



American Association
of Colleges of Nursing
The Voice of Academic Nursing

AACN LEADS
TRANSFORMING ACADEMIC NURSING LEADERSHIP

Elevating Leaders in Academic Nursing

*An AACN LEADS Program Designed for Aspiring Deans
and Senior Faculty in Leadership Roles*

Directory

ELAN Cohort V- 2023-2024



Angela Alston, DNP, MPH, APRN-CNP

Assistant Clinical Professor and Chief Diversity Officer
The Ohio State University

Dr. Alston is an Assistant Clinical Professor and Chief Diversity Officer at The Ohio State University College of Nursing. She teaches in the women’s health nurse practitioner and nurse midwifery programs. She is passionate about equitable health care for all. Dr. Alston has over 16 years of clinical experience in diverse settings. She holds dual certification as a women’s health and family nurse practitioner and continues to maintain an active clinical practice.



Kyungeh An, PhD, RN

Associate Dean of the School of Nursing
Georgia State University

Dr. An is a dedicated educator and an accomplished researcher for more than two decades, she offers her values and expertise to academic programs and scientific societies to advance Nursing Science and improve people’s lives through education, scholarship, and leadership. Her program of research focuses on the prevention of cardiovascular disease (CVD) in vulnerable populations. With the overarching goal of advancing science, she had expanded her research over two decades. She earned her doctorate in nursing-neuropsychology from The Ohio State University and her master’s and bachelor’s, both in nursing, from Seoul National University. She started her doctorate program after 10 years of clinical practice.





Kimberly 'Kim' Brown, DNP, MSN, RN

Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Dr. Brown is a Clinical Assistant Professor at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville College of Nursing. She received her DNP from the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga. Her nursing experience has been focused on adult health. She has been a nurse educator in undergraduate education for over 12 years. Dr. Brown's scholarship is in the area of diversity in nursing education. As Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the College of Nursing, Dr. Brown leads many initiatives focused on inclusive excellence in nursing education.



Gina Clarkson, PhD, APRN, NNP-BC

Interim Associate Dean and Director of the SON
Idaho State University

Dr. Clarkson is an Associate Professor with tenure in the School of Nursing at Idaho State University. Dr. Clarkson will be taking over as the Interim Associate Dean and Director for the School of Nursing on July 1, 2023. Dr. Clarkson teaches mainly in the PhD program, but teaches all nursing graduate students. Dr. Clarkson's research area of interest is parenting of infants and she is particularly interested in helping fathers of infants who were sick as newborns, such as those who were in the Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU). In addition to being faculty in the School of Nursing, Dr. Clarkson is a Neonatal Nurse Practitioner who works Per Diem to maintain her clinical skills at Intermountain Medical Center in the NICU.



Kelley Connor, PhD, RN, CHSE

Professor/Simulation Center Director
Boise State University

Dr. Connor has been a nursing educator and scholar at Boise State University for seventeen years. She has created and taught courses in undergraduate and graduate nursing programs including courses in informatics, maternity nursing, camp nursing, and simulation education. She has an interest in international nursing and has served as a visiting professor at Hangzhou Normal University in Hangzhou, China, and taught faculty-led study abroad courses in Ireland and Croatia. Dr. Connor has demonstrated a strong commitment to simulation innovation. She is currently the Director of Simulation-based Education and Research in the School of Nursing where she teaches and mentors students, faculty, and staff. Recently, she oversaw the development and implementation of a series of virtual healthcare simulation scenarios into the prelicense nursing program to prepare nurses to practice in a virtual environment, an inpatient psychiatric experience, and a self-care simulation scenario aimed at reducing burnout. She regularly recruits and mentors individuals to participate in simulation research teams investigating simulation outcomes. Current research projects include developing empathy, integrating self-care, and virtual healthcare options. She is an active member of several simulation professional organizations.



Butch de Castro, PhD, MSN/MPH, RN, FAAN

Dean and Professor
Seattle University

Dr. de Castro is a Professor and Dean of the College of Nursing at Seattle University where he holds the Robert J. and Mary H. Bertch Endowed Professorship in Nursing Leadership. As a researcher, Dr. de Castro utilizes community-engagement approaches to examine how employment circumstances, job conditions, and work organization factors contribute to chronic stress and risk for work-related injury and illness among immigrants and populations of color. As an educator, he teaches from a health equity and social determinants framework, employs problem-based learning methods, and incorporates service-learning projects. His external service has spanned being on the King County Board of Health; journal editorial boards for Workplace Safety and Health, and Public Health Nursing; the American Academy of Nursing's Diversity and Inclusivity Committee; and Washington State Nurses Association's Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety Committee. His academic preparation includes receiving a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from the University of California, Los Angeles, a joint Master of Science in Nursing/Master of Public Health degree and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Environmental Health both from The Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, and a post-doctoral research fellowship in public health at the University of Illinois at Chicago.



Carolyn Dickens, PhD APRN

Interim Associate Dean for Faculty Practice and
Community Partnerships
University of Illinois

Dr. Dickens is the Interim Associate Dean of Faculty Practice and Community Partnerships where she oversees several faculty practice sites, the financial contracts of state and county programs, and the nursing professional development program. Dr. Dickens role includes maximizing the educational experience of NP students through her faculty based clinical sites and leadership roles within the UI Health system. Dr Dickens serves as the chair of the Quality Committee at the second largest FQHC in Illinois (80,000 individual patients) where the organization has won multiple quality awards under her leadership., She is Co-I on several grants to develop innovative STEM solutions to improve the care of patients with Heart Failure and low Socioeconomic Status. She is a Fellow in the American Association of Nurse Practitioners and a Fellow in the Heart Failure Society of America.



Tomeka Dowling, DNP, RN

Director of DNP Curriculum & Operations
Rush University

Dr. Dowling is an Assistant Professor and Director of DNP Curriculum and Operations at Rush University College of Nursing. As director of a nationally ranked DNP program, she is focused on ensuring standardized processes within the program, college, and university that promote educational equity, inclusive learning environments as well as integrate instructional strategies for diverse learners. Through various academic leadership roles, she has experienced the many challenges of higher education and nursing education specifically. Dr. Dowling has a passion to move beyond the rhetoric of inclusion and diversity to integrating strategies that promote inclusion in, and resilience beyond, the classroom. Dr. Dowling is a member of Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society, American Nurses Association (ANA), Virginia Nurses Association (VNA), American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), and National League for Nursing (NLN). Working with various professional groups has granted her the opportunity to promote excellence in nursing education while meeting the profession's need for a competent and diverse nursing workforce. She is engaged in preparing nurses who can meet health care needs of diverse populations, narrow gaps in health equity and disparities, and develop policy to improve health care.



Allyson Duffy, PhD, RN

Associate Professor/ Regional Director
University of South Florida

Dr. Duffy is an Associate Professor and Regional Director for two regional campuses for the University of South Florida College of Nursing. She is a three-time alumna of the University of South Florida, receiving her BSN, MSN, and PhD. Allyson completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the James A. Haley VA in Tampa, FL. She was awarded the faculty Daisy Award in 2022.



Emily Fox, DNP, APRN, NNP-BC, CNE

Director of Pediatric & Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Programs
University of Texas at Arlington

Dr. Fox is a Board-Certified Neonatal Nurse Practitioner (NNP-BC) and Certified Nurse Educator (CNE) with a passion for evidence-based practice, education, professional development, and creating positive change. She takes pride in providing excellent graduate and doctoral education and believes in bold action toward innovation. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 2005 from The University of New Mexico, a Master of Science in Nursing with Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Certification in 2009 from Arizona State University, a Post-Master's Certificate in Conflict Management, Negotiation & Mediation in 2019 from The University of Alabama, and a Doctor of Nursing Practice in 2020 from The University of Alabama. Dr. Fox has worked in the clinical arena as an NNP-BC since 2009 and in higher education since 2017. She previously served as an adjunct faculty and clinical instructor for the West Virginia University School of Medicine and has conducted research as a primary investigator and participated as a co-investigator in multiple clinical trials. Currently, Dr. Fox is the Director of Pediatric & Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Programs at the University of Texas at Arlington and maintains clinical practice in several Neonatal Intensive Care Units in the DFW area.



Ann Fronczek, PhD, RN

Associate Professor/Director of UG Programs/Director of Nursing PhD Program
Binghamton University

Dr. Fronczek is an Associate Professor and academic leader in the Decker College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Binghamton University. Since 1999, she worked her way from a position as a clinical instructor in the undergraduate program to Clinical Associate Professor. She served as Director of Undergraduate Programs from 2008-2014. In 2014, she left the academic role in order to work to focus achieving tenure and promotion. During this time, Dr. Fronczek’s research and scholarship work was in the area of telehealth where she served as a telehealth education consultant for a program grant and local partners. After achieving the rank of tenure, Dr. Fronczek continued her role as Associate Professor and assumed leadership for the nursing PhD Program, a role that she continues. In 2022, she asked to return to the role of Director of Undergraduate Programs in addition to leading the PhD Program. Her current area of teaching expertise is curriculum development and implementation, course development, education technology, and leadership in nursing education. Past teaching experiences have been across clinical courses in the undergraduate, pre-licensure programs. She serves as mentor to undergraduate students in an honors program, graduate nurse educator students, and PhD students.



Carmen Giurgescu, PhD, RN, WHNP, FAAN

Professor, Associate Dean for Research, and Chatlos Foundation Endowed Chair in Nursing
University of Central Florida

Dr. Giurgescu is a Professor, Associate Dean for Research and the Chatlos Foundation Endowed Chair in Nursing at the University of Central Florida (UCF) College of Nursing. Dr. Giurgescu has more than 15 years of clinical experience as a Labor and Delivery Registered Nurse and a Women’s Health Care Nurse Practitioner. She has taught across the undergraduate and graduate nursing programs, and is committed to academic excellence as measured by her students’ success. Dr. Giurgescu is internationally known for her work in reducing disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes among African American families. Her research has been focusing on the influence of maternal and paternal factors (e.g., racial discrimination, depressive symptoms, telomere length) on preterm birth. Dr. Giurgescu has received more than \$14M in research funding as PI, Co-I and faculty sponsor. As Associate Dean for Research, Dr. Giurgescu’s impact has resulted in a 250% increase in research funding at the UCF College of Nursing. Dr. Giurgescu is committed to the success of students and faculty from UCF and across the country.



Katherine 'Christy' Hall, PhD, RN-BC, CNE

Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs
East Tennessee State University

Dr. Hall is an Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs at East Tennessee State University. She earned her PhD from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, MSN in Nursing Education from Old Dominion University, and her BSN from the University of Virginia's College at Wise. She has 28 years of nursing experience with 23 spent in academics in various roles. She is a board-certified Medical-Surgical nurse and a Certified Nurse Educator. She has significant experience in curriculum development and extensive teaching experience, having taught and mentored students in Associate, BSN, MSN, DNP, and PhD programs. Dr. Hall's research is focused in the area of clinical preceptorships and nursing education. She has served as the PI for a \$1.8 million dollar HRSA grant directed at improving clinical experiences for APRN students and their preceptors. She has presented and published works at regional, national, and international levels. She is engaged in several professional organizations and currently serves on the editorial board for the Journal of Professional Nursing. Dr. Hall is passionate about nursing education and enjoys mentoring novice faculty entering academia.



Janice Hawes, DNP, RNC, CNS

BSN Program Director
University of Texas at Tyler

Dr. Hawes is BSN Program Director at the University of Texas at Tyler. This position oversees the nursing tracks: BSN, RN-BSN, and Concurrent programs. She earned her BSN from Fort Hays State University, MSN, CNS, and DNP from the UTT. Her initial clinical professional practice focused on the Maternity specialty while obtaining her RNC-OB certification. She continued her clinical practice while pursuing a management track promotion into the Interim Nursing Chief Officer position. Her professional goals and love of teaching in her CNS role placed her in academic teaching for the past several years. She served in various leadership roles at the university as Curriculum Chair for the Shared Governance committee and was selected to receive the Faculty Daisy Award. She was selected as lead faculty for the undergraduate curriculum revision in 2019. Her dedication to academic profession recently allowed her to be promoted to BSN Program Director. Dr. Hawes is active in research projects such as SPIN and GLOW projects. She continues teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs, where she loves working with nursing students. She brings new ideas and improvements into the program with the overall goal of student success.



Brittany Hay, DNP, APRN, ANP-BC, FNP-BC

Associate Dean of Graduate Clinical Programs
University of South Florida

Dr. Hay is an Associate Professor and Associate Dean of the Graduate Clinical Programs at the University of South Florida College of Nursing (USF-CON). She is driven to develop a skilled next-generation advanced practice workforce. She has published and presented on successful projects to reduce unnecessary hospitalizations and readmissions, academic-practice partnerships during the pandemic, and competency-based education. Her scholarship focuses on strategies to develop and assess diagnostic reasoning competence in nurse practitioner students. Dr. Hay joined the USF-CON in 2018 as an Assistant Professor. She has served as director of family and adult-gerontology nurse practitioner concentrations. She is leading curriculum transformation at the college to address the 2021 AACN Essentials. Dr. Hay has been recognized for her contributions by students and peers through the Daisy Award for Extraordinary Faculty (2020), Graduate Academic Educator Award (2021), and a Faculty Leadership Award (2022). Dr. Hay has been in advanced practice since 1994 providing direct care across rehabilitative, rural, and urban settings in the Eastern U.S. Sixteen years were spent in a medically underserved area. She draws on this rich experience to develop programming that advances the clinical reasoning of students within complex, real-world contexts.



Patricia Hershberger, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, FAAN

Chair, Dept of Health Behavior and Biological Sciences
University of Michigan

Dr. Hershberger is the Rhetaugh G. Dumas Endowed Professor and Chair of the Department of Health Behavior and Biological Sciences at the University of Michigan School of Nursing. In addition to leading over 60 faculty as Department Chair, Dr. Hershberger has built upon her clinical practice as a Board-Certified Family Nurse Practitioner to lead transdisciplinary research teams to advance knowledge about decision making among individuals and families who interface with reproductive technologies to create scalable digital health interventions (e.g., "TELL Tool") to improve the health and well-being of families across generations. Her inimitable leadership style has also been recognized by multiple professional organizations where she has served on the Board of Directors of the Midwest Nursing Research Society (MNRS), Trustee for the MNRS Foundation, Inaugural Chair for both the MNRS Mid-Career and the Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science Mid-Career Scientific Interest Group. Dr. Hershberger is a fellow in the American Academy of Nursing and the immediate Past-Chair of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine Nurses Professional Group Executive Board. Recently, she was the only nurse appointed to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine Donor Conceived People and Families Taskforce.



Natalie Heywood, DNP, RN

Director, RN-BSN & CEP Program/Clinical Assistant Professor
Arizona State University

Dr. Heywood is a clinical assistant professor at Arizona State University. She serves as the RN-BSN and Concurrent Enrollment Program Director. She teaches in both the RN-BSN and MS Nursing programs and has previously taught in the pre-licensure nursing program. She earned a Master's degree in Nursing Education and a Doctor of Nursing Practice Innovation Leadership from Arizona State University. She is passionate about systems thinking and developing her leadership skills to support nursing students and faculty best to be successful in their roles. Her work includes contributions to the recently published position paper on using the NCLEX RN Test Plan to crosswalk to the New Essentials to support the curricular redesign of RN-BSN programs. Dr. Heywood received the Innovation and Excellence in Nursing RN-BSN Education Award in 2021 for her innovative work with senior nursing students completing their capstone project through community involvement during the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Heywood also works per diem in the emergency department, where she has spent most of her clinical career. She is married, has two children, and is an avid hockey fan.



LeAnn Holmes, DNP, APRN, FAANP

Clinical Associate Professor/DNP Director
University of Nebraska Medical Center

Dr. Holmes is a clinical associate professor with a 25+ year background in practice who has been with the UNMC College of Nursing graduate program for 5 years. She maintains a current primary care faculty practice with an NP-owned practice and also services as the Director of the Morehead Center for Nursing Practice. Additionally, she is the Director of the DNP program with 150 students in eight specialties. As director of these programs, she works with many community partners, mentors faculty and students and leads change. Her areas of clinical scholarship focus include NP workforce development and the impact of faculty practice on NP education and faculty recruitment and retention. LeAnn is also the PI of the current HRSA-granted uNParalleled post graduate nurse practitioner residency program now in its fourth year. She is active as a Fellow of AANP and a site visitor for CCNE NP Residency/ Fellowship Accreditation.



Derek Holt, DNP, FNP-BC, ENP-BC

Assistant Professor/ Director of FNP Track
University of Mississippi Medical Center

Dr. Holt is an assistant professor at the University of Mississippi Medical Center School of Nursing. Dr. Holt specializes in family and emergency medicine. Holt received his BSN cum laude in 2003 from Alcorn State University, where he was named Undergraduate of the Year in 2001. He began his career as a registered nurse in various medical/surgical specialties at UMMC in 2003 and earned his MSN and postgraduate certificate with highest distinction at Alcorn State in 2006. He has worked in the Department of Emergency Medicine for over 13 years and served as the lead practitioner. He has been faculty here since 2015. Dr. Holt has served as a content expert panelist for American Nurses Credentialing Center's Emergency Nurse Practitioner Certification. Holt obtained his DNP from the University of Alabama at Birmingham with superior academic performance in 2012. He also has experience as an expert legal nurse consultant. He is the current program director of the UMMC School of Nursing Family Nurse Practitioner track. Dr. Holt is a fellow in the Dean's Emerging Academic Leaders Fellowship Program. Dr. Holt recently received the 2022 State Award for Excellence presented by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners.



Jackeline 'Jackie' Iseler, DNP, RN, ACNS-BC, CNE

Program Director
Michigan State University

Dr. Iseler is a DNP prepared clinical nurse specialists (CNS) and a national nursing leader. Dr. Iseler's dual appointment role includes the CNS Program Director at Michigan State University and faculty practice as a CNS at Trinity Health Grand Rapids, Michigan. She is a National League of Nursing certified nurse educator and was recently elected to the board of directors for the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialist (NACNS). Additionally, she received the faculty of the year award from NACNS in March 2023. She was the first certified CNS at Spectrum Health in Grand Rapids, Michigan which led her peers to seek certification. Dr. Iseler has served as president of the Great Lakes Chapter of the International Transplant Nurses' Society, president of the Michigan Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists, and chair of the Graduate Education Committee for NACNS. She has also served as the first CNS representative for the Michigan Board of Nursing. Dr. Iseler's educational, leadership, and clinical expertise has produced numerous publications on patient care, and hospital leadership, academic and service partnerships, and impactful publications on the role and education of CNS's.



Desha Johnson Makiya, PhD, MBA, RN, CCRN-K, PCCN-K

Clinical Assistant Professor/Assistant Director Didactic Learning
Sam Houston State University

Dr. Johnson Makiya is a Clinical Assistant Professor at Sam Houston State University and serves as Assistant Director of Didactic Learning, leading traditional and RN-BSN programs, curriculum redesign, faculty mentoring, and supervision. Along with her administrative role, she teaches senior level adult health and older adult courses. She earned a PhD in Nursing from the University of Texas at Tyler, a Master of Business Administration in Health Care Administration from the University of Phoenix, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Alcorn State University. Dr. Johnson Makiya has more than 20 years of nursing experience, holds certifications in adult critical care and progressive care nursing, and continues practice at a Level II Trauma Acute Care Facility. Her scholarly interest focuses on moral distress and healthy work environments. She is currently a Co-PI in the Stress, Trauma, and Nurse in Development (STAND) study which seeks to examine the prevalence of trauma and burnout among undergraduate nursing students, and a Co-PI on a 2023 GEER II-Nursing Innovation Grant which aims to develop innovative solutions to address the shortage of nursing faculty. Dr. Johnson Makiya is passionate about student success and an active participant in multiple professional nursing organizations.



Michelle Kabakibi, DNP, FNP-C, AGNP-C

Assistant Director of DNP NP Programs
University of San Diego

Dr. Kabakibi is a nationally board-certified Family and Adult/Gerontology Nurse practitioner. She is the DNP/NP Assistant Director and a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of San Diego. She has experience in working at an internal medicine private practice, Nursing homes care and management and the hospital setting. She is responsible for providing primary care, preventative care, physical exams, diagnosing and treating complex disease processes, treating opioid use disorder, performing wellness and cognitive impairment exams and minor procedures. Dr. Kabakibi is a member of the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties, American Association of Nurse Practitioners and the Honor Society of Nursing Sigma Theta Tau International. She is member of The Junior league with an emphasis on Community recovery related to Transitional aged foster youth and food insecurity. Dr. Kabakibi is a published author in The International Journal of Health, Wellness, and Society. She has a passion for leadership including mentoring prospective nurse practitioners and continuous development of the NP program at USD. She has a great interest in teaching Primary care and the complex disease processes of aging adults including education in awareness of cognitive and functional decline and health promotion.



Heidi Keeler, PhD, MSN/MBA, RN

Associate Professor, Director Continuing Interprofessional Development and Innovation Office
University Of Nebraska Medical Center

Dr. Keeler serves as an associate professor at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). She received her BSN from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, MA, a dual MSN/MBA from Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, and her PhD nursing research from The University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, Nebraska. Dr. Keeler has a professional interest in nursing workforce and professional development using entrepreneurial and innovative solutions. She is the director of the UNMC College of Nursing Continuing interProfessional Development and Innovation office which specializes in producing live and online educational products for the healthcare team. She serves as lead faculty on the Gerontological Nurse Prep Course, designed to train nurses to attain board certification in gerontological nursing, which has increased the overall number of board-certified nurses by over 6 percent nationally. Dr. Keeler serves as the UNMC assistant vice chancellor for community engagement and is responsible for building a supportive infrastructure to maintain long term reciprocal and mutually beneficial community-academic partnerships. Dr. Keeler is interested in aligning professional development and related technologies with academic continuums and community engagement to innovatively address the nursing workforce, with her most recent funding that targets preceptor and clinical faculty systems regionally.



Kimberly 'Kim' Kelly-Cortez, PhD, MEd, MBA, RN, CNE, NPD-BC

Senior Associate Dean/Director of Programs
Western Governors University

Dr. Kelly-Cortez is the Senior Associate Dean and Director of Programs for the Prelicensure BSN program at Western Governors University (WGU). In her national role, Dr. Kelly-Cortez has continued to support the growth of the Prelicensure program by opening new pathways to entry in new states, opening healthcare patient simulation centers/labs, and creating enrollment opportunities focusing on expanding access to communities in need of pathways to nursing education. She received her BA from Texas A&M University, MEd from the UHCL, her BSN and PhD in nursing from the UTMB, and her MBA from WGU. Dr. Kelly-Cortez is an NLN certified nurse educator (CNE) and is certified in nursing professional development by the ANCC (RN-BC). Her research continues to focus on student success, programmatic excellence, Competency Based Education, DEI, and the use of simulation in both the academic and hospital setting. She has also presented research related to NCLEX pass rates at local and national conferences including the NLN Education Summit in 2018 and 2020 along with presenting on Competency Based Education and Alternate Clinical Models at the NLN Summit in 2020 and on Diversity in BSN prelicensure programs in 2022 at the AACN conference.



Charleen McNeill, PhD, MSN, RN

Professor and Executive Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs
 University of Tennessee Health Science Center

Dr. McNeill is a Professor and the Executive Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. She obtained her PhD from the University of Texas at Tyler, her MSN from the University of Texas at El Paso, and her BSN from the University of Arkansas. Her research involves emergency shelter placement, emergency preparedness, resilience, and COVID-19. Research involving emergency preparedness centers on investigating response measures inclusive of individuals with access and functional needs, resiliency, and the impact health care providers have on preparedness levels. She investigates measures to improve emergency preparedness and response among health care professionals and preparedness levels among vulnerable citizens. Dr. McNeill is involved in studies to determine the prevalence of COVID-19 among various populations, the impact of COVID-19 on the lives of participants, and how antibody levels change over time. Dr. McNeill is an Army veteran who was recognized as the 2017 Inaugural Outstanding Alumni for the University of Texas at Tyler and the 2017 Outstanding Alumni for the College of Education and Health Professions at the University of Arkansas. Dr. McNeill is also the President Elect for the Southern Nursing Research Society.



Heidi Mennenga, PhD, RN, CNE

Professor/Associate Dean for Academic Programs
 South Dakota State University

Dr. Mennenga is the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and a Professor at South Dakota State University. Her administrative scope of responsibility includes directing Undergraduate and Graduate Nursing Programs, including BSN, RN to BSN, MS, DNP, PhD, and Post-Graduate Certificate programs. She supervises three assistant deans who oversee our four campus locations across the state of South Dakota and provides supervision to three other individuals. Prior to her current role, Dr. Mennenga was a rural nurse at a critical access hospital and a faculty member in the College of Nursing at South Dakota State University. During her role as faculty, she served in several leadership positions, including Undergraduate Curriculum Chair and Graduate Curriculum Chair. Dr. Mennenga earned her BSN and her MSN from South Dakota State University and her PhD from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Dr. Mennenga’s research focus is related to rural nursing, curriculum, and student outcomes. She recently served as PI of a \$2.8 million HRSA grant focused on training nurses in the primary care setting. Dr. Mennenga engages in lifelong learning and is committed to exploring opportunities to aid in further leadership development, including creating a network of other leaders.



April Messer, PhD, RN, CCRN

Associate Director, School of Nursing, Assistant Professor
Western Carolina University

Dr. Messer is an Associate Director and Assistant Professor at Western Carolina University. She is a second career nurse and began her nursing career working in an Adult Medical Surgical Intensive Care Unit. In her clinical role, she served as the Patient Safety Officer for the hospital's critical care service line, chair of the unit-based practice council, and chair of the hospital-based practice council. Dr. Messer teaches in the Accelerated BSN program and her scholarship is in the area of improving care for people with substance use disorders. In addition to serving as Associate Director of the SON, Dr. Messer represents the College of Health and Human Science as a faculty senator, and is chair of the university Academic Policy and Review Council.



Sarah Mollman, PhD, RN, CHPN, CNE

Associate Dean for Research
South Dakota State University

Dr. Mollman is Associate Dean for Research (ADR) for the College of Nursing at South Dakota State University. Her nursing oncology experience led her to research decision making in women with early-stage breast cancer as a master thesis which planted the research seed. After graduating with a PhD in Nursing from the University of Nevada Las Vegas, Sarah began her palliative care research trajectory which includes studying perceptions and knowledge of palliative care as well as the adaptation of an early palliative care intervention to be culturally responsive for the state's underserved populations with advanced cancer. She serves as the co-project director of a statewide network which has educated over 2,000 individuals in primary palliative care and brought together over 400 interdisciplinary professionals interested in palliative care. In her role as ADR, she hopes to plant and grow research seeds in others and foster nursing science which benefits the profession and society. Sarah balances her professional life by spending time with her family (two-legged and four-legged), hiking in the beautiful Black Hills and reading historical fiction.



Tiffany Moore, PhD, RN, SANE-A

Interim Associate Dean for Academic Programs
University of Nebraska Medical Center

Dr. Moore is an Associate Professor at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, College of Nursing in Omaha, Nebraska. She is the Interim Associate Dean for Academic Programs. Dr. Moore's research interest includes the effects of chronic stress on maternal/infant health. She currently practices as a Forensic Nurse Examiner.



Angela 'Angel' Mulcahy, PhD, RN, CMSRN, CHSE

Clinical Associate Professor, Prelicensure Program
Coordinator, BSN Honors Program Coordinator
Texas A & M Health Science Center

Dr. Mulcahy is a Clinical Associate Professor, Pre-licensure Program Coordinator and BSN Honors Program Coordinator with the Texas A&M School of Nursing. Dr. Mulcahy earned her BSN from the University of Wyoming, MS from the University of North Dakota, and PhD from the University of Texas at Tyler. Dr. Mulcahy is a certified Medical-Surgical Nurse (CMSRN), a Certified Healthcare Simulation Educator (CHSE), and has over 13 years of education experience in nursing and the use of simulation as a teaching modality. Dr. Mulcahy is a member of both SSIH and INACSL and was an INACSL Research Fellow in 2020-2021. Dr. Mulcahy joined the faculty of Texas A&M University School of Nursing in 2012 and over the past 10 years, her research has focused on the use of simulation with baccalaureate students to increase clinical performance while decreasing the use of traditional clinical sites. Dr. Mulcahy has experience with interdisciplinary collaboration as the education director/coordinator to expand the reach of Forensic Nursing to Improve Access to Care and Screening and successfully managed two simulation grants from The Texas Higher Education Collaborating Board (THECB), both focused on the development of the simulation program in the School of Nursing pre-licensure program.



Bridget O'Brien, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, AOCNP

Director of Family Nurse Practitioner Program/Assistant Professor
Rush University

Dr. O'Brien is the Director of the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Program and Assistant Professor at Rush University. She earned her BSN from Marquette University and her DNP from Rush University. She is double board certified as a family nurse practitioner and advanced oncology nurse practitioner, and maintains an oncology clinical practice at Northwestern Medicine, where she developed the role as the first nurse practitioner in the division of oncology. In her academic role for the past 10 years at Rush University, she has taught and advised in the DNP program. More recently she directs the FNP program and has developed and implemented a large simulation program. She was elected to the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) Simulation Committee, and is co-authoring an e-book chapter on simulation. Dr. O'Brien is also the appointed chair of the Nursing Committee of ECOG-ACRIN. In this role she facilitates nurse liaisons to all disease committees aiding in the development and implementation of National Cancer Institute (NCI) sponsored trials. She is collaborating with all the cooperative groups of the NCI to enhance engagement of advanced practice providers (APPs) in clinical oncology research. Her scholarly interests include oncology, simulation, primary care, and diagnostic reasoning.



Michele Polfuss, PhD, RN, CPNP-AC/PC, FAAN

Associate Professor/Joint Research in the Nursing of Children
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

Dr. Polfuss is a tenured Associate Professor and the Joint Research Chair in the Nursing of Children between the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee College of Nursing and Children's Wisconsin. She began practicing as a Nurse in 1996 and then as a Certified Pediatric Nurse Practitioner in 2000. Her passion for the prevention and treatment of childhood obesity prompted her to obtain her PhD in Nursing in 2010. She transitioned to academia in 2013 but has remained connected to clinical practice through the Joint Chair role since 2017. Concurrently she has honed her research trajectory, which is focused on the measurement, prevention, and treatment of childhood obesity and its related comorbidities with a special focus on children with developmental disabilities and the role of the family through parenting and feeding behaviors. She currently is teaching in the graduate program of the College of Nursing while completing her two multisite federally funded studies. Her most recent accomplishment was being inducted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing in 2022. Professional organizations include, but are not limited to, the American Association of Nursing, International Family Nurses Association, National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, and Sigma Theta Tau Nursing Society.



Megan Pratt, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, GS-C

Associate Professor/ Track leader of the FNP and AGPCNP programs
University of Nevada, Reno

Dr. Pratt graduated with her Bachelors in Nursing in 2004 from the University of Nevada Reno. She began her career in critical care. She obtained her Master’s degree as a Family Nurse Practitioner in 2010 from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She went on to complete a post masters as a Nurse Educator at the University of Nevada Reno in 2015 and her Doctorate of Nursing Practice from Frontier Nursing University in 2020. She is currently an Associate Professor and track leader for both the Family Nurse Practitioner and Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Programs at the University of Nevada, Reno. She maintains clinical practice serving her states first responders as the Wellness Clinical Director at Specialty Health. She is actively involved in her local chapter of Sigma Theta Tau, the Nevada Advanced Practice Nurse Association, Nevada Donor Network, and the Geriatric Advanced Practice Nurse Association.



Patricia ‘Patti’ Puccilli, DNP, RN, CNL

Clinical Professor
University of New Hampshire

Dr. Puccilli has been a nurse for thirty-four years and educator for the past eighteen. After receiving her master’s degree she began her academic career in 2005 as an assistant clinical professor at the University of New Hampshire specializing in maternal child nursing. She received her Doctorate of Nursing Practice in 2015. As a nurse educator, she has taught various courses across undergraduate and graduate programs. She has taught pre-licensure students and has served as DNP candidate’s project chair. She developed the first interdisciplinary simulation based course in the college of health and human services with a team based faculty model. She has been co-director of the simulation lab and was part of the team that recently designed a state-of-the-art health science simulation center. She currently teaches in the undergraduate program, which she has been director since 2015. This role has allowed her to be involved in program revision, curriculum development, faculty mentoring and supervision, and student advising. She successfully achieved rank of associate clinical professor in 2017 and one of the first to achieve rank of clinical professor in nursing in 2022. Dr Puccilli is deeply committed to preparing nurses to provide safe, equitable care to all patients.



Elizabeth Riley, DNP, APRN, CPNP-AC, PED-BC, RNC-NIC, CNE, ANEF

Program Director, MNSc/Clinical Associate Professor
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences

Dr. Riley is the MNSc Program Director and a Clinical Associate Professor in the Education Department within the UAMS College of Nursing. She teaches in both graduate and undergraduate programs. She earned her Certified Nurse Educator through the National League for Nursing (NLN) in 2016. Dr. Riley currently serves as the Specialty Coordinator for the Nursing Education track in the graduate program. She was recently inducted into the NLN Academy of Nursing Education in September 2022. Fellows in the NLN Academy of Nursing Education are individuals who have made enduring and substantial contributions to nursing education as teachers, mentors, scholars, public policy advocates, practice partners and administrators. They provide visionary leadership and are recognized for their expertise in nursing education. Dr. Riley earned her Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree in Educational Leadership from American Sentinel University in 2018. She has been awarded over \$100,000 in combined grant funding for intramural and extramural sources for both educational and neonatal research. Dr. Riley’s research focuses on effective curricular interventions to aid students with lifelong learning and scholarly writing, as well as interventions to promote positive outcomes in maternal and neonatal patient populations.



Jamie Robinson, PhD, RN, CNL

Associate Professor
James Madison University

Dr. Robinson is a tenured Associate Professor and the Associate Director for Undergraduate Programs at the James Madison University School of Nursing. She earned her Ph.D. from Virginia Commonwealth University and holds certification as a Clinical Nurse Leader. Dr. Robinson has 25 years of experience in nursing, including 18 in nursing education. Dr. Robinson’s nursing career has focused on serving rural communities. She is passionate about improving access to care in rural healthcare deserts by leveraging registered nurse expertise to bridge care gaps and assist with navigating complex healthcare systems. She is active in health policy, advocating at the state and federal level for policies that better serve rural communities. In nursing education, she teaches in BSN and RN to BSN programs, both of which focus on entry-level nursing competency. She was a team member of the HRSA NEPQR-funded Undergraduate Primary Care and Rural Education (UPCARE) project, where her role is to develop curricula to support primary care and rural healthcare education and to create longitudinal rural clinical experiences for BSN students. She is also a Quality Matters Certified Peer Reviewer and course developer.



Naila Russell, DNP, FNP-BC

Director of Advanced Practice- FNP Program
Simmons University

Dr. Russell is the Director of Advanced Practice for the Family Nurse Practitioner Program at Simmons University. She has a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from the University of Michigan-Flint. Dr. Russell has been practicing as a FNP since 2013 and specializes in dermatology. As the President of the Nurse Practitioner Association of Maryland, she is a health policy expert sitting on the legislative committee and regularly testifying on healthcare legislation. She is a past fellow of the George Washington University Center for Health Policy and Media Engagement and the Media and Medicine program at Harvard University. Dr. Russell has published original research on structural racism in nursing and has an active research interest in diversity, equity and inclusion. She is a member of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners History Committee. Dr. Russell lives in Michigan and enjoys spending time outdoors with her family.



Hudson Santos, PhD, RN, FABMR, FAAN

Associate Dean for Research
University of Miami

Dr. Santos is the Associate Dean for Research, Professor, and the Dolores J. Chambreau Endowed Chair at the University of Miami School of Nursing and Health Studies. Before joining the University of Miami, he was term-distinguished scholar, associate professor, and director of the biobehavioral laboratory at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dr. Santos is an internationally regarded nurse researcher who focuses on the impact of social determinants of health and adverse life events on maternal-child health and developmental outcomes in at-risk populations, with a special emphasis on Latinx communities. He employs bio-social methods, longitudinal cohorts, and clinical interventions to understand the relationship between biological and social factors in determining health and disease outcomes. His work aims to bridge the gap between biological and social domains in nursing science and address the developmental origins of health and disease. Dr. Santos has a strong commitment to mentoring future generations of nurses and other health professionals. He provides guidance to undergraduate, graduate, and early career faculty from various disciplines and institutions, and has experience teaching at both undergraduate and graduate levels in nursing and public health.



Tammy Spencer, DNP, RN, CNE, ACNS-BC, CCNS

Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Program
University of Colorado – Anschutz

Dr. Spencer currently serves as the Assistant Dean of the Undergraduate Program at the University of Colorado College of Nursing. Dr. Spencer is a seasoned classroom instructor with a focus on adult Medical-Surgical nursing with a special focus on concepts related to caring for the critically ill adult patient. She serves as the Lead Specialty Advisor for the baccalaureate nursing program. Dr. Spencer currently practices as a staff nurse in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) at University of Colorado Hospital and completed her post-master's certificate as an Adult Clinical Nursing Specialist in 2010. Dr. Spencer has also completed her certifications as Critical Care Clinical Nurse Specialist, and Certified Nurse Educator. She has been instrumental in efforts to pass the eNLC legislation in Colorado and the signing of the Emergency Rules by the Colorado Governor's Office to decrease student clinical hours during the pandemic. A recipient of multiple teaching awards, she was honored to receive the 2022 National League of Nursing Nurse Educator of the Year Award.



Kristina 'Kris' Thomas Dreifuerst, PhD, RN, CNE, ANEF, FAAN

Director PhD Program and Professor
Marquette University

Dr. Thomas Dreifuerst is a Professor and Director of the PhD program at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI. She is also leading the College of Nursing's transition to the new Essentials and competency-based education. Dr. Dreifuerst's pedagogical program of research is at the forefront of disciplinary efforts to develop, use, and test innovative teaching methods to improve students' clinical judgment and clinical reasoning skills. She also investigates how educators can be well-prepared to use evidence-based methods to enhance teaching and learning. Her work has been recognized for leading initiatives to transform nursing education and she has influenced pedagogical changes in educational practices locally, nationally, and internationally. She is best known for the debriefing method she developed: Debriefing for Meaningful Learning (DML) which has been adopted by schools of nursing throughout the world for use with simulation, traditional clinical experiences and in the classroom. Dr. Dreifuerst has authored journal articles and book chapters on debriefing across the curriculum and best practices in teaching and learning. She is the recipient of prestigious national and international awards and honors recognizing her expertise and contributions to the field.



Jennifer Timm, DNP

Assistant Professor
Winona State University

Dr. Timm is a tenured Associate Professor in the Department of Graduate Nursing at Winona State University, located in Southeastern Minnesota. Dr. Timm's expertise includes interprofessional education and practice, community-based clinical education, public and rural health, care for underserved groups and those facing health disparities, and interprofessional community cross-sectoral leadership. Dr. Timm has worked as an administrator, supervisor, leader, and volunteer in multiple community-based organizations. Her teaching responsibilities involve courses within nursing executive leadership programs and advanced health promotion. Through emphasis in community health outcomes, Dr. Timm fosters the development of innovative nurse leaders in a variety of clinical settings, especially those outside traditional biomedical systems. Dr. Timm is passionate about improving systems in community health and has led numerous innovations in interprofessional work, including the redesign of care access in a mental health and substance abuse clinic, implementation of a Health in All Policy in a rural county, integration of outpatient mental health and substance abuse services, and the design and implementation of an interprofessional clinical education model titled Bridges Health. Successfully securing an array of grant funding, she has supported many student-led, faculty-guided evidence-based projects. Dr. Timm is an active leader in Sigma and Midwest Nursing Research Society.



Wendy Trueblood Miller, PhD, RN, CNS, CCRN, FAAN, FAES

Professor and Associate Dean
Indiana University

Dr. Trueblood Miller is a Full Professor and Associate Dean at the Indiana University School of Nursing. Dr. Trueblood Miller's independent program of research is focused on generating knowledge that will advance the state of the science in the area of chronic disease self-management, with particular emphasis on the population of adults with epilepsy. Specifically, she focuses on improving the quality of life of people with epilepsy via patient-centered interventions. Her research program consists of an interdisciplinary team involving researchers from nursing, public health, informatics, law, and medicine. Trueblood Miller has a specific interest in complex systems analysis of social media data. She is director of the Social Network Health Research Lab at the IU School of Nursing where she oversees interdisciplinary projects that focus on capturing patient voice. Dr. Trueblood Miller is also experienced in tool development. She is co-director of the IUSON T32 Fellowship Program. She is funded by the NIH and industry.



Arin VanWormer, PhD, RN

Associate Professor and Traditional BSN Program Director
University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire

Dr. VanWormer is the Traditional BSN Program Director and an Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. She has 24 years of professional clinical experience, with an extensive background in medical-surgical-neurological and critical care nursing. Dr. VanWormer completed a Master’s degree in Nursing Education and a post-master’s certificate as an Adult Clinical Nurse Specialist (ACNS). She has experience advising doctoral students and teaching a variety of courses across programs, including graduate research methods, undergraduate capstone/transitions, nursing theory, and clinical instruction. Her scholarly work focuses on clinical and educational research, as well as interdisciplinary collaboration. Her research interests include adult health, acute care, alternative/complementary therapies, and nursing education. In her program director role, Dr. VanWormer is responsible for the implementation of the curriculum for the Traditional BSN program and providing support for undergraduate faculty and staff.



Tara Walker, DNP, APRN, ACNP-BC

Assistant Professor -Clinical
Wayne State University

Dr. Walker is an Assistant Clinical Professor at Wayne State University. Dr. Walker holds a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from Wayne State University and is an Acute Care Nurse Practitioner. She is committed to addressing health disparities and improving health outcomes in urban communities. She works as an Internal Medicine hospitalist at Detroit Receiving and Harper University Hospital in Detroit, MI. Dr. Walker is dedicated to mentoring registered nurses and advanced practice registered nurses through her joint owned professional mentoring business, No Nurse Left Behind, LLC. Using her professional and educational experiences, she passes down her knowledge to help nurses overcome barriers to professional and educational advancement. Her recent accomplishments include leading a Midwest region Black Maternal Health social media campaign for her sorority which covered eight states and the province of Ontario. She is also the co-author of an urban health textbook entitled “Urban Health: A Practical Application to Clinical Based Learning” published November 2022.





Lee Ann Waltz, PhD, RN, CNE

Associate Professor
University of the Incarnate Word

Dr. Waltz has been a full time faculty member in the Ila Faye Miller School of Nursing since 2007. With over 35 years of experience as a Registered Nurse, Dr. Waltz is passionate about inspiring the next generation of nurses. Her research interests include evidence-based practices in health care, curriculum development, interprofessional education and practice, and nursing education. Prior to her appointment at UIW, Dr. Waltz served in numerous nursing positions, with areas of expertise in geriatric and mental health nursing. She has served in numerous local leadership positions in geriatric nursing, including Program Director of an outpatient geriatric mental health center, Director of Nursing at a long term care facility, Nurse Planner of Continuing Education for Morningside Ministries, and has served on the Board of Directors of a local nonprofit nursing home. Previous awards include the Jonas Nurse Leaders Scholar Program Scholarship (2014), the Nightingale Excellence in Nursing Award (2013), and has been nominated for the Presidential Teaching Award. Waltz holds a Doctorate in Nursing from the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston and a Master and Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.



Charles 'Charlie' Yingling, DNP, FNP-BC, FAANP, FAAN

Clinical Professor/Associate Dean for Professional Practice
University of Michigan

Dr. Yingling is a national leader in innovative nurse-led academic-practice partnerships that expand access to care for and improve health in marginalized communities. The focus of Dr. Yingling's scholarly work is to bring nursing care to nursing-naïve spaces, settings and communities in which nursing care is not currently available, but could fundamentally change health outcomes. Dr. Yingling has created new nurse-led models of care to reach LGBTQ+ people, justice-involved people, immigrant families, low-income children and other historically marginalized groups. Through the partnerships he creates, Dr. Yingling facilitates community engagement that supports student learning, faculty practice, and clinical scholarship. Dr. Yingling's leadership in nursing education and practice has been recognized with Fellowship in the American Association of Nurse Practitioners and the American Academy of Nursing.