

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

What a wonderful Fall semester we have had here at Penn Nursing and at the Center for Global Women's Health. It has been a tremendous semester for the Center as we continue to address our three priority areas: Violence and Victimization, Maternal Morbidity and Mortality, and Gender Based Health Issues. Some of our initiatives since our last newsletter include:

- Raising awareness around freedom of choice with leaders Dayle Steinberg, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood Southeastern Pennsylvania (PPSP) and Elicia Gonzales, a queer Latinx who is the Executive Director for the Abortion Liberation Fund of PA. Here is the [link](#) to the presentation.
- Highlighting how art, specifically the art of Frida Kahlo, can be used as a way for nurses and nursing students to better understand women's health issues, including trauma and disability. Here is the [link](#) to the presentation by Dr. Siobhan Conaty, PhD.
- Dr. Monique Howard and Drs. Carmen Alvarez and Donna Sabella were lead trainers on Bullying and Intimate Partner Violence for the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). These trainings were attended by representatives from several South American countries.
- Sponsoring, through a generous gift from Maura and Patrina Topper, "Transgender 101 for Health Care Students" – conducted by the [Transgender Training Institute \(TTI\)](#).
- Supporting our students in work related to our three priority areas.

In other related news, I was appointed Track Director of Penn's [Women's Health/Gender Related Nurse Practitioner Program](#). As an alumna of the program, I am thrilled to work closely with our students and train the next generation of providers in women's health and gender responsive care.

I hope you enjoy reading about some of the amazing work our faculty and students are doing. Wishing you and your loved ones a peaceful holiday season.

Warmly,
Holly

PENN NURSING RENFIELD FOUNDATION AWARD FOR GLOBAL WOMEN'S HEALTH

Penn Nursing
RENFIELD FOUNDATION AWARD
for
GLOBAL WOMEN'S HEALTH

In 2012, the Beatrice Renfield Foundation established the [Penn Nursing Renfield Foundation Award for Global Women's Health at Penn Nursing](#). The goals of the Award include raising awareness of global women's health issues, supporting multi-disciplinary approaches to addressing global women's health issues, and rewarding innovative strategies designed to deal with pressing issues for women. The award is to be presented to a demonstrated leader in improving women's health who has advocated for policies and/or programs that improve the lives and health of women by illuminating social injustices; empowered women to lead their institutions, communities and nations as well as their homes; forged innovative solutions to promote the health of women and girls; and/or partnered with them to manage symptoms of health-related conditions, and improve their quality of life across the lifespan. The awardee's work and leadership will have resulted in significant impact in improving the lives and health of women and/or increased visibility of the issues impacting the lives and health of women and girls.

The 2024 application process will begin in the Spring of 2023. Stay tuned for information about the nomination process. We appreciate the nominations we receive from our partners.



*Andrise Alzuphar, ABSN 2022 graduate
(used with permission)*

My First Birth Doula Experience By Andrise Alzuphar (ABSN Graduate)

Since getting trained as a birth doula through the Philadelphia Alliance for Labor Support (PALS), I have been anxiously awaiting diving into the doula world. When attempting to make a hair appointment in June my stylist informed me she would be on maternity leave. After congratulating her I mentioned I recently became a birth doula, would love to be her doula, and offered her support. She was excited and accepted my offer immediately. As her due date approached, we connected over a FaceTime call and discussed numerous topics: preparing her hospital bag; what to do when her water broke; what to expect during labor; different labor positions; and different techniques to distract from the pain. Shortly after this call, I received a text from her that said, “Good morning girl! Give me a call when you get this.” Once I called, she said that her water broke in the morning and that she was not having any contractions. She took this opportunity to take a shower, finished a last bit of cleaning up for when the baby came home, and ate something light before heading to the hospital. She said she didn’t panic because of our conversation and that she felt prepared. Once she arrived at the hospital, her midwife checked her and said she was starting to dilate. I assured my client and her husband that they were doing a great job and were on the road to having a baby. As her contractions grew more intense, I reminded her husband of the different pressure techniques to try and relieve her pain, as well as setting some dim lighting and playing her birth playlist. I took a rapid COVID test and once it came back negative, I hopped in my car and made my way from Philadelphia to New York where she was delivering.

As I walked into the hospital and stopped at the nurse’s station, I felt a sense of pride saying, “I’m a doula visiting a client.” It felt like I was meant to be there. Once in the room, I greeted everyone and dove into supporting my client. When the midwife and nurse asked if I was family, my client jumped in and proudly said, “No, that’s my doula.” The midwife and nurse were so welcoming and filled the room with nothing but positivity. They made me feel like a valuable member of the team as soon as I got there. It seemed every time the nurse or midwife asked my client if she was aware of something or began to prepare her on a topic she said, “Yes, my doula discussed that with us.” This reassured me that being a birth advocate was my passion. Soon it was 10 P.M. and the midwife said it was time to push. In between pushes, the midwife inquired about my passion to be a doula. I quickly explained this was an exciting stop on my journey to becoming a midwife.

My client pushed for around 20 minutes and her beautiful baby boy was born at 10:23 P.M. As she pushed, I watched as she used every strategy we discussed to bring her baby boy into this world. After he was born, the midwife immediately put him on her chest for skin-to-skin bonding. As he cried, I watched the parents smile, cry, and welcome their son into the world. The midwife waited a couple of minutes before instructing the dad on how to cut the cord. Once she did, I followed the baby over to the scale to get some photos for them. I returned to my client, and we waited for the placenta to be delivered. Once the baby was cleaned up, he was returned to his mother. I gave them some time alone before returning and making sure she was all settled in the postpartum unit. As I left my client’s room at 2 A.M. all I could think was, “This is how we combat maternal mortality amongst women of color.”

More midwives, more nurses, and more doulas collaborating and ensuring women are heard during pregnancy, labor, delivery, and postpartum. My first experience as a birth doula was nothing short of amazing.



Tara Teipel, Penn Nursing Senior
(used with permission)

My Experience as an Independence Blue Cross Nurse Intern at the Mazzoni Center

By Tara Teipel (Traditional BSN Student)

Through the [Independence Blue Cross Nurse Internship Program](#), I had the stellar opportunity to work at the [Mazzoni Center](#) in the summer of 2022, between my junior and senior years of the traditional BSN program. The Mazzoni Center is an LGBTQ-focused clinic serving the Philadelphia Metropolitan Area. People of all gender identities and sexual orientations come to the Mazzoni Center for primary care, behavioral health services, STI testing, youth drop-in hours, and more. The Mazzoni Center also hosts the [Philadelphia Trans Wellness Conference \(PTWC\)](#), which is the largest transgender health conference in the world. In addition to its very own team members, PTWC hosts some of the best providers, speakers, and experts to educate healthcare professionals, therapists, educators, and the general public.

As a nurse intern, I analyzed community health needs, provided quality and comprehensive health and wellness services, performed Medicare Annual Wellness Visits (AWV) with eligible patients, and delivered productive telehealth calls to patients to improve scheduling quality and decrease rehospitalization following the Transitional Care Model. These projects aimed to address gaps in the healthcare system that can be especially damaging to the LGBTQ+ population, which has been historically stigmatized by healthcare professionals and society as a whole. Providing gender-responsive care was a vitally important aspect of the Center, aiming to offer holistic services including chest and cervical care, laser hair removal, sexual health services, behavior health consultants, medical case managers, and gender-affirming services including hormone therapy. In this setting, the Mazzoni Center aims to approach all of their patients' specialized needs in an inclusive and welcoming environment. Nurses have an imperative role in connecting patients to these resources and ensuring nothing falls through the cracks. Mazzoni Center nurses and nurse practitioners are incredibly hands-on with all in-person visits and interactions, telehealth calls and meetings, and even contribute to larger-scale public health approaches to address the community and beyond.



Women's Health/Gender-Related Nurse Practitioner Graduate Students Samantha Noblejas and Natisha Chen attending the 25th Annual NPWH Conference in Houston, Texas (used with permission)

My Experience Serving as a Student Ambassador to the National Association for Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH) Annual Conference

By Samantha Noblejas, BSN, RN, C-EFM – Graduate Student in the Women's Health/Gender-Related Nurse Practitioner Program

As a student in the Women's Health/Gender-Related Nurse Practitioner program, I had been searching for unique opportunities to expand my clinical knowledge and professional network beyond the classroom. In September, I had the opportunity to fly from Philadelphia to Houston for the [National Association for Practitioners in Women's Health \(NPWH\) Annual Conference](#). Each year, NPWH selects a number of WHNP students for the [Student Ambassadors Program](#), part of an initiative intended to build a national community of early-career WHNP students, and a way for us to connect with mentors and attend the conference for free. Each mentor is an experienced WHNP who serves on the NPWH Board. I was paired with [Dr. Heather Quaille](#), founder, owner, and clinical director of

the SHOW Center, who specializes in sexual and reproductive health, forensic nursing and human trafficking, and sits on the NPWH Board as Treasurer. I loved being able to connect with WHNP students from around the nation and bond as a cohort of the next generation of women's health nurse practitioners. I also loved being able to attend the conference with Natisha Chen, one of my friends and classmates from my cohort! We learned so much together during this weekend, attending presentations together and seeing all the new, innovative products from the exhibitors.

The conference was also a space for me to connect with providers in the women's health/sexual and reproductive health space actively advocating and fighting for their patients. The conference was held in Texas, most likely one of the worst places in terms of access to reproductive care in the country – a fact not lost on any of us. NPWH addressed the fact that the conference location had been locked in since pre-COVID and before many of the heartbreaking challenges to abortion

care post-*Roe v. Wade* reversal. It was, however, still able to serve as an active space where discussions surrounding reproductive health and abortion access occurred as planned. It was also a way for WHNPs and students (like me) around the country to hear the experiences of abortion providers from Texas and other states. There were safe and brave spaces provided for these providers to discuss their stories and struggles, for all to vent anger and frustration, and to brainstorm ways to move forward and support each other. As a student who just started her GYN clinicals at a busy OB/GYN clinic in Northeast Philadelphia this semester, it was the perfect timing for me to learn from other NPs, learn about ways to build my clinical practice and use supportive language with my patients. I loved being able to attend a hands-on IUD insertion workshop, and work on my techniques with a simulator! Some of my most favorite presentations included the ones on Disparities in Gynecologic Cancers by Dr. Nalo Hamilton, OB Ultrasound Basics from Dr. Jamille Nagtalon-Ramos, and Trauma-Informed Sexual Care for the LGBTQ+ community by Dr. Heather Quaile. Dr. Shawana Moore, the NPWH Board Chair, also gave an eye-opening presentation and discussion on Health Inequities in Uterine Fibroids. Coincidentally, this is one of the main reasons I decided to pursue women's health – after witnessing my mom's experiences seeking out supportive gynecologic care for fibroids.

For those who plan to pursue careers in the women's health/gender-related care space, it is so important to connect with other professionals and mentors. As a young, Filipina-American future WHNP, it meant the world to meet a diverse set of individuals doing this work from around the country. I look forward to seeking out more ways to learn from others and build my knowledge to advocate for access to sexual and reproductive health, combat racial and ethnic health disparities in the Philadelphia community, and seek out ways to educate and empower my future patients. This conference was an incredible start and truly invigorated my inspiration to pursue this specialty!

Addressing Period Poverty – Students in the Community

Through her advocacy work, Penn Nursing student Caroline Dillon secured a donation of 50,000 sanitary napkins from Always, Inc. Ms. Dillon partnered with the Center to identify an organization to direct this donation. The Philadelphia based [No More Secrets, MBS](#) was identified. Founder Lynette Medley and COO Nya McGlone along with several volunteers were on hand on October 12, 2022, to receive this donation. This donation will support the work of No More Secrets by ensuring that women and girls have access to feminine hygiene products.



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

Art and the Sexual Violence Healing Journey

In Fall 2022, the Center hosted an event to focus on sexual assault on campus, with an emphasis on the the “red zone”, which refers to the period between mid-August and November when new students are most vulnerable to sexual assaults. Katherine Cambareri, MPH and Laura Sinko, PhD are public health practitioners and artists who use their talents to depict the sexual violence healing journey. These artists were joined by Dr. Indira M Henard, MSW, Executive Director of the DC Rape Crisis Center. View the recording [here](#).

Freedom of Choice - A Dialogue About Abortion

Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization (2022) is a landmark decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in which the court held that the Constitution of the United States does not confer a right to abortion. The court’s decision overruled both Roe v. Wade (1973) and Planned Parenthood v. Casey (1992), giving individual states the full power to regulate any aspect of abortion not protected by federal law. In support of individuals and families having access to quality health care and options, the Center held a conversation with Dayle Steinberg, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood Southeastern Pennsylvania (PPSP) and Elicia Gonzales, a queer Latinx who is the Executive Director for the Abortion Liberation Fund of PA. Here is the [link](#) to the presentation. Please visit these organizations websites for more information and ways to support their work.

Frida Kahlo: Where Art History & Nursing Methods Collide

In collaboration with the Penn Center for Latin American and Latinx Studies, Penn History of Art, the Philadelphia Commission for Women, the Penn in Latin America and the Caribbean (PLAC), and the Penn Women’s Center, the Center for Global Women’s Health invited Dr. Siobhan M. Conaty to share how art and creating an artist’s eye can be beneficial in nursing methodology. Dr. Conaty specifically uses the work of Frida Kahlo to demonstrate how Kahlo’s self-portraits can assist nurses with understanding trauma and disability. Here is the [link](#) to the presentation by Dr. Siobhan Conaty, PhD.

Transgender 101 for Health Care Students

Through a generous gift from Maura and Patrina Topper, the Center hosted a “Transgender 101 for Health Care Students” training opportunity for students across the University. Conducted by the [Transgender Training Institute \(TTI\)](#), a group of transgender and non-binary educators, Dre Ceja (they/them), a Chicano, queer, and transgender speaker, facilitator, and trainer, spoke to our students on topics such as the differences between sex assigned at birth, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, and explored examples of how anti-transgender prejudice intersects with other forms of oppression. They also modeled how to navigate these conversations using up-to-date and affirming language and reviewed three essential guidelines for supporting transgender and non-binary people in all spaces. One student who attended shared, “The trans 101 webinar was great for clinicians who wanted to expand their inclusive vocabulary and for students building their patient care skills. I particularly liked the section around how to apologize gracefully when you make a mistake or mis gender a person. It’s helpful to get permission from experts to be human and encouraged to manage the mistake in a way that is sincere.” The Center will be hosting “Transgender 101 for Faculty and Staff” in Spring 2023.

OTHER NEWS



Dr. Abigail Howe Heyman PhD, CNM, RN named Nurse Midwifery Track Director

In Summer 2022, Dr. Abigail (Abby) Howe Heyman was appointed as the new [Nurse Midwifery](#) Track Director at Penn Nursing. Abby has been working with pregnant and birthing people and their families for over twenty years and as a nursing educator for over a decade. She is energized by working with students as they acquire the knowledge and skills to care for families throughout the lifespan, particularly during the life-changing childbearing period. In her research, Abby has sought to explore barriers to implementing evidence-based practice in the perinatal setting. Abby is currently practicing as a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner for the Philadelphia Sexual Assault Response Center (PSARC). The Center for Global Women’s Health is looking forward to working closely with Abby in the pursuit of our mission.

WHAT WE ARE READING?



Golden, B., Asiodu, I.V., Franck, L.S. et al. Emerging approaches to redressing multi-level racism and reproductive health disparities. NPJ Digital Medicine. 5, 169 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41746-022-00718-2>

Abstract: This commentary examines the impact of multi-level racism on reproductive health disparities in the United States. Multi-level racism and its impact on reproductive health over the lifespan are described on a societal, community, and individual level. To advance, we recommend using the Remove, Repair, Restructure, Remediate (R4P) approach combined with the Retrofit, Reform, and Reimagine (3R) model to address multiple forms of racism. Emergent policies and actions are identified to proceed towards health equity.

The Hologic Global Women's Health Index Pathways to a Healthy Future for Women. (2022). 2021 Global Report. According to the [2021 Global Health Index](#), women's health got worse in 2021. Click the link to review the full report.

GRANT NOTICE

The Lesbian Health Fund (LHF), a program of GLMA, is the only US research fund dedicated solely to the unique health needs of LGBTQ+ women and girls. The 2023 grant cycle is open! LHF welcomes all proposals that identify or address health disparities among LGBTQ+ women and girls (e.g., sexual and/or gender minority women or girls, gender diverse people assigned female at birth). Further priority areas for 2023 as well as details about the grant application [can be found here](#)

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If you would like to support the work of the Center, please consider making a gift to the Center's Fund by clicking [here](#).

To make a recurring gift on your credit card, call the School of Nursing at 215-898-4841.