Nurses top the charts for honesty and ethics

A 1999 annual Gallup poll on Honesty and Ethics found nearly three-quarters of Americans deem nurses' honesty and ethics as either very high or high. This ranking puts nurses at the top of the list of 45 jobs and occupations. The top five professions rated for honesty and ethics were nurses (75 percent), pharmacists (69 percent), veterinarians (63 percent), medical doctors (58 percent) and K-12 teachers (57 percent).

2000 Media Kits

For copies of the 2000 Sigma Nursing Guide to Health Care and Includes experts in a variety of health care areas. To apply online, visit nursingsociety.org/media.

2001 Media Guide

Beginning in May you can apply for the 2001 Media Guide to Health Care. The guide is distributed annually to trade and consumer media and includes experts in a variety of health care areas. To apply online, visit nursingsociety.org/media.

News Briefs

Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing

EXCELLENCE in Nursing Education

Second Quarter 2000 Volume 1, Number 2

Creating excellence in online education

The instructional team at Indiana University School of Nursing meets regularly to refine online course content. Members are: (left to right) Janie Canty-Mitchell, assistant professor of nursing; Michael Vaughn, director of information technologies; Jan Ward, advisor for lifelong learning; Dennis Dell, videoconferencing coordinator; and Louise Watkins, Web technician.

School nurses

Counselors, educators, advocates and caregivers

It's Monday morning at a local elementary school and students visiting the school nurse report, "I was sick all weekend and mom said to come and see you." Other children complain of chronic ailments. Are they ill, or could the symptoms be a sign of stress due to family problems or an encounter with the school bully? The role of the school nurse is ever expanding, changing and growing, according to Jessica Gerdes, RN, school health consultant, DuPage County Department of Health, Illinois. She works with 255 public schools and many private ones as a consultant and coordinator for certified school nurses and public health nurses. School nurses don't just provide health checkups or referrals. They also provide counseling for eating disorders, teen pregnancy, depression and even substance abuse. They teach health prevention and wellness. An estimated 20 million children with chronic medical conditions also fall under their care, expanding their jobs to administer medications, such as Ritalin, during the school day, and maintain equipment such as ventilators or wheelchairs.

The most common school nurse requests Gerdes receives relate to disease outbreaks (i.e., head lice), immunizations or student referrals to social workers and counselors. The issues facing school nursing as parents' job demands and outside commitments drain their time, Gerdes said. An additional challenge is working with uninsured families who rely on the care of school nurses. At some DuPage County schools, Gerdes reports students have even brought sick relatives to school for diagnosis.

With school violence cases and learning disabilities on the rise, school nurses in Chicago who had bloodstains on their office walls.
Chiron: developing leaders

by Teila Higgins

Tau’s Interna­
tional Mentorship Institute of­
nurses is offering two mentor-fellow options: as a fellow or mentor within the senior fellow option. A potential plan could include a sabbatical, for education, a fellowship, or for practicing in a career opportunity.

Chiron 2000 participants are: Fellow Andrea W. Koepke, Mississippi; Mentor Janis P. Bellack, South Carolina; Fellow Julie A. Olson, Wisconsin and Mentor Medena C. Drotz, Iowa; Fellow Monica L. Tenhunen, California and Mentor Lois Evans, Pennsylvania.

The experience and further education will provide new opportunities for nurses. Those who wish to author or review articles for the program unique in that it's inter­active, offers participation in chat room forums, and links to additional nursing resources for users to access in real time. Currently, other comparable programs exist. Nurses worldwide may read case studies, answer examination questions, and contact the experts, authors and colleagues through the virtual community chat rooms. Those seeking contact hours will pay a non­refundable fee for course credits. Relaying the launch of the program this summer, new case studies and topics will be added to the site.

Those who wish to author or review case studies also have an opportunity for participation. Submissions are being sought from members for case studies in more than 20 topics that will be published online. A template is available for writing your case and should take about three hours to prepare. There is also a need for authors to serve as peer review panelists in their areas of expertise and provide evaluations of submitted case studies and feedback to the authors.

Authors and reviewers are needed in the following areas: Obstetrics, Ethics, Neonatal, Breastfeeding, Pain management, Non pharmacological interventions, Pain management – Pharmacological update, Palliative care update, Obstetrical care update, Gynecics, Delegation and clinical decision making, End of life care and Meningitis.

To post­menopausal chronic health issues

Earn CEUs through online case studies

An innovative resource for providing a top­quality, peer-reviewed, continuing education model for your nursing students is available through Sigma Tau Tau International’s Online Case Studies for Nursing.

Students who are seeking further educational opportunities or meeting licensing or recertification requirements in specialty areas can complete courses at their own level or learning pace, and at their convenience. There are even opportunities to retake courses if a user isn't satisfied with their original score. As an educator, you can participate in the program by sharing your expertise with colleagues worldwide either by writing peer-reviewed case studies or by serving as a case study reviewer.

“Nurses are lifelong learners and this program helps to support them in their career and personal goals,” says Patricia E. Thompson, RN, EID, president of Sigma Tau Tau. “Because nurses have busy lives with a variety of professional demands, it's exciting to offer a continuing education opportunity that can be completed at their convenience and from the privacy of their own homes.”

Registered nurses at any professional level or job responsibility who take the courses will gain points of contact to develop expertise in their particular area of interest. Sigma Tau Tau is working to recruit more nurses through a national public relations and advertising campaign to attract new nurses, but also to provide health care content for nurses, consulted on curriculum development and participated in a community project identifying children with developmental delays.

The opportunity offered through Chiron enabled Koepke to experience nursing philosophies of the eastern world and expanded her knowledge of teaching styles learned from her Korean colleagues. This experience strengthened her role as a leader within the School of Nursing at Anderson University, Anderson, Ind., where she is a faculty member.

Senior Fellow Andrea W. Koepke was one of the initial participants to complete Chiron in the fall of 1999 as part of a sabbatical leave. Prior to her membership, she had selected Chiron as a way to mentor additional groups of nursing students to a Korean orphanage for children with disabilities. Koepke’s plan included teaching at Seoul National University in South Korea, presenting continuing education workshops and consulting with the Lambda Alpha-at-Large Chapter. She taught graduate students about many facets of nursing, consulted on curriculum development and participated in a community project identifying children with developmental delays.

The deadline for Chiron 2001 applications is June 30, 2000. For additional information visit nursingsociety.org/leadership/chiron.html or call 1.317.634.8717.

Teila Higgins is a journalism intern from Butler University, Indianapolis, Ind., working with the International Leadership Institute at Sigma Tau Tau International.

Nursing coalition launches Web site

By Jama Piper

A coalition of 17 nursing and health care organizations working to recruit more nurses through a national public relations and advertising campaign will take the campaign’s message to the Internet via a new Web site. Sigma Theta Tau International is a charter member of the coalition and serves as its fiscal agent.

The Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow (NHT) site, to be launched in May during Nurses Week (May 6 - 12), will feature information about the campaign, coalition members, and sponsor and partner opportunities. The site’s address is nursesource.org.

Medical Recruitment Network, an Internet company based out of Indianapolis, is working to recruit more nurses through a national public relations and advertising campaign and will develop the Web site.

"When fully functional, it will include career opportunities for nurses, "explains Jonathan Klimansky, vice president, sales and business development of Medical Recruitment Network. "It's going to be a great tool not only for recruiting new nurses, but also to provide health care content and career options based on personal and professional needs." The NHT coalition was formed to proactively address the need for health care professionals, has signed on as a major financial and in-kind sponsor for the campaign.

"Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow/Sm," the new site will showcase the Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow ads. Professionals will be able to go to the site for nursing career profiles, speaking tips, mentor program information and enhance their on what coalition members are doing to promote nursing within their organizations.

While coalition members are searching for major corporate support, individual contributions are also needed for the campaign. Donors will be recognized on the coalition Web site. If you'd like to contribute, please make your check payable to "Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow/Sm" and send to Sigma Tau Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, 46202, 130 West North Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202.

Such exposure will result from a series of high-quality, attention-getting television, print and radio advertisements broadcast nationally.

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Such exposure will result from a series of high-quality, attention-getting television, print and radio advertisements broadcast nationally.
Title: Associate Professor

Employer: University of Southwestern Louisiana

Years in Current Position: 33

Three favorite aspects of job:
- Introducing students to maternity care
- Assisting students in clinical learning
- Working with colleagues who have similar backgrounds and goals

Three challenging aspects of job:
- Balancing teaching, research, practice and administrative roles
- Writing successful grant proposals
- Publishing in professional literature

Job description:
Facilitating holistic and woman-centered philosophy during instruction in both the clinical and classroom setting. Role includes shaping studies and education during pregnancy, confidence building, and development of labor-coping skills as women approach birth.

Education:
- BSN, 1972, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions
- MSN, 1983, University of Mississippi, maternal-newborn/nursing DNS, 1995, Louisiana State University, nursing education

SIGMA THETA TAU
Delta Eta
Best advice: “Talk to practicing nurses to find out what the work entails. Seek out nurses from different specialty areas.”

How Sigma Theta Tau has shaped her career:
“Belonging to Sigma Theta Tau has helped me in my career in this way: As a new faculty member, I was asked to run for president of our chapter. Though initially overwhelmed at the idea, I accepted the challenge and was subsequently elected. My experience as chapter president and the support I received from my Sigma Theta Tau colleagues helped me develop confidence in my organizational and leadership abilities and welcome further challenges in my career in academia.”

Anne B. Broussard is one member whose career is profiled on our new Web site, Career Profiles in Nursing, at nursingsociety.org/career. This site offers society members, students and others interested in a nursing career insight into the many career opportunities—administration, clinical practice, pediatric nursing, research, education and more. It links you directly with each person and leads to the universities from which they graduated. Visit the site today to ask these nurses questions through e-mail and explore the world of nursing.

When assessing excellence in online education, ask the following questions:
- Who are the faculty and what are their qualifications?
- Is there a “match” between faculty expertise and course content?
- Is course content accurate? Reflective of current practice standards? Evidence-based?
- Does the course sponsor/provider have a “bias” or “sponsored” material in content?
- Is the course curriculum or program peer reviewed? Accredited?
- Has the educational provider met accreditation requirements to offer the course?
- Will academic credit or contact hours be awarded?
- Can credits be used to meet requirements for degree programs, certification or licensure?
- Will credits be accepted by degree granting entities?
- What learning strategies and activities are used in this course to promote successful achievement of learning outcomes?
- How will learning outcomes be recorded? Who maintains the record? What evidence of learning can be accumulated for a learning portfolio?
- What learning strategies and activities are used in this course to promote successful achievement of learning outcomes?
- How long will it take to complete the course?
- What computer, learning or study skills are necessary to participate in the course? Will they be offered as part of the course or developed during the course?
- Are opportunities available for dialog with other course participants, socialization, networking or cross-cultural sharing? Access to mentors or preceptors?
- Is there access to learning resources such as libraries, tutorials, simulations or databases?
The celebration of Nurses Week, beginning each year on Florence Nightingale’s birthday, is a time for reflecting on the rich sense of community that draws us into the profession and sustains us as we move from novices to experts in the practice of nursing. When nursing colleagues meet, there is an implicit understanding that we are drawn together in a common bond of service to others. Nurses Week events provide us with opportunities to make explicit how the community of nursing improves the health of the world’s people. As Sigma Theta Tau International members are living out this legacy, May 6-12 is an opportune time to inform the broader community of the public good performed by nurses in a variety of roles.

From its earliest beginnings, nursing has been concerned with the human condition. In addition to caring for patients, nurses are often the ones who are in tune with students’ secrets and emotional issues. Concern for overall health has linked nursing closely with social efforts of communities to provide practical and effective measures to preserve health. As a result, nurses are trusted by the public to know how to care for persons who experience suffering and distress, and they are expected to partner with others to promote health and prevent disease under varying and complex conditions. The public trust is rooted in a distinguished tradition.

The work of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing, provides testimony to nursing’s mission of service to humanity over a lifetime. As perhaps the greatest war nurse in history, she overcame obstacles to make significant contributions to the military health care system and hospital reform. She pioneered the use of social statistics and her graphical representation. She masterfully consulted with others to persuade governmental leaders to support large-scale reforms in public health practices. Using the science of biostatistics, she dramatically illustrated how death rates decreased when the spread of infection across populations was controlled through sanitation measures.

The Nightingale vision of service to community was validated recently by society members who guided the development of its newly crafted organizational vision. Our aim is “to create a global community of nurses who lead in using scholarship, knowledge and technology to improve the health of the world’s people.” As we collaborate with individuals and groups in the broader community to carry out this mandate, members are urged to tell their inspiring stories. As full partners, the public deserves to know of nursing’s contributions to society and to engage in dialogues about the ways in which the work of nursing might be supported now and in the future. Nurses Week provides the entree for nurturing relationships among nursing colleagues and our local communities.

Florence Nightingale, the mother of modern nursing, is commemorated through International Nurses Week, beginning each year on her birthday, May 6.

Article resource/suggested reading
Jeanne M. Floyd, RN, PhD, CAE, is director of research and evaluation at Sigma Theta Tau International.