Growing Our Own
Developing Nursing Leaders

In this issue
8. Benefits of Cross-Training
9. Growth Through Education
14. Nurse of the Year
Retaining and Developing Excellent Nurses

The global nursing shortage can significantly impact our hospitals and facilities, as nurses deliver the highest percentage of patient care with the greatest influence on patient safety and outcomes. Baptist Health’s solution to this long-term concern is to retain and develop the excellent nurses within our system. This “grow our own” strategy focuses on preparing nurses and strengthening leadership competencies that contribute to superior performance.

Baptist Health has implemented retention and development strategies to create a nursing practice environment that is engaging and rewarding. These strategies also enable our organization to better identify and develop our next generation of leaders. You will read about some of these initiatives in this issue of Nursing Excellence and learn how they contribute to the development of nurses who are leading change and advancing health. At Baptist Health, nursing leadership is evident at every level across all settings.

Introducing New Leaders

A warm welcome to three new nurse executives who are contributing to Nursing Excellence: Sandra McLean, MSHA, MSN, RN, chief nursing officer of West Kendall Baptist Hospital; Paul Mungo, MSN, MSM/HS, RN, NE-BC, chief nursing officer of South Miami Hospital; and Kimberly Ronselli, MSN, RN, chief nursing officer of Baptist Outpatient Services. These nurse leaders are a testament to Baptist Health’s “grow our own” strategy.

Highlighting Nurses Week

Photos of our National Nurses Week events are featured on the cover and pages 12 and 13 of this issue. Baptist Health nurses celebrated this special week with unit-based activities, award ceremonies, research showcases, luncheons and the 25th annual Robert B. Cole Distinguished Nursing Lecture Series.

More than 1,000 Baptist Health nurses attended the beloved lecture series on May 9 and 10. Motivational humorist Bobbie Staten, RN, delivered the keynote lecture, entitled Batteries Not Included. Richard Cole, son of the late Robert B. Cole, continued his father’s legacy by presenting a generous donation in support of the Center for Excellence in Nursing. And the inaugural, systemwide Richard Cole Nurse of the Year was announced. You can read more about the winner, Joanne Aberilla, MSN, RN, CCRN, on page 14.

On the cover: Top row, L to R: Casandra Cieslak, RN, was honored to receive the DAISY Award from members of the South Miami Hospital nursing team; West Kendall Baptist Hospital nurses Ernstlyne Cadet, RN, (left) and Julie Fanfan, RN, perform the double-check process for insulin administration; Ann Marie D’Elia, BSN, RN, CEN, (center) was named Baptist Hospital’s Nurse of the Year. Second row, L to R: During her “morning rounds,” Christine Helms, BSN, RN, CEN, delivered coffee and snacks to the Mariners Hospital staff; With a nod to the Wizard of Oz, “There’s No Place Like Homestead” was the theme of Nurses Week at Homestead Hospital; Tamiami Urgent Care nurses work together to “inspire, innovate and influence.” Bottom row, L to R: Fishermen’s Community Hospital nurses gathered to board the bus that would take them to the Robert B. Cole Distinguished Nursing Lecture Series; Kistina Rua, BSN, RN, ONN-CG (second from right), was named Miami Cancer Institute’s first DAISY award winner; L to R, Jenny Acle, RN, and Maria Triana, RN, donned traditional nurses’ caps in honor of Doctors Hospital’s Nursing Nostalgia theme.

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For more than a decade, experts have predicted a national nursing shortage by 2020. We have witnessed a flurry of action to remediate the predicted shortage, but no plan has been introduced that fits the country as a whole. In Florida, for-profit (think expensive) nursing programs were introduced in response to this crisis. Unfortunately, few of these students graduated or were successful on the NCLEX exam. Some of these programs made local news and have since closed.

Is the predicted nursing shortage real? The Florida Center for Nursing reports that 47 percent of Florida nurses are over age 50. The majority of these nurses — 64 percent — work in acute care hospitals in direct patient care and will leave the bedside for other nursing positions that rely on their years of knowledge at the bedside. In fact, the predicted nursing shortage is expected to have its primary impact in acute care settings and home health. Nationally, it is estimated that 1.1 million new nurses will be needed by 2022; the states of California, Texas and Florida are predicted to have the most vacancies.

Years ago, Baptist Health developed strategies to provide a pipeline of new nurses as well as supportive methods for the continual development of nurses as they transition into new specialties. We work closely with area colleges and universities to make certain that, together, we have nurses ready for “tomorrow.” We offer nationally accredited residency programs for new graduate nurses as well as seasoned nurses changing specialties. The Clinical Competency Advancement Program was developed to support the retention of our best direct care nurses in the acute care setting. There are many other programs in place to help nurses learn new skills and grow into new roles.

How is Baptist Health doing? It appears our pipelines and strategies are effective. The average age of our direct care nurses currently is 40.1 years. Our year-to-date annualized turnover for direct care nurses is 8.88 percent, compared to more than 18 percent turnover for Florida direct care nurses in 2017. Baptist Health is well positioned to meet the nursing shortage that looms right around the corner for our great nation.

Empowering Others to Succeed

Carrie Ponce, MSN, RN, CPN, CNL, pediatric clinical educator at Baptist Children’s Hospital, is considered an expert by patients and colleagues. She is highly regarded for the way she empowers staff with the clinical knowledge and technical skills they need to provide high-quality patient care.

Ms. Ponce joined Baptist Health in 2001 as a staff nurse at Homestead Hospital after earning a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. In 2003, she transitioned to pediatric nursing at Baptist Children’s Hospital. Her caring nature, attention to detail and passion for evidence-based care earned her a promotion to patient outcome facilitator — a position she held from 2004 to 2010 — and a subsequent promotion to advanced patient outcome facilitator. As Ms. Ponce moved up the career ladder, she also advanced her education by earning a Master of Science in Nursing degree with the help of Baptist Health’s tuition reimbursement program. “I have worked with leaders who have realized my potential, listened to my goals and guided my growth as an emerging leader,” Ms. Ponce said.

Ms. Ponce has led various initiatives, such as the Family-Centered Care Committee, Pain Committee and the Pediatric Department Collaborative. In addition to being certified as a pediatric nurse and clinical nurse leader, she also is a pediatric chemotherapy provider through the Association of Pediatric/Hematology Nurses.
Evidence shows that developing people within an organization improves retention, engagement and the outlook for the future. To stay ahead of the nationwide nursing shortage and keep up with the rapid growth and expansion of Baptist Outpatient Services, we have adopted a proactive “grow our own” strategy.

Baptist Outpatient Services continues to expand over three counties — Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach — giving our nurses ample opportunity to cultivate their technical and leadership skills. Nurses seeking to be an Advanced Nurse in the Competency and Clinical Advancement Program can accrue points by working in multiple specialty areas. The value of this broad experience was evident during Hurricane Irma. Nurses from the Ambulatory Surgery Center worked at our Urgent Care Centers and also supported Baptist Health’s hospital Emergency Centers.

At Baptist Outpatient Services, a team member’s potential leadership ability and personal interest in growth and development are assessed upon hire. When a nurse has been identified as a potential leader, a focused development strategy and formal training begins. Our six-month Emerging Leader program is designed to train and secure our future leaders through workshops, project practicums and exposure to multidisciplinary processes within Baptist Health. Early identification of future leadership candidates and their participation in the program have proven successful, as many team members have been promoted to leadership roles.

With multiple specialties throughout Baptist Outpatient Services, nurses can expand their skill sets by transitioning into new roles and cross-training in areas that complement their current roles. Currently, several of our urgent care nurses have been cross-trained to work in pre-op for the Surgery and Endoscopy Centers. With the anticipated openings of our multispecialty Miami Beach Ambulatory Center and free-standing Country Walk Emergency Center, “growing our own” nurses gives Baptist Outpatient Services a strong foundation to provide excellent care to the communities we serve.

**Preparing a Ready, Agile Leader**

Jeri Brown, RN, director of Baptist Endoscopy Center Coral Springs and Baptist Health Surgery Center, says Baptist Outpatient Services leaders have supported and mentored her during her rise to a multi-facility, director-level position. “I have been encouraged to cross-train, take stretch assignments and participate in the Emerging Leaders program,” Ms. Brown said. “Patricia Rosello, MSN, RN, has an open-door policy and excellent follow-through. She has been a great support to me.”

Ms. Brown came to Baptist Outpatient Services with leadership and banking experience. When she launched her second career as a bedside nurse at Doral Urgent Care in 2009, her manager quickly recognized her talent and leadership skills. Since Baptist Outpatient Services supports internal advancement, Ms. Brown was promoted to supervisor at Tamiami Trail Urgent Care. She later gained valuable leadership experience as supervisor at both the Pembroke Pines and Weston Urgent Care centers, which prepared her for her next role as manager of Davie Medical Plaza.

Cross-training in the diverse specialties within Baptist Outpatient Services is a key component of the organization’s talent management process. To expand her clinical acumen, Ms. Brown received training in the ambulatory surgery specialty prior to her promotion to director of the endoscopy and surgery centers. “Training in new product lines makes our team members well rounded and well prepared for new challenges,” Ms. Brown added.
As nursing becomes an increasingly complex profession, we must remain dedicated to nurturing and supporting the professional development of nurses. Luckily, we work for an organization that has a rich history of providing leadership development programs that enhance growth. My professional advancement has been fostered by many opportunities and mentors in our health system. I am a prime example of Baptist Health’s “grow our own” strategy.

I began my career as a per diem night shift nurse in the Emergency Department at South Miami Hospital. I was promoted to an assistant nurse manager and later advanced to director and assistant vice president before being named vice president and chief nursing officer at Doctors Hospital.

My experiences have enhanced my ability to assess potential leaders, boost their confidence and provide them with the resources necessary to support their professional development. I believe a commitment to nurture the professional growth of nurses is key to effective succession planning.

The competencies required of our nurse leaders and organization must continue to evolve in order for both to thrive. Today, creative thinking and agile, adaptive leadership are important traits of nurse leaders. As a leader, I also encourage a collaborative culture. Nurses who recognize the importance of interdisciplinary relationships will excel in today’s healthcare landscape.

Collaboration across all levels enables our healthcare team to integrate knowledge throughout the system and solve unique challenges — all while delivering efficient, high-quality, compassionate patient care across the continuum.

Making the Right Career Move

Crystal Vinas, MSN, RN, CMSRN, patient care supervisor, did not intend to become a nurse when she started working at Doctors Hospital in 2000 as an Intensive Care Unit/Progressive Care Unit per diem unit clerk. She was taking classes to become a financial advisor. However, heart-to-heart conversations with her nurse leaders led to a change of heart and a passion for taking care of patients. In 2009, Ms. Vinas began her nursing education as a member of the Scholars Program, and two years later she launched her nursing career as a Versant resident on 2 South. It was the beginning of a bright career.

Firmly believing that education opens the doors to new opportunities, Ms. Vinas has earned a Master of Science in Nursing degree as well as a postgraduate certificate as a nurse practitioner. She also has achieved advanced nurse and preceptor status in Baptist Health’s nurse advancement program. She gained valuable experience and perspective as a travel nurse and worked as a relief charge before being promoted to patient care supervisor.

“This leadership position has helped me grow professionally and personally,” Ms. Vinas said. “I look forward to continued growth and the opportunity to make a far-reaching impact on patients and families.”
The rural location of Fishermen’s Community Hospital in the Middle Keys creates unique nursing recruitment and retention challenges. With a population of around 8,000, the workforce in Marathon is limited. Hurricane Irma also compounded matters. Many nurses incurred major damage to their homes, and they are still recovering. Housing options are scarce, housing costs are high and job opportunities for significant others are limited. We have established new staffing models to overcome these obstacles and create a rewarding and engaging environment for our nursing teams in the Keys.

Since Mariners Hospital faces some of the same challenges as Fishermen’s Community Hospital, pooling our resources is a smart strategy. We now hire nurses to work at both hospitals. These nurses have a designated home base but attend orientation and training that prepares them to care for patients at both facilities. We also have cross-trained existing staff at Mariners Hospital, such as house supervisors, to work at Fishermen’s Community Hospital. While they are on duty in Marathon, direct care nurses at Mariners have the opportunity to gain knowledge and experience as relief supervisors.

This strategy not only ensures that our patients in the Keys receive high-quality, evidence-based care, it also provides our nurses with distinctive hands-on experience and exposure to a multitude of activities across the care continuum. It is difficult to gain this level of involvement in a large hospital that consists of highly specialized nursing units. These career development opportunities, along with flexible working conditions, personal and professional support, recognition programs and team camaraderie, promote job satisfaction among nurses in a rural healthcare setting.

Good Things Are Happening

Cherie Dunford, RN, CMSRN, was born at Fishermen’s Community Hospital and now is a valuable member of the hospital’s nursing team. She began her nursing career as a medical-surgical nurse, gained valuable experience in the Intensive Care Unit and has cared for patients in the Emergency Center for the past three years.

When Fishermen’s Community Hospital joined Baptist Health last summer, Ms. Dunford says she knew “only good things could happen.” But then Hurricane Irma struck the Florida Keys and caused significant damage to both the hospital and her home. When the field hospital was established, she came to work every day with a smile and ready to care for her community. Her experience and leadership skills proved invaluable as she mentored medical-surgical nurses to function in the field hospital Emergency Center. When the nursing team introduced shared governance in January, Ms. Dunford was elected co-chair for the newly established Unit Practice Council, which plays a vital role in the hospital’s Pathway to Excellence journey. She also was invited to join the combined Fishermen’s Community Hospital and Mariners Hospital Peer Review Council to review nursing care for referred cases.

Ms. Dunford currently is earning her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree and aspires to become an acute care nurse practitioner — hopefully at the new Fishermen’s Community Hospital. “My husband and I recently joined the Young Philanthropists of Baptist Health to help raise funds for the new hospital building,” Ms. Dunford said. “I am extremely excited for the future.”
It is no secret that the United States is facing a nursing shortage. The world population is living longer than ever, thanks to advances in medicine, nutrition and safety. But while global aging is a giant leap forward for mankind, longevity also presents increased healthcare challenges. In response, Baptist Health continues to grow and expand its services. We’ve opened new centers of excellence, such as Miami Cancer Institute, acquired new hospitals, including Bethesda Health System and Fishermen’s Community Hospital, and increased staffing to meet the needs of our community. We also focus on retention and “growing our own” workforce to ensure that we continue to meet today’s healthcare delivery challenges.

Baptist Health provides many opportunities for employees to learn and grow and feel satisfied and engaged. The innovative Scholars Program addresses the ongoing shortage of registered nurses by increasing the number of new nurses entering the workforce and equipping experienced nurses with new skills. Since its inception in 2001, 3,651 scholarships totaling $43 million have been awarded. The program provides opportunities at all levels of nursing education, including ASN, BSN, MSN, ACNP and DNP.

Clinical Learning offers many programs to help employees develop skills throughout their career. Nurses can maintain and enhance their competencies and learn about advancements in patient care. There are developmental programs for clinical partners, monitor technicians and unit clerks. Staff members can earn required hours necessary for license renewals. Human Resources also provides career coaching and skill training for employees as well as development courses and onboarding for new leaders.

These opportunities positively affect the Baptist Health culture. It is expected that our team of professionals will value and participate in a lifelong learning process to be the best they can be. Education, development and mentorship ensure that our employees are prepared to deliver high-quality, compassionate care to patients and families in an ever-changing healthcare environment.

Living Her Dream

Flor Amaya, BSN, RN, CMSRN, keeps her humble beginnings in mind as she advances in the career of her dreams. Born in El Salvador, Ms. Amaya came to Homestead at age 6 and spent her first year working in the area’s agricultural fields with her family. At a very young age, she knew she wanted to work in healthcare to help others.

Ms. Amaya started her journey with Homestead Hospital in 1998 as a certified nursing assistant and unit secretary. During the two years she spent in this role, she attended nursing school to become a registered nurse. After graduation, she gained valuable experience in medical-surgical telemetry and pediatrics and later as a staff nurse and relief charge on MS4.

Ms. Amaya continued to seek advanced education to progress in her career. She also wanted to set a good example and ensure a bright future for her two young boys, she says. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree in 2010 and one year later was promoted to medical-surgical patient care supervisor. “My managers have always believed in my abilities and potential,” she said. “And when an opportunity opened up, I worked hard to prove myself.”

Ms. Amaya will earn her nurse practitioner degree in May 2019, and she has far-reaching aspirations for the future. “My long-term goal is to open a neighborhood clinic in Homestead, so I can give back to my community,” she said.
The “grow our own” strategy at Mariners Hospital addresses the shortage of healthcare workers in our rural area. Our approach recognizes and builds on the idea that health professionals are more likely to serve in the community in which they were raised. Many of the novice nurses who apply at Mariners Hospital grew up in the Keys, so they are well aware of the limitations as well as the benefits of working and living here. They come to us with varying degrees of nursing education. All will attend the nurse residency program and those who do not have a Bachelor of Science in Nursing will agree to earn the degree within five years. Ours is a long-term strategy that moves nurses into the development pipeline and enables our team to more effectively address our future healthcare workforce needs.

To maintain a healthy rural community, our nurses must be well educated and well trained and have had experiences that prepare them for rural practice. In other words, they must be cross-trained. Cross-training enables our team to cover emergency call-outs, vacation time and nurse vacancies. The practice also decreases the amount of time a nurse is placed on call due to low patient census. And when many nurses left during the mandatory evacuation of the Keys during Hurricane Irma, cross-trained nurses responded to help the hospital team open an Emergency Center to serve our community.

We cross-train at all levels of nursing. Certified nursing assistants are trained as unit clerks and telemetry technicians. Multispecialty care nurses are trained to care for patients in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and the Emergency Center. ICU nurses are cross-trained to work in the Emergency Center and the Post-anesthesia Care Unit (PACU), while PACU nurses learn skills necessary to function in the Emergency Center. In addition, nurses from many departments of the hospital are trained to care for patients in our Hyperbaric department and are on call to provide 24/7 care to meet the needs of the diving community in the Keys.

Investing in cross-training facilitates our recruitment and retention efforts, reduces workforce shortages and increases nursing engagement.

Kathleen Cottrell, BSN, RN, is the epitome of a home-grown nurse. As a young child in 1992, she stayed at Mariners Hospital during Hurricane Andrew as her mother, Chief Nursing Officer Cheryl Cottrell, MBA, BSN, NE-BC, assisted with the safe transfer of patients prior to the storm and the hospital reopening following the storm. Ms. Cottrell spent many hours of her childhood at the hospital, even appearing as a model in many of the hospital’s brochures.

In 2013, a grown-up Ms. Cottrell began her healthcare career as a clinical partner, cross-training as a telemetry technician and unit clerk. She later gained “very valuable, beneficial and professional experience” as a member of the Scholars Nurse Partner program at Homestead Hospital.

Prior to graduating with her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree in May 2017, Ms. Cottrell assisted with Cerner implementation at Mariners Hospital. Post-graduation, she was tapped for the nurse residency program. Her favorite part of the program was looping, she says. She trained at Baptist Hospital, precepting with a respiratory therapist and working with ventilated patients and those with tracheostomies. At Mariners Hospital, she spent time accessing ports with oncology nurses, monitoring stress tests in Imaging and performing various procedures in the Emergency Center. “These looping experiences prepared me for roles in other departments, developed increased collaboration and instilled confidence in my skills,” Ms. Cottrell said.

Today, Ms. Cottrell is a member of the hospital’s Unit Practice Council, attends Cerner inpatient meetings and Medication Administration Council meetings and contributes to the hospital’s HUSH strategy. She will earn certification as a medical-surgical nurse in July 2019.
Oncology nurses play a critical role in the delivery of high-quality, comprehensive, compassionate, evidence-based cancer care to a high-risk and complex patient population. Highly functioning oncology nurses must possess up-to-date, cancer-specific knowledge and specialized clinical expertise. Without proper education and training, nurse performance, satisfaction and retention, as well as patient care and outcomes, will suffer.

In 2016, prior to the opening of Miami Cancer Institute, the nursing education team conducted an extensive search for local programs that would prepare our nurses to care for severely ill cancer patients. No local programs were available, so the team developed an in-house curriculum to properly train nurses and advanced practice providers new to oncology. After successfully implementing an oncology onboarding program, the nursing team conducted a nursing needs assessment and education gap analysis to address ongoing educational requirements. Armed with the results, the Institute’s Nursing Education and Standard Practice department developed the Oncology Academic Educational Series, an evidence-based program that meets the educational needs of our nursing staff and standards of the Oncology Nursing Society and The Joint Commission.

The series comprises 10 formal oncology nursing educational programs. Topics include oncology fundamentals, radiation oncology, certification review, psychosocial dimensions of cancer care, oncology pharmacology and late-breaking lectures in cancer care. Since its launch in January 2018, more than 158 nurses, advanced practice providers, radiation therapists and other clinicians have attended the academic series. The average evaluation rating is 4.6 on a 5-point rating scale.

Miami Cancer Institute is committed to providing our nursing staff with up-to-date, evidence-based, quality training and education that enables them to function as leaders and professionals in the care of cancer patients.

**Blazing the Trail in Cancer Genetics Nursing**

Rae Wruble, RN, MBA, the clinical genetics nurse in the Division of Clinical Genetics at Miami Cancer Institute, is a pioneer in the field of hereditary cancer genetics education and testing. Throughout her 50-year nursing career, 27 of those with Baptist Health, she has conquered uncharted territory in nursing to improve the lives of others.

Ms. Wruble gained unique cancer care experience working in radiation therapy, leading efforts to expand Baptist Hospital’s outpatient cancer services and serving on Baptist Health’s Cancer Committee. She also had a family history of cancer. It was 2000, Ms. Wruble says, when she saw the future of medicine heading in the direction of genetics. She creatively pursued the training and education she needed to reinvent herself and start her career in cancer genetics.

In 2001, Ms. Wruble developed Baptist Health’s Genetic Risk Education Service and began providing genetics education and test facilitation services. She was Baptist Health’s sole practitioner in this field from 2001 to 2015. She served more than 3,000 patients and families at Baptist Hospital and Baptist Health Breast Center, following its opening in 2008. Today, as part of Miami Cancer Institute’s “Gene Team,” she works alongside highly trained genetics practitioners.

Ms. Wruble’s other notable career highlights include serving on Baptist Health Breast Center’s accreditation committee, securing over $300,000 in grant funding for underserved individuals, receiving commendations from the American Nurses Association for her pursuit of excellence and leading the efforts for certification in the nursing specialty of cancer genetics.

“The supportive environment at Baptist Health has enabled me to help advance this important field,” said Ms. Wruble. “My goal is to elevate the Division of Clinical Genetics at Miami Cancer Institute to be a renowned leader in cancer genetic risk assessment and genetic counseling services.”
In line with key points from the Institute of Medicine’s 2010 Future of Nursing report, the mission of Baptist Health’s Nursing Leadership Institute is to prepare and empower our nurses to lead change in healthcare. The Institute, launched in 2014, also supports South Miami Hospital’s “grow our own” strategy. The dynamic learning environment of the 12-month educational program fosters the development of nursing leadership competencies that influence an enthusiastic work environment, promote innovation, maximize productivity, increase job satisfaction and foster retention.

Based on Ida J. Orlando’s nursing theory, the Institute’s curriculum prepares nursing leaders by focusing on leadership in nursing as opposed to management in nursing. Interns work with mentors, create a development plan, manage a leadership project and participate in rounding, meetings and leadership competency exercises. In April, I was one of three chief nursing officers who met with this year’s interns to discuss leadership traits and strategies. In my presentation about “leading organization efforts,” I highlighted the importance of collaborative relationships, systemwide focus and succession planning.

Four South Miami Hospital nurses have completed the Nursing Leadership Institute program and two nurses are members of the current cohort. These nurses were nominated by their manager and went through a rigorous leadership behavioral interviewing process conducted by entity nursing leadership, the Institute coordinator, Human Resources and the Director of Clinical Learning.

Three of our four Institute graduates have been promoted to leadership roles. These nurses possess strong ethics, values, character and a commitment to the common good. They not only effectively motivate individuals, they motivate the entire organization by meaningful conversations and public displays of enthusiasm and optimism.

The Nursing Leadership Institute effectively helps South Miami Hospital develop collaborative nursing leaders at every level of practice in order to deliver high-quality patient care. The program develops nurses who possess inspirational motivation skills and can communicate clearly a vision of the future — a future that is exciting and meaningful and inspires strong commitment by others.

Two months after graduating from the Nursing Leadership Institute in January 2017, Ashley Hurtado, MSN, RN, CCRN, a clinical nurse in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), was promoted to NICU patient care supervisor.

Ms. Hurtado began her career with Baptist Health in 2008, working in Construction Management and Finance. She took a hiatus to complete her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree and returned to South Miami Hospital as a NICU staff nurse. Her natural leadership skills did not go unnoticed. Ms. Hurtado says she was honored to be chosen as a Nursing Leadership Institute intern, especially after going through the meticulous selection process.

Through workshops, interactive lectures, mentorship, networking and a capstone project, the yearlong program enabled Ms. Hurtado to identify her strengths and weaknesses and combine her corporate experience and clinical skills to establish a strong leadership foundation. She gained valuable insight and knowledge through her interactions with Baptist Health’s chief nursing officers and attendance at the systemwide Patient Care Leadership Council meetings.

“Those interactions allowed me to see firsthand how the chief nursing officers advocate for nurses and patients,” Ms. Hurtado said. “As a staff nurse, I only saw a small picture of the larger process. The Institute enabled me to view the system as a whole, and it was enlightening.”
Growth and changes in the healthcare industry are creating new positions. An improved economic outlook and aging baby boomer workforce are accelerating the rate of retirement. A more lucrative job milieu is prompting employees to explore new job opportunities. Collectively, these factors swell the vacancies in nursing clinical and leadership positions.

At a recent conference, I found myself frequently repeating the following to exhibitors offering opportunities for workforce solutions: “My organization embarked on a ‘grow our own’ strategy some years ago to ensure a nursing workforce pipeline. This has been a very effective strategy that has eliminated the need for contract labor.” One curious exhibitor probed the wholeness of the strategy, to which I proudly explained that the programs have opportunities for the full gamut, including nursing students, new nurse graduates, experienced nurses transitioning to new specialties, expert nurses advancing to leadership roles and nursing leaders ascending to executive leadership. With exasperation, he remarked, “There is no place like that place, so that place must be the place.” I responded, “Absolutely, it is the best place to be your best.”

Massive workforce changes present challenges for every organization. The Society for Human Resource Management estimates the cost of replacing professional employees to be 1.5 times their salary. We must continually find methods to attract talent, boost the morale of high performers and retain them. Developing transformational nurse leaders who can create an environment that inspires is a strategic imperative of our “grow our own” strategy. The cost benefits are apparent. More essential, however, is the preservation of knowledge of our corporate culture, products and services, client relationships and processes and procedures.

The fact that 28 of 32, or about 88 percent, of West Kendall Baptist Hospital’s nursing leaders have been internally promoted is staggering evidence that a “grow our own” strategy boosts morale and improves retention. Fundamental to this success is the ability of leaders to raise up the next generation of leaders through coaching and mentoring. A legacy is created, and a leader’s lasting value is demonstrated by succession.

**Drive, Determination and Passion Fuel Her Journey**

Ann Mullings, DNP, RN, began her healthcare career in 1997 as a medical assistant and X-ray technician. Recently, she was promoted to assistant vice president of Nursing at West Kendall Baptist Hospital. Her success can be attributed to her drive, determination and passion. Supportive programs and mentors at Baptist Health also have played a role in the development of this homegrown nurse leader.

Recognizing the value of lifelong learning, Dr. Mullings earned her associate’s, bachelor’s and master’s in nursing degrees through the Baptist Health Scholars Program. She also earned a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree with a specialization in Healthcare Systems Leadership.

Prior to joining West Kendall Baptist Hospital, Dr. Mullings served as a bedside nurse and unit supervisor in Homestead Hospital’s maternity unit. When West Kendall opened, she accepted the role of maternity unit nurse manager, spearheading efforts to earn the Baby-Friendly designation. She was promoted to director of nursing in 2015. In this role, Dr. Mullings fostered a nursing environment of professionalism, superior clinical outcomes and service excellence, says Sandra McLean, MSHA, MSN, RN, chief nursing officer. Dr. Mullings serves on numerous hospital and systemwide committees. She has earned several awards for her performance, including Leader of the Year, Leader Volunteer of the Year and the Black Achievers Award.

“It has been a gratifying career,” said Dr. Mullings. “My Baptist Health leaders and mentors have inspired me to be the best I can be — and my journey continues.”

West Kendall Baptist Hospital

**Message From Chief Nursing Officer Sandra McLean, MSHA, MSN, RN**

Ann Mullings, DNP, RN, began her healthcare career in 1997 as a medical assistant and X-ray technician. Recently, she was promoted to assistant vice president of Nursing at West Kendall Baptist Hospital. Her success can be attributed to her drive, determination and passion. Supportive programs and mentors at Baptist Health also have played a role in the development of this homegrown nurse leader.

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Prior to joining West Kendall Baptist Hospital, Dr. Mullings served as a bedside nurse and unit supervisor in Homestead Hospital’s maternity unit. When West Kendall opened, she accepted the role of maternity unit nurse manager, spearheading efforts to earn the Baby-Friendly designation. She was promoted to director of nursing in 2015. In this role, Dr. Mullings fostered a nursing environment of professionalism, superior clinical outcomes and service excellence, says Sandra McLean, MSHA, MSN, RN, chief nursing officer. Dr. Mullings serves on numerous hospital and systemwide committees. She has earned several awards for her performance, including Leader of the Year, Leader Volunteer of the Year and the Black Achievers Award.

“It has been a gratifying career,” said Dr. Mullings. “My Baptist Health leaders and mentors have inspired me to be the best I can be — and my journey continues.”
Nursing Notes
Highlights from Nurses Week

Doctors Hospital leaders and 2 South nurses had some fun with the “Nursing Nostalgia in the ‘90s” theme during Nurses Week.

Nurses Week at Homestead Hospital focused on adventure, friendship and the love of family and home, just like the classic film, The Wizard of Oz, which inspired the Nurses Week theme.

Miami Cancer Institute’s Nurses of the Year, pictured with nurse executives, were recognized during Honors Hour.

The Nursing Administration – Quality & Performance Improvement team from Baptist Outpatient Services gathered to commemorate their Nurses Week celebration.
The Mariners Hospital nursing team arrived by bus at the Robert B. Cole Distinguished Nursing Lecture, held at Trump National Doral Resort.

The NICU team’s Antimicrobial Stewardship Project won first place at Baptist Hospital’s Best Practice Fair.

South Miami Hospital Magnet Nurses of the Year celebrated their accomplishments during Honors Hour.

Marathon Fire Rescue delivered lunch to the nurses at Fishermen’s Community Hospital during Nurses Week to thank them for their commitment to the community.

Nurses from West Kendall Baptist Hospital’s Beautiful Beginnings department enjoyed breakfast and camaraderie, delivered by the hospital’s nursing leaders on the first day of Nurses Week.

The Mariners Hospital nursing team arrived by bus at the Robert B. Cole Distinguished Nursing Lecture, held at Trump National Doral Resort.
Inaugural Richard Cole Nurse of the Year Award Announced

Joanne Aberilla, MSN, RN, CCRN, clinical nurse educator in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at West Kendall Baptist Hospital, was named Baptist Health's Nurse of the Year at the Robert B. Cole Distinguished Nursing Lecture Silver Jubilee, which was attended by more than 1,000 Baptist Health nurses on May 9 and 10. Entitled the Richard Cole Nurse of the Year Award to honor Robert B. Cole’s son, the distinction will be presented each year at the annual Nurses Week event.

The award was launched by the Baptist Health Nurse Engagement Council, which is composed of nurses from each entity and spearheaded by Diane Amado-Tate, MS-HSA, MSN, RN, NE-BC, Baptist Health chief nurse experience officer and Doctors Hospital chief nursing officer. After the Council established and disseminated the award criteria, each entity submitted a nomination for the Richard Cole Nurse of the Year. A Council subcommittee reviewed the 11 esteemed finalists and named Ms. Aberilla the inaugural winner.

“I am very humbled, and I thank God for the legacy of the Cole family,” Ms. Aberilla said. “I value the responsibility that comes with this recognition. ‘To whom much is given, much will be required.’ And God has given me much through Baptist Health.”

Ms. Aberilla has more than 27 years of experience in intensive care nursing and 12 years of experience as a critical care nurse educator. In her current role, she collaborates with the ICU interprofessional team to achieve unit goals and improve patient outcomes. She also serves as a mentor to ICU nurses who are seeking certification as a critical care nurse. She consistently is voted the hospital’s Clinical Nurse Educator of the Year.

Ms. Aberilla has been involved in numerous research studies that promote patient safety and quality outcomes and has presented her findings at many nursing symposiums. She spearheaded the hospital’s clinical alarms initiative and was tapped to direct the systemwide rollout. She is collaboratively leading the American Heart Association’s Resuscitation Quality Improvement Program at West Kendall Baptist Hospital. Ms. Aberilla also is a member or leader of several hospital and systemwide nursing councils, including the Adult Critical Care Best Practice Committee, CPR Committee, Clinical Alarms and Noise Committee, Pain Council and the Learning Council. She has served as a Versant Residency program faculty member and facilitator for several nurse training initiatives. Ms. Aberilla is a member of the American Association of Critical Care Nurses and the American Heart Association.

“The entire West Kendall Baptist Hospital team is incredibly proud of Joanne, and we are thankful that she is a valued member of our team,” said Sandra McLean, MSHA, MSN, RN, chief nursing officer. “She is a role model for all nurses. She positively influences those around her, leading to enhanced staff engagement and performance and improved patient outcomes and experience.”

Congratulations to the 2018 Richard Cole Nurse of the Year nominees.

Nursing Excellence is guided by the Editorial Advisory Board, which includes Jan Brodnax, RN, MSHSA, South Miami Hospital; Simone Cheong, MSHSA, MSN, RN, CMSRN, West Kendall Baptist Hospital; Cheryl Cottrell, MS-HSA, BSN, RN, NE-BC, Mariners Hospital; Dawn Kressly, MSN, RN, Doctors Hospital; Janelle Mentzel, MSN, RN, CPHQ, Baptist Hospital, Baptist Children’s Hospital; Maria Olmeda, MSN, RN, Baptist Outpatient Services; Melanie O’Neill, MSN, RN, Fishermen’s Community Hospital, Mariners Hospital; Marguerite Powell, MSN, MBA, MSN/HM, ONC, SCRN, Miami Cancer Institute; Jessica Sowers, BSN, RN, CMSRN, Homestead Hospital. Editor: Christine Kotler. Editorial Contributor: Nancy Eagleton. Art Director: Denise Winston.

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