Calling the Capitol Home

Chris Alvarez
B.S., Health Care Administration, 2005

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Return the enclosed envelope and let us know how you’d like to receive future issues.
**Dean’s Message**

**A Good News Report**

by Dean Marilyn Hopkins

Bad news seems to be coming from everywhere, and I don’t want to hear it anymore. I know these are challenging times, but I believe it is important to keep an optimistic frame of mind. In a search for balanced input, I’ve started watching Brian Williams and the NBC evening news. Every show ends with a heart-warming report of everyday people performing acts of kindness and generosity in their community.

The feature, “Making a Difference,” was initiated in response to viewer complaints about negativity in media reporting. I am not trying to minimize the seriousness of home foreclosures, rising unemployment, state budget deficits and funding reductions that impact education and social services. I understand the concerns regarding melting ice caps in Antarctica and the need to protect our environment for future generations. I even sympathize with basketball fans, like my husband, who lament the Sacramento Kings had their worst season since arriving in Sacramento!

However, this message in **Update** is my message to you, and I want to emphasize good news that is happening in our Sacramento State community. Like the people featured in the NBC evening news, our faculty, staff and students are making a positive difference in the lives of others and in our physical environment. I’ve provided a list of some of the activities that show how we are Making a Difference on this page so you can get a feeling for the wonderful work we are doing. Yet there is even more good news to report.

A drive through campus reveals the huge concrete walls of the new Recreation and Wellness Center. Affectionately named The WELL, the new facility near Hornet Stadium will open in fall 2010. It will feature a fitness center, indoor track, gym and racquetball courts, rock climbing wall, massage therapy spa, baby sitting center, and new student health center. At the north end of campus near J Street, we see finishing touches on American River Courtyard, a new apartment style housing complex for students. Best news of all is The University Foundation purchased the CalSTRS building on Folsom Boulevard. By spring 2010, the facility will provide new and expanded space for the Division of Nursing, Department of Physical Therapy, Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology, and Maryjane Rees Language Speech and Hearing Center.

It has been a busy and exciting academic year that culminated in May with the Golden Anniversary celebration of the Division of Nursing, a reception to recognize student nominees for the Dean’s Honor Award and Commencement. Stay tuned for more good news reports from our campus. We remain committed to providing excellence in our academic programs and to preparing graduates who can assume leadership roles in their discipline and community.

**Making a Difference**

- **A member of the Criminal Justice faculty and her cat.** Jackson, volunteer twice a month at Shriners Hospitals for Children as a Pet Partner Team with the Delta Society.
- **Kinesiology and Health Science students volunteer weekly** in an after-school program for autistic children in Solano Hall.
- **The Division of Nursing mailed more than 30 boxes of holiday gifts to soldiers** in Iraq and collected more than 100 toys for underprivileged children.
- **Physical Therapy faculty and students provided pro bono services** to uninsured students and neurological patients who exhausted their health benefits.
- **Three undergraduate students** from Speech Pathology and Audiology will travel to Costa Rica to teach English and perform health and hearing assessments for local youth.
- **The Bachelor of Social Work Association partnered with Loaves and Fishes** in a Drive to Help the Homeless.
- **Therapeutic Recreation students received a volunteer award** from the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors for work at the Mental Health Treatment Center.
- **A student in Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration volunteered** in a women’s rape crisis center in Africa, and a faculty member from the department raised money for bicycles and helmets for homeless children.
- **Nursing students took turns buying groceries** for a classmate in financial crisis and raised $5,000 in the Race for the Cure.
HCA Internship Opened New Doors

Christopher Alvarez figured he’d have a career as an officer in a naval hospital. That way, his father, a career U.S. Navy corpsman, would have to salute him. But while pursuing a bachelor’s degree in Health Care Administration, a scholarship and an internship at the state Capitol changed his plans.

“Doors close, but windows open,” Alvarez said.

Alvarez served an internship with Assembly member Lori Saldaña of San Diego. “There was no formal training,” he said. “I just got thrown into the mix and learned on the job. I was immediately meeting with constituents and lobbyists. It helped to have mentors.”

His mentors included the chief of staff, the legislative director and the woman who recruited him for the internship. Alvarez, who graduated in 2005 with a B.S. in Health Care Administration, took to the work. Today he is employed as a legislative aide in Saldaña’s office.

“My degree gave me an understanding of health administration and the concept of medical health,” Alvarez said.

Alvarez analyzes bills and provides recommendations on how to vote, as well as advises Saldaña on key issues. He serves the legislator on two Assembly committees—veterans’ affairs and local government—and subcommittees and has managed 17 bills and one resolution through the legislative process.

Alvarez also organizes public hearings, coordinates conferences, provides briefings and summaries, and speaks on the legislator’s behalf.

Alvarez is applying to graduate school to pursue an MBA this fall. He may then work in private industry for a time before returning to government.

Alvarez credits his degree for helping him develop good work habits. “Don’t be afraid to do the tedious task work that’s always part of an internship. I think part of the reason I was offered my job is because I did everything from check the mail to answer the phone. Think of your internship as paying your dues, and your boss or supervisor will greatly appreciate it.”
Improving Our Nation’s Parks

If you’ve visited a national park from the East Coast to Samoa, Patrick Gregerson has worked to make your experience better.

In 2007, Gregerson became chief of park planning and special studies, which entails oversight of long-range, general management planning in all seven regions of the National Park Service.

“At any one time, we have an average of 100 active general management plans,” says Gregerson, who earned a B.S. in Recreation, Parks and Tourism from Sacramento State in 1977 with an emphasis in environmental planning and park administration.

His job also puts him in charge of studies to identify potential new national parks and a $10 million program to manage and preserve wild and scenic rivers in the parks.

It was volunteer work during community college that first interested Gregerson in a Park Service career and led him to Sacramento State. Seasonal work as a ranger in nearby county and state parks followed, along with service for the Peace Corps in Paraguay, a graduate degree from the University of Michigan and work at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., where he co-authored Plants in Danger: What Do We Know?

In 1984, Gregerson began his career with the National Park Service. Over the years, his work has taken him to Venezuela, Colombia, Costa Rica and Qatar as a park planning expert. He now travels all over the United States to participate in planning projects in parks as diverse as the 400-mile-long Blue Ridge Parkway and a brownstone that was the home of Carter G. Woodson, the creator of Black History Month.

Gregerson continues to draw on the skills he honed while giving interpretive talks to park tourists. He meets the public to hear concerns about park issues, but some meetings also involve members of Congress and the secretary of the Interior.

Gregerson appreciates “working effectively on a national level in a program that has been near and dear to my heart for 30 years. When I go home at the end of the day, I feel good about what I did.”

Budgeting on a Large Scale

Overseeing a $235 million annual budget does not rattle Gary Mason, a natural reserve specialist for the National Park Service in Washington, D.C., who earned his B.S. in Recreation and Park Administration in 1976.

“When I worked in the parks, my efforts involved implementing what the budget was funding. Now, I make sure the level of funding we request provides the resources and organizational support that each park needs to address its natural resource management priorities.”

Mason said he was able to learn quickly because of his Sacramento State education.

A family vacation to Yellowstone in the 1960s launched Mason’s interest in a Park Service career. His first Park Service job was as a seasonal ranger at Crater Lake. He then worked seasonally in parks on the West Coast, primarily during college and summers.

A position with an Army Corps of Engineers reservoir project at Lake Shelbyville, Ill., secured Mason’s permanent status with the Park Service. From there he transferred to Golden Gate National Recreation Area in San Francisco in 1978, then on to North Cascades National Park for 12 years.

“Being on the ground in the parks, working with the public and working with peers to get things done in the park is a very tangible experience. My current work is truly abstract because I’m so far from being hands-on—we entrust the people in the field to do their best with the resources we find for them. It’s very fulfilling in a different way.”

“On a personal note: Gregerson enjoys playing tennis and hiking, as well as mountain biking with the younger of his two sons who still lives at home.”

“On a personal note: When Mason isn’t working on the addition he is building on his home, he can be found in his big vegetable garden (“We have a very long growing season”) or volunteering with a conservation organization for endangered parrots in the Caribbean’s Lesser Antilles. He also takes advantage of the wealth of art and other exhibits, natural history and historic preservation activities that abound in Washington.”
All in a Day’s Work

A visit from the Queen of England. The Cherry Blossom Festivals and Fourth of July celebrations. Concerts. Demonstrations. Former presidents lying in state. If there is a public gathering in the nation’s capital, Karen (Nordman) Cucurullo is likely in the middle of it.

As chief of partnerships for the National Mall and Memorial Parks within the National Park Service, Cucurullo authorizes about 3,000 annual agreements and permits with groups that want to stage events in her territory.

That territory covers some of the nation’s most cherished sites—the Washington Monument, the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and 450 other significant memorials, monuments, plaques, statues, historic sites, gardens and parks all over Washington, D.C.

“I’ve met people I never thought I would meet and done things I never expected to do. I fought fires at Yellowstone and in California and Oregon, had my picture taken with Ronald Reagan and with Barbara Bush, saw the Queen of England when she visited, and worked a presidential inauguration,” Cucurullo says. “It’s definitely not a 9-to-5 job!”

By the sixth grade, thanks to childhood trips to California state parks, Cucurullo had set her sights on a career as a park ranger. She graduated from Sacramento State in 1980 with a B.S. in Recreation and Park Administration, minor in Criminal Justice.

Regarding her current position, she says, “Citizens have such a deep connection to this park. It’s especially satisfying to help visitors enhance their experience, make our park a better place and protect it for future generations. Working at this park—any park—is such an honor. What a wonderful job to provide service not only to people from America but to people from all over the world. It’s a happy place.”

Experience Catches Criminals

Robert M. Thompson, B.S., ’79 in Forensic Science with a minor in Chemistry, is an established expert in his field. A forensic database systems program manager at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, he manages new forensics technology in the institute’s Office of Law Enforcement Standards.

Thompson’s primary focus is ballistics imaging and DNA, especially as they pertain to the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), which helps law enforcement officials use evidence to identify suspects.

“When crime investigators have a DNA profile from a crime scene, but no suspect,” Thompson says, “CODIS allows certain labs to enter the DNA into the system to see if it matches DNA profiles already in the database or DNA from cold (unsolved) cases. It’s something like a fingerprint system for DNA—sort of a forensic Google.”

A high school counselor introduced him to forensics. Work earlier in his career gave him extensive experience with advanced blood typing, firearms cases and court trials.

In 1994 he accepted a position as a firearms and toolmark examiner for the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. There, Thompson was one of a select cadre of ATF examiners who helped develop, install and train others on the genesis of the ballistics imaging system, NIBIN, that is currently used in the United States.

Though he no longer does direct case work, Thompson says, “The benefits are not broadcast widely, but if you work in this field, you feel that you’re going to help someone get justice.”

ON A PERSONAL NOTE: Cucurullo enjoys gardening, home improvement projects and travel. She and her husband have two children, Anna, 18, and David, 12.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE: Because he often travels for work, Thompson prefers activities close to home in Alexandria, Va. He enjoys custom hot rods and shooting—everything from pistols to black powder rifles—and he and his wife often explore the Washington, D.C., area, the Shenandoah Valley and Gettysburg.
Strengthening the Bonds of Communication

“Communication is such a basic element of our lives,” says Rachel Tarro. “When you have that bond with other people, it’s huge. It’s as basic as breathing.”

Tarro works as a speech language pathologist for the Sacramento VA Medical Center, in Sacramento County. “Many of my clients have aphasia from strokes or other brain injuries. I find that people who have lost their ability to communicate verbally and nonverbally are very motivated to recover those skills,” says Tarro, who earned a B.S. in Speech Pathology and Audiology (2003) and an M.S. in Speech Pathology (2005) from Sacramento State.

“Developing strategies and finding ways to help them is incredibly rewarding,” she says. “To see a client turn to his wife and be able once again to say, ‘I love you,’ is very powerful.”

Tarro’s interest in speech and communication was sparked at an early age when she babysat for a neighborhood child who had lost her hearing after a childhood fever. Tarro learned sign language so she could communicate with the youngster.

After graduate school, Tarro worked for almost three years in the Sacramento City Unified School District. Last April, she moved to her current position with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

“The resources that I have at the VA are amazing, both in terms of the flexibility and resources. I have the flexibility to determine how often and how long I can treat people and access to resources like durable medical equipment,” she says. “It’s a wonderful work environment—my colleagues are eager to go above and beyond the needs of the job.”

Tarro actively maintains relationships she developed with Sacramento State faculty and fellow graduates. Once a month, she and 11 friends have dinner and play Bunco. “It’s a great way to keep in touch. It’s also good networking!”

Nursing Program Leads to Career Success, Fulfillment

Volunteer work in the emergency room at Mercy San Juan Medical Center helped Robert Fisher confirm that nursing was the career for him—one in which he could help people, enjoy the people he worked with and have the flexibility he wanted.

During his last year in Sacramento State’s B.S. in Nursing program, Fisher worked in the emergency room at Sutter Roseville Medical Center, first as part of his internship and then, after taking his boards early, as an employee while he finished his degree.

He moved to Boise, Idaho, 18 months ago, and worked at a private hospital before joining the Boise VA Medical Center last April. There, he floats between the step-down telemetry and intensive care units.

“I like the people I work with, and I like the management,” Fisher says of the Veterans Affairs facility. “The VA in Boise is a teaching hospital. We have first- and second-year residents, and everyone works together as a team.”

He says he has noticed a difference between new nursing graduates from Sac State and those from other schools. “Our last semesters at Sac State, we were actually working and getting hands-on experience and knowledge. New grads from other schools don’t seem to have as much experience as I did.”

In time, Fisher may move back to the emergency room. For now, he’s enjoying his work on two new units, camaraderie with his colleagues, and the day shift to which he was recently assigned.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE: Reared in Sacramento, Fisher says Boise reminds him of Sacramento when it was smaller. He spends much of his free time learning to fish and golf and also remodeling the “semi-fixer-upper” he recently bought.

Variety Is This Man’s Spice of Life

Working as a physical therapist has allowed Kevin McNeil (B.S. in Physical Therapy, 2000) to combine two of his passions: a love of sports and a desire to move around the country.

“I like variety in my life,” McNeil says. “A career in physical therapy fits my interests, and I’ve taken advantage of it.”

After graduation, McNeil stayed in the area, working at Shriners Hospitals for Children – Northern California, then as the director of an outpatient clinic in Rocklin. With outpatient
orthopedics as his ultimate goal, he opened McNeil Physical Therapy, a sports medicine practice in Granite Bay, and served as secretary for the northeast district of the California Physical Therapy Association.

McNeil then taught for a semester as an adjunct professor in Sac State’s physical therapy program. He says the faculty’s dedication is the reason behind the program’s success. Recently, he finished a year-long contract working in a maximum security prison in Susanville.

McNeil is in the process of re-enlisting as a captain in the U.S. Air Force for yet more variety. He is seeking new places to live and travel, new patient populations and new specialties.

He looks forward to getting his Ph.D. while serving in the Air Force and hopes for a final assignment near his hometown of Lowell, Mass. There he plans to retire from the military and open a practice or teach in a university physical therapy program.

Despite his travels, McNeil remains in touch with the Sac State faculty. “I still call if I have a question about a particular patient with whom I’m not getting the results I want. Once you’re a PT student there, you’re always part of the family!”

ON A PERSONAL NOTE: McNeil and his wife, a computer systems engineer for Apple, are avid golfers and have structured their careers so they have the freedom to travel—always with their golf clubs. McNeil also enjoys reading and writing fiction.

Continuing a Legacy of Service

As a child, Greg Rose was interested in poverty and social justice issues.

His parents were active on the boards of many community organizations, and they also created a foundation of their own. Rose learned at an early age that individuals could make a difference in other people’s lives.

While earning his B.A. in Psychology at California State University, Northridge (1984), and working for a number of community organizations, Rose knew that he wanted to be involved at the level of policy and program development. “I chose the Sacramento State program specifically for its location in the capital. I hoped for internships in the policy arena.” He completed his MSW in 1993.

Rose’s first-year internship was with the Sacramento County District Attorney’s Office and Child Protective Services. He helped to implement multidisciplinary interview centers, the result of legislation that developed a new policy for processing cases of suspected child sexual abuse.

For his second-year internship he served in the office of Assemblymember Barbara Lee, who now represents California’s 9th District in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Today, Rose is on the front line of the macro practice he envisioned. As assistant deputy director of the California Department of Social Services’ Children and Family Services Division, he is responsible for policy on services ranging from child abuse prevention through adoption. He is part of a team that manages a staff of some 350 people, 40 percent of whom do direct field work.

“I find certain aspects of problem solving especially rewarding—like the collaboration that’s required to solve problems and ultimately knowing that the policies that we implement, policies that evolved from my discussions with others, affect people’s lives in a positive way,” he said.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE: Rose enjoys running (“It’s like meditation.”), including half-marathons and two marathons. He loves to garden, cultivate his vegetarian cooking skills and spend time with his wife, Melissa, and sons, Nathan, a recent Cal Poly San Luis Obispo graduate, and, Sam, a senior at McClatchy High School in Sacramento.
Ten Sacramento State students are serving in specialized nursing internships with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, providing them with excellent practical experience and promising career opportunities.

Melissa Burden, Kathleen Kizilbash and Christilyn Magee are three of the students currently in the VA Learning Opportunities Residency (VALOR) program, and all three sing its praises.

VALOR offers outstanding registered nursing students enrolled in baccalaureate programs the opportunity to develop competencies in clinical nursing at an approved VA health care facility while they work on their degrees. Students are appointed on a full- or part-time basis during the summer months and may continue during their senior academic year on a part-time basis.

Sacramento State students can work at the new inpatient hospital near Mather Field or at outpatient clinics in Chico or Redding.

Melissa Burden always knew she wanted a career in which she was helping people. “I started working in the health care field about 10 years ago as a medical assistant and health care aide and learned that I wanted to be a nurse. I always loved science.”

In VALOR, she works in the emergency room, which is her specialty.

“I enjoy it a lot,” Burden says. “Every patient has a different problem, so you have to deal with all types of body systems, and you’re constantly faced with different situations. It’s exciting and challenging. The opportunity for student nurses to perfect their skills in this program is amazing. Just over the summer, I accomplished and repeated so many skills that it really built my confidence and enhanced everything I’ve learned, like inserting IVs,” she says. “We also get to do physical assessment on our patients and have patient interaction—all the typical things you would do in your nursing care.”

Kathleen Kizilbash says the VA treats VALOR students just like employees.

“Except for certain duties, the expectations for us were the same as those of professional staff,” she says. “The staff is really helpful, and the vets themselves are fantastic, down-to-earth, tell-it-like-it-is people. They always express their appreciation and treat us with respect.”

Christilyn Magee, a December 2008 graduate, also knew she wanted a career in health care.

“My nursing specialty, pediatric intensive care, is actually not part of the VALOR program, but when the opportunity came up to join the program, I knew that I wanted to get some experience other than clinical before I graduated,” she says. “I love it. The nursing managers are great, and the program has provided us with all kinds of experiences. We’re really independent: We are responsible for checking our own labs and communicating with the physicians,” Magee says. “We pretty much take on the RN role, which isn’t something we generally get to do in clinical.”

Magee says the experience is both enjoyable and rewarding. “Working with the veteran population has been great, and the staff treats us so well. It really makes working there a lot of fun.”

“Veterans Affairs Residency Program Benefits Nursing Students”

— Kathleen Kizilbash
Meet Kendra Lewis: A Woman with a Mission

“I beg for a living,” says Kendra Lewis, the director of development for the Colleges of Health and Human Services and Interdisciplinary Studies. All that begging translates into money raised for good causes.

Lewis, who started at Sacramento State in March 2008, began raising funds for important causes and organizations before attending college. She credits selling chocolate bars to benefit her San Francisco high school as the genesis of her development career.

“The principal of my high school was so good at raising money. I loved what she did,” Lewis says. “My class was the first to use a new building for which funds had been raised. In my senior year, I met some of our benefactors—some of the wealthiest people in San Francisco—and learned firsthand about asking for money.”

Lewis went to college with the intention of becoming a lawyer. Her mentor at Fresno State University, Vice President Benjamin Quillian, directed Lewis to the vice president of advancement. She then interned in the Development Office and graduated with a degree in history, before attending the University of San Francisco to receive a certificate in development.

“Fundraising is very cerebral work,” Lewis says. “You have to understand the needs of the college and be in tune with the dean’s priorities and the university’s mission. Then you have to communicate that to individuals in the hope that they will support it. There’s a lot of strategy involved.”

Lewis now is working on Sacramento State’s move to the newly acquired CalSTRS building, which will be a new home for campus programs including Nursing, Physical Therapy, and Speech Pathology and Audiology.

“It’s exciting for how it will impact the University, and it’s wonderful to work on a project that will affect the community for generations,” she says. “We’re raising funds by offering naming opportunities—naming the simulation lab and various classrooms, for example—to endow scholarships and faculty positions and to allow faculty and students to do more research.”

Before coming to Sac State, Lewis was a fundraiser for the American Heart Association, the Sacramento Urban League and, most recently, served as managing director and development director for Sacramento Theatre Company. She also worked as an independent contractor and was assistant producer for the Macy’s Passport Fashion for Compassion Show benefiting the Magic Johnson Foundation, amfAR and the Elizabeth Taylor Foundation.

Her extensive experience has given her a keen insight into the world of giving. “People don’t just give because it’s a tax write-off,” Lewis says. “They give because it’s in their heart. It’s the adult version of sharing your peanut butter sandwich in kindergarten. But when you make a donation, it’s in perpetuity; it’s there forever. I like that people are committed. I’m fascinated by that.”

The challenges of fundraising also include the word, “no,” which Lewis takes in stride. “It’s hard and it can be frustrating. But I understand that when people say ‘no,’ it’s not personal; it’s for other reasons that have nothing to do with me or my mission. ‘No’ is not definitely no. It means ‘later’ or ‘not now.’”

And that hope is what keeps her going. “What’s important to me is that people are basically generous, and it’s my job to show them that our mission is important enough for them to support it. I’ll definitely retire from this work,” Lewis says.

Alumni Make Impact in State’s Department of Social Services

In his role as deputy director of the Children and Family Services Division of the California Department of Social Services, Greg Rose supervises nearly 30 Sac State College of Health and Human Services alumni. Pictured, from left, are Teresa Contreras, M.S.W. 1989, chief, Office of Child Abuse Prevention, Child Protection and Family Support Branch; Mary Sheppard, M.S.W. 2006, social services consultant, Outcomes Unit, Outcomes and Accountability Bureau, Children’s Services Operations and Evaluations Branch; Monisha Avery, M.S.W. 1990, manager, Title IV-E Waiver Unit, Resources Development and Training Bureau, Child Protection and Family Support Branch; Joyce Dowell, B.A. 1975, chief, Child Welfare Policy and program Development Bureau, Child Protection and Family Support Branch; and Nina Dyba, M.S.W. 2006, social services consultant, Outcomes Unit, Outcomes and Accountability Bureau, Children’s Services Operations and Evaluations Branch.
A recent $30,000 scholarship endowment from the J.R. Needy Foundation is designed to provide two students from the Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration each year with scholarships.

The gift reflects the foundation board’s wish to continue the scholarships the Needy Foundation has awarded on its own for several years.

The Needy Foundation was organized in 1985 when Ed Sato, an emeritus professor of recreation and leisure studies, approached former students of J.R. “Shacky” Needy (at left) about creating a foundation to honor the longtime faculty member and department chair.

The foundation was created with three objectives, says Keith Demetrak, one of the original organizers. “We wanted to award scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students in the program, further the linkage between the program and alumni who are practitioners, and enhance the professionalism of the students and practitioners.

“Scholarships started out at $500, but as tuition increased, we increased the award to $750 and then to $1,000,” Demetrak says. “To date, we have awarded between $35,000 and $40,000 in scholarships.”

“The Needy endowment will be a perpetual gift,” says Kendra Lewis, director of development for the Colleges of Health and Human Services and Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies. “As fundraising for the endowment continues, the impact of one professor on his students will come full circle. Gifts from former students will help the next generation of learners and recreation professionals, and a proud legacy will be sustained.”

Fundraising efforts continue, and anyone interested in contributing should contact Lewis at (916) 278-2565 or klewis@saclink.cusu.edu.

The J.R. Needy Foundation Board (left to right): Debbie Walker, Judy Quattrin, RPTA Chair, Dana Kivel and Keith Demetrak
Martha Long Dukes: A Unique Perspective

Before there were university nursing programs, most nurse training, with few exceptions, was hospital training ending with a nursing diploma,” says Martha Dukes. “When I was a student in the Franklin Hospital School of Nursing in San Francisco from 1949 to 1952, one of my fellow students had a child and was divorced. It was her deepest, darkest secret, and she had to keep it from her peers to stay in school. You had to be single in those days to study to be a nurse!”

Things have changed since Dukes earned her nursing diploma in that hospital training program and then her Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing in 1962. She was one of 10 students to receive the traditional class pin and nursing cap in the first graduating class of what was then the Department of Nursing in the Division of Science and Mathematics at Sacramento State College. “The program started out in very small quarters on the second floor of what used to be the dining facility,” says Dukes. “Years later the program moved to the third floor of the Science Building (now Sequoia Hall). When the campus needed that space for computers, Nursing moved to temporary trailers and then to a building occupied by the Department of Fish and Game.”

As the department moved and grew, the entire nursing landscape changed. “The knowledge base just exploded,” noted Dukes. “We started with basic hard science courses like organic chemistry and physics. As knowledge increased, nursing programs refined course content and added courses like gerontology and human sexuality. “Even early on, we had clinical experiences that were connected with our academic courses. We trained at DeWitt State Hospital for mental health and the old Sacramento County Hospital, now the UC Davis Medical Center, for advanced medical surgical nursing.”

Dukes originally intended to be a school nurse. It was her love of teaching and working with students that compelled her in 1958 to enter Sac State’s inaugural nursing class and later earn a master’s in Nursing and post-master’s certificate. She began teaching mental health nursing at Sac State in 1964. Although Dukes retired in 1996, she returned in 1997 to teach part-time and still does so today. “The delivery of care is markedly different now,” says Dukes. “We didn’t have the term ‘nursing process,’ in 1958, and now it’s a defining quality of nursing practice. The nursing process is a beautiful framework that came about with collegiate education—the assessment and planning of interventions to meet patients’ physical, emotional and social needs. And these days, it’s an entire health care team that delivers care. Will someone be there to care for a patient when he or she goes home? Do those caregivers know how to provide for the patient’s health, or do they need education? Nurses are expected to incorporate the whole picture. “Prevention is another important aspect of our nursing preparation. And, of course, research has contributed to how we give care,” says Dukes. “Patients’ rights have made a big difference, and not just in the added paperwork. Previously, nurses gave medication or shots but couldn’t tell the patient what they were or what they were for. Nurses couldn’t even tell you your blood pressure or temperature! “I’ve watched our program grow from a bachelor’s to a master’s and a school nurse credentialing program. With broader basic requirements and more emphasis on the community, our students are prepared for leadership roles. It’s all been very exciting!”

Professor Edwina Leon
Department of Social Work
December 14, 1924 - March 22, 2009

Professor Melinda Seid
Department of Kinesiology and Health Science
May 29, 1952 - January 12, 2009
SACRAMENTO STATE
COLLEGE OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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50 GOLDEN YEARS:
HONORING A LEGACY OF NURSING LEADERSHIP

Sac State’s Division of Nursing celebrated on May 6, 2009, the 50th anniversary of its inaugural nursing class. The gala event, with emcee Sharon Ito of News10, included dinner at the Alumni Center, keynote speakers, and a delightful review of nursing “then and now” featuring alumni from the first graduating classes.

“We pulled out all the stops!” says Ann Stoltz, division chair and associate professor. “It was a terrific opportunity to celebrate our leadership in nursing education in the capital region, to get us together, and to energize alumni.

“The timing also coincided with the decision to move the Division of Nursing to new and expanded space in the CalSTRS building in 2010,” says Stoltz, “There we will be able to accommodate more students, do more training on site, and do an even better job of encouraging critical thinking with more technology and simulation labs. The anniversary celebration gave us an opportunity to look back at where we’ve come from, where we are now and where we want to go.”

To learn more about the new facility and how your gift can help the Division of Nursing, contact Kendra Lewis, director of development for the Colleges of Health & Human Services and Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies, at (916) 278-2565, klewis@saclink.csus.edu.