

NURSING

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL CENTER

Transforming patient care through professional practice

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A newsletter
from the office
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Officer

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NURSES RAISE \$10,000 FOR HARDSHIP FUND

If you asked Donna Keeney, MSN, CRNA, a nurse anesthetist in Vanderbilt's Department of Anesthesiology, to describe her colleagues with two words, she would use "generous" and "competitive." And when those two qualities are combined, incredible things can happen.

A few years back, Keeney's department began incorporating charitable work into its annual celebration of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) Week, which is observed in January. Since these efforts began under the leadership of colleagues Edith Newberry and Mary Peters, the department has donated money, time, food and supplies to individuals (and pets) in need of assistance.

This year, the team raised \$10,470 for the VUMC Employee Hardship Fund. Thanks to the efforts of more than 160 Vanderbilt CRNAs, the fund will have those resources to provide financial assistance to colleagues across the Medical Center who are facing a hardship, particularly one that is unexpected.

A bake sale was among the money-raising strategies employed by CRNA employees.

"Good people are often faced with challenging financial circum-

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We all know that Vanderbilt nurses make remarkable things happen. This issue has several examples.

To mark CRNA week, our nurse anesthetists raised more than \$10,000 for our employee hardship fund. This is an incredible amount of money raised in a short time that will help our fellow employees in their time of financial need. Kudos to all involved.

Also in this issue, you will read about a nurse-led effort to conceive of and create a permanent memorial for organ donors at Vanderbilt. This labor of love took more than

five years and the result, located in our Critical Care Tower, is just tremendous. My thanks to all.

Our advanced practice professionals continue to set the standard nationally and internationally and are well represented in a major new publication. Read more inside.

Lastly, please save the dates for several exciting Nurses Week events. Details can be found inside.

Enjoy this issue,

stances due to events outside of their control,” said Jim Kendall, LCSW, CEAP, manager of Work / Life Connections, who noted the fund has offered relief to colleagues facing sudden hospitalizations, acute illnesses, house fires, funerals and moves due to situations involving domestic violence.

“While the fund isn’t set up to cover all situations or expenses, it may offer one way to assist fellow employees in need,” he said.

Since the fund was established in 1994, more than 3,000 VUMC and Vanderbilt University employees have benefited, with an additional 600 VUMC employees having benefited from the fund since the Medical Center’s split from the University three years ago.

“We work with people every day who we don’t know may be needing something,” Keeney said. “Whatever their bills might be, they may think that they’re at the end of their



CRNA team members present the group’s donation to Jim Kendall, LCSW, CEAP, manager of Work/Life Connections, at the CRNA staff meeting on Feb. 27. From left: Julie York, Brent Dunworth, Donna Keeney, Amanda Dickert, Kendall, Laura Durchsprung and Edith Newberry.

rope. If this donation can help take the burden of, for example, a house payment off them, I feel like that would be a huge weight lifted.”

To encourage participation, the department turned the fundraising into a friendly competition between its six CRNA divisions with the winner determined by the most funds raised per capita. The divisions hosted taco bars, chili cook-offs, bake sales, basket auctions and raffles — including a bid for third-row tickets to see the Nashville Predators take on the Detroit Red Wings, which were donated by an anesthesiologist. “It got crazy. Everyone wanted those tickets,” laughed Keeney.

“CRNAs are so good at taking care of people. We take care of everything our patients need during surgery. So, why not take care of our own, too? It’s our job, so I wanted to expand that outside of the operating room.”

Daily emails sent by Nurse Anesthesia Division Chief,

Brent Dunworth, DNP, MBA, CRNA, detailing the department’s “leader board” kept the competitive spirit alive.

“Dessert sales, gift baskets and many other similar efforts appeared almost daily,” said Dunworth. “This effort allowed a real injection of fun into the workplace during an annual week where we celebrate our own profession. The outpouring of generosity from the VUMC nurse anesthetists wildly exceeded even our own expectations.”

“It’s pretty hard to exceed your target when you didn’t even know what your target was, and our CRNAs did it. It was amazing,” Keeney said.

NURSES TEAM UP TO CREATE ORGAN DONOR MEMORIAL

Vanderbilt University Medical Center nurses gathered on the sixth floor atrium of the Critical Care Tower on Feb. 14 to dedicate “The Gift of Life,” a metal sculpture memorializing the final, selfless act of VUMC’s organ donors and their families. It was the culmination of a four-year process that was conceived of and created by nurses.

The sculpture, forged by Tennessee-based artist Terry Williams, pictures two birds high atop a birdhouse that towers over the heads of visitors to the atrium.

The VUMC Donation Nurse Champion Committee raised more than \$28,000 over six years and held multiple fundraisers to make it a reality, said committee member Teresa Hobt-Bingham, MSN, RN. “It is really a dream come true,” she said.

The sculpture was the brainchild of Heather Hart, MSN, RN, AG-ACNP, who co-founded the Donation Nurse Champion Committee with Hobt-Bingham in 2013. The committee’s goal was to build a permanent memorial to raise awareness for organ donation and honor patients and families for their gifts of life through organ donation.

“I think the unspoken hero in every trans-

plant case is the donor,” Hart said. “We really wanted to visualize that message and how powerful that is.”

Hundreds of volunteer hours made the sculpture possible. Most of the money was



Attendees gather at the dedication of “The Gift of Life” sculpture, which memorializes organ donors and their families and is on display in the Critical Care Tower.



Heather Hart, MSN, RN, AG-ACNP, conceived the idea of the donor memorial.

raised through four annual benefit concerts called Songs for Life. Hart’s husband, Emerson Hart, is the lead singer for the multiplatinum rock group Tonic. He and his musician friends played for free and the concerts’ proceeds went toward the

memorial.

The first benefit concert in 2014 was held in Langford Auditorium, then moved to City Winery for the next three years. Headliners included Kevin Griffin, singer from multiplatinum band Better than Ezra, and Grammy-award winning singer and songwriter David Hodges.

By 2017, the group had raised enough money to begin the process of conceptualizing and creating the sculpture.

Early sketches focused on songbirds, hearkening back to the Songs for Life concerts that made the work possible.

“It’s been quite an incredible journey and process and we’re all a bit dizzied by it,” Heather Hart said.

VANDERBILT APRNs FEATURED IN NEW PUBLICATION

Vanderbilt University Medical Center, a leading institution for advanced practice professionals, recently reached another milestone for prominence in this area.

The second edition of "Integrating Advanced Practice Providers in the ICU" was published by the Society of Critical Care Medicine and VUMC is represented in three out of the 14 chapters. No other institution has such representation.

There are nearly 1,200 advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) and physician assistants (PAs) practicing at VUMC.

April Kapu, DNP, APRN, ACNP, Associate Nursing Officer for VUMC Advanced Practice and Director of the Office of Advanced Practice, described the book as a road map for nurse practitioners and physician assistants in the ICU.

"They learn how to structure the staffing, the orientation, how to bill for their services, how to measure their

outcomes," she said. "To have Vanderbilt as the institution setting the pace is amazing."

Kapu is an author of the eighth chapter, "Advanced Practice Providers at the Organizational Level." The chapter's objectives include describing the typical components of an advanced practice provider's organizational structure and the balance of centralized and decentralized leadership and programs as well as discussing the purpose and types of advanced practice leadership models.

Caroline Banes, MSN, RN, ACNP, Trauma ICU Lead Nurse Practitioner, is an author in the fourth chapter, "Developing Orientation Programs for APPs in the ICU." The chapter offers strategies and methods for developing and implementing orientation programs.

Janna Landsperger, ACNP, a nurse practitioner in the Medical Intensive Care Unit at VUMC, is an author of the 10th chapter, "Metrics for Critical Care Medicine

Advanced Practice Provider Teams." The chapter explores advanced practice teams' productivity issues and attribution issues regarding outcomes in team-based care.

Vanderbilt University School of Nursing is also represented. Ruth Kleinpell, PhD, AG-ACNP, Assistant Dean for Clinical Scholarship at VUSN, authored the sixth chapter, "Assessing Outcomes of Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants in the ICU." It reviews the evidence of advanced practice providers in the ICU, discusses key considerations when assessing the outcomes of such providers and highlights strategies for demonstrating outcomes. Kleinpell is the immediate past president of the Society of Critical Care Medicine.

In addition to PA colleagues, APRN roles encompass Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists, Nurse Practitioners, Certified Nurse Midwives and Clinical Nurse Specialists.

SAVE THE DATE! NURSES WEEK EVENTS COMING UP IN MAY

Nurses Week will be here before we know it. Please mark your calendars for the following events and prepare to join us for an exciting week of inspirational and educational activities. Everyone is encouraged to attend each of the events.

- **Nursing Honors 2019** - Friday, May 17, from 3 to 4 p.m. in Langford Auditorium. Reception to follow in lobby.
- **State of Nursing Address 2019** - Tuesday, May 28, from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. in Light Hall 208.
- **Research Nurses Poster Session 2019** - Friday, May 17, from noon to 2 p.m. in Light Hall North Lobby.