Leading Nursing Education for a CENTURY
Mission
The mission of the Bon Secours Memorial College of Nursing is to foster holistic lifelong learning through innovative career education designed to cultivate servant leaders who are passionate about bringing people and communities to health and wholeness.

Vision
We will be the College of choice for those who consider caring to be calling and a ministry inclusive of the needs of all people.

Values
As a higher education institution, we commit that our mission, vision and strategic direction are framed within these value statements:

- COMPASSION — intentional engagement in caring practices that embodies a culture of respect, integrity and justice
- QUALITY — commitment to education excellence that promotes lifelong intellectual, ethical and spiritual growth
- SERVICE — cultivation of an attentive spirit that seeks to empower others in the co-creation of a just and caring world

Goal Statements

- CARING — Provide a framework for positively impacting society through culturally sensitive service to the global community.
  1. Create opportunities for faculty, staff and students to provide culturally sensitive service to local, regional, national and international communities.
  2. Cultivate an environment of respect, compassion and servant leadership which actively promotes and facilitates the development of servant leaders.
  3. Embed the core concepts of ministry, mission and civic engagement into the curriculum and campus life.
- LEARNING — Foster an environment designed to engage the learner in the development of a critical and creative consciousness.
  1. Attract, empower and retain mission-focused students, faculty and staff committed to academic excellence and lifelong learning.
  2. Provide a stimulating learning environment that excites curiosity, encourages creativity and integrates community commitment into the learning process.
- TRANSFORMING — Liberate the potential of the College community by expanding individual and collective capabilities with respect to knowledge, discernment and growth.
  1. Empower faculty and staff to reach their full potential through professional development and mission-related opportunities.
  2. Integrate a variety of learning styles into the delivery of the curriculum to enhance the growth of the whole person.
  3. Cultivate an understanding of the importance of the College within the Bon Secours Ministry — a Ministry of Education.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PROVOST

100 Years of Nursing Education

Our College’s rich history began as a diploma program at Richmond Memorial Hospital’s School of Nursing, but our educational roots truly go back further. The Sisters of Bon Secours, whose ministry was founded for the care of the sick, has long held nursing at their foundation. In 1919, the Sisters of Bon Secours opened the first hospital on U.S. soil in Baltimore as a “Hospital and Training School for Nurses.” Shortly thereafter, the Sisters opened the Bon Secours Hospital School of Nursing in 1921, which operated until 1970. We feel privileged to carry on the tradition of nursing education within Bon Secours.

As we prepare future generations of nurses, we are keenly aware of the challenges we face as educators and as a profession. There is a critical shortage of nurses. According to a recent article in the Atlantic Monthly (February, 2016), “the U.S. has been dealing with a nursing deficit of varying degrees for decades, but today — due to an aging population, the rising incidences of chronic disease, an aging workforce, and the limited capacity of nursing schools — this shortage is on the cusp of becoming a crisis, one with worrying implications for patients and health care providers alike.”

Simply put, we need to invest in nurses. As a ministry of education, it starts with our students and extends to our faculty and staff. Through the Bon Secours Richmond Health Care Foundation, we can build our resources right here in central Virginia. Advancing the mission of the College requires scholarship support, faculty development and program provision, but we can’t do it alone. We invite our friends, alumni and community to join us in this endeavor.

We’re partners in this mission to advance nursing education and professional development. Our faculty and staff are innovative and resourceful; they continue to give our students an educational experience that rivals larger schools. In the last year, we have implemented a new student information system, CampusNexus by Campus Management, which will improve both the student experience and educational outcomes, including extending positive student participation. We’ve also launched new programs such as Alternative Spring Break, designed to build community and student engagement, and put the values and mission of Bon Secours into action. We’ve expanded our global outreach internationally in Trujillo, Peru and stateside in Grundy, Va. through Remote Area Medical (RAM), which provides medical care through mobile clinics in underserved and often isolated communities.

Through our progress and commitment, we still manage to have a great deal of fun. Check out the images from Spirit Week (right), a Student Services programming event in its second year and going strong!

Together in Fellowship,
Melanie H. Green, PhD, RN
With so many exciting adventures, successes and milestones to share each academic year, we could fill a library attempting to tell them all! Here’s a snippet of the journey taken last year. From orientation to graduation — it’s been a memorable year at the College of Nursing.
NEW STAFF

Julie Marsh, MEd, Coordinator of Distance Education and of Instructional Design

An educator for many years, Julie Marsh is responsible for overseeing the implementation of all distance education initiatives in a way that assures best practices and enhances face-to-face and distance education offerings through the successful use of educational technology, course design and delivery methods. She has experience in designing courses, both face-to-face and online/hybrid and has a strong pedagogical background. Marsh holds a bachelor’s degree in English from James Madison University, a master’s degree in literature from Virginia Commonwealth University and a master’s degree in curriculum and instruction from University of Richmond. She’s currently completing a doctorate in educational policy, planning and leadership with a focus in curriculum and educational technology from The College of William and Mary with an anticipated graduation date of January 2017.

Noel Basma, BS, Simulation Technician Specialist

While new to simulation, Noel Basma has been working in health care for the last 12 years with a background in analytical chemistry. She earned a bachelor’s degree in forensic science from Virginia Commonwealth University. Prior to joining Bon Secours, Basma was setting up surgical training using cadavers at the Shrader Road facility, which is now our Clinical Simulation and Learning Center. She spends most of her time in the lab, but also conducts simulations at the College of Nursing for both the BSN program and Bon Secours Richmond Health System.

Joann Bawiec, BA, Programming Coordinator

Joann Bawiec earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology from the Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, starting her career as a certified addictions counselor. After 10 years in the mental health field, she made a switch to marketing and advertising, including event logistics. Prior to joining the College of Nursing, Bawiec managed Bio Skills, a surgical training facility that has become the Clinical Simulation and Learning Center for the College. She is involved with program scheduling for all clinical simulations as well as other programs being held at the Learning Center and the College.

Michael Edwards, Certification Instructor

Michael Edwards is the newest member of the clinical simulation certification department, where he works with students to increase their proficiencies with life-like simulations and practical instruction. He also assists employees in obtaining and maintaining their certifications in basic and advanced life support. In health care for more than 20 years, Edwards spent the last 15 years as an electrophysiologist technician, where he was tasked with programming and troubleshooting implanted cardiac pacemakers and defibrillators. Edwards has experience as a firefighter with Hanover Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and has volunteered for more than 15 years as an EMS provider, with certifications in EMT, CPR and ACLS. He is a life member of Manchester Volunteer Rescue Squad.

Troy A. Jackson, BA, Certification Instructor

In addition to his role as a certification instructor at the College, Troy Jackson works as affiliate faculty and as a simulation technician with the Virginia Heart Association. Previously, he spent the last 28 years as a paramedic/Firefighter in several large metro areas including Los Angeles, Denver and Richmond, where he was an EMS supervisor. He remains active as a paramedic for Richmond Volunteer Ambulance. Jackson earned his bachelor’s degree in political science with a concentration in criminal justice from James Madison University.

Robin Whelpley, PharmD, Associate Professor

Robin Whelpley is a board certified pharmacotherapy specialist who previously worked as a pharmacy clinical specialist in psychiatry for last seven years at Richmond Community Hospital. She is certified in Mediation Therapy Management and obtained a teaching and learning certificate from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). She earned a doctorate of pharmacy from VCU and teaches Pathopharmacology I & II. Whelpley is highly involved with Autism Speaks, the world’s leading autism science and advocacy organization.

Tamarah Pearson, MSN, RN, Instructor

A graduate of Richmond Memorial Hospital School of Nursing, Kimberly Brownie worked for several years in the medical-surgical unit at Richmond Memorial Hospital before moving to Bon Secours Memorial Regional Medical Center, where she held several roles including staff nurse and clinical coordinator. Before joining our faculty, she was the endoscopy clinical educator for Bon Secours Richmond. Brownie is involved with Hiting Cancer Below the Belt, an organization that raises awareness for Colorectal Cancer and the importance of having routine colonoscopies. She has earned a BSN from Old Dominion University and completed a MSN with a specialty in education from Walden University in February 2016. She teaches Competencies for Nursing Practice I.

Tamarah Pearson, MSN, RN

Tamarah Pearson had already earned a bachelor’s degree in biology and environmental science from the University of Denver when she felt the call to serve others and decided to make a career change. She earned her bachelor’s degree in nursing from Virginia Commonwealth University and embarked on a career in their burn unit before joining Bon-Secours as a clinical nurse, preceptor and charge nurse at Memorial Regional Medical Center. Pearson recently earned a master’s degree in nursing with a concentration as nurse educator from Liberty University in 2015 and joined our faculty last year as an adjunct instructor. Now a full-time faculty member, she teaches Foundations of Nursing Scholarship and Competencies of Nursing Practice II.

Diane Smith, DNP, RN, Assistant Professor

Diane Smith has a nursing career that spans nearly four decades. She has worked as a family nurse practitioner in many settings — hospital, home health, sports medicine and with veterans; and for the last 15 years has worked in the hospice setting, serving as administrative director, nurse educator and clinical educator during her tenure in nursing. She has a doctor of nursing practice from Old Dominion University, a master’s in nursing from University of Virginia, and a bachelor’s degree in nursing from Georgetown University. She teaches Lifespan Health Assessment and Adult Nursing Science I Practicum.

NEW FACULTY

Joann Bawiec, BA

Michael Edwards

Troy Jackson, BA

Robin Whelpley, PharmD

Kimberly Brownie, MSN, RN

Tamarah Pearson, MSN, RN

Diane Smith, DNP, RN

PRESENTATIONS

Trina Gardner, MSN, RN presented at the National Association of Nurses conference on June 30 in Indianapolis, Ind. She produced a video that showed how to make an e-portfolio using a web-based platform called Weebly and discussed it during a panel discussion on the importance of e-portfolios for school nurses.

Barbara Elcissor, DNP, RN presented a poster at the Virginia Association of DNP’s conference this past July in Virginia Beach, Va. titled “Bridging the Gap between Knowledge and Practice of Servant Leadership in a Pre-licensure BSN Program.”

Diane Smith, DNP, RN also presented a poster at the Virginia Association of DNP’s conference this past July in Virginia Beach, Va. titled “Investigating the Outcomes of a Nursing Visit 24 Hours Before Death.”

CERTIFICATIONS

Teri Trench, MSN, RN passed the Certification for Nurse Educator (CNE) examination on July 21, 2016. For academic nurse educators, CNE certification establishes nursing education as a specialty area of practice and creates a means for faculty to demonstrate their expertise in this role. It communicates to students, peers and the academic and health care communities that the highest standards of excellence are being met.

Angelic Sorrell, MSN/Ed, RN passed the Certified Healthcare Simulation Educator (CHSE) examination this past summer. Sponsored by the Society for Simulation in Healthcare (SSH), this certification was developed for educators focused on health care simulation and recognizes expertise in simulation above and beyond domain expertise. Additionally, Sorrell was elected to Board for the Virginia League of Nursing, which is the state affiliate of the National League of Nursing and was elected as membership director for the Virginia State Simulation Alliance.
Karen Johnson, PhD, taught post-licensure pharmacology courses at the College since 2004. She began her teaching career at the University of Cincinnati after spending more than a decade as a pharmacologist for a large corporation. Prior to joining the College of Nursing, she also taught at Virginia State University and in the Virginia Community College System. A graduate of Howard University, she earned a bachelor’s degree in zoology and doctor of philosophy in biochemical pharmacology. A nurse for more than 40 years, Ann Pryor, MS, RN, taught Adult Nursing I Practicum, Metaphysical Nursing, Behavioral Health Practicum, Health Assessment Lab and Immersion in her 15 years with the College as full-time faculty. Pryor has a special interest in oncology nursing and was also interested in adult health promotion and disease prevention, holistic nursing care, and serving medically underserved populations. Pryor earned her graduate and undergraduate degrees in nursing from Virginia Commonwealth University. Jenny Thomas-Wright, MSN, RN, taught at the College for 10 years and especially loved teaching new students. As a nurse and educator, her areas of interest included mental health and substance abuse, clinical simulation, curriculum development and mentoring new faculty. A registered nurse for more than 30 years, Thomas-Wright earned her master’s degree in nursing at University of Phoenix and her bachelor’s degree in nursing at Virginia Commonwealth University. A graduate of our second BSN class in 2003, Kristen Johnson began her career as a registered nurse in the postpartum/newborn unit at Virginia Commonwealth University Health System and then with Bon Secours. Building upon her experience, she accepted a position in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit of the University of Virginia Health System. While she enjoyed bedside nursing, she began thinking about a nursing position where she could have more patient communication and interaction time while advancing her nursing and critical thinking skills. That’s what led her to apply for the clinical research coordinator position. “It seemed like a good combination of education and research that I was looking for,” she said.

As a clinical research coordinator, Johnson’s days can vary depending on the needs of the trial they are conducting. “There are different aspects of this job,” she said. “One is receiving and learning protocols for clinical trials; a protocol is your instruction manual for the trial.” The protocols she receives from the sponsor can vary in length and can be anywhere from 50 to 200 pages total. These comprehensive guides answer a multitude of questions such as, “Why is the trial being conducted?” What treatment plans or drugs are included in this trial? “What are the inclusion or exclusion criteria of the research participants?” She also helps to screen doctors’ clinics for potential trial participants. “Sometimes the doctors will advise us of potential candidates and sometimes we can help by screening the clinics in advance,” she said. As participants are secured, Johns begins the enrollment process, which includes explaining the trial, reviewing the schedule and answering questions. She then schedules their appointments and tests required as part of the screenings. “It’s a constant collaboration with physicians, RN coordinators, pharmacists, social work and other offices.” The protocols she receives from the sponsor can vary in length and can be anywhere from 50 to 200 pages total. These comprehensive guides answer a multitude of questions such as, “Why is the trial being conducted?” What treatment plans or drugs are included in this trial? “What are the inclusion or exclusion criteria of the research participants?” She also helps to screen doctors’ clinics for potential trial participants. “Sometimes the doctors will advise us of potential candidates and sometimes we can help by screening the clinics in advance,” she said. As participants are secured, John handles the informed consent process, which includes explaining the trial, reviewing the schedule and answering questions. She then schedules their appointments and tests required as part of the screenings. “It’s a constant collaboration with physicians, RN coordinators, pharmacists, social work and other offices.”

Johnson sees patients at each of their visits and reviews labs, scans, and adverse events, while working with the physicians to ensure there are no dose limiting toxicities that would require them to deviate from the study medication or pursue another intervention.

And while some patients thrive during the trial, others unfortunately do not. “We are dealing with patients and families whose lives are affected by cancer and when outcomes aren’t favorable, it can be tough emotionally,” she said. Nevertheless, she remains enthusiastic about her career research. “I am excited to come to work every day because there is always a new and challenging problem to solve.”
Why did you choose a career in education?

To be honest, this career path chose me. I was a student working for the college I was attending as an undergraduate, when the director of admissions asked if I might be interested in one of the admission representative openings. I applied and got the job. I loved the opportunity to help high school students navigate the path of choosing a college.

What led you to Bon Secours?

I attended and began my career at a faith-based institution and always wanted to return to an institution that had a mission I could wholeheartedly support. Bon Secours offered that opportunity.

You’ve been instrumental in growing enrollment, creating new programs such as College Ambassadors, and getting our new Student Information System (CampusNexus) in place. As you look ahead, what’s your motivation?

I feel the College Ambassador program has been a great opportunity for students to collaborate with administration and leadership. I hope to continue to engage students through this program and help develop leadership skills students can take with them in the nursing profession.

What excites you most about this new role?

I enjoy seeing students enter the College and become great nurses. With this new role, I will be able to see the cycle full-circle from admissions through alumni. I hope to encourage graduates to stay engaged at the College and help new nurses enter the nursing profession.

Congratulations on your promotion to associate dean. What are your first year priorities?

It has been a busy year, implementing a new student information system, beginning a new website redesign, but it’s exciting to be part of such a great team. I look forward to supporting others in their roles and finding ways to encourage others to use their talents and gifts.

What is your plan for engaging students and collaborating with faculty?

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What do you hope to accomplish in your role as assistant professor?

I love the organization and what I stand for. I accepted this teaching position because I had a great experience here as a student, and I know the faculty are very engaged and invested in their students. Also, I remained active as an alumnus after graduation and have seen the tremendous change and growth in the program.

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Why did you decide to become an educator?

I began working at Bon Secours Memorial Regional Medical Center in oncology after graduating from Bon Secours Memorial School of Nursing. I soon realized that education and professional development were topics that interested me most. With education as my career path, I took a job as a clinical educator and began researching doctoral programs.

As a graduate of our nursing program, you’ve come full circle as a faculty member. Tell me about your decision to stay within the health system.

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OUR CURRENT SCHOLARSHIPS:

MERIT-BASED:

Gloria H. Booker Scholarship — Established in honor of Mrs. Booker’s devoted 40 years of dedicated and compassionate teaching and service.

Glenn LeBlanc Men in Nursing Scholarship — Created by a graduate who pursued a career in pediatric nursing and in support of male students in their pursuit of nursing education.

The Modlin Scholarship — Established to honor Dr. George Matthews Modlin and is awarded to a student who shows promise and has potential to make significant contributions to nursing and the community.

The Sarah F. Richardson Scholarship — Established in memory of Ms. Ritz-See, class of ’81.

Jean Ritz-See Scholarship — Established by a descendant.

Flight Lieutenant Parke Farr Smith, RA F Merit Scholarship — Established in memory of Flight Lieutenant Parke Farr Smith by his nephew.

Lettie Pate Whitehead Scholarship — Established in memory of Mrs. Whitehead’s life and legacy by championing women’s education. As a physician, he has stressed the importance of nursing. “The medical profession is dependent upon the ability of competent and well-educated nursing staff to function effectively. That’s a critical part of providing care,” he has said.

On March 18, 2016 the College of Nursing held a Blessing and Dedication of the Library and Learning Commons in honor of Dr. Claiborne as a token of appreciation for his continued support of nursing education. During the ceremony, current nursing student and Lettie Pate Whitehead Scholarship recipient Edriam Penn-Timity spoke about the importance of scholarships and the impact they have on a student’s education. She said, “Receiving this scholarship has been a tremendous help to me during the program... I feel supported and believe the school is making an investment in my future.”

In 2016, the Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation generously committed $260,000 in scholarships to the College — the largest gift ever received. This outstanding scholarship support enables the College to attract and retain the most qualified and competitive nursing student body.

The Lettie Pate Whitehead Scholarship is offered each spring to students in financial need who hail from one of nine Southeastern states.

Miscellaneous scholarships may be added throughout the academic year. The requirements, award amount and the process for determining the awardees can be found on Blackboard.
1915 to 1919
Six Sisters of Bon Secours 1st Novitiate in the U.S. earned their professional nurse training at local Baltimore hospitals. Within a few short years, these Sisters would be educating future generations of Bon Secours nurses.

1919
Bon Secours Hospital, Baltimore, which officially opened to patients on Jan. 26, 1919.

1925
Sr. Liborius Morrison’s diploma from 1st graduating class (January 24, 1925).

1936

1938
Early clinical education in the nursery.

1955
Graduation ceremony held in the Chapel.

1961
Richmond Memorial Hospital School of Nursing opens.

1940
The stable on convent grounds was converted to a school and known as the “Little Red School House,” complete with classrooms and related facilities.

1970
Last Baltimore graduating class cleans out their lockers; school closes its doors.

1973
Capping Ceremony at the Richmond Memorial School of Nursing.

1977 to

1978
Students at Richmond Memorial during clinical education.

1986
Studying for exams.

1991
Mother/Infant clinical training.

1998
Richmond Memorial Hospital, which with the nursing school was affiliated, joins the Bon Secours Health System.

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Richmond Memorial Hospital, which with the nursing school was affiliated, joins the Bon Secours Health System.

2000
Bon Secours Memorial School of Nursing makes its mission trip to Haiti with students; missions continue today.

2007
Students conduct research, present their findings.

2010
The school transitions to a baccalaureate degree granting college, graduates first BSN class in 2013.

2015
Future

Today
The College continues to provide world-class education that includes didactic, clinical simulation, practicum, global outreach, student engagement and enrichment and more.
Peru Mission Trip & Remote Area Medical (RAM)

With a mission to cultivate servant leaders who are passionate about bringing people and communities to health, the College offers programs that bring that philosophy to life. During this last academic year, we announced two new opportunities for students to volunteer in underserved communities, in addition to the annual Haiti Mission Trip. The Peru Mission Trip will be held at the Clinica MADRE De Cristo in Trujillo, Peru. This new outreach opportunity will have a focus on maternal and child health, and also takes place during spring break, just as the Haiti mission. Their first scheduled mission will be held in March 2017.

The second is Remote Area Medical (RAM), which provides a stateside immersion experience to our students over a weekend in Grundy, Va. during the fall semester. The College of Nursing team participated in their first RAM mission trip on October 2, 2015.

RAM provides clinic events, mobilizes partners and uses health care provider abilities to offer free preventive, dental and vision care to help improve the quality of life of those in the most underserved and impoverished areas. “Stop the Suffering in Appalachia” is a RAM initiative that represents approximately 1,200,000 people in need of basic health care. RAM intends to use the initiative as a gateway to establish affiliates based in Appalachian states to provide ongoing services and health care access beyond 2016.

The 2015 BSMCON team provided services in triage. Our nursing students were responsible for informal meet and greets and checking out each patient in the clinic. The computer system tracked the types of services, as well as the monetary value of the services provided. Participating were faculty members Deanna Allison, MSN, RN; Susan Massengill, MSN, RN; Susan Massengill, MSN, RN; Susan Massengill, MSN, RN; Susan Massengill, MSN, RN, Christine Turner, PhD, RN; and Laura Vasel, MSN, RN, along with then students (now graduates) Allegrah Nguyen, Carolyn Hanzlik and Jennifer Jernigan.

RAM service trips will be offered each fall; students are encouraged to inquire and apply for participation.

HAITI MISSION TRIP

Our team of eight students (Haley Mosman, Melissa Joseph, Rachael English, Mollee Kennedy, Lacey Stephens, Kendall Plummer, Sarah Brockman, Kent Duffy) and three faculty leaders (Kathy Fox, MSN, RN; Amy Feurer, MSN, RN; Christine Turner, PhD, RN) returned from the annual Haiti Mission Trip this past March with a renewed sense of purpose. Over three and a half days, the team saw a shift in the 1,300 men, women and children that made the trip to the improvised clinics coming back with less illness, decreases in blood pressures and more self-care. Faculty leader Kathy Fox noted they were coming in “just to make sure they were OK.” This was truly a blessing.

The trip is a blessing to our students too, which for many is their first mission. Upon returning, we often hear students remark how genuine the people of Haiti are, given their circumstances. It’s often an emotional journey, with prayer, care and love felt throughout the week.

Student Kendall Plummer felt God’s presence more than ever before. She was extremely grateful for the education she received, as well as the care she was able to provide. Being a part of the team was especially rewarding. “Everyone truly loved each other; there was a natural bonding among the team,” she said.

Haiti Mission Trip is annual and takes place during the week of Spring Break. Interested students can apply when applications became available in Blackboard.

“Everyone truly loved each other; there was a natural bonding among the team.”
Rachel English, BSN, RN
Serving God in Lesotho, Africa

The desire to serve God has always been part of Rachel’s life. She felt a calling in high school to serve children, and began taking short-term trips to Sub-Saharan Africa. This led to more extensive service and during the summer of 2013, she spent six weeks with Reclaimed Project in its first Orphan Care Center in Botswana.

“My aunt and uncle were missionaries in Botswana; they were the ones who connected us. I fell in love with caring for orphans and felt God calling me to do something like this with my life,” she said. “I am happy to be using my knowledge to glorify God in Lesotho.”

She and Tyler are working at one of the two Orphan Care Centers that were started before their arrival. She explained, “We are here to help them continue and grow. The idea is that the women who work at the centers and the churches will be able to do this on their own one day and become completely sustainable.”

As Rachel and Tyler settle into life in Lesotho, they find themselves falling in love with the country and its people. They are also learning a new language, Sesotho, as they adjust to life without modern conveniences such as dishwashers or dryers, or having a grocery store nearby (the closest one is four hours away). With each circumstance, they have learned to trust God.

“After going through school at BSMCON, I learned that nursing is an occupation that extends beyond the hospital walls,” she said. “I am happy to be using my knowledge to glorify God in Lesotho.”

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As staff leader, Jared Crist was humbled by the experience of working with the students. “These students came together to demonstrate what Bon Secours is all about. Volunteering at the Evelyn D. Reinhart Guest House is a shining example of this,” he said. “The house provides guests’ needs from food and laundry to entertainment, and most of the work is done by volunteers. Our students cleaned, made meals, organized closets and helped make cards of comfort for the guests.”

Together, 12 students, one student leader (Joelle Doctor) and one staff member (Jared Crist) united over spring break to launch the College’s inaugural ASB. From housing and food insecurity to environmental and patient support, the students worked tirelessly to support the community, volunteering a total of 252 hours.

The organizations impacted were the Lewis Ginter Community Kitchen Garden (that provides fresh produce to FeedMore), the Evelyn D. Reinhart Guest House (a Bon Secours philanthropic project to support the friends and families of patients in our hospitals), Housing Families First (a transitional housing facility for homeless families formerly called Hilliard House), the Habitat For Humanity Restore (a thrift store that supports the construction of homes in the local area), James River Trails: Belle Isle (a public park in Richmond) and the Richmond Ronald McDonald House (a residence for children patients and their families).

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“My aunt and uncle were missionaries in Botswana; they were the ones who connected us. I fell in love with caring for orphans and felt God calling me to do something like this with my life,” she said. “I am happy to be using my knowledge to glorify God in Lesotho.”

She and Tyler are working at one of the two Orphan Care Centers that were started before their arrival. She explained, “We are here to help them continue and grow. The idea is that the women who work at the centers and the churches will be able to do this on their own one day and become completely sustainable.”

As Rachel and Tyler settle into life in Lesotho, they find themselves falling in love with the country and its people. They are also learning a new language, Sesotho, as they adjust to life without modern conveniences such as dishwashers or dryers, or having a grocery store nearby (the closest one is four hours away). With each circumstance, they have learned to trust God.

“We have learned so much about ministry and about loving others. We can’t wait to look back a few years from now and see what else God has taught us along the way.”

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Remember when Spring Break was a time to relax? For students who want to make a difference in their communities and in the world, there is Alternative Spring Break (ASB), which involves volunteering your time, instead of taking a break. Alternative Spring Breaks began hitting college campuses in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s and can be found at many institutions of higher learning today.

This past year, the College piloted its own Alternative Spring Break with the goals of building community, student engagement, helping the local community and putting the values and mission of Bon Secours into action. Developed through the work of the Student Affairs Committee—a committee made up of students, staff and college administrators focused on student welfare and the student experience—ASB would require three days of service at local Richmond, Va. area organizations that work to better the community.

Together, 12 students, one student leader (Joelle Doctor) and one staff member (Jared Crist) united over spring break to launch the College’s inaugural ASB. From housing and food insecurity to environmental and patient support, the students worked tirelessly to support the community, volunteering a total of 252 hours.

The organizations impacted were the Lewis Ginter Community Kitchen Garden (that provides fresh produce to FeedMore), the Evelyn D. Reinhart Guest House (a Bon Secours philanthropic project to support the friends and families of patients in our hospitals), Housing Families First (a transitional housing facility for homeless families formerly called Hilliard House), the Habitat For Humanity Restore (a thrift store that supports the construction of homes in the local area), James River Trails: Belle Isle (a public park in Richmond) and the Richmond Ronald McDonald House (a residence for children patients and their families).

As staff leader, Jared Crist was humbled by the experience of working with the students. “These students came together to demonstrate what Bon Secours is all about. Volunteering at the Evelyn D. Reinhart Guest House is a shining example of this,” he said. “The house provides guests’ needs from food and laundry to entertainment, and most of the work is done by volunteers. Our students cleaned, made meals, organized closets and helped make cards of comfort for the guests.”
As a leader in Bon Secours, I feel more informed. I’m able to be part of the solution and prepare my team for the changes ahead."

Cindy Stutts, MS, RN
Administrative Director, Employee Wellness & EAP

"For me, nursing has been my calling, not my job, and it has called me to see needs outside of the hospital walls," said Patricia (Patty) Gavilan about her decision to become a nurse 14 years ago. Nursing as a second career for Gavilan, who began her career at Virginia Commonwealth University in the pediatric emergency department after receiving her associate degree in nursing at John Tyler Community College.

She decided to join Bon Secours in the neuroscience telemetry unit after accompanying a colleague to a recruitment event. "I knew from the moment I started working here that this was a different place, a place where it was possible to honor patients as individuals and openly pray with and for my patients," she said. Six years later, she transitioned into mission services as manager of the Office of Cross Cultural Services where she manages a variety of needs: language access services, the interpreter training program, local training and in-services related to cultural competency, while serving as liaison and member of our Diversity and Inclusion Council at Bon Secours Health System Office and as the mission liaison for Windsor Office Park.

Deciding to earn her BSN was an important step of caring for the people and patients Patty serves. She said, "My nursing education at BSMCON is strengthening my knowledge and skills with research and best practices..."

Patricia Gavilan, RN
Manager, Cross Cultural Services, Mission

"As leader in Bon Secours, I feel more informed. I’m able to be part of the solution and prepare my team for the changes ahead."

Cindy Stutts, MS, RN
Administrative Director, Employee Wellness & EAP

"My nursing education at BSMCON is strengthening my knowledge and skills with research and best practices..."

Patricia Gavilan, RN
Manager, Cross Cultural Services, Mission

STORIES OF FAITH:

A mother of four sons, Sharon Filegar was at a stage in her life when she was able to change her focus and achieve some goals she had set for herself. A nurse for more than 25 years in the mother/infant unit at St. Mary’s Hospital, one of those goals was earning a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She decided to apply and was accepted into the Bon Secours Memorial College of Nursing’s RN-BSN program.

SHARON FILEGAR, BSN, RN — OVERCOMING A DIAGNOSIS WITH RESILIENCE

She was progressing along in the program when, in late 2015, she started experiencing recurring migraines that lasted for days at a time. After consulting with her primary care nurse practitioner, an MRI was ordered since it was a new onset of migraines. "I was notified that it was a tumor about the size of a golf ball but was benign, based on its appearance," Filegar said.

Her neurosurgeon, Peter Alexander, confirmed the tumor’s benign status, and since it was not emergent, but still needed to be removed, could be scheduled at a time that was convenient for Filegar. Surgery was scheduled for mid-May so that she and her son (who was completing his last semester of nursing school at Liberty University) could finish their BSN programs without interruption.

"I was never particularly worried about the outcome of the diagnosis or surgery as I was confident that I was in God’s healing hands and that He would work out whatever the outcome for His glory and honor," she said.

Although Filegar had completed her studies, she realized her surgery date would conflict with the College’s commencement ceremony. She inquired about having a friend and colleague in nursing attend the ceremony. "As a leader in Bon Secours, I feel more informed. I’m able to be part of the solution and prepare my team for the changes ahead...""
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