

PEOPLE & EVENTS

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University of Arizona Establishes Memorial Fund to Honor Victims of Recent Tragedy

In response to the shooting spree that killed three nursing professors on October 28, 2002, at the University of Arizona (UA) in Tucson, the university has established a memorial fund for the slain faculty members: Dr. Cheryl McGaffie, Barbara Monroe, and Robin Rogers. Robert Stewart Flores, Jr., was the nursing student who shot the faculty members and then took his own life.

The victims dedicated their lives to their patients and their students. "The tragedy in Arizona has once again reminded us of the fragility of life; Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims, families, and friends, and we must stand together and support each other as we try to make sense of this tragedy," said Tom Quinn, president of the National Student Nurses Association (NSNA) and a retired law enforcement officer. Students described the instructors as compassionate teachers who took interest in the welfare of their students.

"Our hearts are heavy with the loss of our nursing colleagues," said NSNA Executive Director Diane J. Mancino, EdD, RN, CAE. "The nursing community is very intimate, and when tragedy strikes, it is felt far and wide. We send our heartfelt sympathy to the family, friends, students, and colleagues of the victims."

UA has established a memorial fund to honor the victims of the College of Nursing tragedy and is requesting that contributions be directed to the "Nursing Faculty Memorial Fund" at the UA Foundation. Checks should be made payable to Nursing Faculty Memorial Fund/UAF and sent to Office of Development, P.O. Box 245018, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85750-5018. For more information, visit www.arizona.edu.

Ropka Receives Outstanding Alumnae Award for Nursing Research



Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) member Mary E. Ropka, PhD, RN, FAAN, has received the Marlene Kramer Outstanding Alumnae Award for Research in Nursing from the School of Nursing at the University of Connecticut (UConn) in Hartford. Ropka, an associate professor in the Department of Health Evaluation Sciences in the

Schools of Medicine and Nursing at the University of Virginia, received the award at UConn's School of Nursing Alumni Banquet held at the Hartford Club on October 18, 2002.

The award honors alumni who help to attract more students to the varied and plentiful career opportunities in nursing. Ropka, one of four recent outstanding alumni awardees, continues to work toward enhancing nursing care amidst growing demands for health care and increased acuity of patient illness.

After initiating and serving as the first director of the intramural research program at the National Institute of Nursing Research/National Institutes of Health, Ropka worked on a series of exceptional and well-funded research programs. Laura Dzurec, PhD, RN, CS, dean and professor of UConn's School of Nursing, said, "Dr. Ropka's impressive record of research is enviable, and the students and colleagues at the University of Virginia are lucky to have such a motivated and well-respected researcher at their university." Ropka is currently the principal investigator for Supporting Decisions in Inherited Cancer Susceptibility, a grant funded by a Cancer Prevention, Control and Population Sciences Career Development Award through 2006.

Ropka received her baccalaureate degree in nursing from Syracuse University in New York and completed her master's degree at UConn, with a focus in medical-surgical nursing and a minor in teaching. Ropka received her PhD from the University of Virginia in research (epidemiology), with minors in nursing and evaluation. Ropka's interdisciplinary career has been a mix of clinical, teaching, research, and administration, with a particular focus on cancer.

Lyons Named Associate Director at James P. Wilmot Cancer Center



ONS member Catherine A. Lyons, RN, MS, CNAA, recently was named associate director for Strong Health cancer services and the James P. Wilmot Cancer Center at the University of Rochester Medical Center in New York. She will oversee the coordination of care and services to patients with cancer at all locations and institute patient satisfaction programs.

"She is an outstanding clinician and administrator who has demonstrated her expertise in streamlining care and management to

provide easy access for our patients to outstanding cancer care," said Richard I. Fisher, MD, director of the Wilmot Cancer Center and Strong Health cancer services.

Lyons joined the Wilmot Cancer Center from the National Cancer Institute, where she was chief of clinical trials support and research nursing. She previously held positions as executive director for cancer services at Peninsula Regional Medical Center in Salisbury, MD, and vice president for clinical operations at Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, NY, where she worked for 25 years.

The Buffalo native is a graduate of Niagara University and State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo, where she earned a master's degree in nursing. She served in the U.S. Army Reserves Nurse Corps from 1979–1988, and she was an adjunct clinical faculty member in the School of Nursing at SUNY Buffalo from 1988–2000. She is a graduate of the Leadership Buffalo program.

In addition to being an ONS member, Lyons is active in the American Organization of Nurse Executives, American Association of Cancer Education, and Sigma Theta Tau International. Her healthcare leadership was recognized in 2000, when she received the Niagara University Caritas Medal. She also received the Distinguished Alumnae Award from Holy Angels Academy in 2001. Lyons has published numerous articles and conducted presentations on a variety of oncology nursing matters.

Sellers Named North Carolina Nurse of the Year



ONS member Jean B. Sellers, RN, MSN, OCN®, was named the Harriet Flint Oncology Nurse of the Year at the North Carolina Nurses Association's annual convention in Raleigh last October.

This award is given to an individual who demonstrates commitment to quality patient care, professionalism in his or her role, and commitment to advancing the discipline of oncology nursing at the local, state, and national levels.

Sellers has been the oncology patient care coordinator at High Point Regional Health System for six years. She is also an on-call RN for Hospice of the Piedmont and is active with the

American Cancer Society (ACS), ONS, and Piedmont Bioethics Network. She received an ACS Master's Scholarship, which she used to complete her master's degree in nursing administration from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro last year. Her clinical time was spent at NorthEast Medical Center's Cancer Program under the direction of Lynn Erdman, RN, MN, who was the First Harriet Flint Oncology Nurse in 1990.

Sellers currently serves as president of the Piedmont Triad Chapter of ONS. She has been an active member since 1996, serving on various positions both locally and nationally. In April 2002, she published an article in the *American Journal of Nursing* titled, "Speaking the Unspeakable for End-of-Life Patients." This article is a result of her interest in the care of patients at the end of life and her desire to make a difference.

Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization to Expand Network of Affiliates

Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization, a patient resource for breast cancer information and support, recently announced plans to expand its affiliate base to five cities across the United States. The new affiliates are Denver, CO, Houston, TX, Long Island, NY, Miami, FL, and San Francisco, CA. The effort is being conducted in partnership with Pharmacia Oncology.

As part of its expansion, Y-ME conducted open meetings to inform people about Y-ME and its services and volunteer opportunities, as well as the breast cancer treatment landscape and patient quality-of-life issues. As a central resource in their local communities, Y-ME affiliates provide adult and teen education programs, support groups to women and their families touched by the disease, monthly newsletters, and advocacy efforts in both English and Spanish. Y-ME currently has affiliate partners in nearly 30 cities throughout the United States.

"This year alone, more than 200,000 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer. Many will look to Y-ME and other patient advocacy organizations for support and information on the latest treatments," said Y-ME Chief Executive Officer Margaret Kirk. "Today, Y-ME is increasing our reach nationwide, and, thanks to our partnership with Pharmacia Oncology, we will be able to extend our reach and bring hope, information, and caring to those who need it most."

Pharmacia Oncology shares Y-ME's commitment to breast cancer through its involvement in cancer community support efforts and ongoing breast cancer clinical research.

"We are pleased to be part of this important initiative and to work with Y-ME to help people with breast cancer and their families access both information about their disease and vital support networks," said Gabe Leung, group vice president, Global Oncology Franchise.

The mission of Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization is to decrease the impact of breast cancer, create and increase breast cancer awareness, and ensure through information, empowerment, and peer support that no one faces breast cancer alone. For more information, visit www.y-me.org.

National Brain Tumor Foundation Accepting Grant Applications

The National Brain Tumor Foundation (NBTF) has announced the opening of its 2003 grant funding cycle. The deadline for grant applications is **January 31, 2003**.

Nurses are encouraged to apply for the Quality of Life Grant and the Medulloblastoma/Primitive Neuroectodermal Tumor Grant. For more information about funding availability and an application, visit NBTF's Web site at www.braintumor.org and click on the research icon at the bottom of the page.

Publish Your Accomplishments!

The *Oncology Nursing Forum* accepts news of member accomplishments for "People and Events." Submissions should include a recent photo and be less than 250 words. For more information, contact Associate Editor Jane M. Fall-Dickson, RN, PhD, AOCN®, at 301-962-8281 (jdickson@nidcr.nih.gov).