



MESSAGE  
FROM  
THE DEAN

### *Dear Alumni and Friends,*

I hope you enjoy reading about all of the exciting activities and accomplishments taking place in the College of Health and Human Sciences at WCU. It has been my privilege to step in as the interim dean of the college when our founding dean, Linda Seestedt-Stanford, was asked to serve as interim provost this past June. I am pleased to report that Linda continues to be a true champion of the college, and she is actively involved in helping us plan for the transition to the new health building scheduled to be completed late next year. As I read the articles included in this edition of Impact, I feel so proud of the accomplishments of our faculty, students and alumni. Our partnerships with community agencies and alumni strengthen our academic programs while our students and faculty continue to make a positive difference within the region. More students are participating in both local and international

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## Effort to Name Nutrition Lab in Cosper's Honor

Susan Kosma, a 1998 graduate with a master's degree in health sciences, and now a bariatric dietitian with Mission Medical Associates, is leading the initiative to raise money to name the nutrition lab in the new Health and Human Sciences building in honor of Dr. Barbara Cosper.

Cosper's leadership as the nutrition and dietetics program director was instrumental in elevating the program to its current status. Cosper founded the undergraduate program in nutrition and dietetics in 1977 and was responsible for the program obtaining its first accreditation. She also founded the internship program, and the master's concentration in

nutrition and dietetics was implemented under her leadership in 1981. Cosper retired from WCU in 1999 and has maintained an active role in the program.

Students in Western Carolina University's nationally accredited program in nutrition and dietetics learn to access the nutritional needs of individuals and gain the skills needed to provide nutritional counseling while promoting good nutrition with individuals, groups and community programs. Western Carolina University offers a bachelor in science and a minor in nutrition and dietetics, and a nutrition concentration at the master's level.

For more information about contributing to the naming of the Barbara Cosper lab, contact Greg Bauguess, director of development, at 828-227-3045 or [bauguessg@wcu.edu](mailto:bauguessg@wcu.edu).



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# Lecture Compares Native and Western Perspectives on Mental Health

Native psychologist Dr. Eduardo Duran presented the second of WCU's bi-annual public lecture series in Indian Health in September. Duran spoke with a group of graduate and undergraduate students earlier in the day and then spoke to an estimated 300 people that evening in the University Center Grandroom. During his lecture, Duran reminded the audience of the origin of the term psychology – the study of the soul. He said that healers have to be wounded, healed and then centered to be effective. He went on to explain that in indigenous terms, counseling isn't necessarily considered client-centered, but therapist-centered. If the client is off-center and must come back to center, he or she can better do so if the therapist is centered.

"If you are centered, they will find their center and heal themselves," he said.

In the evening's presentation, Duran spoke of healing soul wounds. The Western academy begins the therapist-client relationship by creating a hierarchy between the two, with the client being perceived as defective. In contrast, in Native traditions, illness is seen as an entity that comes to visit. It may be a natural part of the

world order to experience fear (anxiety) or sadness (depression). These entities must be acknowledged and wounds of the soul healed before these entities move on. He recognized that many of these teachings may seem foreign to Western-trained clinicians, but not so for indigenous peoples.

Duran also provided some history of counseling as it related to Native people, citing, for example, recordings of early colonists and missionaries to forbid Native people from recanting or remembering their dreams. This imposition was a colonizing force that kept people from using their own traditions that had been used in healing and centering their people for thousands of years. He said that psychology's approach in today's

society is to "declare war on things – a mentality of the Western world." The "natural law" of Indigenous philosophy is based on the quality and dynamics of relationships. They don't necessarily "cure" but focus on many factors that contribute to one's balance. Western medicine's approach is to focus on the patient, which becomes the diagnosis. He refers to this as the naming ceremony of the DSM-IV. Therefore the person becomes objectified, as does their humanity.

The presentation provided a lively and positive discussion afterward, with many looking forward to learning more about intergenerational trauma and healing the soul wounds. The lecture resonated with many in the audience, as evidenced by the long line of community members, students, and faculty waiting to speak to him after the evening presentation.

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## Nursing Alumna Receives Award at Homecoming

Carol Fowler Durham, a 1976 alumna of the WCU School of Nursing, was presented with WCU's 2010 Alumni Award for Academic Achievement during a ceremony held in Ramsey Regional Activity Center as part of Homecoming festivities Oct. 9.

Durham, now a clinical professor and director of the Clinical Education and Resource Center

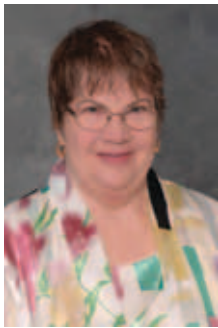


at University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill School of Nursing, has been a leader in nursing education and curriculum

development for more than 28 years. She is part of an award-winning project that is shifting the focus in nursing education from body mechanics to safe patient-handling and movement. In addition, she has been a leader in incorporating human patient simulation into nursing education and also has collaborated with

pharmacy and medical schools to develop interprofessional simulation experiences for students across disciplines.

"Throughout her career, Dr. Carol Fowler Durham's accomplishments in the field of nursing education and curriculum development have done much to further the development of the field of nursing as well as to help with patient care and safety," said Betty Allen, president of the WCU Alumni Association. "She has taken her knowledge and education forward to share it with others, while adding to it with ideas of her own. She has been an innovator."



## Sharon Jacques Funds Nursing Scholarship

Dr. Sharon Jacques, a faculty member in the School of Nursing for more than 30 years, has graciously provided funding for the development of the Sharon Jacques Nursing Scholarship. This scholarship will be available to support nursing students in the RN-to-BSN program at WCU. The creation of this scholarship is a reflection of the level of commitment and service that Jacques has provided to the School of Nursing over the past three decades, and the college is grateful for her years of excellent service as a faculty member and mentor in the School of Nursing. Jacques plans to retire in 2011. For information on how you can support this scholarship, please contact Greg Baugess, director of development, at 828-227-3045.

## Development Challenge Winners Chosen

The Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice and the School of Health Sciences were recognized during the fall CHHS opening meeting as winners of the first annual College of Health and Human Sciences Development Challenge. The Development Challenge was designed as a friendly way to foster departmental competition through employee giving. During the past academic year, the number of faculty and staff donating to their departments or schools doubled from the previous year, and employee donations increased by \$3,000.

The Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice had the highest percentage of faculty donating, with 80 percent of faculty giving

to the departmental development fund. The School of Health Sciences had the largest faculty donation of \$2,260, with an average gift of \$23 a month.



*Greg Baugess and Jay Scifers*

## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Continued from cover

service activities and professional presentations than ever before. The licensure pass rates of students in all of our professional programs are exemplary. And, in spite of the economic challenges, faculty and staff continue to strive for academic excellence by developing creative and challenging learning opportunities for students.

The faculty members, along with our community partners, are also very engaged in planning and developing the interdisciplinary clinic opening in the new health building. It is anticipated that this clinic will provide nursing, speech and hearing, physical therapy, social work, and nutritional services for individuals and families within the region.

I invite you to visit our webpage at [chhs.wcu.edu](http://chhs.wcu.edu) to learn more about our academic programs and the interdisciplinary clinic. Thank you so much for your continued support of the college. We could not do what we do without you!

Sincerely,

**Marie T. Huff PhD**



## Westbrook Delivers Keynote Address at NASW State Conference

Social work faculty member Tonya Westbrook was selected to deliver the keynote address at the National Association of Social Workers North Carolina chapter's annual meeting in November.

Westbrook addressed the history of social work ethics and the use of ethical decision-making models in practice. Westbrook, who is entering her fourth year as an assistant professor in the Department of Social Work, was instrumental in the department becoming a part of North Carolina's Child Welfare Education Collaborative, which funds training for and provides stipends to students who wish to become professional child welfare workers.

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS

### Department Receives Award for Academic Excellence

The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders was presented with Western Carolina University's 2010 Academic Program of Excellence Award during the university's spring awards convocation. The department was selected from a group of several nominees, winning a \$10,000 cash award. The award was presented by Chancellor John Bardo, who cited the department's clinical activities, grant receipts, presence in the professional literature and prominent faculty as reasons for the recognition. After much discussion, the faculty and staff in the CSD department decided to use the money to support student scholarships, assist with clinical monitoring and facilitate the growth of creative faculty projects.

### Social Skills Group Helps Local Children with Autism

In the fall 2009, Julie Ogletree, clinical coordinator for the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders severe disabilities and autism grant; Kathy Dolbee, a local representative of the Autism Society of America; and seven graduate students in communication sciences and disorders initiated a social skills group for children in the Jackson County area who are on the autism spectrum and who struggle in social contexts.

The group began with the irregular participation of three to four middle grade students and their family members and by the end of the spring 2010 semester had grown to include eight regular attendees from three counties. Sessions included learning to use spoken language to negotiate social situations such as asking for assistance, requesting information, or sharing with others. Reading others' social cues including body posture or tone of voice was also emphasized. All instruction occurred through role play and video modeling, allowing for interaction between the children and graduate students within enjoyable learning contexts. Several activities took social skills group participants off campus, including visits to local restaurants and participation in a poetry slam at a local coffee house.

Recreational therapy faculty Peg Connolly and Jennifer Hinton joined the group, adding an interdisciplinary perspective. Hinton and Ogletree completed a grant proposal over the summer to submit to Autism Speaks, an autism science and advocacy organization. The grant requests funding to assist with the continuation of the group, which restarted in September.

For more information, contact the WCU Speech and Hearing Center at 828-227-3375.



*From left, WCU graduate students Katie Kirk, Nicole McRight, Michael Taylor, Rhian Vandenburg and Tyra Minton spend time with Austin Coburn (foreground) at the climbing wall at WCU's Campus Recreation Center during a field trip for a social skills group for children with autism.*

## HOMECOMING NOTES

The College of Health and Human Sciences marked Homecoming in October with a number of events.

- The **Department of Social Work** invited a panel of social work alums to speak to a group of more than 60 students Oct. 5.
- **Patrick Bartholomew**, a 1986 alumnus of the CSD program, spoke to a group of current CSD students. Bartholomew has worked with individuals with communication disorders throughout the lifespan, working in early intervention, with



juvenile offenders, and with adults in Hospice care. Currently, he serves as the director of the Communication Department at the J. Iverson Riddle Developmental Center, a regional residential center for adults with developmental disabilities located in Morganton. Bartholomew also has served as president for the North Carolina Augmentative Communication Association (1995) and currently serves as chair of the Council for Clinical Specialty Recognition for the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

- The college hosted its second **annual homecoming alumni reception** in Moore Hall prior to the football game Oct. 9. Visiting alumni had the opportunity to view renditions of the new health building and talk with current faculty from a variety of programs in the College of Health and Human Sciences.

## DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

# Physical Therapy Doctorate to Begin in 2011

Faculty members in the Department of Physical Therapy are celebrating final approval from UNC general administration to transition from a master of physical therapy to a doctor of physical therapy program. The impetus for doctoral level education was prompted by the profession's response to dramatic changes in health care delivery models, physical therapist practice and professional education. The approval allows the program to move in accordance with nationwide trends. The first entry-level doctoral program began at Creighton University in 1996, and by 2010 all but seven of the 213 accredited physical therapy programs in the United States offered a doctoral degree.

The three-year doctoral program at Western Carolina University replaces the existing master's program with the first cohort of students enrolling in August 2011.

The program will expand the total credit hours from 78 to 104 and the length of full-time clinical education from 26 to 34 weeks. The doctoral program allows the faculty to increase content in areas such as diagnostics, imaging and pharmacology, to



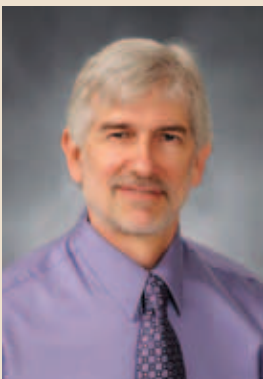
*Department of Physical Therapy faculty members, from Left to Right: Dave Hudson, Karen Lunnen (Department head), Sue McPherson, Kathy Starr, Lori Schrodt and Todd Watson*

offer enhanced and more diverse clinical educational experiences, and better prepare graduates for employments as professionals in physical therapy. "The new program will provide a curriculum specifically designed to incorporate the standards of a doctoral-level

professional education," said Karen Lunnen, department head. "Since additional space is required to accommodate a third cohort of 32 students, the timing for the anticipated move to the new health building could not have come at a better time."

## DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE Department to Offer New Minor, Concentration

Steve Brown, head of the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, announced the department's plans to begin offering a residential minor in emergency and disaster management. Many current criminal justice majors also select a minor field of study, and the new minor presents an excellent complement.



*Steve Brown*

Another exciting change in the distance learning program is the addition of a concentration in administration of justice. This concentration was specifically designed for practicing professionals. Admission will require a year of documented experience working in criminal justice and allied professions.

To learn more about the online emergency and disaster management major or the residential minor, contact Carlie Merritt, director of online program, at 828-227-2172 or e-mail her at [cmerritt@wcu.edu](mailto:cmerritt@wcu.edu).

## SCHOOL OF NURSING Nursing Partners with A-B Tech

The School of Nursing has partnered with Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College through the recent implementation of the Regionally Increasing Baccalaureate Nurses Project.

The first cohort of 17 students in the RIBN program was admitted in fall 2010. Students are dually admitted and enrolled at WCU and A-B Tech and considered baccalaureate degree-seeking students. This model brings associate and baccalaureate nursing programs together in new partnerships to increase the number of professional nurses with baccalaureate degrees and expand the number of nursing students educated in public health and gerontological nursing.



## Nutrition Students Help WNC Fight Hunger

Students in two first-year seminar nutrition classes, ND 190: "Personal Nutrition," hosted a scavenger hunt and food find during the spring semester. The purpose of the hunt was to raise money for organizations that provide food to hungry and food insecure residents of Western North Carolina. The event provided students with a fun avenue to address the problem of hunger and food insecurity in Western North Carolina.

The students raised more than \$215 through scavenger hunt team registration fees and donations, as well as collected three boxes of nonperishable food. The food was delivered to the Community Table in Sylva while the monetary donations were divided among the Clay County Food Pantry, Cherokee County Food Bank, Graham County Emergency Food Pantry, Andrews United Methodist Church Welcome Table in Cherokee County, and CareNet in Macon County.

In addition to the event, students volunteered a minimum of three hours at the Community Table in Jackson County. April Tallant, ND 190 professor, shared a letter from Bert Wiley of the Clay County Food Pantry, who wrote, "We rely on donations because they enable us to make the purchases and fill the many, many [food] boxes that go out each week. We are thankful, but our customers are also thankful – they tell us so."

## Students Present at Conferences

Six environmental health students were chosen to participate in the American Society of Safety Engineers Region VI professional development conference as part of a student research competition. WCU undergraduate students were competing against graduate students from ECU and Virginia Tech. Drew Craig took first place overall with his study of "Radio Frequency Identification: A Safer, More Effective and Efficient Chemical Inventory Tool." Chris Caler won third place overall with his study "Complete Hazard Assessment within a Gross Anatomy Laboratory." Samantha Connell won the undergraduate poster competition with her study "Measuring Ambient Air Concentrations in a Research and Development Clean Room Environment."

At the annual conference of the North Carolina Recreational Therapy Association, recreational therapy student Traci Gardellis presented a highly acclaimed session on yoga as a therapy modality, while 11 other recreational therapy students presented poster sessions on modalities used in practice. In addition to gaining much praise for their presentations, two students, Kaci Thornburg and Leah Sprague, won first and second place, respectively, in the conferencewide poster competition.

Emergency medical care student Chelsey Dyches co-presented with faculty at the North Carolina Office of EMS's annual Emergency Medicine Today Conference on Oct. 4. The presentation was titled "Establishing EMS Student Professional Organizations."

Two environmental health students were awarded scholarships from the North Carolina Mosquito and Vector Control Association to attend the annual meeting Nov. 17-19 in Atlantic Beach. Charles Sither gave an oral presentation titled "Molecular Identification of *Ochlerotatus atlanticus* and *Oc. Tormentor*" and Samantha Kunze presented "The Ecology of Rock Pool Mosquitoes in the Southern Appalachian Mountains."

Nurse anesthesia students Danny Roth and Andrew Hatch, along with faculty members Claire DeCristofaro and Shawn Collins, presented at the annual Transcultural Nursing Society Conference. Their presentation was titled "What Non-Therapeutic Drug Effects Are Seen with Fospropofol for Moderate Sedation?" Student Adrienne Fosegan and faculty members DeCristofaro and Mason McDowell presented "Prevention of Succinylcholine Associated Postoperative Myalgia in Adults."

Eight criminal justice students made poster presentations at the 2010 American Society of Criminology annual conference in November. Congratulations to Andrea Rawlinson, Courtney Dameron, Christina Foster, Joseph Kellerman, Kellie Hayes, Amber Poe, Melisa Glatte and Matthew Wilkerson.

## First Accelerated Nursing Cohort Graduates

In August, WCU graduated its first cohort of 17 nursing students as part of a partnership funded through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

A goal of the Enhancing Academic Partnerships Program is to increase recruitment and retention of V.A. nurses. The post-graduation plans of the inaugural class indicate that great strides toward meeting this goal have been made, with 14 of the graduates accepting positions at the Charles George VA Medical Center in Asheville.

The program supported an expansion in the number of faculty for the School of Nursing and allowed the school to increase enrollment in the Accelerated Bachelor of Science in nursing track. The program also supports professional development for expert clinicians from the VAMC as they join the WCU faculty as nurse educators.



## Physical Therapy Students Volunteer in Haiti

Four students from the Department of Physical Therapy, Emily Nantz and Eric Collins from the class of 2011 and Catherine Bevilacqua and Brandon Hardee from the class of 2010, went to Haiti from May 18-25 to assist victims of the earthquake. They worked in a makeshift tent set up to function as a physical therapy department and provided care to individuals with a wide range of disabilities.

Emily summarized the value of international service opportunities for students in health-related professions. "Hearing all the news stories and seeing pictures can never really prepare you for an experience in a third world country that has been through such a horrific natural disaster," she said. "Not only did I get to make a difference in their lives by doing physical therapy evaluations and treatments, but I also was able to brighten their days solely by my presence. The hugs, tears, sweat and long days left a lasting impression."

## Students Perform Well on Licensure Certification and Exams

Seven graduates of the master of social work program who completed the substance abuse studies certificate program took and passed the substance abuse practice state licensure exam this summer. "This is particularly impressive given that only 60 percent of individuals who took the exam in June passed," said Dottie Greene, program coordinator.

All nine 2010 athletic training graduates passed the Board of Certification examination on their first attempt. This 100 percent average compares with the national average of approximately 40 percent.

The 2010 pass rate for CSD for the praxis (national certification exam) in speech language pathology was 100 percent.

One-hundred percent of the 2010 nursing anesthesia graduates passed their boards.

WCU's undergraduate nursing students had one of the state's top pass rates, at 95 percent, on a professional licensure examination. That rate is the second-highest among state-supported programs that award the bachelor of science degree in nursing.

## IN BRIEF

- CSD graduate **Nicole McRight** received high honors as a recipient of the 2010 Student Educational Achievement Award given by the North Carolina Speech, Hearing & Language Association. The award is made by NCSHLA on the basis of academic excellence and merit. McRight received the award at the spring state conference of NCSHLA in Raleigh in April. Nicole is the seventh recipient in the last 10 years who is from the WCU Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders.
- MSW student **Steven Whitehorn** was selected for the 2010 Toby Brown Award by the N.C. chapter of the National Association of Social Work. This award is given to a student who demonstrates outstanding academic work and accomplishments in the field during an internship. Steven demonstrates strong leadership potential and also is very active in campus and community organizations. Additionally, he was selected as the recipient of WCU's BSW Program Leadership Award as an undergraduate student.
- Congratulations go to our nurse anesthesia students (and faculty)! They won the **N.C. Anesthesia Bowl** for the second time in three years, beating all other programs in the state.
- Senior athletic training student **Ryan Wright** spent three weeks in Japan as an athletic trainer for Japanese sports camps. Ryan gained experience as he practiced skills while being fully immersed in the Japanese culture.
- When comparing all athletic training education programs for scholarships and professional presentations for North Carolina and the Mid Atlantic Athletic Trainers' Association, **WCU ranked first for the sixth consecutive year**, first among the 20 accredited athletic training programs in North Carolina, and first among the 50 accredited programs in District 3.
- **Ted Denning**, an undergraduate recreational therapy major, was sworn in as one of the state student representatives of the North Carolina Recreational Therapy Association.
- Social work graduate student **Lisa Weeks** and undergraduate **Kent Purser** were selected as student representatives for the state chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.



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