is accredited separately from the NP programs, which now offer BSN to DNP tracks for family, adult/gerontology primary and acute care, and psychiatric/mental health NPs.

The first class of BSN to DNP nurse practitioner students graduated in 2022, and beginning in 2023, students will be admitted twice a year with the addition of spring enrollment.

Cizik School of Nursing's reputation for excellence plays no small part in its popularity among students from the Panhandle to the Rio Grande Valley. For example, the number of students enrolling from the Dallas area has grown substantially as graduates there spread the word among their colleagues, Boss said.

The fact that most work is done online makes advancing their education from any corner of the state possible. However, the face-to-face element remains a critical



Cizik School of Nursing's largest-ever class of 41 DNPs graduated in 2022. Seated in front are DNP faculty and staff members.



component of Cizik School of Nursing's DNP program. Normally, students would travel to Houston for a couple of days each semester to meet with faculty and collaborate with their cohort. Because of COVID-19, those interactions shifted to video conferencing, which continues to be an option for students in far-flung locations as we emerge from the pandemic, Boss said.

"WE ALWAYS FOCUS ON QUALITY, WE ARE VERY CONCERNED WITH HIGH QUALITY AND HIGH STANDARDS, AND THAT SHOWS UP IN THE ALUMNI WHO HAVE COME THROUGH THE PROGRAM AND GRADUATED. THEY CONTINUE TO LEAD IN PHENOMENAL WAYS."

— Professor Emerita Joanne Hickey, PhD, ACNP, FAAN

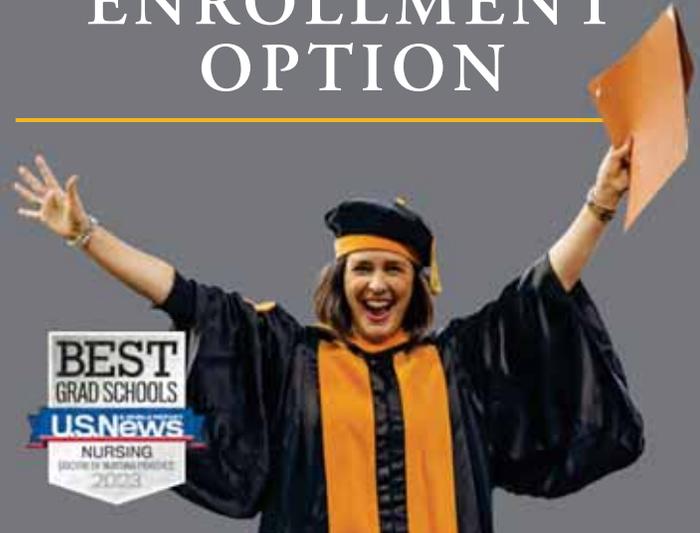
After all, underserved rural communities arguably need DNP's most, Siders noted. "We are trying to recruit from rural areas and encourage our graduates to go back there and serve their communities," she said.

Ultimately, an unwavering commitment to excellence keeps Cizik School of Nursing's DNP program in the top 5% nationally as ranked by U.S. News & World Report.

"I just see it continuing to grow in terms of student admissions, faculty involvement, and continuous quality improvement," Boss said. "Our alumni are in a really good position when they graduate because of our reputation for excellence."

"We always focus on quality," Hickey said. "We are very concerned with high quality and high standards, and that shows up in the alumni who have come through the program and graduated. They continue to lead in phenomenal ways."

NEW FOR 2023 SPRING ENROLLMENT OPTION



Cizik School of Nursing is expanding access to our highly rated BSN to DNP Nurse Practitioner program by adding a second annual enrollment opportunity. Beginning in 2023, a new cohort will be admitted in both the spring and fall semesters.



Get the details:
go.uth.edu/BSN-DNP-NP



A NEW HOME FOR NURSING EDUCATION AND DISCOVERY

If the Cizik School of Nursing building looks newer than its years, that's because it was designed with the future – of nursing and the planet – in mind.

From an environmental perspective, the building stands as the crowning achievement of the late Brian Yeoman, who retired as UTHealth Houston's associate vice president for facilities, planning, and development in 2003. Yeoman was a pioneering champion of sustainability and procurement during his 27 years with the university.

BNIM Architects of Kansas City, which specializes in sustainability, was engaged to lead the project and worked alongside San Antonio-based Lake | Flato Architects as well as consultants representing 17 disciplines and specialties.

Planning and design took several years with many, many stakeholder group meetings. "The process was very laborious and methodical. Everybody had input," said Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN, who entrusted day-to-day management of the process to Associate Dean for Management Nancy McNeil, PhD. McNeil now serves as senior associate dean for administrative affairs at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston.

Innovation requires investment, and the late Robert Cizik, a longtime UTHealth Houston supporter, chaired a successful philanthropic campaign to raise \$10 million toward the building's ultimate price tag of \$57 million.

Then called the School of Nursing and Student Community Center, the building officially opened in October 2004. The 194,000-square-foot, eight-story facility includes approximately 20,000 square feet of space in 23 state-of-the-art classrooms, a 200-seat auditorium, a café, the PARTNERS student lounge, student government offices, research laboratories, and faculty/administration offices.



"WE WERE THE GOLD STANDARD. SO MANY PEOPLE CAME TO LOOK AT THE NEW BUILDING AND REPLICATE WHAT WE WERE DOING."

— Gwen Sherwood, PhD, RN

Its design speaks to the important relationship between the practice of nursing and the built environment in promoting health-centered lives. The design won several prestigious state and national awards, and in 2009, it became the first structure in The University of Texas System to earn LEED® Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.



Patricia Stark and Robert Cizik sign a beam during construction of what would become the home of Cizik School of Nursing.

A commitment to conservation shows from the use of recycled building materials to resource-saving design elements. More than three-quarters of the materials used in construction were recycled from old buildings or industrial scraps within a 200-mile radius of Houston. Fly ash concrete, made with a byproduct from coal-fired power plants, supports the structure, and shredded blue jeans make up the insulation.

The building is designed to accept desirable daylight while rejecting unwanted heat. A specialized air conditioning system lowers energy costs by cooling from the floor up, rather than from the ceiling down. Rainwater is funneled into large cisterns to flush toilets and water the landscape, reducing the school's water costs by more than 90%.



“I THINK WE OVERPREDICTED AT THAT TIME ABOUT ONLINE EDUCATION, BUT NOW I’M SURE IT IS JUST WHAT’S NEEDED.”

— Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN

The building was ahead of its time technologically as well as architecturally. Audio/visual equipment in classrooms enabled real-time remote interactions, and students could connect to the internet from any classroom or study area.

Virtual learning eventually caught up with the building's technology, enabling graduate students to complete most of their coursework remotely while taking advantage of opportunities to meet and interact with their faculty and peers each semester. The well-equipped learning environment also facilitated the abrupt transition to online instruction necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic's onset in March 2020.

A simulation lab with high-tech manikins served as a centerpiece when the building opened. After an expansion 15 years later, it now occupies the entire fourth floor. Its 27,000 square feet of space contains six high-acuity rooms simulating the hospital environment, four debriefing rooms, 14 patient exam rooms, and a home health apartment. From a centralized audio/visual control room, faculty members or preceptors can monitor students, lead scenarios, and operate high-tech robotic “patients.”



In 2007, another simulation lab was constructed in an annex across a breezeway from the main building, initially for Professor Sandra K. Hanneman's research of circadian rhythms in critically ill patients on mechanical ventilation. She began the project during the late 1990s in a laboratory at the Texas Heart Institute that Tropical Storm Allison destroyed in 2001, along with Hanneman's research.

"About two years later, I started looking for funding to build a lab at the nursing school," said Hanneman, PhD, RN, FAAN. She continued her NIH-funded project in the new lab with financial support from UT System, PARTNERS, and private foundations. A second-round research grant did not come through due to the expense and difficulty of replicating the study. Now, the lab has been remodeled into the nurse anesthesia simulation lab.



The nursing school's leadership team poses on the roof of the new building in 2006. (L-R) Patricia L. Starck, dean; Sandra K. Hanneman, associate dean for research; Nancy O. McNeil, associate dean for management; and Gwen D. Sherwood, associate dean for community affairs.

Cizik School of Nursing's scientists do most of their work in the Research Department, which houses the bioscience laboratory, a behavioral science laboratory with an observation mirror, the Center for Nursing Research (CNR), and the new Smart Apartment. In June 2021, the CNR biosciences lab attained a Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) Certificate of Waiver from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, greatly expanding the number and types of tests authorized by CLIA that the lab can provide for research and clinical purposes. Its -80 Celsius and liquid nitrogen freezers support Cizik School of Nursing's management of UT System Health Biobank Consortium.

The new space – built specifically for nursing education – was a far cry from the office building that served as the school's previous home for 30 years. In 2012, The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center had the old structure imploded to make way for new construction.

Faculty who made the move from 1100 Holcombe Blvd. to 6901 Bertner Ave. recall working out a few bugs. All enjoyed the ample natural light and the feeling of being closer to nature that the new home provided, as well as the technology needed to advance nursing education and discovery.

"We were the gold standard," said retired professor Gwen Sherwood, PhD, RN, former associate dean for community affairs. "So many people came to look at the new building and replicate what we were doing."

"WE WERE TRYING TO PREDICT WHAT EDUCATION WOULD LOOK LIKE IN THE COMING YEARS."

— Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN



The Simulation and Clinical Performance Laboratory was expanded by 9,000 square feet in 2019.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR AWESOME ALUMNI

Cizik School of Nursing has conferred 13,487 degrees and certificates during its 50-year history – some of them to alumni who keep coming back for more! We are grateful to each of you who chose our school as part of your academic journey, support our mission through giving, and help prepare the next generation of nurses as preceptors and mentors.

As we celebrate five decades of excellence in education, practice, and discovery, our alumni engagement team is boosting outreach efforts with several fun and meaningful ways to get involved.



50th Anniversary Book

What have you been up to since graduation? Let us know by creating a page in our online alumni yearbook so you can connect with graduates from 1972 to 2022.



UTHealth Houston Alumni Community Mentoring Program

Through the UTHealth Houston Alumni Community, you can personalize your profile to highlight your career interests and skills, as well as the ways in which you are willing to help others through mentorship opportunities and networking. Students can review mentor profiles to find someone who fits their career goals and send a direct message to start the conversation.



Night with a Nurse

Volunteer to host dinner for a small group of students to discuss careers in nursing and develop mentoring relationships in a casual setting.



Alumni Advisory Council

Cizik School of Nursing is looking for dedicated individuals to serve on the Alumni Advisory Council, which helps determine alumni programming needs, events, and initiatives. The council meets quarterly or as needed. Nominate outstanding alumni, including yourself!



Alumni Panels

At these wildly popular events, undergraduate students get real-world advice, learn about graduate programs at Cizik School of Nursing, and meet potential employers. The Student Government Organization and the UTHealth Houston University Alumni Engagement team collaborated on two panels in the 2021-2022 school year.

For questions about alumni engagement opportunities, call **713-500-4900** or email **alumni@uth.tmc.edu**.

2010s

A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERSHIP

Cizik School of Nursing moved into the “twenty-teens” propelled by momentum in educational programs and research funding. As Patricia L. Starck wound down her 30 years as dean, she left her successors well prepared for the future. The school celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2012 with other long-time faculty members approaching retirement as well.

Helping address the nursing shortage by growing the faculty became Starck’s top priority in her last decade as dean. She led the effort to raise \$2 million in philanthropic gifts that provided full-ride scholarships and stipends to the 10 PhD students admitted for fall 2010 to the Patricia L. Starck Accelerated PhD Scholars Program. The newly minted Doctors of Philosophy in Nursing were among 22 full-time faculty members added in 2013. The second cohort began in fall

2013. Several of the graduates of the accelerated PhD program continue to serve as Cizik School of Nursing faculty members today.

The growing need for nurses at the bedside also prompted changes on the undergraduate level. The Pacesetter Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program accepted its first 50 students in fall 2010. This fast-paced program enables full-time students to prepare for RN licensure exams in 19 months. The program now admits approximately 140 students per semester who have completed prerequisites at other institutions or who hold bachelor’s degrees in other fields.

The first two years of the decade also saw the creation of an early decision program enabling associate’s degree nursing students at Houston Community College and Lone Star

College to seamlessly transition into Cizik School of Nursing’s RN to BSN program.

In 2016, thanks to the efforts of Associate Professor Bridget R. Pullis, PhD, RN, an additional program was founded to help U.S. Armed Forces veterans transition into the BSN program by providing support services and up to three hours of academic credit for military training and experience.

The school’s Ambassadors Program also launched that year, offering professional development opportunities to an initial group of five outstanding Pacesetter BSN students. Another enhancement opportunity for undergraduates, the Joan and Stanford Alexander Fellowship in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, selected its first cohort of four students in spring 2018 to develop skills and



2010

- The school partners with Houston Community College’s John B. Coleman, MD College for Health Sciences on early decision BSN admissions for associate degree nursing students.
- The Patricia L. Starck Accelerated PhD Scholars Program admits 10 students for the fall semester.
- The new Pacesetter BSN option is also offered for fall.



2011

- Dean Starck becomes UTHealth Houston’s Senior Vice President for Community Affairs.
- A \$500,000 gift endows the Huffington Foundation Chair in Nursing Education Leadership to be held by the dean.
- The school agrees to early decision BSN admissions through the Lone Star College System.



2012

- MD Anderson’s Houston Main Building, the nursing school’s home for 30 years, is imploded on Jan. 8 prior to final demolition.



2013

- The Council on Accreditation (COA) of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs approves the new BSN to DNP degree in Nurse Anesthesia.
- A second group of accelerated PhD students is admitted for fall, after a successful \$1.3 million fundraising initiative. All 10 members of the 2010 cohort are hired as assistant professors.



2014

- In February, Dean Starck announces plans to step down as dean at the end of the year.

sensitivities for working with special needs populations. The project was developed and is directed by Assistant Professor Allison P. Edwards, DrPH, MS, RN.

The trend toward transitioning advanced practice nursing education from the master's to doctorate level also took hold in the teens. The Nurse Anesthesia program – consistently ranked among the top 10 in the nation by U.S. News & World Report – was the first at Cizik School of Nursing to offer a BSN to DNP option. The nurse practitioner programs followed suit in 2019, with students now able to pursue four different specialty tracks.

The state's only Emergency Nurse Practitioner (ENP) program also expanded to serve more students across the state. Established in 1994 by Professor Elda Ramirez, PhD, RN, FAAN, and the late Frank Cole, PhD, the post-master's certificate program received the first in a continuing series of educational grants from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in 2010 to expand access to ENP education throughout the state using online didactic content. This support continues today.

Ramirez, her teaching colleague Assistant Professor Deborah McCrea, EdD, MSN, FNP-BC, EMT-P, and countless other faculty, staff, and students would once again step up as volunteer care providers, flood rescuers, and muck shovelers when Hurricane Harvey broke rainfall records over several days in August 2017.

Research programs continued to grow in the teens as well. Notable nurse scientists making important discoveries during the decade included Terri Armstrong, PhD, FAANP, who secured a \$2.4 million R01 grant from the National Institute of Nursing Research to study personalized cancer treatment by looking at toxicity associated with anticancer therapies. She went on to become deputy chief of the Neuro-Oncology Branch of the National Cancer Institute's Center for Cancer Research.

The next generation of leaders at Cizik School of Nursing stepped forward amid great progress, facing the challenges of nursing's future with enthusiasm. During Lorraine Frazier's time as dean from 2015 to 2018, Cathy Rozmus, PhD, RN, FAAN,

was promoted to vice dean for academic affairs, and noted health informatics expert Constance Johnson, PhD, RN, FAAN, came from Duke University School of Nursing to serve as associate dean for research.

Cizik School of Nursing's influence extends far beyond Houston and Texas, with alumni educating future nurses at universities across the nation. The school's fourth dean would join those ranks, and colleagues bid farewell with a mixture of pride and sadness when Frazier accepted the position of dean at Columbia University School of Nursing.

Fortunately, another rising star followed in Frazier's footsteps. Diane Santa Maria, DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN, may not have expected the call when UTHHealth Houston President Giuseppe Colasurdo, MD, asked her to serve as dean *ad interim* in 2018, but she welcomed the challenge.



2015

- Lorraine Frazier, PhD, RN, FAAN, becomes dean on February 1.
- The Nursing Informatics track in the post-master's DNP program admits its first students in fall 2015.



2016

- In the spring semester, the Veterans' BSN program begins facilitating the transition of U.S. Armed Forces veterans into professional nursing.
- U.S. News & World Report cites the DNP program as the highest-ranked in Texas and No. 24 nationwide. The Nurse Anesthesia program is ranked No. 8 nationally.
- The Ambassador Program is established.



2017

- On Nov. 15, in recognition of their landmark gift of \$25 million, the school is renamed "Jane and Robert Cizik School of Nursing at UTHHealth Houston."



2018

- The school's original documentary, "Caring Corrupted: the Killing Nurses of the Third Reich," wins a Platinum award in the prestigious Worldfest film competition.
- Frazier concludes her 3 1/2 year deanship. Diane Santa Maria, DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN, is appointed dean *ad interim*, effective Aug. 20.
- A tribute wall honoring the Ciziks' gift is unveiled on Oct. 24.



2019

- The BSN to DNP Nurse Practitioner degree program is approved by the THECB for fall 2019.
- Robert Cizik dies June 4 at age 88.



A NEW NAME IN NURSING EXCELLENCE

CIZIK NURSING | 50 YEARS

The Cizik family name stands for philanthropy, service, and a passion to improve the lives of people in Houston and throughout the world.

In November 2017, the nursing school at UTHealth Houston benefited from one of the family’s many gifts – the largest in the school’s history. Our name changed to the Jane and Robert Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth in recognition of a \$25 million endowment.

“The Cizik family’s gift is truly transformational,” said Dean Diane Santa Maria, DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN. “Patients and health care systems will benefit from their generosity for decades to come.”

The Ciziks’ support of the university spans decades. Robert Cizik served as a UTHealth Houston Development Board member from 1995 to 2010, and he chaired a \$10 million fundraising campaign for the \$57 million nursing school that now bears the family name. Jane is a lifetime member of PARTNERS (see page 30).

Giving back to the institutions and communities that have been part of their lives is an enduring family value for the Ciziks. The couple supported all of the educational institutions they attended – Robert’s alma maters University of Connecticut and Harvard University, and



Dean Lorraine Frazier (left) and UTHealth Houston President Giuseppe N. Colasurdo, MD (right) share a laugh with the Ciziks at the naming ceremony.

University of Houston, from which Jane earned an Honors College degree. Other beneficiaries of the Ciziks’ generosity include the Hermann Eye Fund, which named the facility where McGovern Medical School ophthalmologists practice the Robert Cizik Eye Clinic. The Ciziks’ philanthropy also named the Jane Cizik Garden Place at the Women’s Home in Houston and the Jane Cizik Center at Citizens for Animal Protection.

Robert Cizik retired in 1996 as chairman and CEO of Cooper Industries, a manufacturer of engines, turbines, and compressors for the oil and natural gas industry. He sought to instill the spirit of giving in employees by initiating the company's foundation and matching gifts program, which distributed \$50 million in charitable donations from 1980 to 1995.

Robert died June 4, 2019, at the age of 88. Jane remains a passionate supporter of the school and active PARTNERS member who wastes no opportunity to spread the word about Cizik School of Nursing's vital role in meeting the need for well-prepared nurses and health care leaders.

The family's multipronged plan for supporting Cizik School of Nursing includes funding scholarships, faculty chairs, innovative research, and a distinguished lecture series. So far, two PhD students have benefited from Cizik scholarships.

Santa Maria and Chao Hsing Yeh, PhD, RN, FANN, hold The Jane and Robert Cizik Distinguished Chairs. These endowments help support the dean's research with youth experiencing homelessness and Yeh's research into auricular medicine for nonpharmacological pain management. The school is seeking candidates for three additional distinguished chairs endowed by the Ciziks' gift, including one designated for the Cizik Nursing Research Institute executive director.

In March 2022, Patricia A. Grady, PhD, FAAN, delivered the inaugural Jane and Robert Cizik Research Lecture. Grady, a neuroscientist and director emeritus of the National Institute of Nursing Research, spent the day meeting and consulting with early career faculty and doctoral students about their research pursuits.

"Seeds planted grow. Persistence pays off," she said during the lecture. Her words represent not only sage advice for nurse scientists beginning careers of discovery, but the Cizik family's enduring legacy.



UTHealth Houston Chief Academic Officer Michael Blackburn, PhD (retired); Jane Cizik; keynote speaker Patricia Grady, PhD, FAAN; and Jane's daughter Paula Cizik attend the inaugural Jane and Robert Cizik Lecture in March 2022.



“THE CIZIK FAMILY’S GIFT IS TRULY TRANSFORMATIONAL. PATIENTS AND HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS WILL BENEFIT FROM THEIR GENEROSITY FOR DECADES TO COME.”

— Dean Diane Santa Maria, DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN



UTHealth Houston President Giuseppe Colasurdo, MD, (right) honors Robert and Jane Cizik at the nursing school's naming ceremony in November 2017.

LORRAINE FRAZIER

PhD, RN, FAAN

DEAN, 2015–2018



Lorraine Frazier,
former dean of Cizik School of Nursing

CIZIK NURSING | 50 YEARS

Taking her seat in the dean's chair marked a homecoming for Lorraine Frazier.

Frazier's transplanted roots in the Bayou City run deep. She arrived in Houston as a child when her parents left behind the unrest in their native Belfast, Ireland. She first experienced hot weather stepping off a plane in August and first set foot in a Texas Medical Center hospital at age 13, when her father was diagnosed with kidney disease.

Being accepted into the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program in 1995 at UTHealth Houston was a dream come true for Frazier, who had earned her associate's degree at Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State University) in San Marcos and her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at the University of Oklahoma. Frazier ultimately received an MSN and PhD from Cizik School of Nursing, as well as a master's degree in clinical research from McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston.

The talented and enthusiastic scholar and leader made her mark at the school early on. Center on Aging Director Linda Kaeser, PhD, RN, pointed out Frazier in class one day to retired faculty member Ellen MacDonald, MSN, RN. "Ellen, keep an eye on that one," MacDonald recalled Kaeser saying. "She's going to go places."

**"ELLEN, KEEP AN EYE ON THAT ONE,
SHE'S GOING TO GO PLACES."**

— Former Center on Aging Director Linda Kaeser, PhD, RN

As a research assistant, Frazier supported development of the school's first doctoral program, through which she later earned her terminal degree. Her postdoctoral work focused on genetics and the relationship between cardiovascular disease and depression, for which she secured a multimillion dollar grant from the National Institute of Nursing Research.

"We learned what genetics could do and couldn't do," Frazier said. "In studying depression, we found out over the years that it's a lot about the environment and a little about genes."

Frazier became an expert in biobanking, first as director of TexGen Research, a partnership among institutions within the Texas Medical Center, and later director of the UTHealth Center for Clinical Sciences BioBank. In 2009, she also became the school's first faculty member selected to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Executive Nurse Fellows program, in addition to completing other prestigious fellowships and receiving numerous awards for her work.

By 2011, Frazier was a tenured professor holding the Nancy B. Willerson Distinguished Professorship, and she had advanced to the position of assistant dean and chair of the Department of Nursing Systems. But the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences College of Nursing needed a leader, and Frazier moved north to assume the deanship. She eagerly returned to Houston four years later to succeed her mentor, Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck.

"She was an individual who had the ability to grow people," Frazier said of Starck. "I felt my career took off with her blessing."

As dean, Frazier implemented a five-year plan she had worked on as part of the RWJF fellowship, with the overarching goal of growing programs, thereby increasing enrollment and revenue. She counts the Cizik family endowment as the most impactful event of her deanship.

Opportunity knocked again in 2018 when the Columbia University School of Nursing recruited Frazier as dean.

"There are no accidents in life, I believe," Frazier said. "UTHealth Houston was a very important part of my journey, and of many people's journeys. You always had the opportunity to do what you wanted to do, and that's what every school should be like. I owe Cizik School of Nursing a lot for that, and I am grateful."



Dean Frazier with (top to bottom): UTHealth School of Public Health Dean Eric Boerwinkle; UTHealth School of Public Health Research Associate Facheng Luo; supporters at the 2017 PARTNERS Spring Luncheon; UTHealth Houston President Giuseppe Colasurdo, MD, and former McGovern Medical School Dean Barbara J. Stoll, MD

2020s FORWARD INTO THE FUTURE



2020

- Cizik School of Nursing cuts the ribbon on its expanded Simulation and Clinical Performance Laboratory and its new Smart Apartment.
- UTHealth Houston campus shuts down most in-person activities in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Socially distanced simulations and testing return to the nursing school during the summer term. Graduates celebrate with virtual commencement and pinning ceremonies.
- Diane M. Santa Maria, DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN, becomes the fifth dean of Cizik School of Nursing, effective Sept. 1, 2020.



2021

- Cizik School of Nursing students, faculty, and staff volunteer countless hours at COVID-19 vaccination clinics run by UT Physicians.
- Graduates of Cizik School of Nursing, UTHealth Houston School of Dentistry, and UTHealth School of Public Health participate in the first joint commencement ceremony at Minute Maid Park.
- Dean Diane Santa Maria serves as co-director of the newly formed Texas Developmental Center for AIDS Research, its Mentoring Program, and its Substance Use Scientific Working Group.
- Professor Jacquelyn Campbell, PhD, MSN, RN, FAAN, delivers the inaugural presentation of the Carla Diaz-Lewis Domestic Violence Lecture Series on Oct. 13, 2021.



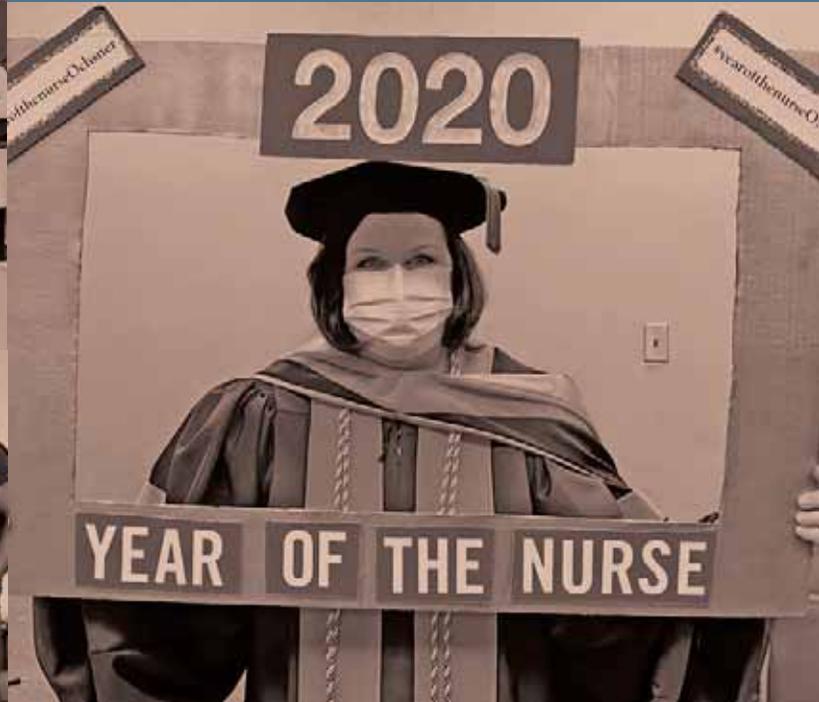
2022

- The BSN to PhD program is established to give nurses interested in research the opportunity to advance their careers more quickly.
- UT Health Services moves into its spacious new clinic on the ground floor of the UTHealth Houston Professional Building.
- Patricia A. Grady, PhD, FAAN, director emeritus of the National Institute of Nursing Research, delivers the inaugural Jane and Robert Cizik Lecture on March 22, 2022.
- Cizik School of Nursing collaborates on a \$2.3 million Leadership Education in Adolescent Health (LEAH) fellows HRSA-funded grant led by the Baylor College of Medicine-Texas Medical Center. Student Grecia Zamora is named the program's first nursing fellow.



“WE WERE ON AN
UPWARD TRAJECTORY
EVERY YEAR.”

— Dean Emerita Patricia L. Starck, PhD, RN, FAAN



DIANE SANTA MARIA

DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN

DEAN, *AD INTERIM*, 2018 – 2020

DEAN, 2020 – PRESENT



Diane Santa Maria,
dean of the Cizik School of Nursing

CIZIK NURSING | 50 YEARS

Little did Diane Santa Maria know when she accepted the appointment of dean *ad interim* in 2018 that she would wind up leading Cizik School of Nursing through the most severe global health crisis in a century. Yet the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic helped convince her – and the selection committee who had been conducting a dean search for two years – that she was the right leader for the job.

Santa Maria became the fifth dean in Cizik School of Nursing's history effective Sept. 1, 2020.

The up-and-coming nurse scientist came to the school in 2009 as a community health clinical faculty member. She simultaneously worked as a teaching assistant at UTHealth School of Public Health while studying for a Doctor of Public Health in health promotion and behavioral science with minors in epidemiology and adolescent health.

These areas of study left Santa Maria well prepared to pursue research work aimed at sexual health and HIV prevention among youth experiencing homelessness. In 2019, she received an R01 grant exceeding \$3 million from the National Institute of Nursing Research to test the efficacy of a nurse case management HIV prevention

“AS NURSES, WE HAVE A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PATIENTS LIVING WITH HIV OR AT RISK FOR CONTRACTING IT, ESPECIALLY HERE IN TEXAS, WHERE WE HAVE SEEN SLOWER ADOPTION OF MEASURES THAT HAVE PROVEN TO BE EFFECTIVE IN OTHER PARTS OF THE U.S.”

— Dean Diane Santa Maria, DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN

and care intervention called CAYA (Come As You Are) among unstably housed and homeless youth. Subsequent grant supplements focus on the impact of the pandemic and COVID-19 vaccine uptake as well as HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) acceptability and adherence.

Santa Maria's expertise in HIV prevention is helping Houston – and Cizik School of Nursing – become a hub for studying HIV/AIDS. In May 2021, the Texas Developmental Center for AIDS Research (TX D-CFAR) was established as a collaboration among site lead Baylor College of Medicine, Cizik School of Nursing, McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston, and the Texas Biomedical Research Institution in San Antonio. Santa Maria serves as co-director of the TX D-CFAR Developmental Core, Mentoring Program, and Substance Use Scientific Working Group.

The dean also has helped recruit other nurse leaders in HIV prevention to the nursing school, such as assistant professors Emily Barr, PhD, RN, in the Department of Research and Sheryl Malone-Thomas, DNP, FNP-BC, in the Department of Undergraduate Studies.

"As nurses, we have a great opportunity to make a positive impact on patients living with HIV or at risk for contracting it, especially here in Texas, where we have seen slower adoption of measures that have proven to be effective in other parts of the U.S.," Santa Maria said.

In 2021, the school adopted a new mission statement under Santa Maria's leadership:

Improve the health and well-being of our diverse community by preparing tomorrow's leaders to drive innovation and excellence in nursing education, practice, and discovery.

While making her own contributions to scientific discovery – and encouraging early stage researchers to develop programs of research – Santa Maria also has supported robust efforts to advance nursing education and practice in her few short and pandemic-challenged years at the helm.

For example, in March 2022, the school's nurse-led UT Health Services cut the ribbon on a new clinic location in the heart of the Texas Medical Center. On the academic front, Cizik School of Nursing introduced a new BSN to PhD option and offered a second annual admission opportunity for its BSN to DNP program with the addition of a spring cohort.

The dean's commitment to working toward equity embraces efforts to improve health care access for underserved populations and to create an environment of openness and opportunity for students and employees at all levels. One of her first acts as dean was establishing

the role of assistant dean for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and appointing longtime DEI champion Elda Ramirez, PhD, ENP-C, FAAN, to lead the school's efforts.

A servant leader who puts her training as a behavioral scientist and mindfulness-based stress reduction facilitator into practice, Santa Maria values listening to others above tooting her own horn. So, people are not likely to hear her brag about the most recent addition to her many professional honors: On July 25, 2022, the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society inducted her into the International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame.

"I am grateful and humbled to be counted among this group of esteemed scholars, but even more so to have the opportunity to lead an amazing team of faculty and staff," Santa Maria said. "I am inspired by their passion to meet challenges head-on, deliver exceptional educational opportunities to our students, and build a safer, more equitable, and more effective health care environment that all can access," Santa Maria said.



Pictured (top to bottom): Dean Santa Maria and Associate Dean for Research Constance Johnson at the Cizik memorial wall; Instructor Paige Owen and the dean attend the Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Research Congress in Edinburgh, Scotland; Sigma President Dr. Kenneth Dion congratulates the dean on her induction into the International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame.

NURSES OF TOMORROW



A delightful baby boom seems to be underway at Cizik School of Nursing. We would not presume to chart career paths for children so early in life, but don't they all look cute in their UTHealth Houston onesies?

CIZIK NURSING | 50 YEARS



Holly Bergh, daughter of PhD candidate Rebecca Bergh, MSN, RN



Avi Vélez, son of Assistant Professor Sydnee Lucas, DNP, FNP-BC



Oliver Rhett DeLaGarza, son of Assistant Professor Haley E. DeLaGarza, DNP, CRNA

"Family truly comes first at Cizik School of Nursing. UTHealth Houston's robust benefits package includes a number of programs designed specifically for growing families, and at the nursing school, we strive to provide a supportive environment for all of our new parents."

— Diane Santa Maria, dean of Cizik School of Nursing and mother of three



Jaxon Edward Kearney, son of Assistant Professor Kelly Kearney, DNP, PMHNP-BC



Eymen Ali Erten, son of Communications Assistant Merve Erten



Luke Paul Lyons, son of Assistant Professor Mandi Lyons, DNP, WHNP-BC



NEW BSN TO PHD PROGRAM

Getting an earlier start to careers in nursing science

Nurses interested in leading meaningful research can become nurse scientists earlier in their careers through Cizik School of Nursing's new BSN to PhD program.

"Nursing is a profession focused on the care of individuals, families, and communities, and most nurses who choose to pursue advanced degrees do so while working in a clinical or community setting," said PhD Program Director Geri L. Wood, PhD, RN, FAAN, the Bette P. Thomas Distinguished Professor in Innovative Health Care Delivery. "This places nurses in a perfect position to identify areas of research that can improve patient and family care. Our new BSN to PhD program will enable nurses to get an earlier start on contributing to the body of scientific evidence, and thus potentially have a greater impact on health care over the course of their careers."

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor when they enter the program – a mentor who will work with them and help them establish their research career. Faculty at Cizik School of Nursing are making significant contributions in many areas, including HIV prevention and care, aging in place, stroke prevention and treatment, oncology symptom management, food insecurity, emotion

regulation among youth experiencing homelessness, clinical care quality improvement, diabetes prevention and management, informatics, and much more. Before applying, prospective students should explore the research faculty section of the school's website to identify nurse scientists whose research interests match their own.

Students entering the PhD program at the BSN level will complete an additional 24 credit hours compared to students who have a master's degree, but they can ultimately earn a doctorate more quickly and less expensively, Wood explained. BSN to PhD students may choose either a part-time or full-time option to complete the 90 hours of coursework. Students are also encouraged to apply for the many scholarships available to support their education.

ANOTHER GRADUATION GRAND SLAM



For the second year in a row, Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth Houston graduates joined their counterparts from UTHealth Houston School of Dentistry and UTHealth School of Public Health to celebrate commencement at Minute Maid Park.

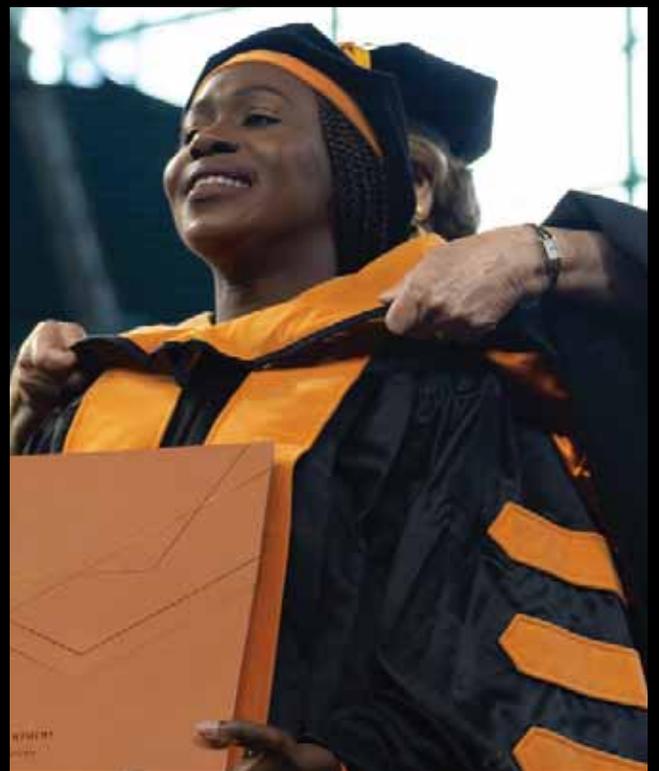
What besides a major league sports stadium could hold that many students and their loved ones? The more than 700 nursing students who accepted diplomas during the May 2022 event were roughly split between undergraduate and graduate programs.

Congratulations to all of our newest alumni! Your personal accomplishments will benefit our diverse community as you begin – or advance – in your health care career. Thank you for being a nurse, when nurses have never been needed more!



BSN student Timothy Joya delivered a spine-tingling rendition of the national anthem during the commencement ceremony.







ALUMNA CREATES NEW LEADERSHIP ACADEMY TO PREPARE CONFIDENT, EMPOWERED NURSES

Before she had even finished her education, Deborah “Debbie” Adams, BSN ‘84, was called on to use her nursing skills. From encountering an unconscious man lying next to his bike on the side of the road, to coming across people with diabetes or epilepsy who were in trouble, to being the first medically trained person at the scene of a major car accident with multiple victims, Adams stepped forward.

“I AM SO IN AWE OF EVERYTHING I HAVE GOTTEN TO DO, AND IT’S ALL BECAUSE OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING I HAD. I HAVE HAD A LOT OF BLESSINGS, AND IT’S IMPORTANT TO GIVE BACK AND RECOGNIZE WHAT I HAVE BEEN GIVEN.”

— Deborah “Debbie” Adams, BSN ‘84

“Every time I turned around, there was someone in need of help,” she said. “That’s just who I’ve always been though. If anybody was hurt, I’ve always run to them. I can never just pass on by.”

A childhood picture highlights her lifelong dedication to the profession. The black and white photo taken at her seventh birthday party shows her wearing the cape and cap of a visiting nurse, beaming proudly for the camera.

When Adams began researching the best nursing schools, Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth Houston came up on every list, so she set her sights on attending it.

After graduating, she served as an ER nurse for 14 years before going into business, but she still jumps in to take care of family and friends. “Once a nurse, always a nurse,” she said.

Adams also serves the community by supporting nursing education so that talented students can become nursing leaders. A long-time partner of Cizik School of Nursing, Adams helped establish the Ambassador Program in 2016, enabling nursing students to work with mentors and engage in leadership development activities. Students learn management, teamwork, and communication skills to become the health leaders needed to face our country's growing nursing shortage.

Now, as the *Many Faces. One Mission.* campaign propels education forward, she is making the single largest gift to the school from an alumna to establish the Deborah Garrett Adams Leadership Academy. In only the second nursing leadership academy in the country, students will learn everything from business networking to managing challenging interactions in the workplace.

Adams personally learned the skills the Academy teaches from her ER nurse manager, mentor, and friend,

“AS A NURSE, YOU HAVE TO BE A VOICE FOR YOUR PATIENTS. YOU HAVE TO DO WHAT IS BEST FOR THEM, THAT IS A SACRED ROLE.”

— Deborah “Debbie” Adams, BSN '84

Venus Manos, RN. Now, future generations will also develop these vital attributes, empowering them to provide the best possible care.

“As a nurse, you have to be a voice for your patients. You have to do what is best for them,” Adams said. “That is a sacred role.”

Growing the program is a top priority for Diane M. Santa Maria, DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN, dean of Cizik School of Nursing and holder of The Jane and Robert Cizik Distinguished Chair and the Huffington Foundation Endowed Chair in Nursing Education Leadership.

“Nurses are being called to take on even greater responsibilities leading health care teams, and we must prepare our students for that,” said Santa Maria. “With the Leadership Academy, we will graduate exceptional nurses with the skills to become the health leaders that our patients, communities, and health systems need.”

Leadership Academy initiatives will be developed and rolled out over the next few years, beginning with a simulation in the fall 2022 semester in which BSN Ambassadors will join MSN leadership track students to learn about conflict management and crucial conversations. Future plans include alumni and community engagement and exploration of topics such as staff engagement, civility and

professionalism, safety culture, health economics and policy, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. A fellowship program is also in the works.

“We don’t want to educate nurses on just the technical parts of the job,” Adams said. “We want them to have these extra skills under their belt to lead the changes needed in health care.”

“Nursing is a call to service, and Debbie has answered that call, time and time again – first at patient bedsides and now in support of tomorrow’s nurses. We are very grateful for her commitment to the school and the students,” Santa Maria said.

Adams speaks of the amazing opportunities nursing has opened for her. Her work has taken her around the world – to Central America, South America, and Europe – and has enabled her to live a full life.

“I am so in awe of everything I have gotten to do, and it’s all because of the education and training I had,” Adams said. “I have had a lot of blessings, and it’s important to give back and recognize what I have been given.”



Deborah “Debbie” Adams, BSN '84, credits Cizik School of Nursing with opening opportunities for her to have a full life. With her gift to establish the Deborah Garrett Adams Leadership Academy, she is paving the way for other nursing students.

SIMULATION ILLUSTRATES THE IMPACT OF STRUGGLING TO MAKE ENDS MEET

Dozens of Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth Houston students picked up name badges and put on new identities in April to learn what life is like for families living in poverty.



Students portraying a family living with poverty discuss how to make ends meet.

CIZIK NURSING | 50 YEARS

Community health nursing students took on the roles of single parents, seniors experiencing homelessness, a young adult raising her siblings, and other characters based on real people served by social service agencies as part of the Community Action Poverty Simulation (CAPS).

“The simulation is not a game. Millions of people face these challenges every day,” Assistant Professor Riza Mauricio, PhD, RN, told the students.

Among UTHealth Houston faculty and staff helping out with the learning experience was Associate Professor Rebecca Lunstroth, JD, MA, associate director of the McGovern Center for Humanities and Ethics. Lunstroth put together the university’s first poverty simulation for students at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston in 2018. She, Mauricio, and other faculty traveled to Jefferson City, Missouri, to learn about the CAPS program developed by the Missouri Community Action Network and to experience the simulation themselves.

“The goal is to make sure you keep a roof over your head and feed your family. I failed,” Mauricio said of the training session she attended in Missouri.

The objective is to help students understand that purchasing medicine or sticking to a healthy diet are just two of the many priorities patients must juggle when living in poverty. “It’s up to us as nurses to assess the patients and offer the help that they need,” Mauricio said.

Students portraying family groups sat in clusters around the room, each with a packet describing their situation and containing play money and transportation vouchers – less than they would likely need. The challenge was to make it through a month paying all basic expenses and keeping kids in school while dealing with unexpected problems. Workweeks passed in 15-minute segments separated by five-minute weekends.

Meanwhile, volunteers sat behind tables around the perimeter that represented businesses and social service resources – a bank, a homeless shelter, a mortgage company, a school in one corner of the room, and a jail in another. When the bell rang to start a new “week,” many students rushed to the pawnshop or the payday loan table.

By the end of the “month,” only one or two students had visited the clinic, signs indicating evictions or utility shut-offs hung on several chairs, and many families were homeless and hungry.

“I was fortunate to be in a group that could afford to pay the rent and utilities and put food on the table without significant life interruptions, although I almost lost my job because I was tardy,” said RN to BSN student Goreti Okello. “The whole experience was sobering, and it just reinforced the fact that we all need to give each other a little grace and kindness. It is so sad that many Americans are one paycheck, one injury, or one severe sickness away from living on the streets.”

For Pacesetter BSN student Meghan Orsak, the simulation highlighted the value of connecting with others. “I learned how much kindness and empathy can really make an impact,” she said. “I was running around the room trying to pay bills and buy groceries when I took a moment to talk to a fellow peer. We both discussed everything that was going on within the simulation and the stress we were feeling, and I realized how much better I felt talking to someone rather than trying to focus solely on myself.”

Many aspects of the simulation seemed familiar to Pacesetter student Krystal Rodriguez, who lived through family financial challenges herself.

“I had a very similar upbringing, and I have worked so hard to be where I am today,” Rodriguez said. “It was a privilege to be a part of the simulation, and I am grateful it was offered to the many students of UTHealth Houston. When we start to practice, we will have an idea of how to comfortably approach individuals, how to assess for socioeconomic disparities, and we will have a better holistic understanding of what our patient is facing on a day-to-day basis to truly treat the root of the problem.”

Lunstroth and Mauricio said plans are underway to make the next poverty simulation an interprofessional collaboration among various schools at UTHealth Houston.

“THE SIMULATION IS NOT A GAME. MILLIONS OF PEOPLE FACE THESE CHALLENGES EVERY DAY.”

— Assistant Professor Riza Mauricio, PhD, RN



RN-BSN student Goreti Okello pretends to make a mortgage payment during a poverty simulation.

CIZIK SCHOOL OF NURSING

Distinguished Alumni



HONORED IN 2002

1. Rae Helyn Andrews – BSN 1983
2. Diane Ballweg – BSN 1991
3. Debora Simmons Bennett – MSN 1998
4. Lucindra Campbell – MSN 1996
5. Helen “Betty” Cody – MSN 1979
6. Brenda Gregory-Dawes – MSN 1994
7. Willa Decker – BSN 1974
8. Susan Distefano – MSN 1986
9. Joan Duncan – MSN 1995
10. Michael Evans – MSN 1978
11. Lorraine Frazier – PhD 2000, MSN 1998
12. Kathryn Grace Froiland – MSN 1994
13. Alexia Green – MSN 1986
14. Anne Stewart Helton – BSN 1976
15. Tuong-Vi Ho – MSN 1992
16. Carole Kanusky – BSN 1993, MSN 1995
17. Steven Robert Leach – MSN 1990
18. Harriett Linenberger – MSN 1988
19. Huaping Liu – MSN 1992
20. Rosemary Luquire – MSN 1986
21. Jeanette McNeill – MSN 1978
22. Joan Morris – MSN 1980
23. Margaret Moss – PhD 2000
24. Joan Pitcher – MSN 1996
25. Elda G. Ramirez – BSN 1988
26. Paula Trahan Rieger – MSN 1986
27. Mario Segura – MSN 1991
28. Lorinda Rose Sloane Smith – MSN 1991
29. Beth Ulrich – MSN 1980
30. Susan Priest– MSN 1981, BSN 1978

HONORED IN 2007

31. Joyce A. Antes – MSN 1997, BSN 1994
32. Chandice Covington – BSN 1974
33. Thomas J. Flanagan – BSN 1994
34. Mary Pat Rapp – PhD 2006, MSN 1989
35. Debora E. Ybarra – BSN 1996

HONORED IN 2013

36. Debbie Adams, BSN – 1984
37. Christy Blanco, DNP – 2010
38. Elizabeth Mann-Salinas, PhD – 2011
39. Renae Schumann, BSN – 1985
40. Carolyn St. Clair, BSN – 1979

HONORED IN 2014

41. Marylyn Harris – MSN 1997

HONORED IN 2016

42. Penelope Z. Strauss – BSN 1992, MSN (nurse anesthesia) 1996, PhD 2007

HONORED IN 2018

43. Terri S. Armstrong – PhD 2005
44. Wendy Duggleby – PhD 1999
45. Michelle Edwards – DNP 2011
46. Shannan Hamlin – MSN 2000, PhD 2010
47. Holly Jeffreys – DNP 2009

EDUCATIONAL GRANT HIGHLIGHTS



Elda Ramirez, PhD, RN, FNP-BC, ENP-BC, FAAN, has been awarded a two-year grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the Emergency and Trauma Care Education Partnership Program, which has been continuously funded since 2010.



Diane Santa Maria, DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN, is collaborating on a grant with the Baylor College of Medicine-Texas Medical Center Leadership Education in Adolescent Health (LEAH) training program. The grant supports the goal of preparing diverse leaders in adolescent and young adult health through didactic, experiential, and research-based interdisciplinary education and training in core health disciplines of medicine, nursing, nutrition, psychology, social work, and public health. The five-year, HRSA-funded grant will provide a fellowship and stipend for family or psychiatric/mental health nurse practitioner students.



Barbara E. Hekel, PhD, MS, MPH, RN, and Bridgette Pullis, PhD, RN, are using an intramural pilot grant for their study, "Working with the Moveable Middle: Addressing Vaccine Hesitancy," to develop and test curriculum to improve student confidence and effectiveness in addressing vaccine hesitancy. So far, more than 250 BSN students have completed the vaccine hesitancy simulation developed by Hekel, Pullis, and Instructor Jennifer Dugger, MSN, RN.



Padmavathy Ramaswamy, PhD, MSN, MPH, FNP-C, received a seed grant from The University of Texas Kenneth I. Shine Academy of Health Science Education to fund a project titled "The Use of the Interprofessional Collaborator Assessment Rubric (iCAR) in an intra-professional clinical simulation in a School of Nursing." The project will assess how well undergraduate and graduate nursing students collaborate as a team when interacting with patients.



Rebecca Tsusaki, PhD, APRN, WHNP-BC, is principal investigator on a seed grant aimed at developing curriculum to help students better care for sexual and gender minority patients. "Respecting Individuality and Sexuality in Nursing and Healthcare (RISING-H) Curriculum Development for Sexual & Gender Minority Education: A Feasibility Study" also is funded by a UT System Shine Academy grant.

CONTINUING GRANTS

South East Texas Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program Grant

Principal investigator: Janice Knebl, DO

Co-investigator: Jessica Hartos, PhD

Funded by Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program -HRSA-19-008 subcontract to Baylor College of Medicine, grantee institution

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Faculty explore diverse aspects of HIV care



Cizik School of Nursing faculty members are among the first researchers to receive seed funding from the Texas Development Center for AIDS Research (TX D-CFAR).



Emily Barr, PhD, MSN, CPNP, CNM, will use her TX D-CFAR grant for a pilot project titled “TEC-HIV: Telehealth Use and Engagement in Care in Young Adults Living with HIV.” Only 40-50% of people age 15-24 who are living with HIV will continue receiving care within a year after transitioning to adult services, Barr noted in her abstract. Her project will survey HIV care providers and review charts from high-volume HIV clinics in the Houston area to assess the barriers and benefits of telehealth for engaging with this vulnerable population.



Meagan Whisenant, PhD, APRN, is applying symptom science expertise developed as an oncological nurse scientist to her TX D-CFAR study titled “Characterizing Symptoms Among Subpopulations of Persons Living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus.” Her grant will fund collection of preliminary data to support future NIH grant applications to identify molecular and genetic contributions to symptom burden, develop interventions for symptom management, and validate a measurement tool that can be used in clinical trials. Co-investigators are Roberto Arduino, MD; Jordan Lake, MD; and Karen Vigil, MD, from McGovern Medical School, and Tito Mendoza, PhD, and Xin Shelley Wang, MD, from The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.



Assistant Professor Veronica J. Brady, PhD, RN, FNP-BC, is bringing her research interest in diabetes to bear in a project funded through a CFAR led by the University of Alabama. With a \$15,000 seed grant, Brady’s team is exploring the intersection of HIV, diabetes, and depression and seeking to answer important questions about this subpopulation with regard to symptoms and glycemic outcomes. Collaborating with Brady on the study titled “Impact of Depression and HIV Symptoms on Glycemic Outcomes (A1c, BG) Among Patients Living with HIV and Type 2 Diabetes” are Amanda Willig, PhD, from the University of Alabama; Julie Zuniga, PhD, from The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing; and Stan Cron, MSPH, at Cizik School of Nursing.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Other newly funded studies



Daphne Hernandez, PhD, MEd, FAAHB, is working on several research projects related to nutrition and food insecurity.

Hernandez is collaborating with colleagues from UTHealth School of Public Health on a five-year, \$750,000 grant from the Research and Extension Experiential Learning for Undergraduates Program of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, a part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The project, Houston-area Opportunities for Undergraduate Student Training in Obesity & Nutrition (HOUSTON) Academy 2.0, provides undergraduate students in the Houston area with the opportunity to learn how proper nutrition can help prevent obesity and chronic diseases.

In her study "Exploring the Feasibility of Using Interprofessional Education to Deliver Nourishing Smiles to Underserved Adolescents in Houston Area Schools," Hernandez is partnering with Margo Melchor, RDH, MEd, EdD, at UTHealth Houston School of Dentistry. Funded by the schools' Joint Seed Award Program, their project combines an oral health and a nutritional literacy program that nursing and dental hygiene students will deliver at a school in an underserved neighborhood.

Hernandez's most recent study, "Exploring Food Pantry Clients' Use of 'Choice' and 'Non-choice,'" has been funded by Feeding America for \$209,647. The study will look at food pantries associated with the Houston Food Bank to compare usage patterns of those that provide clients with prepacked food boxes and those that allow clients to choose their own foods from available supplies.



Deniz Dishman, PhD, DNAP, CRNA, has teamed up with Brett Chiquet, DDS, PhD, at UTHealth Houston School of Dentistry on a research project funded through the schools' Joint Seed Award Program. Their joint study, "Identifying the Incidence of Post-Sedation Adverse Events in Pediatric Dentistry," aims to adapt or develop a sensor device for at-risk children to wear after in-office sedation for dental procedures.



Jennifer E. S. Beauchamp, PhD, RN, FAAN, is using a \$100,000 PARTNERS grant to develop a fun, interactive way to help survivors and informal caregivers who are coping with post-stroke loneliness and mental health issues with her study titled "Self-management Education and Support to Promote Psychosocial Health among Stroke Survivors and Informal Caregivers in a Virtual Stroke Community (SUPPORT): A Pilot Project."



Doncy J. Eapen, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, received a \$25,000 Heilbrunn Family Center for Research Nursing Scholars Award from Rockefeller University. The study, a partnership with the Children's Learning Institute at UTHealth Houston, titled "Positive Parenting: Empowering Young Mothers Experiencing Homelessness with a History of Interpersonal Violence to Improve Parenting Strategies," will help young mothers experiencing homelessness and domestic violence engage in positive parenting strategies.

CONTINUING GRANTS

Facial and Body Motion Technology to Detect Psychosocial Distress in Stroke Survivors and Informal Caregivers Living at Home

Principal investigator Jennifer E. S. Beauchamp, PhD, RN, FAAN

Co-investigators Xiaoqian Jian, PhD; Jennifer Hughes, PhD; Sean Savitz, MD; Anjail Sharrief, MD, MPH; Christopher Fagundes, PhD

Funded by Maria C. and Christopher J. Pappas Family Distinguished Chair in Nursing

Facilitating Comprehensive Self and Proxy Symptom Assessments for Children with Cancer *(the SMART Pediatric Oncology Tracker of Symptoms) (K23)*

Principal investigator Stacey Crane, PhD, RN, CPON

Funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research

An Examination of Associations between Transition to Practice Measures and the COVID-19 Pandemic

Principal investigator Maja Djukic, PhD, RN, FAAN

Funded by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing

Strategies for Persistent Agitated Delirium in Palliative Care *(R01)*

Principal investigator David Hui, MD

Co-investigator Sandra Hanneman, PhD, RN, FAAN

Funded by the National Cancer Institute

Aging in Place with Cognitive Impairment: Toward User-Centered Assistive Technologies

Co-Principal investigator Patricia R. DeLucia, PhD, and Sabrina Pickens, PhD, MSN, GNP-BC, ANP-BC

Co-investigators Philip Kortum, PhD; Stephanie Leal, PhD; and Fred Oswald PhD

Funded by Rice University ENRICH Program

Diabetes Learning In Virtual Environments Just In Time for Community ReEntry *(Diabetes LIVE JustICE)*

Principal investigator Louise Reagan, PhD, APRN, ANP-BC, FAANP

Co-investigators Constance Johnson, PhD, RN, FAAN; Allison Vorderstrasse, DNSc, APRN, FAAN

Funded by the American Diabetes Association

Feasibility of a Patient-Centered, Telehealth-Delivered Diabetes Foot Care Educational Program

Principal investigator Hsiao-Hui "Joyce" Ju, DNP, RN, FNP-BC

Funded by the Endocrine Nurses Society

Come as You Are – Assessing the Efficacy of a Nurse Case Management HIV Prevention and Care Intervention Among Homeless Youth *(R01 grant with two supplements)*

Principal investigator Diane Santa Maria, DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN

Funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research

Adapting a Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction Intervention for Emotion Regulation and Impulsivity in Homeless Young Adults: A pilot project *(R34)*

Principal investigator Diane Santa Maria, DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN

Funded by the National Center for Complimentary and Integrative Health

CONTINUING GRANTS

An AI-Powered Chatbot for Supporting the Medication Information Needs of Older Adults

Principal investigator Kirk Roberts, PhD, MS

Co-investigators Meghana Gudala, MBBS; Sunitha Mogalla, MBBS, PhD; Mary Ross, DrPH, MSN, RN, GCNS-BC; Mandi Lyons, DNP, MSN, RN, WHNP-BC; and Padmavathy Ramaswamy, PhD, MPH, MSN, RN

Funded by Maria C. and Christopher J. Pappas Family Distinguished Chair in Nursing

Implementing Routine Symptom Monitoring and Management Using Patient-Reported Outcomes Measures to Improve Outcomes in Patients with Breast Cancer

Principal investigator Meagan Whisenant, PhD, APRN

Funded by the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT)

Management of Chronic Low Back Pain in Older Adults Using Auricular Point Acupressure (R01)

Principal investigator Chao Hsing Yeh, PhD, RN, FAAN

Funded by the National Institute on Aging

Pilot Testing a Theory-Driven Self-Management Intervention for Chronic Musculoskeletal Pain (R56)

Principal investigator Chao Hsing Yeh, PhD, RN, FAAN

Funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research

Auricular Point Acupressure to Manage Chemotherapy Induced Neuropathy (R01)

Principal investigator Chao Hsing Yeh, PhD, RN, FAAN

Funded by the National Cancer Institute

Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disorder Training Program

Principal investigator Pauline Filipek, MD

Co-investigator Omobola A. Oyeleye, EdD, JD, RN-BC

Funded by LoneStar LEND

Post-Master's Certificate-Seeking Nursing Students' Outcomes on Advanced HESI Examinations

Principal investigator Kathleen Siders, DNP, APRN, FNP-C

Funded by Zeta Pi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau



Professor Chao Hsing Yeh, PhD, MSN, RN, FAAN, is principal investigator on two R01 grants and an R56 award funded through the National Institutes of Health totaling more than \$6 million. She studies auricular point acupressure as a nonpharmacological approach to pain management.

FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

HONORS AND AWARDS



Dean Diane Santa Maria, DrPH, MSN, RN, FAAN, was inducted into the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society's International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame at the organization's 33rd International Nursing Research Congress on July 25, 2022.



Associate Dean for Graduate Studies Susan D. Ruppert, PhD, RN, FNP-C, ANP-BC, FCCM, FNAP, FAANP, FAAN, was elected as co-chair of the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies Advisory Committee. She was also appointed to serve on the Nominating Committee of the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties for the 2022-2024 term, and the inaugural American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Essentials Implementation Steering Committee.



Professor Sandra K. Hanneman, PhD, RN, FAAN, is Cizik School of Nursing's most recent inductee to The University of Texas Kenneth I. Shine, MD, Academy of Health Science Education.

-
- **Professor Beth Ulrich**, EdD, RN, FACHE, FAONL, FAAN, was inducted as a fellow in the American Organization for Nursing Leadership.
 - **Elda Ramirez**, PhD, RN, FNP-BC, ENP-BC, FAAN, FAANP, FAEN, was inducted into the Diversity Leadership Institute of the AACN.
 - **Professor Chao Hsing Yeh**, PhD, RN, FAAN, was named The Jane and Robert Cizik Distinguished Chair.
 - **Associate Dean for Practice and Community Engagement Leissa Roberts**, DNP, CNM, FACNM, was awarded the Judy Fred Professorship in Nursing.
 - **Professor Vaunette P. Fay**, PhD, RNC, FNP, GNP, was the 2021 recipient of the Emma Josephine Loeffelholz Award from the Institute for Spirituality and Health at the Texas Medical Center.
 - **Assistant Professors Hildreth Eloi**, DNP, MS, RN, and **Myron Arnaud**, DNP, CRNA, were selected by students to receive the 2022 John P. McGovern Outstanding Teacher of the Year Awards, each for the second time.
 - **Instructor Kelli Galle**, MSN, APRN, FNP-C, was selected as one of the top 15 nurses from across the Houston area in the Houston Chronicle's 2022 "Salute to Nurses," and Assistant Professors Deniz Dishman, PhD, DNAP, CRNA, and Daisy Mullasery, DNP, RN, WHNP-BC, were honored among the city's top 150 nurses.
 - **Assistant Professor Emily Barr**, PhD, RN, CPNP-PC, CNM, received an award for Excellence in Service to the Pediatric HIV/AIDS Cohort study at the 14th Annual CFAR Social and Behavioral Sciences Research Network Conference.
 - **Assistant Professor Hsiao-Hui "Joyce" Ju**, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, CNE, received the Clinical Research Award at the 31st Annual Endocrine Nurses Symposium.
 - **Associate Professor Martina Raquel Gallagher**, PhD, RN, PMHNP-BC, was appointed to the American Psychiatric Nurses Association Telemental Health Task Force.
 - **Assistant Professor Linda Cole**, DNP, RN, APRN, CCNS, CNE, CPHQ, FCNSI, is president-elect for the Texas Clinical Nurse Specialist affiliate.
 - **Assistant Professor Sara Lewandowski**, DNP, MS, BA, BS, RN, CNE, HNB-BC, was been elected to serve on the American Holistic Nurses Association Nominating Committee.

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**“I’VE ALWAYS THOUGHT
THERE ARE A LOT OF
PEOPLE WHO ONLY
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MY PASSION, TO HELP
SOMEONE.”**

— BETTY MORENO

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