

# Reflections

Resurrection University Alumni Magazine  
2020 Special Edition



Brian Medley  
(BSN '16) on the  
frontlines of COVID

**The Year of the Nurse  
takes on new meaning.**

*How ResU nursing alumni  
are making a difference during  
the COVID-19 crisis.*

***To say things have changed this year would be an understatement. While ResU has always encouraged and valued change, we certainly couldn't have predicted just how extensive it would be in 2020.***



Like other institutions of higher learning, COVID-19 forced us to be more adaptable than we've ever been, and in a shorter period of time. The pandemic abruptly changed the way we educate the majority of our students, especially because only a few of our programs previously existed in the online space. But

ResU didn't skip a beat: We successfully transitioned to exclusively online learning within a matter of weeks for all students, for all courses, and we implemented a new virtual simulation platform to replace our simulation lab learning and clinicals.

In partnership with our School of Emerging Education, our Spring 2020 MSN graduates created their final projects based on COVID-19 training topics to prepare nurses with the tools they need. The online course was offered to all, for free, and we were delighted to see that nurses throughout the nation registered and took the course.

In July, we celebrated our first-ever car-mencement: an outdoor, drive-through commencement ceremony, to honor our April 2020 graduates and we continued this new tradition again in September for our Summer 2020 graduates. Although we realize it's not the perfect substitution for our traditional commencement ceremonies, it was a unique and memorable experience that allowed us to honor our graduates in

person. And we'll continue to celebrate them and their accomplishments in the best way we can.

As soon as it was possible, we implemented in-person simulation learning again, an aspect of the ResU education that is invaluable to our students and one that can't be replicated through online learning. With safety measures in place, based on the CDC, IDPH and AMITA Health guidelines, we successfully began staggered simulations on campus for our nursing students. At the request of our clinical partners, our radiography students went directly back to clinicals at hospital locations throughout Chicagoland, while maintaining maximum safety precautions.

ResU's mission has never been more apparent. We are a community of educators, learners, and healthcare professionals who are answering the call every day with the same goal in mind: making the world a healthier place. Every day, we educate the next generation of healthcare professionals, who are stepping into a role that is even more vital in this unprecedented time.

I invite you to read on about some of our alumni who are proving just how valuable ResU grads are to making the world a better place.

The future is always unknown, but in these times of uncertainty, the connection we have with one another is even more important. I look forward to the day when we can once again join together. Until then, I wish you and your family continued health and safety.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Therese A. Scanlan".

Therese A. Scanlan, EdD  
President, Resurrection University





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# RESURRECTION UNIVERSITY

NURSING & HEALTH SCIENCES

**2020 Special Edition, Issue Number 17**

*Reflections is the official alumni magazine  
of Resurrection University.*

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# It's the year of the Nurse & Midwife.





**T**he World Health Organization (WHO) designated the year 2020 as The Year of the Nurse and Midwife in celebration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale. During this year of recognition, Resurrection University is celebrating not only our own community of nurses, but all nurses who exemplify that it's amazing to be needed.

In honor of this year of celebration, Librarian Erin Bell and Development Specialist Bianca Marchan redesigned a display case on campus to feature historical archival materials. Pictures, artifacts and information cards reminded students, faculty, staff and visitors of ResU's rich history, and the work of our alumni who helped shape the nursing field.

We are also proud to be highlighting the work of select nursing faculty at ResU each month throughout the year. Take a look at all the amazing nurses we have already honored this year (these and other profiles found at [resu.edu/yearofthenurse](http://resu.edu/yearofthenurse)):

#### JANUARY'S NURSE OF THE MONTH: REEM AZHARI, PHD, RN



Dr. Azhari began her healthcare career as an operating room (OR) nurse. But as she gained experience building teams of different medical

professionals, she found herself pulled into more managerial, administrative, and executive roles. Dr. Azhari says that her administrative experience, particularly her interest in leadership and development, led naturally to teaching.

While working at Resurrection Medical Center, Dr. Azhari created a program to educate OR nurses—an effort that resulted in her transition to her current position as Resurrection University's first Endowed Chair of Interprofessional Education. Dr. Azhari aims not only to build the school's IPE scholars program, which graduates nursing and health sciences students ready to enter the workforce in situations demanding collaborative practice; she also seeks to weave interprofessional education throughout the curriculum as a whole, from the bachelor's through the doctoral level.

#### FEBRUARY'S NURSE OF THE MONTH: YOLANDA A. COLEMAN, PHD, RN



Dr. Yolanda A. Coleman, Assistant Professor of Nursing at Resurrection University, is an influential leader in the healthcare industry. She is the System Assistant Chief Nursing Officer at Sinai Health System and previously served as the Senior Director of Patient Care Services at Saint Anthony Hospital, the Director of Patient Care of Walter

Payton Liver Center and Transplant/Surgical Services at UI Health, and Administrative Director for Loyola Health.

Dr. Coleman uses her talents and skills to create life-changing moments in people's lives. She is passionate about caring for others and making a difference in the community, especially by helping underserved communities and providing expertise to guide healthcare legislation. While maintaining a balance as a mom, professional nurse leader, and educator, Dr. Coleman serves her community through teaching, and by mentoring young girls and women. One of her other passions is helping those affected by gun violence. Dr. Coleman supports a healthcare scholarship each year, sponsored by a foundation started by her family, for those affected by gun violence in Chicago.



Librarian Erin Bell and Development Specialist Bianca Marchan redesigned a display case on the first floor of ResU's campus at St. Elizabeth's Hospital to honor The Year of the Nurse and Midwife. The display features historical archival materials including pictures, artifacts and information cards reminding students, faculty, staff and visitors of ResU's rich history, and the work of alumni who helped shape the nursing field.

### MARCH'S NURSE OF THE MONTH: JULIE DUFF, DNP, APRN, WHNP-BC, CNE



Dr. Julie Duff is an Associate Professor in the College of Nursing at Resurrection University. Dr. Duff explained that she did not "choose" nursing; rather, nursing chose her! She said:

"The desire to be a nurse was just always there. I remember as a young child going to the library with my mom every few weeks and checking out the same two books about nurses. My mother must have gotten sick of reading and re-reading these books to me! Later as a high school student, I had the opportunity one Saturday morning to follow Dr. Loretta Ford (renowned nursing leader and co-founder of the first nurse practitioner program) on her rounds around Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester, NY. At the time, Dr. Ford served as founding Dean of the University of Rochester's nursing school. She was a dynamic and impressive force who made a profoundly positive and long-lasting impact on me."

### APRIL'S NURSE OF THE MONTH: MARIA F. MARTINEZ, DNP, RN



Dr. Maria Martinez (MSN '09) always wanted to become a nurse to help and serve patients in the hospital and community settings. Science, health, compassionate care, and patient advocacy intrigued her and led her to the nursing profession. She explained, "Being an RN is my calling."

Dr. Martinez finds helping patients during the most challenging and difficult moments with their health and lives to be the most fulfilling part of nursing. She said, "Patients want nurses who are not only knowledgeable and skilled with clinical tasks, but most importantly, patients want nurses who genuinely care about them and their families." Some of the most fulfilling moments as an RN, Dr. Martinez believes, are when patients recover from illness, when she can comfort them in the face of apprehension, when she can advocate on their behalf, or when she is thanked for her work: "Genuine, compassionate and professional care makes a difference for all patients, and this is most fulfilling to me."



### MAY'S NURSE OF THE MONTH: BRANDON HAUER, MSN, RN



Brandon Hauer, MSN, RN, is an Instructor in Resurrection University's College of Nursing and a registered nurse in the ICU at Thorek West Hospital on the north side of Chicago. Brandon says he's always helped people in times of need, ever since he was a child. He knows the importance of offering a system of support to those in need, and claims, "Nobody embodies the term 'support system' more than a nurse. It was just a profession that called out to me. I like to say nursing chose me."

He believes the best nurses are those willing to make sacrifices for others, which has been made clear with the development of recent events. Brandon explained, "COVID-19 is definitely testing us ... one of the good things that can come from this is showing the world truly what nurses and healthcare workers do each and every day." He believes that current events offer an opportunity for prospective healthcare workers to evaluate whether they truly have a passion for nursing.

**“  
NOBODY EMBODIES THE  
TERM ‘SUPPORT SYSTEM’  
MORE THAN A NURSE.”**

### JUNE'S NURSE OF THE MONTH: SUZAN ULRICH, DrPH, MSN, MN, RN

Dr. Suzan Ulrich teaches in the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) online program in the College of Nursing at ResU as an Associate Professor. She always wanted to be a nurse growing up and found watching nursing and health-related shows on TV inspiring. However, Suzan shared, "On my first day on the medical surgical unit as a student nurse, I fainted flat on my face." She knew then that working in a unit treating illness was not her calling. Still, she continued along—and did not faint again—but her future remained unclear following this setback, until she started her clinical in maternity: "I was so happy when I started my clinical in maternity because mothers and babies are not sick. I knew this was where I belonged. I also wanted to be just like my maternity instructor. So, I started my nursing career in labor and delivery and soon after, obtained a master's degree in maternity nursing so I could teach."

Looking toward the future, Suzan wants to continue training more midwives, especially midwives of color, so they can provide support and care to black mothers, who are 3 to 4 times more likely to die from childbirth than white women. "This disparity is horrific in a country that spends more on maternity care than any other country in the world. Yet the USA is one of only eight countries in the world with a rising maternal mortality rate. Midwifery care and birth centers demonstrate better outcomes for both moms and babies and particularly for minority women who also have a higher burden of premature births, infant deaths, and maternal morbidity and mortality," Suzan explained.

### JULY'S NURSE OF THE MONTH: MELISSA MURPHEY, DNP, APRN, NP-C



Dr. Melissa Murphey is an Associate Professor and Assistant Dean, Graduate Programs in the College of Nursing at ResU. She is also a Family Nurse Practitioner with Advocate/Aurora Healthcare and an Illinois Society of Advanced Practice Nursing Board Member.

Both of Melissa's parents emigrated from Ireland and played integral roles in instilling the importance of education and a strong work ethic in Melissa and her siblings. She continued, "Unfortunately, she [my mom] passed away prior to seeing me complete my studies as a nurse, but I am confident she is proud that I followed her into healthcare."

Melissa believes nursing is a wonderful profession because nurses can make a lasting impact on patients and their families. She is passionate about advocating for and educating patients and their families on their diagnoses and plans of care. As for higher education, Melissa shared, "I enjoy higher education because it allows me an opportunity to offer my insight and past experiences to those graduate students that will be making lasting improvements and impressions on the healthcare field for many years."

# 2020 is the International Year of the Nurse

## and the **MIDWIFE**, so we talked to one amazing Midwife.

**S**uzan Ulrich, DrPH, MSN, MN, RN, is passionate about the role of midwives in modern healthcare. "When I discovered midwifery in Pittsburgh, I was amazed by how different birth is outside of the hospital." Suzan continued, "I believe the health of the nation is based on the health of women and children."

The World Health Organization agrees. According to the WHO, "Midwifery, where care includes proven interventions for maternal and newborn health as well as for family planning, could avert over 80% of all maternal deaths, stillbirths and neonatal deaths. Midwife-led continuity of care, where a known midwife or group of midwives provides care from pregnancy to the end of the postnatal period, can prevent 24% of pre-term births."

**“MIDWIVES LISTEN. WE GIVE MOTHERS THE EXPERIENCE THEY WANT TO HAVE DURING BIRTH.”**

Suzan added, "If you're Kate Middleton, you have a midwife. It's common outside of the United States. The fact is we need more midwives here and I want to do whatever I can to help."

The data supports the overwhelming need for midwives. In the United States maternal complications have more than doubled in the last 20 years. Nearly half of U.S. counties don't have a single practicing obstetrician-gynecologist. In rural areas, the number of hospitals offering obstetric services has fallen more than 16% since 2004.

Maternal mortality rates continue to climb – more women die from pregnancy-related complications in the U.S. than in any other developed country. Despite the need, midwives only attend to an estimated 10% of births in the United States.

"Midwives listen. We give mothers the experience they want to have during birth. Women have more control over what's going on." Suzan added, "One of the biggest reasons for infant mortality is a lack of listening. Midwives spend a lot of time with their patients. They look at birth as the natural process it is."



Photo by YoungDoo Carey & John Carey

Midwives were once common in America, but between 1940 and 1990 things changed. According to Suzan, "Births went from home to hospital. About half of all births were in the home in the 1940s. By the 90s, 90% were in hospitals. We need more midwives. We're now able to practice independently which leads to better care. We know that better integration of midwives and the midwifery model of care into health systems is fundamental to reducing primary and maternity care provider shortages."

Suzan is committed to increasing enrollment in midwife programs and the number of programs that are offered. "Increasing enrollment is one thing, but the programs need to expand. Right now, there are only around 40 schools that offer midwife programs."

Midwives have a role in healthcare. An important role. As Pope Francis said, "... and midwives carry out perhaps the noblest of the professions. Let us pray for them, that they may do their precious work in the best possible way."



# Over a dozen episodes of ResU's “Thinking Out Loud” podcasts are now online.

Listen at your convenience at [resu.edu/podcasts](http://resu.edu/podcasts) and enjoy insights and conversations with experts on topics ranging from dieting and nutrition, to the 411 on CBD and THC. Recent episodes explore trends in healthcare, how to change careers, and conversations with alumni!



## Featured Thinking Out Loud Podcasts:



### IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO PURSUE YOUR DREAM

Dr. Therese A. Scanlan welcomes Rebecca Klein-Collins, author of “Never Too Late: The Adult Student’s Guide to College,” for a conversation about going back to school. They discuss combatting fears and common misconceptions, tips for non-traditional college students, and why going back to college might just be the best next step for you, no matter your age.



### IPE IS THE KEY TO REDUCING MEDICAL MISTAKES

Did you know that, according to a study conducted by the National Academy of Medicine, 44,000 to 98,000 people die per year due to medical mistakes in the United States? Dr. Reem Azhari and host Dr. Therese A. Scanlan discuss what you can do as a consumer to advocate for your health, and what healthcare workers are doing through interprofessional practice to ensure your safety.



**CHAUNCEY INCARNATO'S JOURNEY TO NURSING WAS ANYTHING BUT TRADITIONAL—YOURS CAN BE TOO!**

Dr. Therese A. Scanlan talks to Chauncey Incarnato (BSN '14), a nurse in the neurological trauma intensive care unit of a Level One Trauma Center in Chicago. Chauncey is a career changer who enjoyed a successful college football career before moving to Chicago and working as a personal trainer, bar back, bellman and even security for night clubs. It wasn't until he took a position as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) that he considered nursing— the rest is history! Soon after, Chauncey enrolled at Resurrection University and earned his BSN.

**ADDITIONAL EPISODES INCLUDE:**

- Food as Medicine
- Cold and Flu? There's Something You Can Do!
- Mindfulness & Meditation: Meditation Can Be Your Medication
- Get the Skinny on Diets
- Check out the Research: Essential Oils as an Alternative to Opioids for Pain Management
- Healthy Holidays: Being Grateful with Your Plateful of Healthier Options
- It's Amazing to be Needed: Changing Your Career Can Change Your Life
- From Federal Agent to Nursing, Fount Hankle Has Always Been in the Business of Helping People



THINKING OUT LOUD EVENT:

# What's the 411 on CBD & THC?

Last Fall, ResU hosted an off campus Thinking Out Loud Event for alumni, faculty and staff, continuing education students, and health practitioners. "What's the 411 on CBD & THC?" was hosted live in-person and streamed live online.



In anticipation of the eventual legalization of recreational marijuana in Illinois (effective January 2020), Kris Tohtz, DC, DABCA, LAc, Director of the School of Emerging Education and Assistant Professor in the College of Health Sciences, presented facts and research about the benefits, risks, uses, and differences between CBD and THC. Following her presentation, audience members watching the event in-person and online were able to submit questions via text message, which Kris Tohtz and ResU President Dr. Therese A. Scanlan fielded and answered in real-time!

Take a look at these fast facts to get an overview of what Kris shared concerning what you need to know about CBD and THC:

- CBD can be taken orally, topically, or be vaped. However, the long-term effects on the lung are not yet apparent when it comes to vaping; therefore, vaping CBD is not recommended.
- THC and how it affects the body is better understood than CBD, as it's been used medically for many years.
- CBD's side effects can include nausea, fatigue, and irritability and it can also affect those with other medical conditions or taking medications. THC's side effects can include fatigue, increased diet, and hyper-

cannabinoid syndrome (resulting in excessive vomiting and dehydration).

- "Dosage" depends on a person's body, genetics, and personal history. CBD and THC can affect how medications work within the body and should not be taken without consulting with your medical professional. As a general rule, "less is more" when it comes to CBD.
- It's recommended to only purchase CBD products from vendors who can supply a COA, or Certificate of Analysis. This can be found on the packaging, or an employee should be able to provide the COA upon request. If the product doesn't have a COA, it's best not to purchase it.
- Ingested CBD does not result in a high, but rather promotes calmness and better rest; it's best used for systemic issues. Topical CBD can result in localized muscular or joint pain relief, which lasts longer than other traditional topical treatments. CBD and THC are not preventative, however.
- THC was federally illegal in Illinois until January 2020. CBD cannot be sold as a supplement, or as an additive to food.

The full-length event is now available to view on Resurrection University's YouTube channel.



# ResU Launches New School of Emerging Education.

An abstract graphic featuring two silhouettes of people's heads in profile, facing each other. The background is a mix of teal and brown tones. Overlaid on the silhouettes are several gears of different sizes and colors (teal, brown, yellow). A hand in a teal sleeve is shown reaching towards the gears. A white cloud is also visible in the upper right. A large, dark, curved line arches over the text.



**T**his Spring, ResU launched its continuing education school within the university: The School of Emerging Education (SoEE), the mission of which is to deliver innovative instructional programs that promote life-long learning and market-relevant skills for diverse learners. Because the launch coincided with the advent and spread of the novel coronavirus, our faculty saw an opportunity to create and make available an online course for nurses and other frontline healthcare workers: "Nursing Readiness in the Face of COVID-19."

**“WE FOUND A SMALL REWARDING WAY TO HELP OTHERS WITH A COMPLIMENTARY OFFERING TO THE COMMUNITY.”**

The course, which launched in April 2020 and extended through June 2020, offered digital badges for learners on topics ranging from prevention and alternative medical treatments, to conducting assessments through telehealth, pregnancy and breastfeeding during COVID-19, and caring for patients and families dealing with COVID-19.

Each component of the course, spearheaded by Dr. Melissa Murphey, was created by a team of ResU faculty and alumni who either served on the frontlines of the pandemic or researched its effects. Dr. Murphey explained, "During this challenging time, I believe there is an opportunity for all people to be extra kind and help others. I am glad that we found a small rewarding way to help others with a complimentary offering to the community. I hope that everyone finds a similar opportunity."

The course was made widely available online to newly graduated nurses, soon-to-graduate nurses, any nurse holding a license, and other frontline healthcare workers. The asynchronous nature of the course allowed healthcare professionals in the field, or returning to the field, to learn at their own pace. Over 225 nurses, nurse

practitioners, radiologists and others from around the globe, including Australia and Belgium, registered for the course.

Because "Nursing Readiness in the Face of COVID-19" was part of the School of Emerging Education, learners were awarded a digital badge after completing each component of the course. Once all topic badges were earned, learners were then awarded the microcredential for completing the course.

Digital badges have transformed the way educational accomplishments are being recognized and displayed. Digital badges are simple, verifiable and trusted web-enabled representations of a collection of learned achievements. They can be shared on web pages, your CV, your email signature line or social media. Digital badges provide employers and peers concrete evidence of what learners can do as a result of their education—and what specialized skills they earned.

Learn more about the School of Emerging Education, badges and microcredentialing, or enroll in a course at [resu.edu/academics/school-of-emerging-education/](https://resu.edu/academics/school-of-emerging-education/).

**COURSE INSTRUCTOR(S) NAME(S) AND CREDENTIALS:** Melissa A. Murphey, DNP, MSN, APRN, FNP-C; Reem Azhari, PhD, RN, CNOR; Kristine Tohtz, DC, DABCA, LAc, IFM ©; Haley DeCero, RN, BSN; Iyeokan Ativie, RN, BSN; Camille Raz, RN, BSN; Latura Stigall, RN, BSN; Tracy Omorogieva, RN, BSN; Irene Oh, RN, BSN; Claudia Roldan, RN, BSN; Stephanie Stanley, RN, BSN; and Ana M. Romero, BSN, RN.

## Thank You to Our Donors

We are grateful to the CHEST Foundation and the Fogelson Family Foundation, our generous donors who made this course launch possible.



# Paige's nursing career is taking off. Literally.

Paige Kopecky's (BSN '16) journey to the United States Air Force is a story of perseverance.

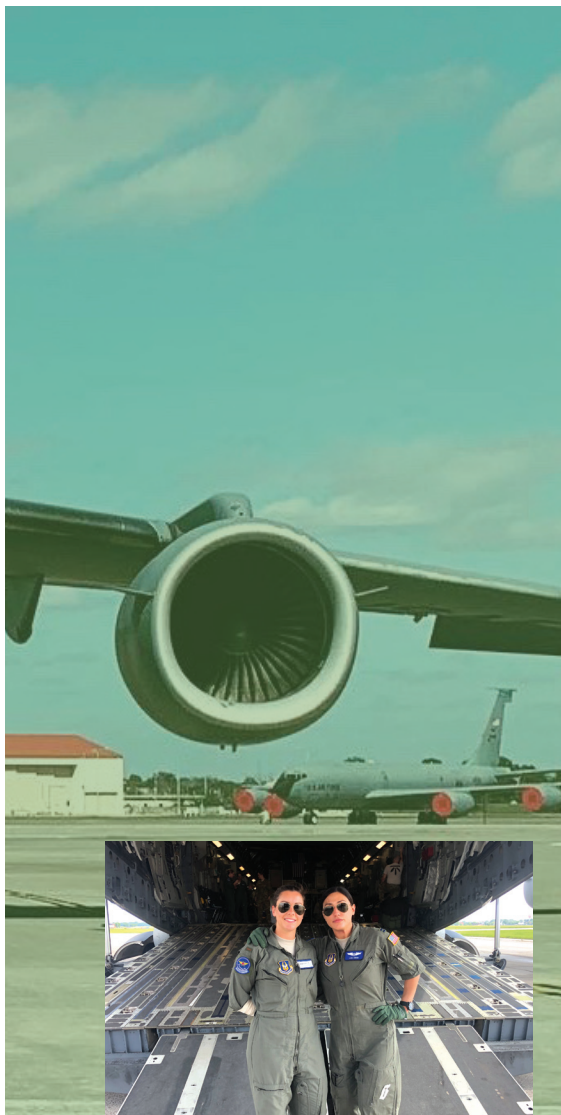
After graduating from high school in Crystal Lake, IL, she started in a pre-veterinarian program. "I grew up riding horses," Paige explained. "For me it made sense but as it turned out I just didn't want to go to school that long and to be honest it just wasn't for me."

Paige enrolled in the nursing program at Resurrection University and earned her BSN in May of 2016. She explored a variety of nursing roles including roles in the ER and OR, but never really found her niche. Then she discovered the Air Force.

Paige explains, "I was working in the ER and the Charge Nurse was a Flight Nurse in the Air Force Reserve. Another technician was in the Coast Guard. I started hearing about their experiences and I was hooked. I was always interested in the military, so when I discovered I could build my nursing career there and my nursing skills were needed, I knew it was perfect."

"I looked into it and started applying in the beginning of 2017. It's a long application process." Paige was commissioned as an officer in the Air Force Reserve in June 2018. In the Reserve, she was required to drill one weekend a month, fly one weekend a month and participate in yearly training. She completed a year of training and became a qualified Flight Nurse in June 2019.





What's the role of a Flight Nurse? Paige explains, "We work in crews of five (two nurses and three techs), which can also change based on patient load. We do stable patient transport, Aeromedical Evacuation (AE). We have to understand how a patient's condition changes with altitude. Before each mission, we actually configure the aircraft which is usually a standard cargo aircraft. Believe it or not there are no planes just for patient transport. Flight Nurses have to know all about the aircraft from a clinical/operational perspective. It's a lot of responsibility."

Paige grew up no stranger to manual labor and that's one of the things she loves about being a Flight Nurse. "I love the operational side of the job." Paige

continued, "It's cool work because you have a lot of physical work to do before the mission. You have to configure the aircraft. You have to see the big picture and make the decisions about how best to transport the patient. You have to string electrical and oxygen lines throughout the plane and make sure everything is perfect."

Paige enjoyed her experience so much in the Reserve that she applied, and was accepted, for active duty. Paige says, "There's a big difference between Reserve and active duty. Reserve is mostly training – we train for deployment. When I'm active duty, most of my missions will be live. I'll be in forward operating bases."

However, due to the emergence of COVID earlier this year, her dates for active duty were delayed. In the interim, she worked in the Emergency Department at Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center. She also started a program this Spring in public health to get her master's degree. She arrived in Japan in September where she is now stationed, completed two weeks of quarantine and will be up and flying soon!

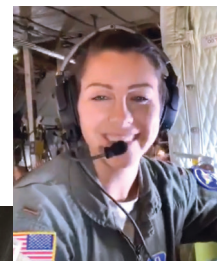
"I never knew about the nursing opportunities in the military," Paige added, "You can work in major specialties, the pay is actually better than many of the civilian nursing jobs, you get leadership training, you get to travel, and the retirement benefits are

incredible. You also get to do things most people never experience. Survival school was amazing."

Paige sees her role in the Air Force as a great honor. As she says, "If you want to feel like you're serving a higher purpose, this is it."

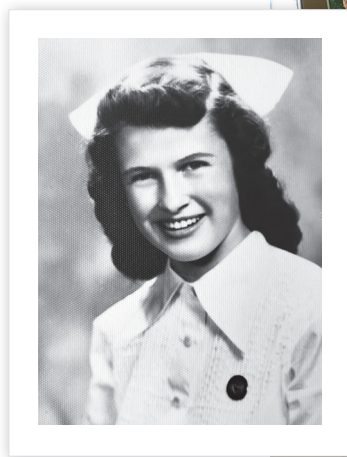
When asked about her advice to nursing students who might be interested in a military career Paige recommends the Reserve. "It's a great way to experience it."

On behalf of everyone at Resurrection University, thank you for your service Paige! Best of Luck in Japan!



# Nursing has changed a lot over the last 50 years

## NURSES HAVEN'T.



When Delores Clark (West Suburban Hospital School for Nurses '51) graduated from high school, women didn't have many career options. "Girls were limited to teaching, being a secretary or nursing." Fortunately, with encouragement from her mother and her aunt, Delores chose nursing. Her aunt, who was a nurse herself, told her about West Suburban College of Nursing. "There weren't too many choices for nursing education back then, so I went to West Sub and graduated in 1951."

During her days at West Suburban Delores said that "we liked to go down to the city in our free time. I was the second youngest person in a class of 65 nurses. At the time, we had blue capes that were part of our uniform; it was very different than today."

Delores continued, "In my day it was more hands on – there was a lot less technology. We didn't have respirators, and with IVs we used to have to actually count the drops. Technology has made a big difference for nurses. Sometimes I wonder how much more technology can we get? The way doctors work with nurses has really changed too. Doctors interact more. Nurses get to do more. It's gotten better for everyone involved – especially the patient."

While technology and the role of nurses has evolved – and continues to evolve – Delores remarked that nurses themselves haven't really changed over the years. "The common thread is caring for people – technology changes – the commitment to caring doesn't. As a nurse, you help people and that's the reward – that's what never changes."

Her career allowed her to experience a great deal over the years – from the Hines VA to Central DuPage Hospital to Amoco Research Center and finally to the Public Health Department in Morris, IL. "I was at the public health department for 16 years and did home visits, child immunizations and I really had the chance to interact with patients."

She added, "Nurses have to have a stick-to-it attitude to do well in school and in their careers. You can never give up. That drive is one of the reasons I became a pilot. I like to say that nursing was my profession, flying was my advocacy."

At the age of 40 Delores earned her pilot's license. "We had a neighbor who flew a lot and had a plane and I would always go with him. When I was 40, I earned my wings and became a licensed pilot. We actually shared a plane and I took my family on trips over the years."

Delores has seen some remarkable changes during her career. "The one constant is what makes nursing such a great career choice for anyone ... you make a difference."





## *As a Rad Tech, this is one x-ray Melissa didn't expect to see.*

It was a moment Melissa Youkhana (BSIT '17), would never forget. "I was diagnosed with a bone tumor a month after graduating from Resurrection University. Instead of planning my career, I had to think about things I never thought I would have to think about – at least not for a long time."

"As a radiography graduate, I was used to seeing scans and even scans with tumors, but after seeing hundreds and hundreds of images, seeing my own scan was absolutely surreal. I knew what I was looking at and I wondered if it was going to end here."

Melissa always knew she wanted to be in healthcare. As she explains, "We're a healthcare family. I had an uncle who was a rad tech and he showed me the equipment and all of the technology they used. It's amazing to be able to look inside someone's body. People always say we're the eyes of medicine. I love the interaction we have with patients too. It was the perfect career choice."

When I saw my x-ray that day ... it was just a month after I graduated, and I had no idea what the future would hold."

Melissa's treatment led her to Midwest Orthopaedics at Rush. She explains, "An orthopedic oncologist treated me. It was so intense being the patient instead of the caregiver. The care and support I received at Midwest was amazing. The diagnosis was basically instant, and my tumor was removed the same week. Thankfully, it was benign! I was fortunate and after six weeks of recovery – leg bones take a long time to heal – I was almost entirely back to normal."

As it turned out, Melissa's experience with Midwest Orthopedics wouldn't end with her treatment.

"One of my old classmates from ResU who worked at Midwest, told me they were hiring. Based on my own experience as a patient and my friend's input as an employee, I knew I wanted to be here. I went from being a patient to starting my career at Midwest Orthopaedics."

"I always wanted to be in healthcare, I just wasn't sure what area." Melissa continued, "When I look back at my experience at ResU, going through the treatment for my tumor, and eventually building my career at the same place that treated me, it really has been surreal."

**“  
SUDDENLY I WAS  
LOOKING AT A  
SCAN OF A  
TUMOR IN MY  
OWN LEG.”**

## Being a nurse on a dedicated COVID-19 unit reminded **Parinda Patel** of the reasons she became a nurse.



2020 SPECIAL EDITION

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REFLECTIONS

**T**There are hundreds of ResU alumni on the frontlines of the COVID-19 crisis providing care for thousands of patients. This is one nurse's story about her experiences – not just caring for COVID-19 patients, but actually recovering from the virus herself.

Parinda Patel (BSN '18), is quick to point out that she doesn't consider herself a hero. "I worked in an orthopedic surgery center at Resurrection Medical Center and when the crisis started, elective surgeries stopped. We were converted to a dedicated COVID-19 unit. All of us were admittedly frightened. We heard the stories. We knew there would be risks. But we took an oath to care for patients."

Parinda said that once patients started arriving, it was easier to focus on providing care, but each shift was emotionally and physically exhausting. "I work 12-hour shifts at night, sometimes four nights in a row. Normally we would do hourly rounds but with COVID we're at risk every time we go in a patient's room. And every time you visit a patient you have to be prepared with PPE. Totally prepared. I had never dealt with death before as a nurse. Putting a patient in a body bag at 3 am ... it changes you."

The support she receives from her family and the community has helped tremendously. "My family was worried but understanding. My dad was a doctor. Still they wanted me to stay home to stay safe, but I wanted to come

to work. This is why I became a nurse. Healthcare workers are being recognized which feels great. When I'm in my scrubs and people see me, they almost always say 'thanks,' which means a lot."

Parinda contracted the virus and self-isolated for over a month. "Working as much as we were working it was actually hard to tell that I was sick. I started getting a sore throat and was tested and found out I had COVID-19. My symptoms were mild, fortunately. Isolation for weeks was hard and eye-opening. It's upsetting to see people ignoring social distancing and not wearing masks. People don't realize how bad it still is. I think it's too soon to get back to normal because this virus isn't normal."

When asked how she keeps motivated to return to her unit shift after shift after shift, Parinda tells a story about one patient interaction that keeps her going. "A patient was admitted having respiratory symptoms and I stayed in the room to talk. The patient had lots of underlying conditions that would make COVID-19 a challenge to recover from. Even with the fear and uncertainty, the patient said that they were okay with passing if that's what happened, they were completely at peace. The patient was pretty young, and their attitude was amazing. They tested negative which made all of us so happy. I keep that spirit close to me to keep me going. Their smile always makes me smile."

"One of the worst things about COVID-19 is patients are alone. Totally alone. They just get dropped off. No visitors. No family. It's very stressful for the patient and for the nurses and doctors. I try to spend time in the room because I know how I felt when I was isolated."

Parinda is currently an MSN Family Nurse Practitioner student at ResU and expects to graduate in 2021. We want to take a moment to thank her – and the countless other ResU alumni who continue to provide care to patients everywhere.



## Jodie chose working in a COVID-19 hotspot over Hawaii because "it's what nurses do."



When Jodie Bradley (BSN '18), decided to become a travel nurse, she had no idea that it would put her in the middle of a global pandemic.

"I grew up in a military family and I was a flight attendant for a while so I guess you could say I was born to be on the road," she explained. "Travel nursing was exactly what I was looking for and I wanted to go to Hawaii to practice. Then the COVID-19 crisis hit. I called the agency I was working with and told them to send me wherever they needed me most. Wherever I could help the most. It turned out I was headed to New Jersey, one of the hardest hit areas of the nation."

When friends and family heard about her decision, their reaction was understandable. "No one was excited." Jodie added, "For me it was a calling. I knew I should be here. Nurses just want to help – it's what we do."

When Jodie arrived in New Jersey, the entire hospital was a "COVID" hospital. "I arrived with about 40 other travelers. We quickly became like a little family." Jodie continued, "I thought I would see respiratory symptoms in all of the patients, but the symptoms are so varied it was shocking. We had people who needed treatments that were all very different."

From Jodie's experience, the stories you hear about COVID-19 are sadly true.

"Supplies were a challenge. They're still a challenge. We had to reuse gowns and masks. Keeping a mask all

day is crazy, but we had no choice. We're still reusing masks." She added, "I was worried about infection because we're using the same masks over and over. A lot of nurses got COVID because of it."

Jodie described the realities of treating patients during a pandemic. "I was prepared to do hard work, but the emotional component of the work is huge. It's hard. The emotional manipulation of families is hard. There have been multiple times a patient is dying, and we would call the family and hold the phone up to the patient's ear. Patients die alone."

With the nation reopening, Jodie is concerned that people may let their guard down. "It's frustrating to see people acting like this is over." She added, "I try to limit my own exposure to the community because I know how dangerous the virus is. I hate to

see people out and about and not being safe."

Jodie finished her assignment in June and took some time off to rest before taking another assignment. She explains, "I need to recover from this. The emotional and physical demands of nursing during COVID-19 are hard to understand unless you've been there. We get a lot of love from the community – cards and lunches and thank you notes – but I still need to take time."

As a travel nurse, Jodie gets to choose her next assignment.

"It's a challenging career being a travel nurse but if you're a free spirit it's a beautiful experience. My next stop? Kauai! And if they have COVID-19 challenges there, I will volunteer to help. It's what nurses do."



# Brian Medley and his wife are ER nurses, new parents, and on the frontlines of COVID-19

Even during so-called “normal” times, working in a busy Chicago emergency room can be challenging. During COVID-19, it can be overwhelming. For Brian Medley (BSN '16), it reminded him about all of the reasons he chose to become a nurse.

“My wife and I talked and just for a moment we considered having her stay home with our son, but we knew this is what we were trained to do.” Brian continued, “I met my wife while we were both students at ResU, during a service learning trip to Honduras. After graduating, we built our careers and started our family. Then COVID turned the world upside down.”



Brian is an ER nurse at Rush University Medical Center and says it's been one of the hardest hit facilities in Chicago. Brian added, “We had to transform the ambulance bay into a COVID receiving area. The virus hit so fast we had to move quickly. We transitioned from normal care to COVID care as rapidly as possible. It was tough in the beginning, because we saw so many people and there were so many unknowns.”

Brian added, “We were fortunate, we never got to the point where we ran out of supplies, people were

donating to the hospital and Rush is a disaster response facility, so we were more prepared than most. As far as PPE goes, we were okay. Employees were tested and we were able to focus on our patients.”

“We had so many patients that we had to build an outside walkway that allowed patients to move from the ambulance bay to a COVID designated area. Testing took a long time which was frustrating for us as well as for patients. It's been a challenge; you have to learn how to leave work at work. To be honest my

wife and I thought COVID would be like the flu, we were wrong.”

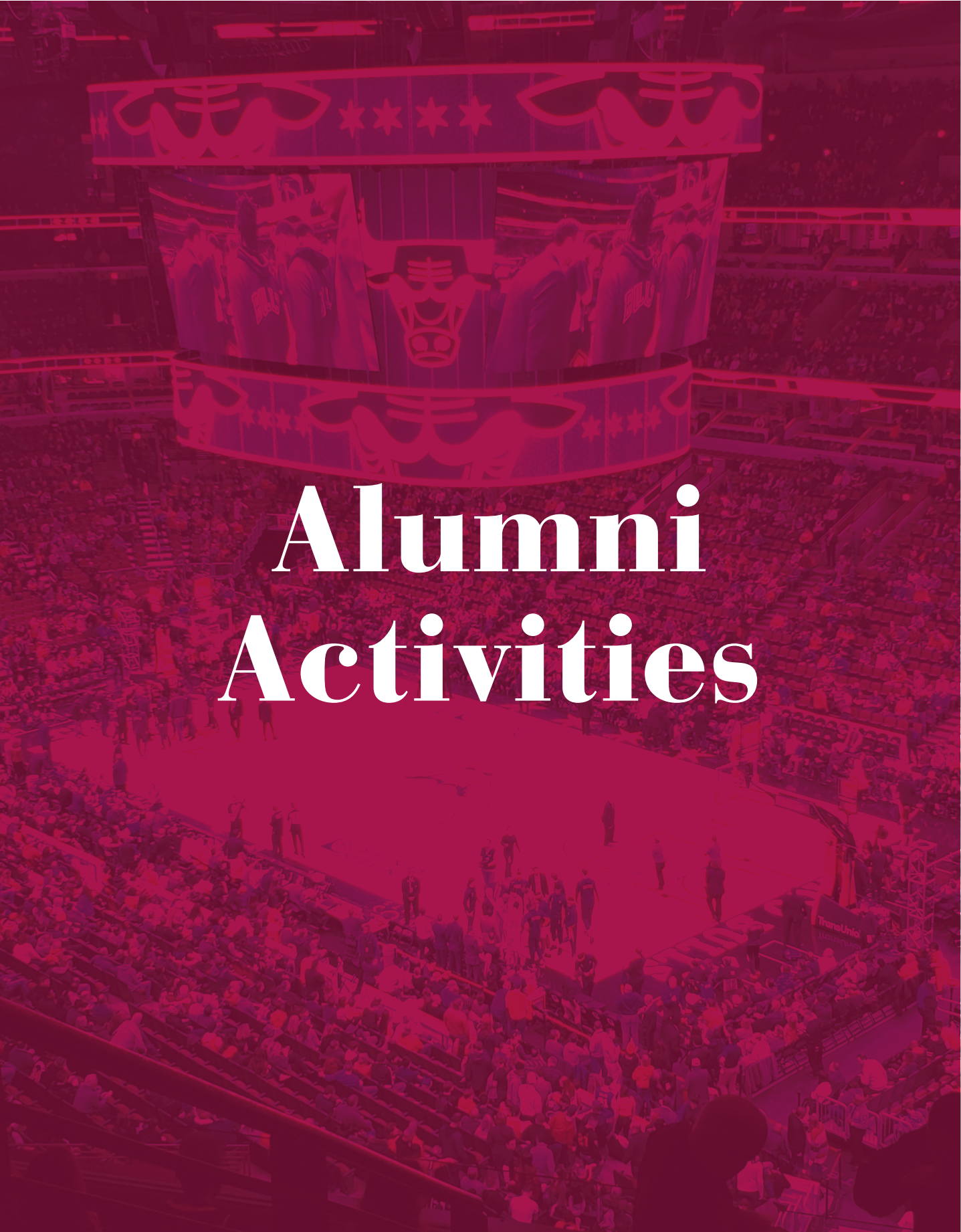
As new parents, the reality of the pandemic hit Brian and his wife hard. He explains, “My family is from California which was a hotspot before us. They knew what we were up against. Naturally, they were nervous for me and my family. We have a two-year-old boy so we've been very cautious. After a shift, we come home and undress outside and head straight to a shower. We follow all of the rules. I can tell you this virus is real; we see it every day.”

“People are actually afraid to come to the ER. Families can't visit. We see people who are struggling to live. When they're going to be intubated, a lot of time patients are in so much distress they don't know what's happening and those that do know what's going on want to talk to family. It's hard to see it every day but we took an oath.”

Like many healthcare professionals, Brian worries that some people aren't taking the pandemic seriously. “Our biggest pet peeve is seeing people not socially distancing. It's ignorant and selfish and very frustrating. People should be vigilant, there is a lot of good information out there.”

“  
**IT'S HARD TO SEE  
IT EVERY DAY  
BUT WE TOOK  
AN OATH.”**





# Alumni Activities

2020 SPECIAL EDITION

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REFLECTIONS





## JANUARY

We started off 2020 with a Chicago Bulls basketball game with alumni and their friends and family.



## FEBRUARY

Thank you to all of our alumni who joined us in-person for alumni panels and our first Venipuncture 101 Skills Day of the new year.

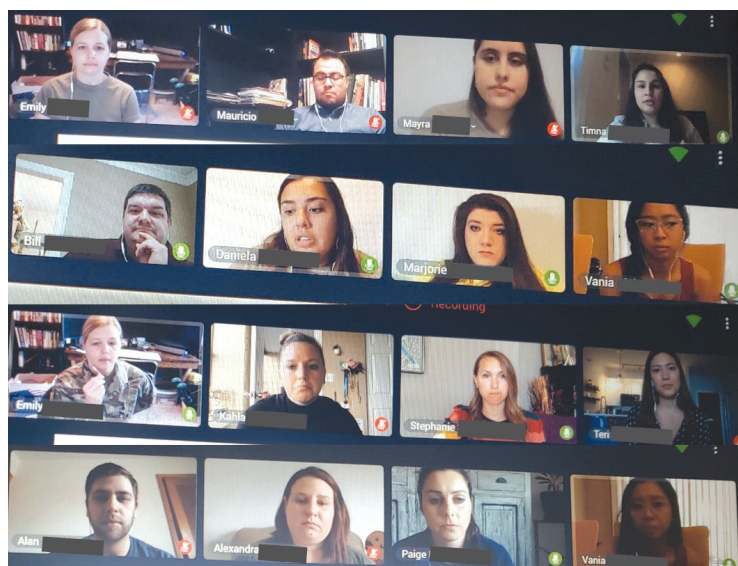


With the emergence of COVID-19 in early 2020, we had to adjust our normal activities to virtual platforms. This unexpected shift did have a positive upside, however, as it allowed us to connect with many alumni who aren't local and normally unable to attend our events. Thank you to our alumni who helped make this transition smooth and to those who participated in these events!

## MARCH/APRIL/MAY

### Virtual Alumni Panels for Students

Our virtual alumni panels allowed for students to continue to partake in one of our regular events for graduating students.



**ResU Alumni Association**  
PRESENTS  
*Coffee Talks*

Grab your favorite beverage and join us for some conversations with our special guest followed by a Q&A.  
RSVP below to ensure you have access to our Coffee Talks.

.....

MAY 14, 10 - 11 AM CST  
CALLING ALL WEST SUB ALUMS  
SPECIAL GUEST: SHARON BOLIN '17

MAY 20, 10 - 11 AM CST  
FROM OR, ER, FERTILITY CLINIC, TO FLIGHT NURSE:  
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE!  
SPECIAL GUEST: PAIGE '16

MAY 26, 6 PM CST  
HOW I BECAME A NP AND A BUSINESS OWNER  
SPECIAL GUEST: CHRIS '15 AND '19 DNP

JUNE 3, 3 - 4 PM CST  
FROM RAD TECH TO COO - THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE UGLY  
SPECIAL GUEST: CARMEN '05

**CLICK HERE TO RSVP**

**Coffee Talks** – Our new series, **Coffee Talks**, allows for alumni to connect virtually and hear from a guest speaker about their career experiences. We hosted four different sessions with guest alumni speakers:

Calling all West Sub Alums - Talk with Sharon Bolin '17

From OR, ER, Fertility Clinic, to Flight Nurse, Anything is Possible - Special Guest, Paige Kopecky '16

How I Became an NP and a Business Owner - Special Guest, Chris Galloway '19, '15

From Rad Tech to COO – The Good, the Bad, the Ugly - Special Guest, Carmen Froman '05

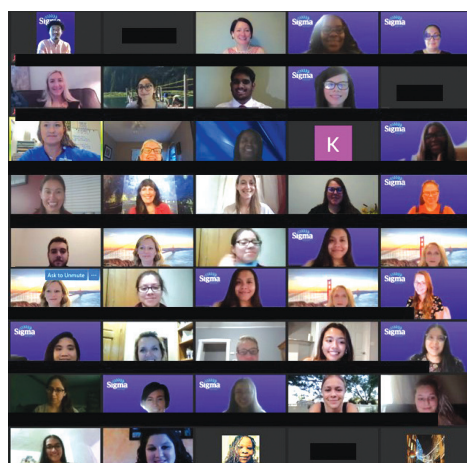


# Alumni Activities



**ResU Race for Wellness** – We hosted a Virtual 5K in honor of our Healthcare Professionals. ResU faculty, staff, alumni and students participated by completing the virtual 5K at their own pace, by walking, running or biking. Thank you to everyone who participated!

**Yoga Nidra** –Kristine Tohtz, Director of the School of Emerging Education and Associate Professor, taught a virtual Yoga Nidra class to help with stress, attended by alumni and faculty.



**Psi Lambda Induction Ceremony** – The Psi Lambda Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau inducted 75 new members in August during their first virtual ceremony. The mission of the Psi Lambda Chapter of Sigma is to support the learning, knowledge and

professional development of nurses committed to making a difference in health worldwide. We asked the new inductees to share one word of what nursing means to them. Congratulations to our new members!

# Reunions



## WEST SUBURBAN HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING CLASS OF 1969 REUNION

Happy 50 years to the Class of 1969! They celebrated their reunion last Fall 2019 in Oakbrook, IL, and we were thrilled to meet this amazing group of women and their guests.

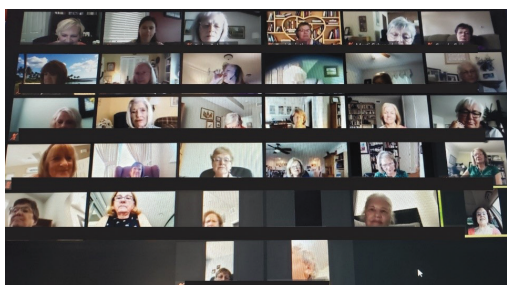


WEST SUBURBAN  
HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF  
NURSING CLASS OF  
1965 CELEBRATED  
VIRTUALLY, TOO!



WEST SUBURBAN  
HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF  
NURSING CLASS OF  
1968 HELD A VIRTUAL  
REUNION IN AUGUST.

# Virtual Reunions



## WEST SUBURBAN HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING CLASS OF 1970 REUNION

Congratulations to the West Suburban Hospital School of Nursing Class of 1970 for celebrating their 50-year anniversary in 2020!

Although the in-person reunion had to be postponed this spring, they were still able to celebrate together, virtually!



# Alumni News & Recognition

**CHRISTOPHER GALLOWAY (DNP '19, MSN '15) RESU ALUMNUS AND FACULTY MEMBER, RECEIVED THE 2019 NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARD FROM THE ILLINOIS NURSES FOUNDATION.**



Galloway was also the recipient of the **Illinois Society for Advanced Practice Nursing (ISAPN) Marie Lindsey Spirit Award**, which is awarded yearly to one advanced practice nurse in Illinois. The awardee is one who demonstrates excellence as a role model for other APRNs, has made a significant contribution to the improvement of patient care,

is creative in their approach to issues which impact advanced practice nursing, and utilizes current evidence-based practice to enhance quality of care.

**Carmen Froman (Saint Francis School of Radiography '05)**, was selected as a 2020 Crain's Chicago Business' Notable Women in Healthcare, for the second year in a row. The feature profiled women leaders in Chicago who have made significant impact within the healthcare industry.

**Jessica Olson (BSN '13)**, was featured in an article in the Maquoketa Sentinel-Press for working as an operating room nurse on the frontlines at a New York Hospital.

**Maria Magda Colta (BSN '17)**, was awarded the DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses at AMITA Health Saint Francis Hospital in Evanston.

**Karena Brown (BSN '14)**, was featured in a WGN Radio's Healthcare Heroes Campaign.

**Parinda Patel (BSN '18)**, was interviewed and featured in a television news segment about working on a COVID-19 unit at AMITA Resurrection Medical Center, on WGN-TV Channel 9.

**Molly Keevil (BSN '20)**, was featured in AMITA Health's "Heroes Work Here" May 2020 issue and shared her experiences working on a COVID-19 unit.

**Maribel Huerta (BSN '16)**, was featured in a television news segment on Noticias Telemundo-Chicago, about being a nurse and working with COVID-19 patients in the intensive care unit at Advocate Christ Hospital.



*Never give up on your dreams. Keep putting one foot in front of the other and you will get wherever you want to go. You will feel overwhelmed at first, but you will get into your groove and be great nurses. The best advice I ever received—"The first six months as a nurse you will feel like you know nothing, the second six months you will hit your stride and things will get better. Don't give up and always ask questions." Congratulations! Good Luck! Come to Psych! :) Travis '15*

*The end of your nursing school journey may not have been what was expected. This is a trying time for all, especially essential workers. But keep your heads up. Your journeys are just beginning. Don't be discouraged by the world, be uplifted by the positivity, the hearts in windows, and the bond of your cohort. You can do this. Alexandra '19*

*You are going to make mistakes; that can be really upsetting! Do not beat yourself up! Learn from those mistakes, use it to make you a better nurse! Elizabeth '10*

*Congrats, all that hard work has finally paid off! Now pass that NCLEX and help us out in the frontlines! Joel '03*

*Congratulations! You did it! We're all very proud of you and your hard work. Keep in mind why you chose this path and never let go of that excitement, even on the toughest days remember you have it within you to do the job and keep your smile on because this is your dream! Mauricio '15*

*Congratulations and best wishes to everyone! Maria '09*



#### SCHOLARSHIP APPRECIATION

## Notes from Scholarship Recipients

**Thank you  
to our donors  
who support  
our students  
with financial  
contributions to  
scholarships.**

*"Thank you for your generosity and kindness. Your donation will assist in ensuring cost does not delay my goal of completing the nursing program and continue doing what I have a passion for, which is helping others." Anonymous*

*"I would first and foremost say thank you. They have no idea how grateful I would be to be offered something so special and meaningful. The fact that the donor chose to donate this to our school in the first place shows me how great of an individual they have to be. They understand that people are not able to fully support themselves and are willing to help people achieve their dreams. I would love to take the time to show them how hard and how long I have worked toward this goal of becoming a nurse and how much this scholarship would help me in finishing the road toward this dream." Anonymous*

*"I want to greatly appreciate the donors of this scholarship. This resource will benefit me and my family immensely because I can focus on my classes and not have to carry the burden of financial uncertainty in relation to my tuition. I can continue my volunteer work with the local community church where the children give me so much joy. Thank you for making my dream a reality." Anonymous*





**Doris K. Mesenbrink (West Suburban Hospital School for Nurses '39)**, 101, of Lake Geneva, WI, passed away on November 22, 2019. Doris graduated from the West Suburban Hospital School for Nurses in the class of 1939 and was a trailblazer. She was a working mother before the term was ever coined—bringing her children to work with her during the night shift so she could care for her patients and manage her staff of nurses. The oldest known graduate, she received an Honorary Degree from Resurrection University at Commencement in 2014. We're thankful for Doris' incredible legacy and extend our condolences to all who loved her.



**Sandra (Sandy) Neudahl (West Suburban Hospital School of Nursing '84)**, maiden King, born Russo on September 23, 1958, transitioned to eternal life on January 18, 2020. She was 61. Sandy, originally a phlebotomist, returned to school to pursue her childhood dream of becoming a nurse. She graduated from West Suburban Hospital School for Nurses in 1984. After the birth of her first child, she worked part-time as an RN at Good Shepherd Hospital in Barrington. She went on to complete her bachelor's degree in her 50s to be able to continue to work in magnet hospitals. We extend our condolences to Sandy's family and friends.



**JoLaine Lubben Sass (West Suburban Hospital School of Nursing '65)**, passed away on Friday, June 19, 2020. We extend our condolences to JoLaine's family and friends.

# *In memoriam*

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