



# The Synapse

*A Communication Impulse*

Connecting the Bethel University Nursing Department with its Alumni | Summer 2020

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### **NEW Pathway to the DNP: Nurses with a Masters in Nursing Education can now apply for the DNP Program**

Wendy Thompson

Bethel University will be launching a new pathway to the Doctor in Nursing Practice (DNP) this fall, 2020, for nurses that have their Masters in Nursing Education. A track has been designed with an advanced practice focus of leadership. Applicants will have an additional admission requirement to complete two preparatory courses in leadership for their advanced nursing practice. Once accepted into the program, students will be granted conditional acceptance into the DNP Program until the preparatory courses: HCAM610 Legal Aspects in Healthcare (3 credits) and NURS630 Nursing Leadership Practicum (5 credits and 250 hours of practicum) are completed. This program meets the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education requirements that the DNP connect to a practice master’s degree. Bethel University is thrilled to be able to offer this DNP option for

nurses! If you have any questions about this option please contact Wendy Thompson, DNP Program Director, at [wendy-thompson@bethel.edu](mailto:wendy-thompson@bethel.edu) or connect with our admissions counselor, Kasin Lewicki, at [k-lewicki@bethel.edu](mailto:k-lewicki@bethel.edu).

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### **Bethel University Nursing Launches New Post-Baccalaureate Program**

Kristi Gustafson

Bethel now offers a Post-Baccalaureate Nursing program! This is an accelerated 15-month program that started in June 2020. It is designed for students with a bachelor’s degree in a non-nursing field who are looking to make a career change to nursing. The Post-Baccalaureate program is accredited with the traditional BSN program and the RN to BSN degree completion program. Students in the Post-Bacc program will have an innovative mix of

online experiences, skills intensives, and clinical experiences. Please help us welcome 18 students to the first cohort!

The Post-Bacc Nursing program is looking for nursing tutors for pathophysiology, pharmacology, adult medical/surgical nursing, pediatric nursing, and maternity nursing. Please email [post-bacc-nursing@bethel.edu](mailto:post-bacc-nursing@bethel.edu) for more information and to apply.

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## DNP Program Accreditation

Wendy Thompson

Bethel University is in the process of seeking accreditation for the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), the nationally recognized accrediting institution that ensures the quality and integrity of graduate programs in nursing. As part of the accreditation process, Bethel University hosted an onsite evaluation of the DNP Program in early Feb-

ruary 2020. This evaluation was a review of our program's compliance with CCNE's standards and key elements of a DNP Program. The evaluation of the DNP program was positive. Based on this review and a review by the CCNE Accreditation Review Committee, a recommendation will be made to the CCNE Board of Commissioners, who will then make the final decision at their fall 2020 board meeting.

## Alumni Requesting a BSN Degree

Bethel University has changed the degree that CAS and CAPS nursing graduates will receive from a BS to a BSN. This degree change was made to facilitate financial aid for graduates from Bethel for our newest program, the Post-Baccalaureate Nursing Program.

As alumni, you can request your awarded degree to be changed from a BS to a BSN. Some early graduates may even have a BA - this also qualifies for the change to a BSN. Instructions on how to do this are listed below:

Alumni can use our online or pdf request forms, depending on whether they are able to log in or need to provide a signature. The forms are available at this site (<https://www.bethel.edu/registrar/forms/>, under All Schools), and these direct links:

Online (requires login): <https://www.bethel.edu/registrar/forms/bs-to-bsn>

Pdf (requires signature): <https://www.bethel.edu/registrar/pdfs/bs-bsn.pdf>

Please reach out to the registrar's office if you have questions about the process.

## Cultivating Leadership for RN to BSN Students

Emily Day

Bethel University's RN to BSN nursing program launched a faculty-student mentorship program this spring 2020. The mentorship program is designed to develop the next generation of nurse leaders and advances pro-

fessional students into leadership roles. Participation in the program is voluntary and based on students' desire for leadership development. Students are

*Cultivating Leadership - cont. on p. 3*

## Bethel University is Offering a Dual Degree in Nursing Leadership

Wendy Thompson

Bethel University has launched a new pathway to the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP). A dual degree pathway in leadership has been designed that can be completed in as few as thirty-three months! This dual degree means that students will be granted both a master's degree (MBA or MASL) and a DNP upon graduation. During the first year, students have the option to take courses towards a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) or a Masters in Strategic Leadership (MASL) within the business programs' healthcare concentration. After the first year, students will start in the DNP program. Some of the DNP courses count towards the master's degree so students will need to complete all the coursework to receive both degrees upon graduation. This program meets the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education requirements that the DNP connect to a practice master's degree. Bethel University is excited to offer this dual option for nurses!

If you have any questions about the dual degree please contact Wendy Thompson, DNP Program Director, at [wendy-thompson@bethel.edu](mailto:wendy-thompson@bethel.edu) or connect with Kasin Lewicki, dual degree admissions counselor, at [k-lewicki@bethel.edu](mailto:k-lewicki@bethel.edu).

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## **STUDENT HIGHLIGHT**

### **Senior Students Fully Engaged**

Senior nursing students Jolene Jakubowsky (2020) and Dana Schonhaler (2020) were “fully engaged” at their community engagement site, Agape Oasis. Each Bethel nursing student participates with a community site during his/her five semesters of nursing. Jolene and Dana’s site provides 24-hour childcare and crisis intervention to families living in North Minneapolis and surrounding communities.

Jakubowsky and Schonhaler partnered with Pethuel Cole, Director of Agape Oasis of Love Crisis Intervention Center, to work with children participating in the domestic violence and sexual assault intervention program. Children who participate in the crisis

intervention program are often impacted by several Social Determinants of Health (SDH) and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), including the repercussions of adult Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).

To promote mental health that supports children as they navigate the increased risk of mental health issues that result from SDH, ACEs and IPV, Jakubowsky and Schonhaler collaborated with Cole to develop and implement a mindfulness curriculum for children ages three to seventeen. The goal of the mindfulness curriculum is to help children cope with and manage their feelings, and is also designed to complement other programming

*Cultivating Leadership - cont. from p. 2*

paired with faculty who have expertise in the same area of interest.

This program has cultivated a closer community between students and faculty and in addition provides support for students to help them achieve their professional and personal goals.

at Agape Oasis in a way that improves the lives and safety of children so that they can thrive past trauma, not just survive.

Jakubowsky and Schonhaler are working with incoming sophomore students assigned to Agape Oasis and have developed a succession plan to ensure the sustainability of their efforts. Their full engagement in the Agape Oasis community has allowed them to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

## **FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS**

### **Assistant Professor of Nursing Beth Anderson and Dr. Kristin Sandau accepted into Parkinson’s Foundation**

Beth Anderson, DNP, BSN, RN, FCN, PHN, Assistant Professor of Nursing, and Kristin Sandau, PhD, RN, Professor of Nursing at Bethel University, have been accepted to the distinguished Edmond J. Safra Visiting Nurse Faculty Program at the Parkinson’s Foundation (PF).

The highly prestigious 40-hour accredited “train the trainer” Nurse Faculty Program improves Parkinson’s disease (PD) nursing care by training faculty leaders across the U.S. to educate nursing students. The rigorous course

includes didactics, clinical time with patients, participation in a PD support group and the opportunity to develop an independent project and includes a \$2,000 stipend offered for completing the program.

As one of just 24 accepted faculty in 2019, upon completion of their training Beth and Kristin will join the elite group of over 300 alumni, PF Nurse Scholars, who have completed the intensive training over the last ten years. PF Nurse Scholars educate more than 20,000 nursing students on

PD annually. With the number of people living with Parkinson’s globally expected to double by 2040 to nearly 13 million, teaching nursing students in the classroom is one of the best ways to prepare them for treating people with Parkinson’s when they graduate.

Beth and Kristin were welcomed to the Nurse Faculty Program this June at Struthers Parkinson’s Center, a Parkinson’s Foundation Center of Excellence in Minneapolis, MN.

## Dr. Connie Clark and Dr. Bernita Missal present Globally Relevant Research at the 2nd Global Experts Meeting on Frontiers in Nursing Education

Dr. Connie Clark and Dr. Bernita Missal, Professors of Nursing, will present their research, “Nursing Care for Somali Immigrant New Mothers” at the upcoming 2nd Global Experts Meeting on Frontiers in Nursing Education. The theme this year is “Explore Latest Challenges and Innovations in Nursing Education.”

This congress brings together leading experts from all over the world to share knowledge and experience of nursing, midwifery and healthcare education worldwide. Highly respected invited speakers will present state-of-the-art lectures in the field of nursing, supplemented by contributed oral and poster presentations. An exhibition will also run alongside the conference sessions.

### LINKS OF INTEREST

**Midwifery Newsletter**  
Here's the link to CATCH:  
<https://www.bethel.edu/graduate/academics/nurse-midwifery/newsletter/catch-issue-7.pdf>

**New Bethel President announcement**  
Link to Ross Allen Named Bethel University's Sixth President:  
<https://www.bethel.edu/news/articles/2020/june/ross-allen>

## RETIREE FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

### 2019 Jim Parker Leadership Award Recipients

Marjorie Schaffer, retired Bethel nursing faculty, and Sue Strohschein served as co-editors of this past year's update of Public health interventions: *Applications for Nursing Practice, 2nd Ed.*, also known as the “Wheel Manual.” The first edition of the manual, published in 2001, incor-

porated best evidence for public health nursing interventions, and has been used by nursing schools, local health agencies, and other organizations nationwide to orient new public health nursing students and staff. Experienced public health nurses use the wheel to refresh their understanding and commitment to population-based practice. For the second edition, Marge and Sue extensively reviewed recent evidence, and updated and aligned interventions with new evidence. A long list of local public health leaders and



nursing faculty at universities throughout the state shared their support for this award, and their gratitude to Marge and Sue.

Sue Strohschein (below left) accepted this award on behalf of both women.

#### About this Award

The Jim Parker Leadership Award, formerly called the Community Health Services Leadership Award, was created to recognize individuals who had made significant contributions to community health services at the state and local levels through their commitment to community health services development and their leadership in promoting the philosophy and purposes of community health services.



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## ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

### Messy, Tangled Grace

Mackenzie Ailes, Class of 2019  
and Julie De Haan,  
Associate Professor of Nursing



I remember the first time I did not want to be a nurse. I had studied all week, armed with 958 flashcards in preparation for the pathophysiology and pharmacology exam. I recall the test in front of me and being confident of zero percent of my answers; I got 45% on that exam. Imagine if you were lying in a hospital bed and your nurse introduced herself with, “Hi my name is Mackenzie, and there is a 45% chance that I am going to keep you alive today.”

I was not used to failing. However, I had no idea what the nursing program was going to ask of me. I had no idea I’d celebrate a life entering the world only to watch parents grieve a baby who couldn’t learn to breathe. Who knew I’d hold the hand of a terrified daughter as her mom left for a scan to see if the cancer had spread? I did not anticipate participating in a code on a 12-year-old after he had been racing four-wheelers with his brother.

I thought pathophysiology and pharmacology were hard. I had no concept of the number of times I would hit my knees, asking God for help.

Sometimes God has a way of tapping us on the shoulder and spinning us around. Although my knowledge of pathophysiology and pharmacology, evidence-based practice, and dimensional analysis were necessary for nurs-

ing practice, maybe they are not what is most important. In the spring of my junior year, I completed a mental health rotation. One shift, I walked up to a girl who looked to be about my age and was coloring quietly. I pretended not to notice the markings etched into her arms. She told me that she had been admitted for stabilization after a suicide attempt. She looked at me, her big blue eyes hollow and full of tears. Her shaky voice walked me down roads that gave the markings meaning. In her moment of desperation, she had been convinced she’d never be enough, that she’d never be worthy of love. She convinced herself it was her fault.

I took her hands and promised her that her life mattered. I told her that she had a purpose. I helped carry the dark, heavy load. Mostly, I looked her into her eyes, human to human, and muttered an honest, “Me, too.”

Maybe that is key to being the best nurse—holding the scared and shaky hands of another and not being ashamed to whisper,

“Me, too.” Maybe it is also the key to being the best person. Maybe that is what Jesus meant when he called us to love each other well. You will be a good nurse with the skill and knowledge you have, but you will be a great nurse when you can sit at the bedside and rub lotion on the feet of someone who has walked a completely different story than you, and do it with love.

As nurses, we are not always celebrated for the way we can interpret an EKG strip in seconds, anticipating an angry heart before it makes up its mind. Our patients may not thank us for the way we draw arterial blood gases in the case of a respiratory emergency or for the way we push fluid into a convulsing body and watch stillness return. We may not be celebrated for our critical thinking and our anticipatory assessments. However, may we always be celebrated for the way we kneel and hold the hand of the terrified. May we always be celebrated for walking into a messy and tangled story and handling it with gentle grace.

**REMEMBER...** “You have been given the gift of holding human life in your hands. Remember to handle it with care, leaving your judgement at the door. Remember that each human you meet is living in a narrative with hardships you know nothing about. Remember to love first. At the end of the day, nurses have the skills and knowledge to assist in healing the sick, but perhaps it’s actually love that saves a life.” Mackenzie Ailes, Class of 2019

## God Works Miracles

Anna Jeter is a graduate of Bethel's 2017 nursing class. In 2018, just one year later, she underwent a lifesaving heart-lung transplant. Anna was the keynote speaker at the Nursing Dedication Ceremony in February. Currently, Anna works as an artist and poet. While writing about hope, loss, and her complex health journey, she remains passionate about both the patient and nursing perspectives and the



meaningful weight they can carry in our lives. Below is Anna's keynote address from the Dedication Ceremony:

“Students, families, and esteemed faculty, it is an honor to stand up here today, five years from when I sat in the audience myself. First, let me congratulate every young individual placed before me today – you have worked hard to be here, and we are all here to acknowledge this calling of nursing that you have chosen to pursue. As I speak, I hope to share a little bit about my story, offering insight into both the nurse and patient perspectives that I have experienced over time.

When I was four years old, I was diagnosed with Pulmonary Hypertension, a rare and complex heart-lung illness that is considered to be terminal. Despite being told that I had only a handful of years to live, improved medicine allowed me to beat the odds, and in 2013 I found myself moving in



as a freshman at Bethel, despite my fragile state of health. After years of critical, chronic illness, I was familiar with the field of nursing, and I felt sure that it is where I was being called. I was determined to give back to this career that had taken such great care of me over the years.

When I graduated in 2017, I wasn't prepared for what would come next. In the same month that I passed my boards, I found myself turning down my dream NICU job so that I could begin the process of seriously listing for a heart-lung transplant. Transplant is the only cure for

*God Works Miracles - cont. on p. 7*



critical Pulmonary Hypertension patients, and it was something I was evaluated for during my freshman year. We had put it off with the hope that I could graduate college first, but with college done, we knew it could not be put off any longer. Everything has a limit, and my doctors felt sure that I had reached mine.

For a list of complicated reasons, I ended up pursuing my transplant in California, at Stanford Medical Center. We finally made the trip out there in August of 2018, a full year after committing to the decision of going forward with transplant. Three weeks later, I received the call to come in – they had a match.

I was admitted around noon, and went into surgery around 10:00 pm. It was one of the most difficult transplants Stanford had ever seen, with a long line of complications. What should have been a three-week hospital stay transformed into eight months of



ICU level care across two states and four different centers.

It would take a long time to go through my medical record of my hospital stay, so I'll try to be brief with the highlights. After

my initial extubation, I was reintubated two more times, before they decided that it would be best to place a tracheostomy, something I am still living with today. I had to go back into the OR sev-

*God Works Miracles - cont. on p. 8*



eral times, one time during which they had to remove a portion of my brand-new lungs. I struggled with cycles of hypercapnic respiratory failure for several months.

I had chest tubes placed and removed, only to be put back in, and for quite some time I was incapable of walking 10 feet without a walker and ventilator assistance. For the first five months, I was not able to speak or eat, and my physical strength reached levels of absolute depletion. My recovery was slow, so slow that it is still taking place today, a year and a half later. Nobody was certain of how far I would be able to come, but with the support of my family, friends, and medical team, I'm here today, the strongest I've been since transplant, and always hopeful of growing stronger still.

I could tell you about what I learned personally through this journey, but I would rather share with you what I saw.

My nurse, at the foot of my bed, with nail polish that she brought in just for me, ready to give me a pedicure. A critical care nurse, at my head, as I began spiraling into respiratory failure, asking me not to give up. A nurse, bringing me my 12th ice cold washcloth of the evening, doing his best to manage my ICU delirium. My Nurse Practitioner, typing up long detailed schedules of therapies to help me build my strength.

A whole team of nurses, coordinating with other disciplines to find a way to get me outside, even





for just fifteen minutes. The first person I saw when I was admitted for my heart-lung transplant was a nurse. Similarly, it was a nurse who helped me and my parents out to the car, upon my discharge eight months later.

It was nurses in the room with me, in the middle of the night, when my ventilator would not stop beeping. Nurses who rushed to attention when my oxygen levels were dropping, or when something was wrong. Nurses who bathed me, cared for me, and listened to what I had to say. I cannot overstate the importance of this role. It will bring you into the midst of humanity at its best, and at its worst. During your practice, you will witness horrible tragedy. But, you will also witness miracles. You are about to enter into an education that will wholeheartedly change your life.



To this day, I could not be more grateful for what this profession has taught me. It has informed me on compassion and has taught me how to be gentler with humankind as a whole. Even more so, this profession carried me through many months as a critically ill patient. I'm confident when I say that, without nurses, I would not have had the chance to celebrate my one-year transplant anniversary, or my 24th birthday.

Never forget the impact that you can have upon entering a patient's room – one 12-hour shift could end up being the highlight of that person's week. To this day, I still remember the faces of the nurses who changed my life – some of them in 2018, some back when I was just four years old and first being diagnosed. This work gives us access to people in a way that many are not afforded – it gives us the opportunity to have a lasting impact on individual lives. Certainly, your education should be taken seriously, but don't forget the very human nature of this work as well. It is one of the most rewarding things you will ever come across, and I'm so excited for each of you to get started. I promise, these next years, and whatever comes after, is going to take you to some amazing, challenging, and life changing places. I urge you to work hard, and to take notice of each miracle and lesson as they come.

Thank you."

**Keep in touch with us!**

**[bethel.edu/alumni/stay-connected/update-info](https://bethel.edu/alumni/stay-connected/update-info)**



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