

Nursing Celebrates 60 Years

Eloise Ravell

Southern Adventist University alumni are invited to celebrate the School of Nursing's 60th anniversary at a special event during Alumni Weekend 2016. Faculty will present various awards to alumni during an evening that commemorates the nursing program's first baccalaureate class and the graduation of more than 4,300 alumni since then. Current students will participate as well, dressing in era-specific uniforms from the past six decades.

According to Sylvia Mayer, associate professor in the School of Nursing (SON), much of the change at Southern can be traced back to a specific recommendation more than a half century ago. In 1948, the Brown Report ("Nursing for the Future") pushed to move the profession's training grounds from non-academic hospital settings to colleges and universities. "Southern was an early adopter of this recommendation," Mayer said. "Nursing has a long history and Southern has made many innovations in the education of nurses over the past 60 years."

After the SON celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2006, the total number of students pursuing a nursing degree each year has risen from about 500 to more than 900, nearly one third of Southern's enrollment. The admission of an additional cohort schedule began in 2015 to accommodate demand and extend the program's reach.

The success of Southern's nursing program has far reaching rewards—a reality experienced first-hand by Mayer. While in Chicago for a nursing conference in 2011, Mayer's husband had a heart attack. In the hospital's Coronary Care Unit, she heard a voice call her name and looked up to see a nursing graduate from Southern.

"What a joy to see this young lady and know we were in godly, capable hands," Mayer said. "We don't believe it was an accident!"

Sara Evans, a recent nursing graduate, reflects the sense of Christian community enjoyed by students, professors, and staff. "Ever since joining the nursing

program, I felt like I was part of a big family," Sara commented. "You create these bonds by taking care of people together; even after graduation I can go back for help from the faculty."

Along with enrollment growth in the AS, BS, MSN and DNP programs, the SON is also celebrating other changes that have taken place since 2006. Florida Hospital Hall, Southern's beautiful new



Members from the first nursing class in 1956. Photo taken at their 50th class reunion in 2010.

nursing facility on campus which opened in 2011, and its Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree, which launched in the fall of 2012, help define the vision administrators and faculty have for the ever-increasing role nursing will play in shaping the campus.

"We continue to influence nursing with a Christ-centered focus in practice, education, and research," said Barbara James, SON dean.

The SON's 60th anniversary program takes place Saturday, October 29, from 7-9 p.m. in the Chattanooga Embassy Suites Ballroom and includes hors d'oeuvres and dessert. Reservations may be made online: southern.edu/nursing60.

celebrating

60
 YEARS

SOUTHERN NURSING

News Notes

- Undergraduate nursing student enrollment continues to grow with the addition of a pre-licensure cohort starting in 2015. Reflecting the national push for BS prepared nurses, the number of students in the RN-BS completion program is at an all-time high. Course offerings include on-campus, online, and off-campus Chattanooga options. These options can be combined to adapt to an individual student's needs.
- The graduate nursing program continues to expand in enrollment and added emphases. Beginning fall 2015 a Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner program was added. The online Lifestyle Therapeutic DNP program's unique emphasis and ease of access has a strong appeal to students. Plus, the Acute Care DNP track draws highly skilled, hospital-oriented nurses. Southern's accelerated RN-MSN option remains the only program of this type in the greater Chattanooga area. This option is especially appealing to the experienced nurse.
- We welcome the arrival of Jill Buchholz, DNP, whose most recent professional career included teaching at Indiana University and Dean of Nursing at Harrison College in Indianapolis. She will be teaching various courses on the undergraduate level. Born and raised in Michigan, she and her husband and two children are happily settling into the southern life.
- We solicit your nominations for Nursing Alumnus of the Year awards—someone who has achieved distinction in practice, education, leadership or service. Send an email with your nominations to bjames@southern.edu or call 423-236-2942.

Come celebrate Alumni Homecoming Weekend with us October 27-30!
Honor Years: 1956, 1966, 1971, 1976, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2006

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