



Fall 2020

### **A Message from the Interim Director**

As I write this message, we are enjoying an absolutely glorious stretch of fall weather. I hope you all are mindful of the positive health benefits of taking time to pause in natural settings to absorb their beauty. As Dr. Teresa Conte reminded us in our October webinar in the series “Public Health On The Go,” we need to enhance our resilience, because surely those of us with an interest in public health are feeling besieged on many fronts- fires in the Western US, flooding in the Southeastern US, derechos in the midwestern US, accelerating melting of the polar ice caps with global implications of climate change for food security and health, a global pandemic, and a contentious US presidential election with major implications for the direction of health policy in this country, to name only a few. And yet I do find this to be a heady time in that transformation comes only during turmoil. When things are rosy, we become complacent. We know transformational change unfolds over time and can be stressful, but this is when creativity and innovation emerge. We also know that the next generation of young people are hardy, tech savvy, and untethered by traditional structures and constraints related to time and place. I’m optimistic that the next twenty years are going to be amazing as they lead the way to a more equitable, technologically enabled society.

The Center is 10 years old this year, a milestone worth celebrating. For the past six of those years, Dr. Ruth McDermott-Levy sat at its helm. Growth included the development of our Global Health Minor, with 97 current students representing Arts, Sciences, Engineering as well as Nursing, and 74 graduates to date. We wish her well in her exciting new role as Co-Director of the Mid-Atlantic Center for Children’s Health and the Environment. I am honored to return to the role of Interim Director this fall, reprising my Fall 2018 association with the Center. And I welcome all of you to take advantage of our programs and activities.

Be well and stay safe,

Nancy

Nancy C. Sharts-Hopko, PhD, RN, FAAN  
Professor

---

## 2020-2021 Coverdell Fellow



We are delighted to welcome to the Fitzpatrick College of Nursing our 2020-2021 Coverdell Fellow, Andrea Goodrich, a student in the BSNEExpress program. Coverdell fellowships are offered to returned Peace Corps volunteers to provide financial assistance to advance their higher education, foster professional experience with underserved populations, and further the Peace Corps mission at home.

Andrea earned a degree in Public Health and Spanish at the University of Vermont. She served in the Peace Corps in Pilpichaca, Peru, in the district of Huancavelica. Her primary focus as a community health volunteer was health promotion among women and children, with emphasis on breast feeding, early stimulation and empowerment to reduce their risk for domestic violence. Using a peer education model, Andrea prepared women to engage in health promotion in their communities, checking in on pregnant neighbors and neighbors with young children. She observed that low birth weight and maternal anemia were widespread issues. Critical moments offered opportunities to reinforce disease-reducing strategies such as hand-washing and boiling water drinking, cooking and washing foods and dishes. One of her accomplishments in Pilpichaca was the creation of a greenhouse garden. A secondary focus was a peer education program in the area of sex education for adolescents, to break the cycle of teens bearing children and leaving school and reduce the occurrence of sexually transmitted infectious diseases.

Upon her return in 2015, Andrea became a guide in Glacier National Park during the summers and spent her winters training volunteers in the safe conduct of outdoor adventure experiences for Special Olympics athletes through the organization, Dream Adaptive. Andrea, a hiker, has taken advantage of several venues in this area, including Ridley Creek State Park, and Wissahickon State Park. Welcome, Andrea!

*Villanova was selected as a school offering Coverdell Fellowships through a highly selective process. Further information about the Paul D. Coverdell Fellows Program can be found through the Center [website](#).*

---

## Highlighting a Member of our Advisory Committee



Anne Sliney, BSN, RN, who hails from Rhode Island, brings longstanding, rich public and global health experience to her role as a member of the Center's Advisory Committee. After working for a number of years in a hospital-based HIV program, Anne organized and developed a comprehensive community-based program to support people with HIV in adherence to their antiretroviral drug regimens. A team of nurses worked out of a community center, provided home visits wherever the clients were, and accompanied clients to healthcare visits. Anne began to think about culminating her career working in global health. She had an opportunity to

connect with Ira Magaziner, the director of the Clinton Foundation, when he made a presentation at Brown University, and in 2004 he offered her a position in the Clinton Foundation HIV/AIDS Initiative. She worked with nursing leadership in India, China, Kenya and numerous other locations to develop the clinical expertise to care for people with HIV. Ultimately her work focused more working with governments to anticipate workforce needs and devise workforce development through the Clinton Foundation Healthcare Access Initiative. Currently engaged in speaking about global health, Anne holds an honorary doctorate from Rhode Island College, the institution from which she earned her nursing degree. We are delighted that she generously shares her expertise with the Fitzpatrick College of Nursing Center for Global and Public Health.

---

### **News from our Global Health Students and Alumni**

**Kristina Day**, BS '20, Cognitive and Behavioral Neuroscience, reports that she is pursuing a dual degree MBA/MPH at Boston University on a full academic scholarship. She is excited to be furthering her public health education a bit closer to home, and expresses gratitude for her undergraduate experience in the Global Health Minor for sparking her interest in public health.

**Isabel DeRamos**, BS '20, Comprehensive Science, reported that she has begun the Master of Science in Epidemiology Program at the Dornsife School of Public Health at Drexel University. She was a Summer 2020 recipient of the national Sallie Mae and HerCampus Funded Futures contest, which resulted in a \$25,000 no-string-attached award. She plans to use her award to fund research on Philadelphia's medically underserved population.

**Corinne Gillenwater**, BA '21, Political Science, completed a virtual internship for Representative Josh S. Cutler in the Massachusetts House of Representatives/ Massachusetts State House. During her time, she acted as a legislative aid and researched public health policy, specifically related to a hospital profit transparency and fairness bill and a bill that sought to provide health insurance coverage for PANDAS/PANS (Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections/Pediatric Acute-Onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome) patients in Massachusetts. In addition, she researched a more general Health Care Bill that bolstered telehealth given the current circumstances, met with medical students and professionals involved in a proposed renewable energy/environmental health bill, and worked with the Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities. She reports that this activity perfectly blended her major in Political Science with her minor in Global Health.

**Erin Hurley**, BS '20, Biology, began working as a consultant for Deloitte in July while she pursues application to medical school.

**Erin Strait**, BA '17, Political Science, is in her second and final year in the MPH Program at Brown University. While in school she works at the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), where she has been reassigned to development of the state's COVID-19 response.

*Minor students and alumni, we welcome your news! Please send it to Global Health Coordinator Sandi Schultz, at [sandra.schlutz@villanova.edu](mailto:sandra.schlutz@villanova.edu).*

---

## Villanova ReachOut: Promoting the Well-Being of Older Adults



In crises come opportunities. Last spring, faculty from the FCN's Gerontology Interest Group (The GIG) recognized the potential for older adults to experience social isolation and loneliness, both of which have been linked to poor health outcomes, as they self-isolated to reduce their risk of contracting COVID. Dr. Christina Whitehouse, assistant professor, observed this in her own patients. Thus Villanova ReachOut was born. Volunteer students from across the university are paired with older adults for weekly conversations via telephone, Zoom, or FaceTime technology.

This program not only provides socialization for the older adults, but it offers students an opportunity to develop their communication skills with active listening and therapeutic community. A further benefit for all participants is the promotion of intergenerational understanding.

Faculty who are involved in addition to Dr. Whitehouse include Drs. Melissa O'Connor, Catherine Curley, Michelle McKay, and Professor Christine Brewer. All have dedicated their careers to impacting the lives of older adults and their communities. Faculty provide volunteer training and support as well as community outreach. Some seasoned ReachOut volunteers have been further prepared as ReachOut Ambassadors who assist with outreach and onboarding new volunteers.

Over 33 older adults have had ReachOut callers and most have been with the program since its inception even as mandated restrictions have eased. Many remark how much they enjoy the engagement with ReachOut volunteers. The faculty are committed to growth and further development of this rewarding program. Any Villanova student, faculty, or staff member interested in volunteering can contact The GIG at [reachout@villanova.edu](mailto:reachout@villanova.edu). Readers who are aware of older adults who might be interested in receiving calls are also invite to email.

*Please visit the [ReachOut website](#) to learn more about this innovative program.*

---

## FCN Faculty Pilot Innovative Virtual Global Health Immersions

In recent years many undergraduate nursing students have had opportunities to immerse in settings ranging from the Blackfeet Nation in Montana to China and points in between. When COVID required the cancellation of international programs, two nursing faculty, Dr. Sherry Burrell, assistant professor, and Dr. Jennifer Yost, associate professor decided to pilot virtual immersion opportunities within existing clinical courses.

Dr. Burrell's group has been working with the College's partners from Good Samaritan Hospital and Maranatha Missions in the Dominican Republic to prepare ten health promoters from several bateyes, or sugar cane communities, around the city of La Ramona. Particular areas of need include management of hypertension and diabetes, as well as sanitation and hygiene related to, for example, clean water and safe food handling. Students have the opportunity to interact with partners via Zoom as they learn the history of Hispaniola and the way the sugar cane industry functions. Working in teams, the students are preparing trainings for the community-based health promoters as well as instructional resources for them to use. The College has had relationships with our partners over time, so we anticipate the opportunity to assess the impact of and build on this working forward.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, senior nursing students enrolled in the clinical component of Nursing Care of Children and Adolescents had the opportunity to engage and collaborate with long-

standing FCN partners in the Valley of the 1000 Hills outside of Durban, South Africa, most recently accompanied by Dr. Jennifer Yost, Associate Professor and retired faculty member Dr. Frances Keen. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the FCN, our students, and international partners were committed to continuing collaborations resulting a perfect fit between students interest in international health and commitment going above and beyond expectations and our partners identified priority health promotion needs of their community during Fall 2020.

Throughout the initial 7-weeks, a group of 6 students met with the faculty to engage in learning about South Africa – for example education, government, culture, healthcare needs, health care professional preparation and roles. Students (waking up in the early morning hours because of the time difference) also met with Hillcrest AIDS Centre Trust and 1000 Hills Community Helpers virtually to engage in an exchange with the sites and the teams implement the programs at the sites. Such programs included the Respite Centre, Peer Education, and GoGo Support Group Programme at Hillcrest AIDS Centre Trust. In addition, students began and continue work on a health promotion project (beyond the initial 7-weeks) to address a need of the 1000 Hills Community in regard to promoting positive childhood development. This project initially involved development of a video and accompanying handout (to be translated into Zulu) on how to make age and safety appropriate toys from household items with anticipatory guidance about development milestones. The plan is for the video to be posted on the 1000 Hills Community Helpers website and the handout to be emailed to our partners for printing and dissemination. While developing this project, 1000 Hills Community Helpers identified that there is also a need for sing-along-videos, such as about handwashing. This group had started the work on these videos, which are likely to be a project carried on in Spring, 2021 through another senior nursing course in Health Promotion and Prevention. Students are currently collaborating with the Multimedia Technologies, University Information Technologies (UNIT) at the University to develop these videos. What really makes this experience great is the adaptability and flexibility and creativity of the students and our international partners to continue our collaborations, to learn and contribute together.

The ability to engage with international partners virtually has several advantages. The environmental impact of less air travel is important in terms of climate change, which is a public health concern. And Zoom interactions work both ways; the fact that students can attend Villanova classes virtually means that in the future we may have greater flexibility in scheduling immersions than we previously experienced.

*We hope you will join us for our April 14, 2020 “Public Health On the Go” webinar to hear more about this innovative approach to offering student international experiences, which could translate across colleges and majors.*

---

### **Roby Fellowship for Global Health Education**

A gift of \$100,000 to Nuvance Health in honor of Villanova Trustee Anne Roby, an alumna of the College of Engineering, will allow one senior Villanova nursing student and one premedical graduate to participate each year for eight years in the Global Health Elective that Nuvance has developed in collaboration with the Larner College of Medicine at the University of Vermont. Fellows will participate in on-line pre-training prior to a six-week summer immersion in one of nine countries in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean region. Fellows are accompanied by program faculty, and an integral aspect of the experience is that the fellows live with local host families. We are excited about the opportunity to develop this partnership though because of COVID our first fellowship has been postponed to 2022.



You can find more information about the Nuvance/University of Vermont Global Health Elective at this link: <https://www.med.uvm.edu/globalhealth/wchn>.

---

## Innovation Grants



To date we have awarded two \$500 grants for the creation of creative, positive media promoting COVID risk-reduction. Jane Kolar, a senior majoring in an independently designed double major in Public Health and Health Policy, will create videos focusing on hand hygiene. A coming surprise is the likely star of the video! Junior Communication major Jaylene Joseph and her sophomore team-mates Anna Jankowski and Grace Gentle - propose a multimedia project to promote mask-wearing. We look forward to sharing their messages with the Villanova community in the spring! And we hope to finalize two more \$500 grants soon.

*In addition, we invite proposals for our annual evidence based project grants of \$1000, one for a student team and one for a faculty/staff team. These grants will be due January 25, 2021 and the funds must be expended by May 1. Please contact Nancy Sharts-Hopko at [nancy.sharts-hopko@villanova.edu](mailto:nancy.sharts-hopko@villanova.edu) for details.*

---

Annual Research Symposium: A Rapid Research Response in Changing Environment

### **Abstract Submission Deadline Extended to December 18, 2020**

The deadline to submit your abstract for the 2020 Fitzpatrick College of Nursing Annual Research Symposium, "A Rapid Research Response in a Changing Environment" has been extended to Friday, Dec. 18 at 11:59 pm ET. The Symposium will explore how the scholarship of students, faculty and healthcare providers in the community responded to the current events in our collective communities. Anyone who has a patient or healthcare related project(s) which enhances patient outcomes, clinical practice, or the clinical work environment is encouraged to submit an abstract. [Click here](#) to submit your abstract by Dec. 18.

---

### **Webinar: Applying an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Approach for Covid-19 Cleaning Protocols**

The Mid-Atlantic Center for Children's Health and the Environment (MACCHE) will host a free webinar on Wednesday, Dec. 9 from 2-3 pm exploring safer methods to keep workplaces and homes clean. Michelle Niedermeier, BE, MS from Penn State IPM will share her expertise in cleaning protocols. This program will award Nurses 1.0 contact hour. To register, [click here](#).

---

## Upcoming Programs

Please join us for our monthly webinar series, “Public Health On the Go.” Upcoming programs include:

January 20, 2021 at 2 p.m. – Dr. Patricia Bradley, associate dean for Inclusive Excellence, will discuss structural racism and its relationship to adverse health outcomes.

February 17, 2021 at 6 p.m. – Dr. Margaret Hattori-Uchima, dean of the School of Nursing at the University of Guam, will share her work with the homeless population of Guam and the impact of COVID.

March 10, 2021 at 2 p.m. – Dr. Elizabeth PetiteMange, FCN clinical associate professor, and Rosemarie Halt, MPH, Delaware County COVID Liaison to the Chester County Health Department, will present, “What is Public Health?”

April 14, 2021 at 2 p.m. – Dr. Sherry Burrell, assistant professor and Dr. Jennifer Yost, associate professor, with participating students, will describe innovative approaches they are using to provide virtual global health immersion experiences when travel is not possible.

*Please register for the programs on the [webinar series page](#).*

c. 2020 Villanova University M. Louise Fitzpatrick College of Nursing  
800 Lancaster Avenue, Villanova, PA 19085  
[villanova.edu/nursing](http://villanova.edu/nursing)