COLLEGE OF NURSING INTRODUCTIONS

DR. JILL BEAVERS-KIRBY, DIRECTOR OF CLINICAL EDUCATION
Dr. Jill Beavers-Kirby serves as the CTU College of Nursing’s Director of Clinical Education. She has been in the healthcare field for thirty-five years. She started out as a firefighter/EMT and then became a paramedic before starting her career in nursing. Dr. Beavers-Kirby has spent most of her nursing career in critical care areas and oncology. What Dr. Beavers-Kirby loves most about nursing is, “Helping people whether at the bedside, in a clinic, in the middle of a hurricane, or in the classroom…I want to help people and practice common sense compassion.” She worked with the Department of Homeland Security for ten years supporting the agency through countless deployments in response to natural disasters. Dr. Beavers-Kirby has been a Nurse Practitioner for fourteen years and has been working full-time in higher education for the last four. As the University Director of Clinical Education, she is responsible for ensuring the college meets all of the clinical outcomes in the BSN, MSN, and DNP programs and is passionate about serving CTU students, “I have wanted to work for CTU for a while now because of the reputation of its nursing program.”

DR. ROBIN GIEGER, LEAD FACULTY FOR THE COLLEGE OF NURSING
Dr. Robin Gieger serves as Lead Faculty for the College of Nursing. She brings over seventeen years of nursing experience, eleven in which she has served as a Nurse Practitioner. “I was drawn to CTU’s commitment to student engagement.” She loves being able to join faculty in supporting students through challenges in hopes of enriching their lives through learning. Dr. Gieger has diverse experience in the profession of nursing from clinical, to Nursing Administration and Executive experience. “I like finding solutions to challenges. I love meeting new people and sharing methods that stimulate positive change…and I’m loving CTU.” Dr. Gieger loves the fact that nursing provides a variety of career fields and diversity; “graduates can follow their interests and work in clinics, hospitals, government agencies, or education.”

As Lead Faculty for the College of Nursing, she is responsible for leading all College of Nursing faculty through course instruction, facilitation of the virtual classroom, and all faculty/student engagement areas.

BETHANY SHOEMAKER, NURSING COORDINATOR
Bethany Shoemaker serves as the Nursing Coordinator for CTU Academic Advising and works directly with the College of Nursing at CTU. She is an MSN prepared nurse and served in the profession for over four years before joining the team at CTU. She has worked in a hospital setting and has experience in direct patient care, maternal-child health, and in oncology. “I love that the nursing profession offers so many opportunities to make a difference in the lives of others. It offers a way to serve both individuals and populations in a meaningful way.” It excites her to know that there are many directions a nurse can take within their career and that the nursing profession, unlike any other, promotes lifelong learning and professional development. In her role as the Nursing Coordinator, Bethany collaborates with the College of Nursing to guide graduate and post-graduate nursing students through the MSN and DNP programs, providing resources to support student success. She oversees the progression of all nursing students through their respective programs. “I love working with students and knowing that they will make a difference in the healthcare environment because of the education they receive at CTU.” She loves ensuring students have a positive experience in their program so they feel prepared to enter new roles in the nursing profession as change agents and leaders. “I appreciate knowing that CTU provides opportunities for adult learners to return to school and further their education through a program that is structured for students with families and work-life.”

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Sarah Armold has been a faculty member with the College of Nursing at CTU since early 2019. She has served in nursing for twelve years specializing in case management and has worked as a community case manager for the last nine. She enjoys performing home visits and assisting patients with obtaining resources to be successful in the home environment — the case management program in which she served a part of received a Magnet Prize in 2011. The prize is a distinction awarded by the American Nurses Credentialing Center of the ANA to an “organization whose proposed project best describes cutting-edge research, practices, services, technologies, programs or other exemplary innovations designed to increase the knowledge base of support for patient care and nursing excellence” https://www.nursingworld.org/ancc/awards/ancc-magnet-prize-program/.

Dr. Armold loves nursing because nurses can help people when they need it most. “I have often assisted patients when they are at their worst and most desperate for help, and it is very rewarding to be of value during a difficult time.”

Dr. Armold teaches in the NRSG313- Alternative and Complementary Interventions & NRSG41- Health and Wellness Assessment courses. “I am most passionate about showing students that they can take charge of their nursing career and find research that pertains to them and their practice. At CTU, we can help students learn to do research and find the answers to questions. The healthcare field is ever-changing, and we have to prepare nurses to find accurate answers.”

During the American Nurses Association conference of April 2019, Dr. Armold presented her poster, highlighting her research project for the Real-Life Application of AACN’s- the Preferred Vision of the Professoriate in Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs. She discussed her published work: Armold, S. (2017). Utilization of the health care system of community case management patients. Professional Case Management 22(4), 155-162.

In this publication, Dr. Armold showed that a nurse visiting a chronically ill patient in the home decreases their utilization of the emergency department (ED) and hospital by 55% and 61% respectively. “In nursing, it is crucial that we prove that the work we do is evidence-based and effective.” Through her literature review, Dr. Armold found that masters-prepared nurses are effective in decreasing a patient’s admissions to the ED and hospital. “Even with this knowledge, it was important that I replicate previous studies to show that the results were valid.”

Dr. Armold’s poster shows students that publishing and sharing knowledge in the nursing profession is possible and demonstrates how scholarship aligns with CTU’s and the College of Nursing’s mission. The scholarship shows the different and diverse roles nurses can play in caring for their patients…and shows that patients can be helped across the continuum of care; that even includes in their home.

Dr. Armold has another publication that was approved for Nursing 2019 to be released sometime this year.
CTU NURSING STUDENT LAURA WEST:
PURSUITING ADVANCEMENT VERSUS PUSURING ADVANCEMENT

Returning to school later in life requires a large commitment—especially while juggling family obligations, a career, and personal relationships. However, finding the right balance to do it all is possible, and nursing student Laura West is a model example.

Laura’s nursing education journey began in 2007 when she received her Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) from San Diego City College. After graduation, Laura began her nursing career in labor and delivery (L&D) and then moved into ambulatory care with Planned Parenthood for several years.

For the past seven years, Laura has worked in primary care with Kaiser Permanente and has discovered a passion for ambulatory care and telemedicine, which she attributes to a field full of opportunities. “With nursing, the possibilities are endless. You can go into management or education. You can work with patients or you can work with other nurses. There never seems to be a dull moment. I am always challenged, which is rewarding,” says Laura. While she loves the work she is doing in her current job, Laura’s ultimate goal is to receive her Doctorate in Nursing Practice (DNP) to teach at the four-year university level.

Twelve years after receiving her ADN, Laura learned of the possibility to attend CTU through a staff meeting at work. One of Kaiser Permanente’s career counselors spoke of an educational alliance with CTU that presented an opportunity to return to school for no out-of-pocket cost. After hearing this information, Laura jumped at the opportunity.

Today, not only is she working to complete CTU’s RN to BSN program, but Laura is also the mother to two young daughters, the wife of a San Diego city fire captain, an active volunteer in her daughters’ Girl Scout Troop, and part of the Nursing Program Committee with CTU.

In addition, she is a preceptor in her current primary care position with Kaiser Permanente—one who “provides valuable teaching and learning experiences and models safe patient care using evidence-based practice”—and is recognized as a subject matter expert with the nurse screening algorithm for the north county clinics in San Diego County. Laura is also involved in the signing off of skill competencies for the medical assistants (MA), licensed vocational nurses (LVN), and registered nurses (RNs) at Kaiser Permanente.

How does she do it all? Laura credits CTU for help making it possible. “CTU is helping me fulfill my education goals to ultimately fulfill my professional goals, and they make it so I can do it all. The tutoring services are amazing. I love the pace of the program. I feel I’m working quickly towards my goal and I like that I get all of my assignments in the beginning so I can build my schedule and still have time to be with my family, to work, and to help with my daughters’ girl scouts. Even though it’s all online, I never feel alone or isolated. Everyone is receptive and accessible.”

Laura is also motivated by a strong conviction to teach and train new graduate nurses and employees, and she believes her education will put her in a position to help people transitioning into the work setting. “Proper training and preceptorship can alleviate a lot of burnout and grief from nurses, and I want to contribute to making that possible for the future of nursing. Having these degrees will put me in a position where I’m able to make those changes and create an environment where new hires coming out of school or from another department feel supported and part of a team and a family.”

Specifically, Laura is excited about the future of telemedicine and the role she aspires to play in helping nurses gain more confidence in an emerging specialty. “I feel very comfortable where telemedicine is now, especially in my place of work. But, I feel it’s still new. Many nurses aren’t comfortable or familiar with it. However, I believe my experience in telemedicine can help change the nursing field to become more comfortable with it.”

Although Laura was a nursing student over a decade ago, she feels she’s done herself a great service by returning to school and learning the latest in her field. “Being in school again has helped me realize how involved nursing is and how much of it is an interprofessional discipline,” says Laura.