
PhD Nursing Student Newsletter

Fall 2022

Fall greetings from Nancy Morris, Tan Chingfen Graduate School of Nursing PhD Program Director. This Newsletter highlights and recognizes the accomplishments of students in the PhD in Nursing program and recent graduates. We want to share their interests in asking and answering questions, conducting research, disseminating results, advancing nursing science, exploring nursing education, engaging in professional organizations, networking, promoting health and justice for all, and beginning to steward the discipline.

This Fall we have 26 PhD nursing students on campus (9 new and 17 returning students) engaged in coursework and working on their dissertations. January 2023 marks the first spring semester start date for BS to PhD students and we will be welcoming an additional 3 students as they begin their doctoral studies. We've had 8 students earn their PhD degree since August 2021. One is serving in a leadership role in a hospital and the rest all have academic positions and are teaching nursing students and moving ahead in establishing their programs of research.



Recent Graduates



Thin Malatesta

Dissertation:
*Moral Challenges,
Moral Distress, and
Moral Resilience in
Critical Care Nurses
During the COVID-
19 Pandemic*

December 2021



Jennifer DiBenedetto

Dissertation:
*Experiences with
Exposure to a
Distant Reiki
Intervention During
the COVID-19
Pandemic*

March 2022



Zareen Barry

Dissertation:
*"I am going to be a
nurse": English
Learner Nursing
Students'
Perspectives on
Transition into the
Student Role*

June 2022

Recent Graduates



Deborah Jean-Baptiste

Dissertation:
*Individuals with Sickle
Cell Disease Using
SBAR as a
Communication Tool:
Secondary Data
Analysis*
June 2022



Julia Patrick

Dissertation:
*"I felt isolated."
Hospitalization
Experiences During the
COVID-19 Pandemic*
June 2022



Tara Tehan

Dissertation:
*A Feasibility Study of
Therapeutic
Conversations with
Family Members to
Reduce the Symptoms
of Post-Intensive Care
Syndrome*
August 2022

Expanding Horizons

Rita Amoah podium presentation “*Ubiety in Nursing Practice – Making each patient the star of the minute amid distractions: A qualitative descriptive study*” at ENRS Scientific Sessions, Providence, RI Spring 2022

Amoah, R.K., Sullivan-Bolyai, S., & Pagano-Therrien, J. (2022). Ubeity in nursing practice: Making each patient the star of the minute. *Nursing Forum*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/nuf.12820>

Amanda Cornine podium presentation “*Facilitators and Inhibitors of LPN-to-RN student transitions: A cross-sectional national survey*” at ENRS Scientific Sessions, Providence, RI Spring 2022

Cornine, A. E., Crawford, A. L., & Sullivan-Bolyai, S. (2022). Facilitators and inhibitors of LPN-to-RN student transition, A cross-sectional national survey. *Nursing Education Perspectives*. <https://doi.org/10.109.01.NEP.0000000000001051>

Jean-Baptiste, D. M., Wassef, M., Sullivan-Bolyai, S. & Jenerette, C. (2022). Individuals with sickle cell disease using sBAR as a communication tool: A pilot study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19, 13817. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192113817>



Expanding Horizons



Nagawa, C. S., **Lane, I. A.**, McKay, C. E., Kamberi, A. Shenette, L. L.,...Sadasivam, R. S. (2022). Use of a rapid qualitative method to inform the development of a text messaging intervention for people with serious mental illness who smoke: Formative research study. *JMIR Form Res*, 6(11), e40907. <https://doi.org/10.2196/40907>

Lane, I. A. podium presentation *"Enhancing academic persistence in college among young adults with mental health conditions: A cognitive remediation intervention.* "International Association for Youth Mental Health, Copenhagen, Denmark Sept '22

Lane, I. A. Table Top Presentation , *"Best practice to measure gender identity in young adults with mental health conditions."* International Association for Youth Mental Health, Copenhagen, Denmark. September 2022 <https://seed-study.weebly.com/gender-identity-findings.html>

Toffay, S. podium presentation *"Self-care among Black African immigrants with hypertension"* at ENRS Scientific Sessions, Providence, RI Spring 2022

Turner, S. poster *"Understanding the prevalence and characteristics of weight stigma among pediatric health care providers: An integrative review"* at ENRS Scientific Sessions, Providence, RI Spring 2022

Turner, S. poster *"Weight neutral care: A concept analysis"* at ENRS Scientific Sessions, Providence, RI Spring 2022

Turner, S. poster, *"Nurses' use of harmful 'wellness' supplements during the COVID-19 pandemic"* at APHA Annual Meeting, Boston, MA. November 2022. 1st place award for Public Health Nursing section!!

Turner, S. podium presentation, *"Policy recommendations for the prevention of disordered weight control behaviors: Findings from a scoping review"* at the International Conference on Eating Disorders, Spring 2022.

Samantha Turner recipient of the Dr. Paul Ernsberger Research Scholarship issued by the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance (NAAFA)

Professional Engagement

Finding people with similar interests and passions working together on common goals can provide the networking, mentoring, relationships, and energy that will encourage and sustain you as you move forward with your career goals. Professional organizations can play a key role in your professional development. Seek out an organization that aligns with your interests and get involved.



Caitlin Healy: Chair of the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists (NACNS) Membership Committee



Tara Tehan: Treasurer on the Board of Directors for the Massachusetts Foundation for Nursing Advancement

Alumni Highlights

Dr. Edwin Aroke graduated from UMass Medical School with his PhD in Nursing in 2016 after which he accepted a tenure-track position at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He was awarded tenure and rank of Associate Professor and is currently the Director of the PhD Program and the Dual DNP-PhD Pathway. Dr. Aroke spends the majority of his time focused on his program of research while balancing his administrative and teaching responsibilities. Additionally, he spends a great deal of time and takes great pride in mentoring students and junior faculty. He works one day/ week as a CRNA. As a PhD student, Dr. Aroke suspected he would research anesthesia care team models, but his mentor, Dr. Sullivan-Bolyai encouraged him to consider improving care for patients rather than care teams. Dr. Aroke's future goals are to continue expanding his research, seeking a clear understanding of chronic pain management in minority health, and training future researchers.

Challenges: While a student, the biggest hurdle was finishing his PhD. The transition from student to faculty role was challenging at first. After realizing it was a matter of strategic thinking and balancing all the different activities he settled into academia.

Facilitators: A major facilitator to success was establishing collaborators across campus. These relationships helped his science grow quickly and encouraged him figure out what exactly it is he's bringing to the table and his research teams.

Advice: Dr. Aroke lives by the mantra: *Rising tides float all ships* and believes it speaks to your willingness to take chances on people and collaborate. For one to succeed in grantsmanship today, one has to be comfortable working with others and bringing them along, and that also means sharing in the fruits of labor with others. He continues to ask himself why he does what he does--to stay true to the mission of the science and ask good questions. *"If you are really staying true to the science and asking the right questions – even the seemingly obvious – the answer eventually comes to you and then you spend your time really going through what would be the best way to go about answering that question."* **And for the person on-the-road to post-doc:** *"Bear in mind, you have to charge your own path. Do not be afraid. It's easy to ask the simple questions. I came to UMass thinking I was going study one thing, but mentors challenged me to think outside the box."*



EDWIN AROKE, PhD, CRNA, FAANA, FAAN

Dr. Aroke is a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) and a Nurse Scientist whose program of research focuses on racial pain disparities. Dr. Aroke is currently working on an interdisciplinary project that aims to identify the role of epigenomic and transcriptomic modifications in racial disparities in chronic low back pain. His scholarship has resulted in several peer-reviewed articles, and national and international presentations on pharmacogenomics, pain disparities, and anesthesia outcomes.



Stephanie Griggs, PhD, RN, FAAN

Dr. Griggs is a pediatric nurse and an Assistant Professor of Nursing at the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, Case Western Reserve University, and an Associate Faculty member in the Schubert Center for Child Studies. Her core research interests are in sleep self-management and cardiometabolic health. She is currently studying the role of sleep and the circadian system on chronic conditions of childhood including type 1 diabetes, as well as biobehavioral technology-based interventions to support sleep self-management and sleep promotion in adolescents and young adults.

Alumni Highlights

Dr. Stephanie Griggs graduated from UMass Medical School Graduate School of Nursing with her PhD in Nursing in 2017 after which she engaged in a 2-year postdoctoral fellowship in self-management of chronic conditions at Yale School of Nursing with the internationally renowned and authority in pediatric diabetes self-management, Dr. Margaret Grey. She subsequently accepted a tenure-track academic position at the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing at Case Western Reserve University in Ohio.

Dr. Griggs dissertation was focused on hope as a latent predictor of emotional well-being and physical function in first-year university students. Dr. Griggs leveraged the NFLP to help offset the financial burden of graduate school and recommends it to others considering an academic track in a School of Nursing. Managing large grant-funded academic research during her fellowship has taught Stephanie a great deal and she feels thankful to be in the position she is in, having received the foundational training she received at UMass Medical School. More recently, she has just finished submitting two R01s, the first of which was scored but not funded, the second of which was just submitted (fingers crossed!). She loves being in a large research-intensive environment where all her colleagues are high-achieving scholars who all push each other to do more and are deep thinkers on complex, impactful topics.

Challenges: "UMass prepared me well, methodologically. I had a strong PhD Dissertation Committee. Having good mentorship is important. However, I don't think I was aware at the time of NIH mechanisms, you know, the lived experience of managing a grant that go along with NIH funding. But everyone was

Advice *Your dissertation topic is important, but learning methodology is much more important. Learning multiple methods especially multivariate methods, and mixed methods, during your PhD really sets you up for success. Trying to learn multivariate methods during your post-doctoral period is a much steeper learning curve while trying to manage a grant.*

Personal Milestones

Danielle Urella welcomed Dominick Anthony Perez October 2021

Samantha Turner welcomed Harrison James Turner February 2022

Sarah Romain welcomed Theodore Robert Weber February 2022

Saisha Cintron welcomed Zimri Joy Cintron September 2022



Congratulations!

Favorite Quote

"People should not say that this or that is not worth learning, giving as their reason that it will not be put to use. They can no more know what information they will need in the future than they will know the weather two hundred years from today."

Clara Barton (shared by Ian Lane).

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Tan Chingfen Graduate School of Nursing Alumni
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