



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
College of Nursing

AGGIE NURSE



MAGAZINE 2024

REACHING RURAL

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DEAN'S MESSAGE

"I am particularly proud of the strides our nurse educators, scientists and outreach professionals have made in rural health."



**Leann Horsley
PhD, RN, CHSE, CNE**

Dean and Professor

Howdy!

It is difficult to narrow down the highlights of the past year here at the College of Nursing. We celebrated our 15-year anniversary, broke ground on a new building in the Rio Grande Valley and, importantly, sent nearly 300 Aggie nurses into a workforce that is asking for their talents and expertise.

As our students, faculty, staff and clinical partners worked to prepare the next generation of nurses and health care leaders, we also made the decision to re-establish our brand. Early in his tenure, Texas A&M President General (Ret.) Mark Welsh III asked each academic unit to consider how it is identified after many changed names as part of adjustments to the university's organizational structure in 2022. Our

transition from the School of Nursing back to the College of Nursing honors our founding identity and best aligns with our legacy of preparing extraordinary Aggie nurses.

While our name has changed, our commitment to education, research, partnerships and outreach has not. I am particularly proud of the strides our nurse educators, scientists and outreach professionals have made in rural health. The rural population is historically under-represented in Texas health care, and we are equipping Aggie nurses to deliver the specialized care these people and communities require.

During the spring 2024 semester, the College of Nursing joined the College of Medicine and Texas A&M Rural and Community Health

Institute to form the Texas A&M Health Rural Engagement Program. Our participation in the program formalizes our focus on rural health and complements the college's related activities like our mobile clinic and many research projects.

In this issue of *Aggie Nurse Magazine*, you will learn more about our efforts to serve the largest rural population in the United States. From sending students to small communities for clinical rotations to developing customized coursework that addresses the unique needs of underserved patients, the college is committed to reaching rural.

Gig 'em!

Leann Horsley

AGGIE NURSE

MAGAZINE

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On the cover:

Emma Chrane '24 participates in a rural-immersive clinical rotation at Goodall-Witcher Healthcare in Clifton, Texas.

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NURSING NEWCOMERS

LEADERS



CHIEF OF STAFF

Dr. James Batchelder

James Batchelder, EdD, MBA, joined Texas A&M from East Tennessee State University, where he most recently served as assistant dean for finance and administration for both the College of Clinical & Rehabilitative Health Sciences and College of Nursing. His other administrative roles at ETSU included special assistant of institutional research and assistant dean for fiscal affairs and assessment for the College of Clinical & Rehabilitative Health Sciences.

Batchelder earned both his Bachelor of Science in accounting and business administration and Master of Business Administration from Milligan College. He also completed a Doctor of Education from ETSU.



EXECUTIVE ASSOCIATE DEAN

Dr. Lisa Haddad

Lisa Haddad, PhD, MSHCA, RN, earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Master of Science in Health Care Administration from California College of Health Science and PhD in nursing from the University of Tennessee.

Prior to joining Texas A&M, Haddad served as associate dean for graduate programs at the East Tennessee State University College of Nursing. At ETSU, she held roles as special assistant to the interim dean, interim associate dean for the Center for Nursing Research and interim director of the PhD program. Haddad is a former emergency and critical care nurse.



INTERIM ASSOCIATE DEAN
FOR RESEARCH

Dr. Blanca Lupiani

Blanca Lupiani, PhD, is a tenured professor at the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences, a role she will partially retain while serving as nursing's top research leader.

Lupiani is a longtime faculty member and administrator at Texas A&M. In addition to faculty positions in the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences, she has held administrative appointments at the university level as dean of faculties and associate provost, interim vice president and associate provost for diversity, and more. She holds a PhD in veterinary science from the University of Maryland and Bachelor of Science in biology from the Universidad de Santiago de Compostela in Spain.



ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR CLINICAL
AND OUTREACH AFFAIRS

Dr. Nicole Peters Kroll

Nicole Peters Kroll, PhD, APRN, ANP-C, FNP-BC, PMHNP-BC, has diverse experience in clinical practice, administration and academia. She was an early faculty member in the college beginning in 2008 and, after holding faculty and administrative roles at several other institutions, returned as assistant director of clinical and outreach affairs. Peters Kroll has also maintained a clinical practice as a nurse practitioner, including serving the college's mobile clinic and University Health Services.

Peters Kroll has a PhD in nursing from The University of Texas at Tyler, an MSN from Texas Woman's University and a BSN from The University of Texas Medical Branch. She holds post-master's certificates in psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner and family nurse practitioner from Liberty University and the University of Massachusetts Boston, respectively.

FACULTY



Renae Authement, DNP, MSN, RN
Clinical Associate Professor



Kim Hudson-Gallogly, PhD, WHNP-BC, CNE
Clinical Associate Professor



Karen Thomas, MSN, RNC-NIC
Lecturer



Kim Belcik, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, CNE
Clinical Associate Professor



Renee Miller, DNP, APRN, FNP-C
Clinical Assistant Professor



Lorena Villalon-Arriaga, MSN, RNC-OB
Lecturer



**Sonya Grigsby, DNP, APRN, AGACNP-BC,
FNP-BC, EMBA-HCM, CCRN, EBP-CH**
Clinical Assistant Professor



Maria Olenick, PhD, FNP, RN, FAAN
Associate Professor



Bethany Yearly, PhD, RN
Clinical Associate Professor



Lacey Helmke, MSN, RNC-OB
Lecturer



Eric Stratton, MSN, RN
Lecturer



Students, former students, faculty, staff, donors and more gathered in March 2024 at the Texas A&M Health Science Center in Bryan to celebrate the College of Nursing's 15-year anniversary.



Commemorating 15 years



McAllen expansion project breaks ground





Texas A&M University's expansion in the Rio Grande Valley hit another milestone in spring 2024 with the groundbreaking of the Texas A&M Health Nursing Education and Research Building at the Texas A&M University Higher Education Center at McAllen. The facility will be home to Texas A&M College of Nursing programs and Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences research and outreach.

The Texas A&M System Board of Regents authorized construction of the \$49.9 million facility in fall 2023. The growth is part of a broad commitment made by the regents and Chancellor John Sharp to provide additional pathways for Rio Grande Valley students to earn a Texas A&M degree while staying close to home.

"We at the Texas A&M System are dedicated to the people of South Texas and Rio Grande Valley," Sharp said. "And that is why we are investing in the region—and its health—with a new facility for nursing and health-related research."

The nearly 61,000-square-foot building will be constructed on the west side of the Higher Education Center campus and includes four nursing classrooms, student study areas, a 10,000-square-foot clinical simulation center and space for a veterinary clinic and research laboratory.

The College of Nursing will first focus on offering its traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree beginning spring 2026. The two-year, five-semester program has approval from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to be delivered entirely in McAllen. The college expects to eventually enroll approximately 50 students per semester, helping the valley and state address a critical shortage of nurses.

"Our clinical partners in the valley have made it clear that the future of public health is directly related to the availability of highly trained nurses who understand how to deliver care in this area," said Dr. Leann Horsley, dean of the College of Nursing. "Our Aggie nurses studying in McAllen will enjoy access to expert faculty, cutting-edge simulation training and clinical experiences right here in the communities they will serve upon graduation."

Texas A&M Health Nursing Education and Research Building

LOCATION >
McAllen, Texas



SQUARE FEET >
61,000

FACILITIES INCLUDE >

- 4 nursing classrooms
- 10,000-square foot clinical simulation center
- Student study areas

PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE FOR Mothers, Children and Families

The Program of Excellence for Mothers, Children and Families (POEMCF) at the College of Nursing develops and manages projects that improve the health and well-being of families and communities across Texas. The 2023-2024 academic year saw the program expand its reach from 10 to 17 Texas counties, highlighted by unique projects in maternal mortality and morbidity, health technology, neonatal abstinence syndrome and more.

CHAMPions

The POEMCF and partners have developed a community-based health promotion program to address maternal health disparities in southeast Texas through a five-year, \$2.28 million grant from the U.S. Health and Human Services Department (HHS).

The college is working with the Texas A&M School of Public Health, the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Driscoll Children's Hospital, Driscoll Health Plan and the Global Institute for Hispanic Health for the project, titled Community Hands Advancing Maternal Health Promotion (CHAMPions).

Robin Page, PhD, APRN, CNM, FACNM, FAAN, an associate professor at the college and director of the



POEMCF, serves as principal investigator.

The nurse-led program aims to mitigate maternal, child and family health risks by sending nurses and community health workers into underserved mothers' homes during pregnancy and their first year postpartum. These maternal-child navigators are specially trained to offer support through health education as they "champion" improved outcomes.

The project's university partners evaluate the effectiveness of the program curriculum, while Driscoll Children's Hospital and Driscoll Health Plan help

implement the program through their network of clinics and health insurance programs.

CHAMPions operates in Bee, Refugio, San Patricio, Nueces and Jim Wells counties.

More: nursing.tamu.edu/champions

Philips partnership

The POEMCF and Royal Philips, a global leader in health technology, collaborated in 2023 to improve health outcomes for mothers, children and families.

The project centered on the Pregnancy+ app, which supports parents from the moment they discover they are pregnant through childbirth by offering personalized content, expert-written information and interactive 3D models to track their baby's development. The POEMCF utilized the Philips Pregnancy+ app — the most downloaded pregnancy app in the world — to study the feasibility, acceptance and impact of innovative technology to improve engagement, awareness and access to health resources.

Since 2016, Philips and the Texas A&M University System have cooperated on projects related to emergency preparedness, engineering, agriculture and more.

Golden Crescent-MOMS

A home-visiting program led by the POEMCF is designed to curb neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) in the Golden Crescent area of Texas. Golden Crescent Management of Opioid Risk in Mothers (Golden Crescent-MOMS) is supported by a three-year, \$1.5 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

Directed by Page, the project is funded under the HRSA's Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP), an initiative aimed at reducing morbidity and mortality related to substance use disorder and opioid use



disorder in high-risk rural communities. GC-MOMS focuses on preventing NAS, which occurs when babies are exposed to drugs, like opioids, in the womb.

The college is collaborating with the Texas A&M College of Medicine and School of Public Health to develop a custom curriculum for community health workers to use during home visits. GC-MOMS' 21-month program considers behavioral health, community risk factors and more.

Other partners include Cuero Regional Hospital, a referral source for the GC-MOMS, and the Billy T. Cattan Recovery Outreach Center, which provides peer recovery support services for enrolled families.

GC-MOMS serves Lavaca, DeWitt, Jackson and Calhoun counties in the Golden Crescent area, which the HRSA designates a health professional shortage area.

More: nursing.tamu.edu/gc-moms

Texas A&M Health Rural Engagement Program

Securing the future of rural care

The Texas A&M Health Science Center (Texas A&M Health) is enhancing its support for health care in rural Texas with its Rural Engagement Program. Launched in early 2024, the program combines efforts from the Texas A&M colleges of medicine and nursing and the Rural and Community Health Institute in an effort to grow the health care workforce and stabilize rural health care organizations.

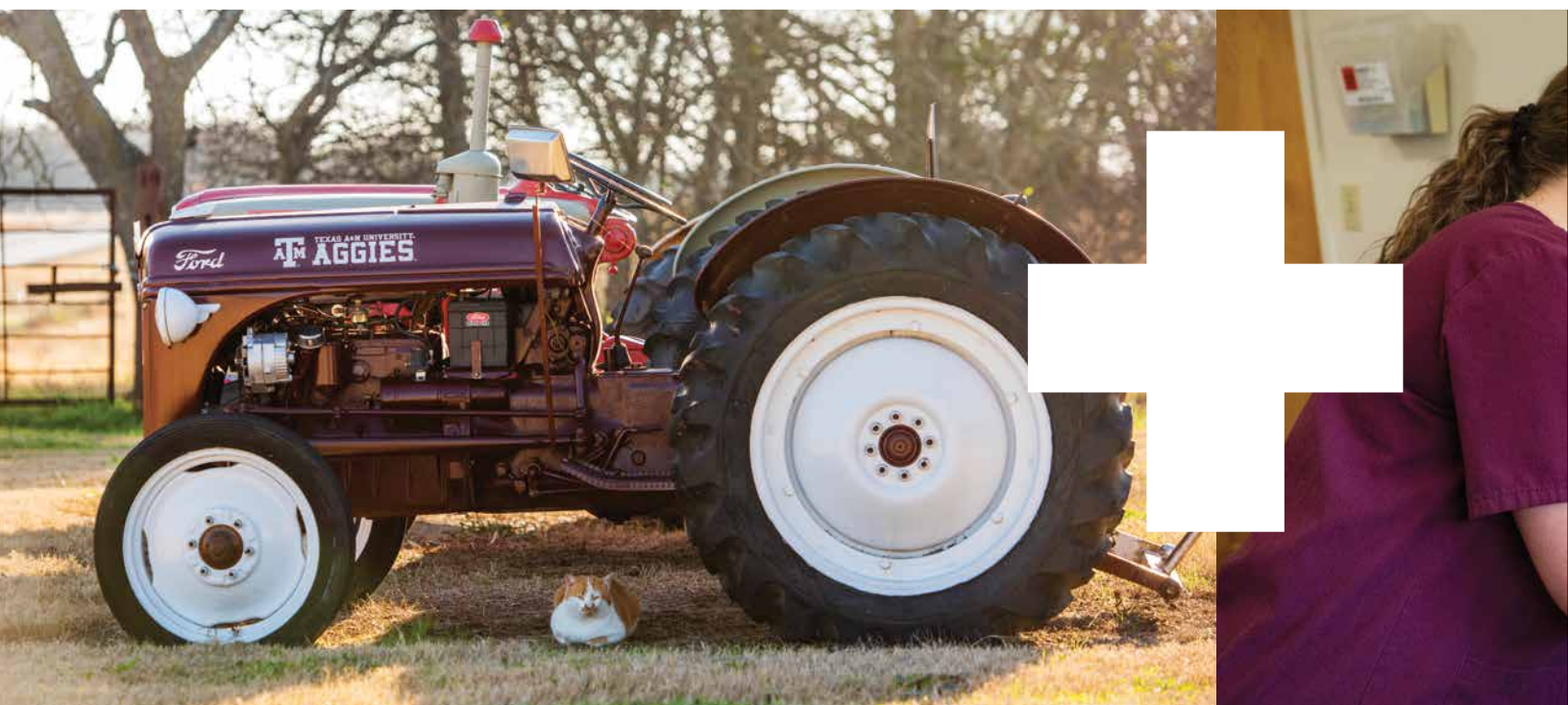
The Rural Engagement Program provides support to help rural health care organizations sustain and grow

their services. Through a comprehensive needs analysis, organizations in the program receive expert assistance developing sustainable action plans to improve financial performance, operational efficiencies, quality of care, workforce capabilities and training.

The program is also aimed at addressing the critical shortage of health care professionals in underserved areas. With additional funding and improved coordination, the colleges of medicine and nursing are committed to providing more

than just clinical experiences for students. Through innovative partnerships with local rural communities, health care facilities, advanced practitioners and school districts, the program offers a unique approach to rural clinical experiences.

The College of Nursing is supporting growth of the rural nursing workforce. It has awarded nearly \$400,000 in scholarships for registered nurses working in rural areas to obtain their Bachelor of Science in Nursing or an advanced nursing degree or certificate. These programs of study



**“Aggie nurses must
be well-prepared to
care for the rural
communities that
need them most.”**

DR. LEANN HORSLEY

position rural nurses to better serve their communities with expertise in needed areas like primary care, behavioral health and more. The College of Nursing is also integrating rural-specific curriculum into its degree and certificate programs, developing a rural fellowship for nurse practitioners and seeking certification as a Rural Health Clinic for its nurse-led clinics.

“All Texans deserve access to high quality health care, and the next generation of Aggie nurses must be well-prepared to care for the rural

communities that need them most,” said Dr. Leann Horsley, dean of the College of Nursing. “Nursing’s participation in the Rural Engagement Program signifies our continued commitment to serving the underserved and addressing the complex challenges facing health care in a mostly rural state.”

In coordination with the Texas A&M Health Telehealth Institute, the Rural Engagement Program is also working on expanding health care organizations’ telehealth capabilities. The Telehealth Institute will enhance

the availability of behavioral health care by extending access to patients’ homes, local clinics and hospitals over the next two years while also laying the groundwork for other tele-specialty services. The institute will also foster innovations with the College of Nursing in expanded clinical care and telehealth training.

The Rural Engagement Program is supported by funding from the 88th Texas Legislature.



Nursing, public health experts secure \$7.4 million to improve adolescent health behavior

The Texas A&M College of Nursing and School of Public Health were jointly awarded a five-year, \$7.4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to promote positive adolescent health behavior in one of the country's largest metropolitan areas. The project is a collaboration with Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago.

Partnerships and Opportunities for Adolescent Health Preparation, Support and Services (POPSS) focuses on implementing evidence-based adolescent health programs for youth in greater Chicago. The programs address unplanned pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, healthy relationships, substance use, mental health, violence prevention and more.



Dr. Kelly Wilson (front left) and Dr. Whitney Garney (front right) and the POPSS team in Chicago.

Dr. Kelly Wilson, a professor in the College of Nursing, and Dr. Whitney Garney, an associate professor in the School of Public Health, serve as co-principal investigators.

The team is working with community organizations serving youth at-risk for experiencing homelessness, Chicago Public Schools and Lurie Children's clinics to provide health services and education to adolescents and their families. Trained educators from Lurie Children's deliver approved evidence-based programs through the system's network of clinics, Chicago Public Schools and participating partners.

"By meeting adolescents and their families where they live, learn and seek care, we hope to address real and persistent health inequalities that exist among this group," Wilson said. "The evidence-based programs we plan to implement contain diverse and proven approaches to promote healthy adolescent behaviors and establish a foundation for a lifetime of beneficial development."

HHS selected POPSS for funding as part of its evidence-based Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) program. TPP is a national, competitive grant program that provides funding to replicate and scale evidence-based TPP programs and develop and evaluate new and innovative approaches to improve adolescent sexual health outcomes and promote positive youth development in communities across the United States.

The research team used the first six months of the project to identify appropriate evidence-based programs and launched programming in early 2024.

Online programs nationally recognized

The College of Nursing's online bachelor's and master's programs are among the nation's best, according to *U.S. News and World Report*.

In the annual Best Online Programs rankings for 2024, the college's RN-to-BSN program was seventh nationally and first in Texas among all online bachelor's degrees. The college's Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) was No. 20 nationally and No. 2 in Texas for online nursing master's programs.

Methodologies for the rankings take into account factors like engagement; service and technologies; faculty credentials and training; and peer assessment.



REACHING RURAL

A TWO-WEEK STAY in the rural community of Clifton, Texas, wasn't initially in Emma Chrane's plans for summer 2024. But the Fort Worth native and recent College of Nursing graduate jumped at the opportunity to participate in a rural-immersion clinical rotation at Goodall-Witcher Healthcare, a hub medical facility for Bosque County just northwest of Waco.

"I wanted to experience something new and different," said Chrane. "I didn't know what rural looked like."

Ten nursing students like Chrane volunteered to fulfill a portion of their clinical obligations in rural areas of Texas, an experience the college piloted to prepare its graduates to take care of this underserved population.

Chrane's time in Clifton was different than her clinical experiences in an urban area like Houston. The patients, she said, had different care needs. Chrane, who now works in the emergency department at St. Joseph Health in Bryan, worked with individuals navigating chronic conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes. Many were farmers or ranchers. Many were elderly. She left the experience with a deeper appreciation of rural nursing.

Formalizing the focus

The college has long focused on reaching rural Texans. A mobile clinic visits small towns in the Brazos Valley. Remote hospitals are connecting virtually to sexual assault nurse examiners (SANEs) at the Texas A&M Health Center of Excellence in Forensic Nursing. Nurse



**How Aggie
nurses are
caring for
underserved
Texans**



Jordan Palmer (left) and
Emma Chrane (right)



scientists are studying the barriers to access in health care deserts.

Over the past several years, these activities reached a fever pitch and required some coordination and development of complementary course and clinical work for students, said Dr. Leann Horsley, dean of the college.

“The pieces are all here, and we recognized an opportunity to strengthen our attention to rural health care,”

Horsley said. “It is central to our mission as a land-grant institution in a state that has the country’s largest rural population.”

Thanks to funding from the 88th Texas Legislature, nursing in early 2024 joined the Texas A&M College of Medicine and Texas A&M Rural and Community Health Institute (RCHI) to create the Texas A&M Health Rural Engagement Program. The support allowed the college to quickly re-organize its rural health efforts.

The college’s Rural Health Initiative is responsible for developing rural nurses and expanding access to care. Longtime rural nurse practitioner and nurse educator Dr. Kim Hudson-Gallogly, a clinical associate professor, directs the initiative and serves as the college’s lead in the Rural Engagement Program.

Building a blueprint

To reach rural areas, the college is engaging in scholarship support, developing new curriculum and clinical experiences, and growing its clinical practice.

“We know rural Texans need us,” said Hudson-Gallogly. “Our plan is multi-faceted and, importantly, designed to be long term and sustainable.”

To bolster the state’s workforce, nurses working in a rural area have access to \$375,000 in scholarship support annually to earn their bachelor’s, master’s or doctorate degree or specialty certificate from Texas A&M.

Just as the college’s graduate students do, those studying in any of the undergraduate programs will soon have specialized coursework in rural health care and options to

**“We know rural
Texans need us.”**

DR. KIM HUDSON-GALLOGLY



train in rural settings like Chrane did in Clifton.

The college also operates the Texas A&M Health Mobile Clinic and a same-day clinic at the Texas A&M Health Hub in Navasota. Both are nurse practitioner led and provide an additional rural training ground for nursing students.

“You don’t have to explain the concept of Selfless Service to an Aggie nurse — it’s in their DNA,” said Hudson-Gallogly. “We want to support those nurses already serving rural communities by offering a pathway to upskilling at minimal cost to them. But we also want all our graduates to have a foundational knowledge of how to deliver rural health care.”

The rural experience

While Chrane’s two weeks in Clifton differed from her upbringing in urban Fort Worth, her classmate and clinical partner Jordan Palmer was more familiar with rural. She grew up in Collinsville, population 2,200, and graduated in a class of 36.

“The things we learned here you may not learn at a larger hospital,” said Palmer. “You understand how to maximize resources. You get to know these patients intimately.”

Palmer, who also did clinical work on the mobile clinic, accepted a position in the neurological intensive care unit at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas after



Emma Chrane
pulls supplies
during her shift.

graduation. But she hasn't ruled out returning to her rural roots later in her career.

"I would consider being a nurse practitioner in a rural setting."

That's a contemplation straight from the rural nursing playbook, according to Hudson-Gallogly.

"We hope exposing our students to rural areas will inspire them to return and serve those patients and communities," she said.

In addition to Chrane and Palmer's two-week stop in Clifton, other students in the rural-immersion opportunity spent time in Pearsall and Mason. Nursing leaders expect the roster of rural health care facilities to grow each year.

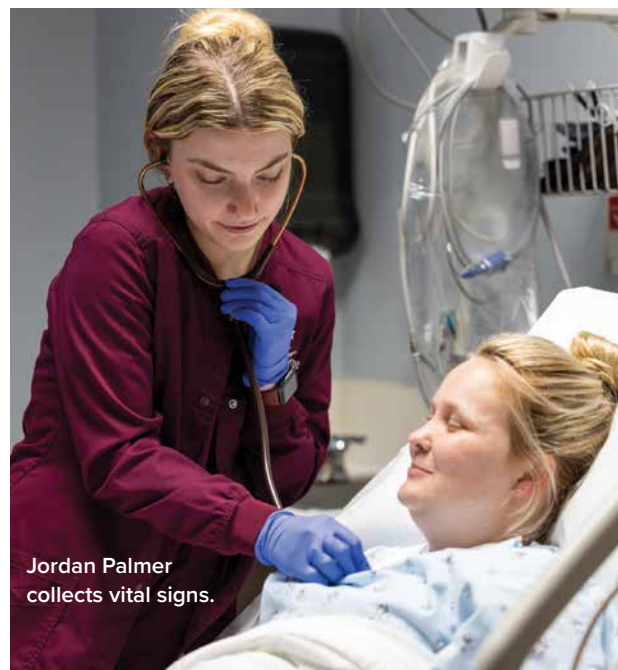
'Growing, modernizing and responding'

The college's expansion and commitment to meeting communities and students where they're at will allow it to reach deeper into Texas.

Enrollment has grown 20% over the past five years. In spring 2026, a new campus opens in McAllen to offer future Aggie nurses in the Rio Grande Valley a traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. The college's graduate, certificate and RN-to-BSN programs are delivered online. And clinical and outreach teams are exploring more nurse-led clinics and

ways to use telehealth to provide needed primary and mental health care to communities through their local school districts.

"Rural health matters," said Horsley. "We are growing, modernizing and responding to meet the health care challenges facing our state."



Jordan Palmer
collects vital signs.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS TEX
OF

Aggie helping shape nursing profession as DIRECTOR OF NURSING for Texas Board of Nursing

When nursing students hear “Board of Nursing,” they may break into a nervous sweat. Perhaps it’s because they’ll need this regulatory body to grant them a license to practice upon graduation. Or maybe they picture an assemblage of administrators gathered around a table in Austin. But for students at the College of Nursing, it may be comforting to know that there’s an Aggie in that group, helping guide the nursing profession in Texas.

Former student Elise McDermott ’19 started with the Texas Board of Nursing (TBON) in 2017 as a nursing consultant for practice. While contemplating a change at a previous job, she discovered her passion for nursing education.

“Part of the reason I decided to come to the board is that in my job before I was doing a lot of education, and I really loved it,” said McDermott. “I wanted to focus more on that, and I just needed a little more work-life balance. I started working with the board the same week I started my master’s program in nursing education.”

After completing her Master of Science in Nursing-Nursing Education at Texas A&M in 2019, McDermott was promoted to TBON’s lead nursing consultant for practice and recently ascended to director of nursing.

McDermott’s goal wasn’t always to work for TBON, which is responsible for regulating nursing practice and approving nursing education programs in the state. In fact, she remembers when she herself was intimidated by the thought of it.

“A lot of nurses are kind of afraid of the board,” said McDermott. “I was very much the same and always aware that there was this regulatory body. But along the way, I became really involved in patient safety, research and education, so that’s why I was interested in joining the board. I wanted to help patients on a broader scale.”

As the director of nursing, McDermott certainly gets to help both patients and nurses from all over the state. She helps create continuing education courses, handle possible practice violations, review nursing program applications, approve advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) and more. While it may not be through direct care at the bedside, McDermott hopes to use her role to make important and lasting decisions that positively impact nursing practices and patients. This, she believes, is the heart of the board’s mission.

“The people that work here really are working as hard as they can to do what’s best,” said McDermott. “I really

KAS BOARD NURSING

“ I really love being involved in patient safety, as well as educating nurses and empowering them to know what is right. ”

ELISE McDERMOTT

love being involved in patient safety, as well as educating nurses and empowering them to know what is right based on an educated understanding of what is expected of them.”

While the board exists in part to ensure that best practices are followed, McDermott wants nurses to realize it is also an accessible resource when they need guidance or have questions. The board is available to professional nurses and students. Education consultants on the board are interested in engaging with nursing students about their programs, McDermott said.

“I don’t think as a nursing student I would have ever thought about doing that,” McDermott said. “But we’re trying to be more approachable for nurses, because we’re all on the same side. We all want what’s best for the patients, and all we really want to do is try and educate as much as we can.”



STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

Nursing student helps provide care to those fleeing ISIS

Sahale Eubank '25 has the same goal as any other nursing student: to become a nurse and provide the best possible care for her patients. However, coming from a family of missionaries, the road that led her to nursing school probably looks a bit different than most.

Eubank was born in Alaska, which is only the beginning of her unique life experiences. When she was just a month old, she and her parents moved

back to Thailand, where Eubank primarily grew up. They never settled in any one place for long, as her parents run a relief organization called Free Burma Rangers.

"We work in Burma, which borders Thailand, Iraq, Syria, Kurdistan and Sudan, so I've lived in all of those places," Eubank said. "In Burma, there's a civil war that's been going on for over 75 years,

where the dictators are constantly oppressing the ethnic groups for natural resources and power."

Because of this, Eubank has spent most of her life helping people within the conflict zones of the war. She and Free Burma Rangers work to provide people fleeing from ISIS with food, water and supplies; document human rights abuses; and treat people with broken bones, infections and wounds. This experience is largely what motivated Eubank to apply to the College of Nursing.

"I specifically remember one night in Syria, a 13-year-old girl had lost her leg, and we were helping bandage it," Eubank said. "Seeing the amount of comfort we were able to give her, I thought, this could be something I spend my life doing: working to see someone who is in so much agony smile for a little bit and make their life a little better."



Sahale Eubank treats an arm injury while working with Free Burma Rangers.

Eubank picked Texas A&M because it felt like the right place for her and the best program to equip her with the knowledge and experience she needed to bring back to the front lines. It also didn't hurt that her dad is an Aggie, class of 1983 and member of the Corps of Cadets.

Transitioning from such a contentious environment overseas to safer, more controlled classroom settings at the college took some time, but Eubank saw it as another opportunity to learn and to even further broaden her worldview.

"It's really shown me how different the American medical system is," Eubank said. "It's already progressed so far beyond what we've done with our frontline medicine because we're doing emergency medicine, whereas here I'm learning how to be a nurse who's in a hospital to prevent all of that from happening. It's definitely different, but it's all been beneficial."

Eubank uses her school breaks to help Free Burma Rangers and provide care to those most vulnerable. Once she graduates, she's interested in splitting her time nursing in the United States and working as a nursing educator with Free Burma Rangers.

"I was raised doing this, so it's very much a personal attachment," Eubank said. "A lot of my friends and family were killed in the war, and so I feel this draw to go back and help the people there."



700 students train in mass disaster response scenario

In March 2024, more than 700 future health care professionals participated in Texas A&M Health's annual Disaster Day emergency response simulation training. Held at Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service's (TEEX) Disaster City, the event provides a realistic emergency scenario to train students in large-scale emergency skills.

In attendance were students across Texas A&M Health, athletic training, psychology and veterinary medicine, as well as the Corps of Cadets. More than 100 faculty and staff members also participated.

This year's simulated disaster included a tropical storm, flooding, an earthquake and an active shooter. During the simulation, students engaged in various roles depending on their field of study. For example, many nursing students worked in triage doing field assessments, while pharmacy students worked with providers in the field hospital to determine the medications needed.

As the event has grown, so has the collaboration with corporations and government agencies, including H-E-B, Salvation Army, St. Joseph Health, Pulsara and the Texas Department of Emergency Management. Members of the university community, private and public partners, and other representatives from local, state and federal agencies toured this year's event to learn about Texas A&M Health's efforts to address disaster response by the health care community.

"Disaster Day stands as a testament to Texas A&M Health's proactive commitment in shaping agile and resilient Aggie health professionals," said Dr. Indra Reddy, interim chief operating officer and vice president of Texas A&M Health. "With the escalating frequency of large-scale emergencies, we take pride in the assurance that Aggie health professionals are well prepared and ready to respond."

STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

“Howdy” from the Hill

Rachel Bode '24 and Laura Jbeily '24 visited Washington, D.C., in spring 2024 with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Student Policy Summit to advocate on behalf of increased investments in nursing and the nursing workforce. Bode and Jbeily, along with other peers attending the summit, met with staff for Texas lawmakers, including U.S.

Sen. John Cornyn and Reps. Monica De La Cruz, Vincente Gonzalez, John Carter and Michael McCaul.

Through their time in nursing school and clinical experiences at various hospitals, both Bode and Jbeily developed an interest in health care policy and advocating for high-quality care for patients and health care professionals.

“I think we can always grow and evolve,” Jbeily said. “I really wanted to see what it looks like for nurses to advocate. I realized if I want to make a change on a local level, I need to have some knowledge of how it works at the top where regulations are made.”

The first day of the summit was all preparation. The AACN staff told students who they would be speaking to and what bills they would be asking representatives to support. But they didn't waste much time. Once they had a basic understanding of what they would be doing and how, students took their newfound knowledge to Capitol Hill.

“We were requesting support on bills that asked for hundreds of thousands, even millions, of dollars,” Bode

Aggie nurses advocate for health care policy at the Capitol

said. “That was cool because when I signed up, I thought that this was more of an educational opportunity, but we got there, and they said, ‘You’re going to Capitol Hill, and you’re talking to actual representative staff.’ It was something I never thought I’d do.”

Along with hands-on experience advocating for health care policies, the summit

provided Bode and Jbeily the opportunity to connect with nurses of all levels and specialties.

“Watching nurses all over the United States advocate for these things was amazing,” Jbeily said. “It reminded me that nursing is not just our own little world. It’s nationwide, and when we unite, there is real power behind what we say.”

After graduating in summer 2024, Jbeily started a position as an operating room nurse at Dell Children’s in Austin, and Bode began a nursing residency at Cook Children’s in Fort Worth. Both feel they gained valuable experience from the summit that they’ll carry throughout their nursing careers.

“Just knowing that someone on my level could go and advocate was huge,” Bode said. “The fact that I could do research, and if it has great findings, advocate for that in my hospital, and then in the Fort Worth area and then in all of Texas is great. This experience really gave me the confidence to know that I could do that in the future when the time is right.”



**“ Nursing is not just
our own little world.
It’s nationwide, and
when we unite, there
is real power behind
what we say. ”**

LAURA JBEILY

Laura Jbeily (left) and Rachel Bode (right)

The NEWEST FORMER STUDENTS

Nearly 300 Aggie nurses
received their Texas A&M
degree during the
2023-2024 academic year.





OUR **SUPPORTERS**

HELPING NURSES HELP

Don Draper, the creative advertising executive from the acclaimed television series “Mad Men,” may have punched up the copy a bit. But it worked.

“Take an assignment with us and get a free laptop.”

Those were the words on LiquidAgents Healthcare’s first direct mailer incentivizing nurses to work with the then-new health care staffing company. Once the piece reached mailboxes, the volume of calls to the Plano-based organization crashed its phone system.

The demand for nurses was, and still is, there.

Jenny Hanlon ’89 co-founded LiquidAgents in 2000 and has helped shape it into a rapidly growing company often cited as a best place to work — all while helping address the persistent nursing shortage plaguing Texas and the rest of the country.





Hanlon and her team are ardent supporters of nurses. They've placed more than 20,000 of them in more than 7,000 hospitals and clinics since 2020.

LiquidAgents also established an endowed scholarship at the College of Nursing in 2019 to support Aggie nurses who will soon enter the workforce.

A need for nurses

Hanlon, the company's chief financial officer, and co-founder Sheldon Arora, chief executive officer, created LiquidAgents after the dot-com bubble burst in the '90s. The demand for work in their respective fields of telecommunications and technology slowed. They noticed, though, that health care's need for essential workers like nurses remained constant.

And Hanlon knew something about the Aggie Core Value of Selfless Service thanks to her time as a finance major at Texas A&M.

"Our goal is to help address the nursing shortage," said Hanlon. "Nurses want to serve, and we help them find places to do that."

Since that first mail campaign in 2000, which Hanlon and a small team sorted and bundled themselves, LiquidAgents has transformed into a

OUR SUPPORTERS

full-service placement firm that delivers a concierge-style experience to match nurses with facilities looking for their skills. Most nurse candidates are interested in short-term travel assignments that last a few months and help the host facility address staffing gaps.

The company assigns each nurse a recruiter to navigate the complexities of travel nursing, including licensing and compliance issues that differ from state to state. The recruiter also helps their nurse find a placement that meets all their criteria.

“What is important to the candidate?” said Hanlon. “Maybe it’s location, maybe it’s the service line or specialty, maybe it’s the schedule. Whatever it is, the health care professional is guided through the whole process to find the right placement with full pay and job transparency upfront without registering.”

Growing and giving

The honors are aplenty for LiquidAgents. Its expansion, personalized client and candidate experience, and employee satisfaction are often recognized by outside groups.

LiquidAgents has multiple appearances on the Aggie 100 list, which honors the 100 fastest-growing businesses led by a Texas A&M former student. During the awards ceremony at the company’s debut on the Aggie 100 in 2017, Hanlon met Patty Rabel, senior director of development for the Texas A&M Foundation who handles fundraising for the college.

Hanlon worked with Rabel and college leadership to establish the LiquidAgents Endowed Scholarship for Aggie nurses pursuing their bachelor’s degree.

The relationship extends far past scholarship support. LiquidAgents has visited the college to educate students about travel nursing, toured the clinical simulation center and even consulted with Dr. Leann Horsley, dean of the college, about how to help more with staffing needs in rural areas.

Hanlon and LiquidAgents’ support of Aggie nurses was commemorated in 2023 when Hanlon was bestowed the college’s Partner in Nursing Award, which annually recognizes a supporter who has made a significant impact on nursing education and practice.

“Jenny is an honorary Aggie nurse,” said Horsley. “Her generosity goes far beyond what LiquidAgents has provided in scholarship

YOUR GIFT. YOUR WAY.

Gifts allow students, scholars, researchers and former students to make valuable contributions to the world’s body of knowledge. Your support allows dreams to become reality and transforms potential into action. Through your support, you can:

Create scholarships that attract the best and brightest students

Fund translational research programs

Increase access to health care for underserved adults and children

Provide support for community outreach and educational programs

Provide the finest facilities that encourage creativity and innovation

Recruit and retain internationally recognized faculty by supporting their research and teaching

CONTACT >>

Patty Rabel, CFRE

Senior Director of Development

979.436.0175

prabel@txamfoundation.com

“We want to help students

achieve their dream.”

JENNY HANLON



Jenny Hanlon (right) received the College of Nursing's Partner in Nursing Award in 2023 (pictured with Dr. Susan McLennon, former interim dean).

support for the college. She understands that nurses have earned a seat at the table and is using her business acumen to help us retain and grow our critical position in health care.”

LiquidAgents was an Aggie 100 company in 2018 and 2022. But 2023 was special, thanks to a new venture. By then, Hanlon and Arora had launched a technology platform called StaffDNA®, a digital marketplace that allows health care professionals, to find, book and manage their own jobs.

The growth of StaffDNA® was unprecedented by Aggie 100 standards. The company secured the No. 1 spot on the prestigious list with a more than 730% compound-annual growth rate, the fastest of any company in Aggie 100's nearly two-decade history.

The technology is a suitable middle ground for nurses who are looking for assignments but may not want or need the services of a recruiter, Hanlon said.

“They get to see everything about the job, with unparalleled transparency,” said Hanlon. “The pay, and even facility specific information, such as the color of the scrubs they'll wear, can be viewed without even registering on the app. This technology we've created puts more money in the candidate's pocket, while charging facilities less, creating the ultimate win-win.”

Culture of service

LiquidAgents' support of Aggie nurses is illustrative of the company's culture. Hanlon and the leadership team have worked hard to cultivate a sense of community and service. Employees, which now number 230, are eager to respond to Hanlon's “vol calls” to prepare dinner at the Ronald

McDonald House, for instance. Step inside the thoughtfully designed LiquidAgents headquarters, and you'll see dozens of pictures celebrating team members' involvement in charitable activities.

“Our employees are proud that our company gives back, and it's integral to our culture,” Hanlon said.

In addition to a host of awards for innovation in staffing and technology, LiquidAgents has been named a top place to work by *Modern Healthcare*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *Dallas Business Journal* and more.

Like many Aggies, Hanlon credits her time at Texas A&M with being deeply formative. She loves Aggieland so much she still calls it home, splitting time between College Station and Dallas and never missing a football game at Kyle Field. Her parents, who were there for her ring dunk and initially secured the six season tickets the family still shares for football, have lived in town for nearly 30 years.

So perhaps it's not surprising the second-generation Aggie with eight Texas A&M former students in her extended family has built a professional — and personal — culture around a service mission.

“We want to help students achieve their dream of a career in health care,” Hanlon said. “And we want to encourage people to get into nursing, even if it's not with us. It's a critically important career.”

Don Draper may have suggested some flourish on that first direct-mail post card. But as for his likely feedback on the culture- and values-driven business Hanlon has built: “No notes.”

ABOUT **NURSING**

Mission

The mission of the College of Nursing is to educate professional nurses of today and leaders of tomorrow through the provision of excellent educational programs in nursing. The college will identify, attract and graduate students of high potential, especially those from groups who have been historically under-represented in Texas health care.

Furthermore, this mission will facilitate individuals, families and groups in achieving the maximum state of well-being through education of highly skilled nurses, research and service. The mission of the college will be enhanced through faculty contributions to community service, leadership, practice and research.

Vision

Our vision is to be a premier college of nursing and to educate and empower a diverse population of nurse leaders who will transform health and health systems through service, discovery and knowledge.

LEADERSHIP



Leann Horsley,
PhD, RN, CHSE, CNE
Dean



James Batchelder, EdD,
MBA
Chief of Staff



Shirley Davidson, MBA
Associate Dean for Finance



Lisa Haddad, PhD,
MSHCA, RN
Executive Associate Dean



Matt F. Hoffman, DNP,
APRN, FNP-C
Assistant Dean for Distant
Site-Round Rock



Blanca Lupiani, PhD
Interim Associate Dean
for Research



Angela Mulcahy-Spence,
PhD, RN, CMSRN, CHSE
Interim Assistant Dean for
Undergraduate Nursing
Education



Nicole Peters Kroll, PhD,
APRN, ANP-C, FNP-BC,
PMHNP-BC
Associate Dean for
Clinical and Outreach Affairs



Matthew R. Sorenson,
PhD, APRN, ANP-C, FAAN
Associate Dean for
Graduate Nursing
Education



Todd Stricherz, MS
Assistant Dean for
Student Affairs

PROGRAMS

DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

- Traditional BSN
- Second-Degree BSN
- RN to BSN
- MSN-Nursing Education
- MSN-Family Nurse Practitioner
- MSN-Forensic Nursing
- Doctor of Nursing Practice
- Graduate Certificate in Forensic Health Care
- Post-Graduate Certificate Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

RESEARCH CENTERS, PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

- Texas A&M Health Center of Excellence in Forensic Nursing
- Program of Excellence for Mothers, Children and Families
- 50+ active projects

CLINICAL AND OUTREACH

- CHAMPions: Community-based health promotion addressing maternal health disparities
- GC-MOMS: Helping mothers navigate substance abuse recovery and treatment
- HIPPY: Home-visitation model for school readiness
- Texas A&M Health Mobile Clinic: Primary care for rural communities
- Nurse-Family Partnership®: Nurse-home visitor program for first-time mothers
- Texas A&M Health Hub: Nurse-practitioner led same-day clinic in Navasota
- Tex-TRAC: Telehealth care for sexual assault survivors in rural hospitals

ACCREDITATION AND DISTINCTION

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing, master's degree program in nursing, Doctor of Nursing Practice program and post-graduate APRN certificate program at the Texas A&M College of Nursing are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org>).



Quick FACTS



STAFF

85

FACULTY

FULL TIME
49
PART TIME
43

ENROLLMENT

700

AMERICAN ACADEMY
OF NURSING

FELLOWS

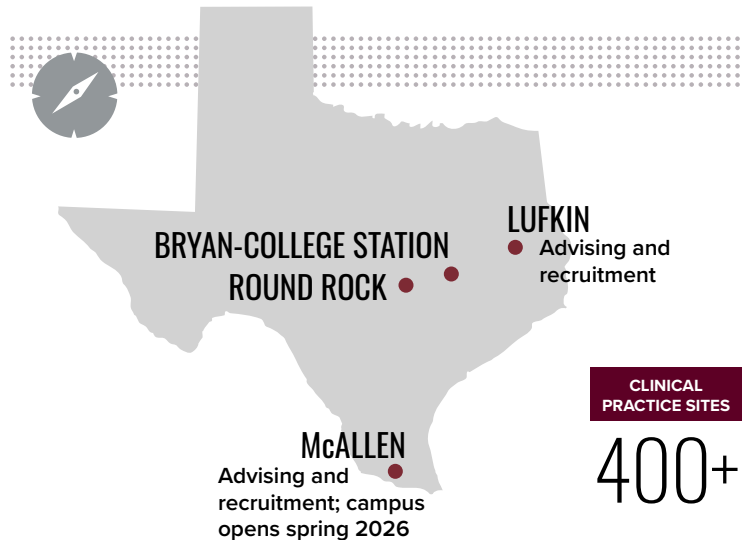
7

NCLEX FIRST-TIME PASS RATE: 98%

NATIONAL NP EXAM PASS RATE: 100%

ANNUAL GRADUATES

300



CLINICAL PRACTICE SITES

400+

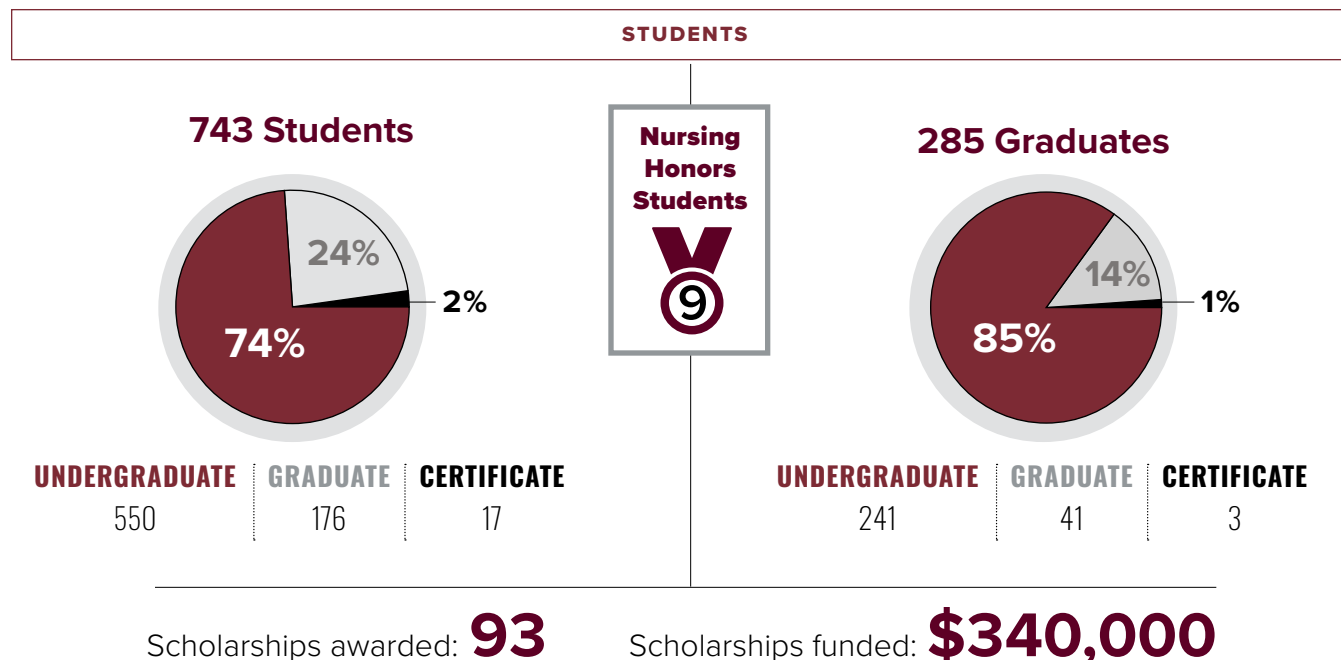


ANNUAL PROJECT AWARDS: \$12.4M

ANNUAL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES EXPENDITURES: \$6.6M

CUMULATIVE PROJECT AWARDS: \$73.6M

2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS



AWARDS

Dr. Rosaleen Bloom was elected co-chair of the Cancer Alliance of Texas's Survivorship Workgroup.

Dr. Sharon Dormire was selected for the Leadership Award for Interprofessional Excellence by the Texas A&M Office of Interprofessional Practice, Education, & Research.

Dr. Nancy Downing was among the Friends of the National Institute of Nursing Research's seventh cohort of ambassadors and named a fellow of the Texas A&M Health Telehealth Institute.

Dr. Leann Horsley was selected as an advisory member for the inaugural Texas Healthcare Workforce Task Force.

Dr. LeRoy Marklund was bestowed the Marie L. O'Koren Alumni Award for Innovation from the University of Alabama at Birmingham College of Nursing, where he received his doctor of nursing practice degree, and won the IPEC/COF Excellence in IPE Collaboration Award.

Dr. Stacey Mitchell was honored by End Violence Against Women International with its Quarterly Recognition Award.

Cassie Moffitt was named education lead for Texas Coordinating Body of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists.

Dr. Robin Page was elected to the Texas A&M Council of Principal Investigators, inducted as a Fellow of

the American Academy of Nursing, received the Texas A&M Community Engagement Award and named a fellow of the Texas A&M Health Telehealth Institute.

Dr. Nicole Peters Kroll was named a fellow of the Texas A&M Health Telehealth Institute.

Dr. Alison Pittman was selected for a Texas A&M Eppright University Professorship in Undergraduate Teaching Excellence award.

Dr. Matthew Sorenson was named a fellow of the Texas A&M Health Telehealth Institute.

Dr. Kelly Wilson was named a fellow of the Texas A&M Health Telehealth Institute.

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

Highlights

(Calendar Year 2023)

Sponsored activities
expenditures \$6.6M

New funding \$10M

Sponsored projects 58

Articles 66

Presentations 69

Poster presentations 24

Books and chapters 12

The College of Nursing's 2023 Research Annual Report highlights scholarly activities, including sponsored projects, publications and presentations.

READ THE REPORT AT
tx.ag/nursingresearch2023



CLINICAL AND OUTREACH

2,200
patient visits

136
babies nurtured
THROUGH
NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP®

2,000
HIPHY home
visits

22,200
continuing
education
HOURS

422
immunizations
ADMINISTERED

1,700
NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP®
client visits

224,000
STUDENT
clinical hours
COMPLETED

2,900
CONTINUING EDUCATION
attendees



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