

## Extra-CHLA: LIVES OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL

### Feeling the Salsa Energy

by Vicki Cho Estrada

If **Christel McRae**, RN, BSN, PHN, isn't working at Children's Hospital Los Angeles or taking care of her three teenagers at home, there's a good chance she can be found on the dance floor pursuing her favorite pastime — salsa dancing.

McRae, an Ambulatory Patient Care Services manager, spends several hours a week perfecting her moves as one of 15 salsa dancers with the Los Angeles-based Ritmo Y Salsa Dance Company. The company, which was founded by three-time ESPN Salsa World Champion Abel Peña Jr., has performed before local and nationwide audiences at

dance clubs, competitions, events and more.

Prior to auditioning and joining the company earlier this year, McRae was a member of another local salsa dance team. She has not only taken numerous salsa dance classes but also taught them, including salsa "boot camps" involving 100-plus dance students.

Looking for a new hobby, she signed up for her first salsa dance class 10 years ago and was immediately taken with it.

"Growing up in a diverse community in Los Angeles, salsa dance was always around me and I wanted to learn more," says McRae, who joined Children's Hospital Los Angeles in 2008.

One class led to another, and she started teaching and performing and "it went from there," she says. "What I love about salsa dancing is the freedom of expression. The rules are different and not as structured as other forms of dancing," McRae adds, noting salsa dancing involves the entire body. "With salsa dancing, you feel so energized when you are done."

McRae also loves the lively and upbeat music, bright-colored costumes, social aspects and healthy exercise (she shed 20 pounds since rejoining the dance team), not to mention the value of stress relief it adds at the end of any demanding day.

While she loves to dance and



Christel McRae

perform, McRae says, "nursing is my core — I'm here to contribute to patients and their families. I have a nice balance between work and my hobby."

## Volunteers IN ACTION

### BMT Nurse Rides the Trail

by Elena Epstein

As a child growing up in Michigan, **Lisa Hatter**, RN, BSN, operations manager in the Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, used to beg her older cousins to take her horseback riding. "They lived in an area with big, beautiful open spaces and they introduced me to horses. From the first time I went for a ride, I loved every minute," recalls Hatter.

Her parents eventually signed her up for 100 hours of lessons through a local community center and she has been riding at least three days a week for the past 20 years. "I couldn't sleep the night

before my riding lessons, I was just too excited," says Hatter, who has been working at Children's Hospital Los Angeles for the past 22 years.

That special love of horses has been an enduring passion for Hatter throughout her life — a passion she has recently turned into a meaningful volunteer effort to assist fellow nature enthusiasts.

For the past year, Hatter has been a member of the Mounted Volunteer Patrol which provides public assistance and promotes awareness and responsible trail use for hikers, cyclists and equestrians within the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and the mountains surrounding the San Fernando, La Crescenta, Simi and Conejo Valleys.

Hatter and her horse, Sophie, a black Missouri Fox Trotter, went through an extensive training program and passed a difficult three-hour test to qualify for this volunteer position. All volunteers are certified by the National Park Service, California State Parks and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority and receive extensive training in first aid, CPR, radio use, trail etiquette, park philosophy and interpretive and historical information.

Hatter, who volunteers at least eight hours a month, says she might be called upon to perform a wide variety of duties, such as supplying directions, offering maps and information, giving basic first aid, encouraging compliance with the park's regulations and contacting and coordinating the resources needed to respond to emergency situations.

"We see so many different scenarios," says Hatter, who has conducted 11 patrols so far. "It could be a hiker who has encountered a rattle snake or poison oak or a rider who fell off his horse."

Volunteering for the Mounted Patrol allows Hatter to fulfill two important needs — helping others and enjoying nature on horseback. "There is something so soothing about riding in these parks," she says. "You're surrounded by beautiful mountains, rushing creeks... there's just nothing like it."



Lisa Hatter riding in the Santa Monica Mountains

# You Can Go Home Again

by Candace Pearson



Nicole Ainsworth and her husband, Ken

A famous novelist once wrote, “You can’t go home again,” but that sentiment isn’t true for nurses at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles who leave to try other waters, only to return. They’re not just happy, they’re thrilled to be back.

Take **Nicole Ainsworth, RN**, in the Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit (NICCU). She was willing to commute nearly 350 miles one-way each week from the Bay Area just to stay at Children’s Hospital.

Ainsworth, a 15-year employee, never intended to leave. Then five years ago, her husband, Ken, got his dream job as a paramedic

with the San Francisco Fire Department. They sold their house and moved north, where Ainsworth tried working at two different hospitals, first in Oakland, then San Francisco.

“I felt like I was in a parallel universe,” she says. “I was in a NICCU, but it wasn’t the same.”

Just before the six-month hold on her position at Children’s Hospital was up, she decided to return. Her “crazy” plan: work six days straight and go home for eight. “When you’re miserable,” she says, “you find a way to not be miserable.”

**Allie Currid, RN, BSN**, was enjoying her position in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) at Children’s Hospital and devoting half her time as chair of SuperKids, training fellow employees in information technology.

Then, in 2008, she and her husband, Patrick, decided they needed a stronger support system for their daughters, Saige and Siena, now 7 and 5 years old. The family moved to El Paso, Texas, where Patrick’s mother lived. “I cried like a baby,” Currid says.

She worked as a nurse educator at a university medical center. The experience made her realize how “Children’s Hospital always strives for excellence — something I knew, but came to appreciate even more.”

## What They Missed

Currid especially missed Children’s Hospital’s emphasis on family-centered care. At her new job, families often were excluded from discussions — and even asked to leave the room when a child was in crisis. “Families need to understand what’s happening to their child at all times,” she says.



Karen Baker

**Karen Baker, RN, BSN**, 4West, discovered a similar disconnect after she moved to New Jersey in 2006 so her husband, Dennis, could get his master’s degree in theatre education at New York University.

Baker signed on at a pediatric facility associated with an adult hospital. Procedures, tools and medications were produced in volumes intended for adults and scaled down. “The child just wasn’t the first priority,” she says.

Her husband’s degree completed, Baker started back at Children’s Hospital in September — “a big relief!” She’s excited by the need to be on top of her game. “You’re expected to know more here,” she says.

**Karen Haas, RN, MN, CNS**, took time away from the Heart Institute in 2004 to immerse herself in family life — with three kids under the age of 8. She taught art and photography in her children’s Manhattan Beach school district, but she missed “adult professional conversation,” she says.

One day, **Barbara Gross, RN, MSN**, administrator for the Heart Institute, called her cell phone, asking, “Aren’t you ready to come back?” Haas saved the message — she still has it — and decided she was indeed ready. Since January 2010, she’s been balancing home and work as she heads up a new home monitoring program for patients with hypoplastic left

heart syndrome, in which the left side of the heart is underdeveloped.

After 10 years on the Bone Marrow Transplantation Unit (her first job as a new grad), **Charv Albano, RN**, decided to become a stay-at-home mom in 2007 to son, Sean, then 3 years old. She also took care of her father and helped with a family business.



Allie Currid



Charv Albano

## Creating a Smooth Transition for Patients Going Home

by Vicki Cho Estrada



David Davis

This spring, she returned to Children's Hospital. "I enjoyed being home, but I realized how much I valued my skills as a nurse and being part of such a great organization," says Albano. "Every single person here is dedicated to our patients and their families." She's now happily engaged in a new challenge: an eight-month training program as an Operating Room nurse.

**David Davis**, RN, MN, understands what Albano missed — "the lifelong learning environment" in an academic facility like Children's Hospital. "We encourage people to keep growing," he says.

His own growth pattern included eight positions at Children's Hospital between 1989 and 2003. Then a department restructuring left him wondering about other opportunities. He began working for a home health and hospice provider, eventually becoming its executive director and CEO. He later joined two Southern California hospitals in high-level administrative positions. In spring 2008, he returned to Children's Hospital as director of PCS Medical/Surgical Services.

Davis knew he'd be back at some point because Children's Hospital is different from any other organization he's worked in. "This is a unique environment in terms of the collaborations that happen between all the professionals," he explains. "It's palpable — everyone's on the same page. We're here to help the children."

### Home Sweet Home

So, perhaps the grass isn't greener on the other side, say these nurses — having seen it for themselves. "But if you never leave," notes Baker, "you never know how good you had it."

Currid returned after two years away, hungry for the "outstanding professionalism" and the respect accorded to nurses at Children's Hospital. "There's a feeling that we all support each other. I felt it the first week I was back."

Ainsworth agrees. Two years into her commute from Northern California, her family moved back. "I missed the teamwork," she explains. "I can say, 'Can you get me *the blue thing?*' and everyone knows what *the blue thing* is."

After 11 years on 4East, **Ann Hart**, RN, CPON, CCC, left Children's Hospital in 2007 to care for her ailing mother. A job at a hospital closer to her San Dimas home was an easier drive, but "just wasn't a good fit," says Hart.

While at Children's Hospital, she set a goal to become a clinical care coordinator (CCC). She talked about it with her mother, who died this February. In May, Hart returned as the CCC on 5E/W. "I feel like my mom orchestrated this."

Even the commute isn't too bad, she laughs. Well, maybe it is, but it's worth it. "This is where I'm meant to do my work," says Hart. "This is home."



Ann Hart holding a photo of her beloved mother



(L-R): Susanne Zook and Nancy Nowak

**Nancy Nowak**, RN, received word that a patient about to be discharged needed intravenous antibiotics, a home nurse and IV supplies — in less than 24 hours. After several calls to a home nursing agency and an infusion pharmacy, everything was ready to go by the time the patient left Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

Such timely coordination is not uncommon for Nowak and **Susanne Zook**, RN, BSN, who, as clinical care coordinators/home care liaisons, are called upon to make crucial arrangements when patients have complex home health care needs.

Working closely with floor-based clinical care coordinators who oversee patients' overall plan of care, "Nancy and Susanne are brought in during the discharge process," says **Elaine Sasaki**, RN, BSN, care coordination manager. "The other coordinators are able to do everything required of them in their jobs because of Nancy and Susanne's support."

Nowak and Zook's work is critical in ensuring patients with complex discharges are cared for after they leave CHLA. Handling 10 to 15 patient cases each, they secure home care equipment and supplies, arrange for home nursing, schedule training, communicate with insurance companies and pharmacies, interact with families and more.

"We may get a two-month notice or a next-day discharge that home health care is needed," says Zook, noting IV therapies, feeding and nasal gastric tubes and tracheostomy supplies are among the common requests they handle.

One of the challenges of the job is working with multiple vendors and a large number of patients with different needs, adds Nowak. "There's a lot of coordination that happens before patients leave the hospital. We have to make sure equipment and supplies are delivered to their homes on day of discharge."

The pair has years of experience in home health care, which is essential in their jobs. For nine years, Nowak conducted home visits for Children's Home Care, a home health agency that was once part of CHLA. Zook worked for another agency for three years, where she served as a liaison with CHLA. Both have been in their present job for 10 years.

Because of their important role at the hospital, one of them is always at CHLA during the week. "We never take a day off at the same time," says Nowak. "We need to make sure our patients are cared for after they leave CHLA."

# Flo Sheet Chronicles

## PROFESSIONAL MILESTONES

**Sandra Watcher**, RN, (Rheumatology) was given the Quality of Life Award for \$30,000 from the Arthritis Foundation's Pacific Region in July 2010. This research grant supports her work on "Families Learning to Live with Rheumatic Disease." Watcher was also the organizer and facilitator of the Lupus and Vasculitis Support and Education Conference sponsored by Lupus LA and held at Children's Hospital Los Angeles in August 2010.

**Rita Secola**, RN, (Hematology/Oncology/Bone Marrow Transplant) was given the APHON 2010 Casey Hooke Distinguished Service Award, which is the Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses' most distinguished award presented each year to an APHON member who has demonstrated excellence in service to and leadership of APHON. The award was presented during the 34th Annual APHON Conference in Minneapolis, Minn. in October 2010. More than 800 pediatric oncology nurses attended the conference, where the APHON Local Chapter Community Service Award was given to Southern California APHON chapter president and CHLA clinical research nurse, **Kelley Haley**, RN. APHON's president also presented a "Declaration of Recognition and Contributions" to **Kathy Ruccione**, RN, (Children's Center for Cancer and Blood Diseases) for her years of dedication and service to COG nursing and APHON and a recognition gift to **Debbie Reid**, RN, (Patient Care Services) for her leadership and service as the APHON Chemotherapy Biotherapy Committee chairperson.

The following nurses from Hematology/Oncology had APHON poster presentations at the APHON conference: **Diane Altounji**, RN, **Monica Grover**, RN, and **Peggy Townsend**, RN, "Caring for the Caregiver: Supportive Care for Nurses;" **Laura Vasquez**, RN, and **Rita Secola**, RN, "Developing a Nursing Education Tool for Administration of Chimeric Antibody in High Risk Neuroblastoma Patients;" **Peggy Townsend**, RN, **Maria Velasco**, RN, **Kellie Loera**, RN, and **Rita Secola**, RN, "Capturing the Educational Needs and Preferences for Generational Differences in Hematology/Oncology/BMT Nurses;" **Jennifer Blaney**, RN, **Donna Quiroz**, RN, **Hazel Kolpak**, RN, **Jasmin Uy**, RN, and **Kristin Malicse**, RN, "Utilizing a Patient Centered Medication Calendar to Improve the Discharge Process in the BMT Population;" **Dawn Landery**, RN, **Mary Moses**, RN, and **Shinyi Tang**, RN, "Developing An Anergy Protocol Kardex for the Hematopoietic Stem Cell Patient;" **Maki Okada**, RN, and **Kathleen Meeske**, RN, "Operationalizing Exercise Guidelines for Anthracycline Treated Cancer Survivors at Children's Hospital Los Angeles."

**Secola** has also received additional funding for her dissertation research on reducing CVC-related bloodstream infections in pediatric cancer. She received the NIH AHRQ Pre-Doctoral Grant for \$40,000 in June 2010 and the Prevention Above Discoveries Grant, Medline Industries for \$23,000 in September 2010.

**Ruccione** was also recognized with a special tribute at the Children's Oncology Group meeting in Dallas, Texas, in October 2010. She has completed her second and last term as the inaugural COG Nursing Chair. COG nurses presented her with an authentic WWII nurse's cape and a letter of recognition from the director of the National Cancer Institute.

**Inge Morton**, RN, (Emergency Department) presented a lecture, "Pediatric Trauma: Late Onset Complications," at the ENA/ EDAP Conference at Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital in Whittier, Calif., in October 2010.

**Victoria Winter**, RN, (Cardiothoracic Intensive Care) wrote a chapter, "Excellence in Practice: A Resident-Centered Care Program in a Long-Term Facility," in the *Artinian Intersystem Model: Integrating Theory and Practice*. She also presented "Family Making: A Grounded Theory Study" at the Sigma Theta Tau Conference, Nursing Odyssey 2010, in San Diego, Calif., in October 2010.

**Noreen Clarke**, RN, (Plastic Surgery) and **Susan Cline**, RN, (Emergency Department) represented CHLA at the National Magnet Conference in Phoenix, Ariz., in October 2010. Their presentation was "Maka's Story: Bringing International Health Care to Our Hometown."

The following nurses presented a poster, "Implementing Preceptor Best Practices: Teaching and Supporting the Model Preceptor," at the Organization of Healthcare Educators Program in Pasadena, Calif., in September 2010: **Fran Blainey**, RN, and **Cindy Rowlett**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care); **Sue Bugsch**, RN, (Newborn and Infant Critical Care); **Fran Guzek**, RN, (5East/5West); **Jessica Klaristenfeld**, RN, (Versant RN Residency); **Debbie Reid**, RN, (Patient Care Services).

**Trish Peterson**, RN, (Hematology/Oncology) gave a lecture, "Got Meds? Facts, Myths and Tips About Pain Management" to Sickle Cell families at Children's Hospital Los Angeles in September 2010. She also gave a lecture, "Immunization and Sickle Cell Disease," to the Hematology/Oncology and Day Hospital residents in September 2010.

**Anna Evans**, RN, (Hematology/Oncology) presented a case report, "Pregnancy in a Patient with Anaplastic Oligodendroglioma Taking Temozolomide," at the Society of NeuroOncology meeting in Montreal, Canada, in November 2010.

**Mary Dee Hacker**, RN, (vice president, Patient Care Services, chief nursing officer), participated in a panel discussion on "Does Better Design Make for Better Health?" sponsored by ZóCALO Public Square in September 2010. She also wrote an article, "What it Means to be a Magnet Hospital," published in *ADVANCE For Nurses* magazine in October 2010.

**Debbie Jury**, RN, (Magik Pain Service) was interviewed by Cynthia Fox of 95.5 KLOS Los Angeles radio station in October 2010 on both the Magik Pain Program and the Amerman Family Foundation Dog Therapy Program at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. She also gave a lecture, "Introduction to the Magik Pain Service and Pain Assessment and Management in the Pediatric Patient," to CHLA Pediatric Residents in October 2010. In addition, she has been participating in the testing process for the Amerman Family Foundation Dog Therapy Program at CHLA in order for the dogs in the program to become Certified Delta Pet Partners.

The Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit held its annual Reunion and Health Fair in September 2010 at the "Live Steamers" in Griffith Park. The planning committee consisted of 25 NICCU nurses. More than 500 family members and former patients attended the event.

**Sandra Lee**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) was voted "Most Valuable Preceptor" by the March 2010 Versant RN Residency in Pediatrics Cohort.

**Cat Goodhue**, RN, (Pediatric Surgery) had an article, "Medical Home Model," published in the *Journal of Trauma Nursing*, April-June 2010 issue.

### Congratulations to the following graduates:

**Victoria Duncombe**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care): BSN, Cum Laude, Cal State University, Northridge  
**Sasha Reis**, RN, (4West): PNP/CNS, University of California, Los Angeles  
**Liberty Garcia**, RN, (4West): BSN, Cal State University, Dominguez Hills  
**Jamie Lin**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care): MSN, Leadership and Management, Western University of Health Sciences  
**Kim Tull**, RN, (5West): MSN/FNP, Cal State University, Long Beach  
**Tyla Vecchiarelli**, RN, (PACU): BSN, Mt. Saint Mary's

### Congratulations to the following Daisy Award recipients:

**Lindsay Quirk**, RN, (Emergency Department) – August  
**Donna Quiroz**, RN, (Bone Marrow Transplant) – September  
**Stephanie Brown**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) – October  
**Cheryl Barton**, RN, (Cardiology) – November

### Congratulations to the following promotions and certifications:

**Diana Sepulveda**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) promoted to an ENT Nurse Coordinator.

**Bianca Salvetti**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) promoted to Nurse Practitioner in Cardiothoracic Surgery.

**Erin Lowerhouse**, RN, promoted to PACU Education Manager.

**Lindsay Quirk**, RN, (Emergency Department) – CPN  
**Jody Castrillon**, RN, (Emergency Department) – CPN  
**Amanda Silver**, RN, (Emergency Department) – CPN  
**Valorie Tripoli**, RN, (Emergency Department) – CPN  
**Veronica Wallace**, RN, (Radiology) – CPN  
**Vanessa Guerrero**, RN, (Radiology) – CPN  
**Laurie Newton**, RN, (Radiology) – CPN  
**Jen Baldwin**, RN, (6West) – CPN  
**Jace Vargas**, RN, (PACU) – CPN  
**Aileen De Guzman**, RN, (6West) – CPN  
**Tammy Johnson**, RN, (6West) – CPN  
**Olivia Banuelos**, RN, (6West) – CPN  
**Monica Ciccarelli**, RN, (6West) – CPN  
**Tere Jones**, RN, (6North) – CPN  
**Amanda Price**, RN, (6North) – CPN  
**Megan Summers**, RN, (6North) – CPN  
**Sue Jensen**, RN, (5West) – CPN  
**Linda Loiselle**, RN, (Float Team) – CPN  
**Amy Omuse**, RN, (Float Team) – CPN  
**Victoria Miller**, RN, (6West) – CPN  
**Anthony Opimo**, RN, (Hematology/Oncology) – CPHON  
**Meredith Bock**, RN, (Endocrinology) – Certified Diabetes Educator  
**Vanessa Mansilla**, RN, (Endocrinology) – Certified Diabetes Educator  
**Amy Giguis**, RN, (5East) – Certified Lactation Educator/Counselor  
**Hilda Rodriguez** (4East) – RN III  
**Christina Smith** (Hematology/Oncology) – RN III  
**Vanessa Guerrero** (Radiology) – RN III  
**Erlyn Devries** (6East) – RN III

## LIFE CELEBRATIONS

**Monica Rice**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) – married  
**George Corso**, RN, (Emergency Department) and **Christina Smith**, RN, (Hematology/Oncology) – married  
**Desiree Navarro**, RN, (5East) – married  
**Maria Sabicer**, RN, (5West) – married  
**Lily Denton**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) – married  
**A.J. Valencia**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) – married  
**Katelyn Manley**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) – married  
**Laura Hughes**, RN, (6West) – married  
**Elizabeth Christianson**, RN, (6West) – married  
**Meredith Gross**, RN, (PACU) – married  
**Shabana Wadalawala**, RN, (Bone Marrow Transplant) – married  
**Audrey Estrada**, RN, (6North) – married  
**Jace Vargas**, RN, (PACU) – legal domestic partnership

### Babies

**Melanie Guerrero**, RN, (Cardiothoracic Intensive Care) – girl  
**David Romberger**, RN, (Cardiothoracic Intensive Care) – girl  
**Sara Morgan**, RN, (Cardiothoracic Intensive Care) – boy  
**Sonya Linesses**, RN, (Cardiothoracic Intensive Care) – boy  
**Renee Flores Garcia**, RN, (4West) – boy  
**Lisa Namkoong**, RN, (4West) – boy  
**Andrea Roberts**, RN, (Newborn and Infant Critical Care) – boy  
**Itsuko Valiente**, RN, (6North) – girl  
**Kim Lindstad**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) – boy  
**Natalie Downey**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) – boy  
**Justin Markle**, RN, (5West) – girl  
**Grace Ruiz**, RN, (6West) – boy  
**Katrina Susca**, RN, (6West) and **Robert Susca**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) – boy  
**Jessica Garcia**, RN, (PACU) – girl  
**Amy Girguis**, RN, (5East) – boy  
**Kristin Malicse**, RN, (Bone Marrow Transplant) – girl  
**Rachel Blackburn**, RN, (6North) – boy  
**Aileen Maranon**, RN, (Newborn and Infant Critical Care) – girl

**Jen Huson**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) volunteered as the nursing director for Camp Dream Street in Santa Barbara, Calif., in August 2010. Other nurses from the PICU who also volunteered were: **Joe Ng**, RN, **Gena Favero**, RN, **Stephanie Brown**, RN, **Linda Topper**, RN, and **Ale Briseno**, RN. Other volunteers included: **George Corso**, RN, (Emergency Department) and **Christina Smith**, RN, (Hematology/Oncology).

**Corina Rico**, RN, (6North) volunteered on a surgical mission with Operation Smile in Kolkata, India in August 2010.

**Rhodora Fernandez**, RN, (PACU) participated in the AVON Walk for Breast Cancer in September 2010.

**Chris Price**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) was awarded first place in the Mammoth 50K in September 2010. He also participated in the San Francisco Marathon in July 2010 and the Bulldog 50K Ultra Marathon in Calabasas in August 2010.

**Janet Waugh**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care) participated in the Inca Trail Marathon in Cusco, Peru in August 2010.

**Kim Tull**, RN, (5West) participated in the Vineman Ironman Triathlon benefiting Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in Sonoma, Calif., in July 2010.

**Mary Ellen Farr**, RN, (PACU) participated in the Dwight Crum Pier-To-Pier Swim Race from Hermosa to Manhattan Beach in August 2010.

The following nurses participated in the Annual Nautica Malibu Triathlon in September 2010: **George Corso**, RN, **Nhan Vu**, RN, **Susan Cline**, RN, **Sheila Anulao**, RN, (Emergency Department); **Nicole Hetschel**, RN, **Erica Winn**, RN, **Yvette Irizarry**, RN, (6West); **Teresa Esquivel**, RN, **Vicki Duncombe**, RN, **Chris Price**, RN, **Heidi Geary**, RN, **Tabby Schwartz**, RN, **Linda Topper**, RN, **Nick Russell**, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care); **Sue Martinez**, RN, **Maria Dakan**, RN, **Tony Blanco**, RN, **Myrel Catbagan**, RN, **Emily Clark**, RN, **Kristy Eaton**, RN, **Monica Lopez**, RN, **Amy Hale**, RN, **Stacy Paone**, RN, **Meghan Stumbo**, RN, (5East); **Mary Ellen Farr**, RN, (PACU); **Linda Camacho**, RN, **Amanda Price**, RN, **Jesi Bernardo**, RN, **Betsy Bohuslavsky**, RN, **Kristina Reyes**, RN, **Lauren Windham**, RN, **Van Nguyen**, RN, **Rosanna Preall**, LVN, **Megan Summers**, RN, (6North); **Maria-Theresa Lapinid**, RN, **Christina Smith**, RN, (Hematology/Oncology).

**Monica Lopez**, RN, **Sophie Lim**, RN, (5East), and **Diane Ito**, RN, (Radiology) completed the Disneyland Half Marathon in September 2010.

**Cathy Kissinger**, RN, and **Tina Rufo**, RN, (6East) completed the San Francisco Half Marathon in July 2010, which qualified them to receive their California Dreamin' Medals and Racing Series Finisher's Jackets. In order to qualify for this medal, participants must complete three events, either half or whole marathons in Southern or Northern California.

**Debbie Dechant**, RN, (Cardiothoracic Surgery), completed the Bank of America 33rd Chicago Marathon in October 2010. Her total run-time included her stopping to assist in the resuscitation of another runner, just ahead of her, until paramedics arrived.



Mary Dee Hacker, RN, MBA,  
vice president, Patient Care Services &  
chief nursing officer

Reading the stories of our nurses who at one point left the hospital only to come “back home” at a later time reminds me of just how special Children’s Hospital Los Angeles really is. As this issue’s feature story so poignantly illustrates, our hospital is not simply a place of employment — it’s a place of growing professionally and personally; a place where life-long friendships are formed; a place where new ideas are celebrated. Our unrelenting emphasis on continuing education, striving for excellence and creating a healing environment where the child and the family are at the core, makes us unique and keeps us coming back year after year. These values are what we are focusing on as we make one of the largest transitions in our history.

In July 2011, we will move to our New Hospital Building. From now until that day, we have a lot of work and critical decisions ahead of us. The anticipation of a major milestone such as this can be quite stressful. But, I am confident that together we will be able to create an efficient transition. The new building is not only beautiful, enhanced with natural lighting, whimsical art work and soothing paint colors, but it truly is a state-of-the-art environment designed for the latest technology.

Our job now is to come together and focus on how to efficiently work in this new environment. We’re looking at how we can best make assignments, access supplies, administer medication and incorporate all the new technology our nurses will be using. This is a transformation for all of us, requiring us to have a positive vision and an enormous amount of commitment and dedication to bring this vision to fruition.

Throughout the planning process, we will continue to receive critical input from our front-line nurses. The essence of being a nurse at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles is working in a team environment, where we can discuss cases with our colleagues and have access to the interdisciplinary support this hospital has been built on. Our new space will continue to support this collaborative environment. I urge all of you to stay informed with the latest news on our move on [CW.org/JustTurnLeft](http://CW.org/JustTurnLeft), which will provide news, updates and event information to help all employees prepare for this exciting transition.

## Diverse Work, Camaraderie Keep ED Nurses Up at Night

by Vicki Cho Estrada

The work is fast-paced, diverse, highly unpredictable and often stressful, but **Jo Ann Barreras**, RN, wouldn’t have it any other way. After working nights in the Emergency Department (ED) of Children’s Hospital Los Angeles for the past 17 years, she says she would not work any other shift.

“I love the pace and independence in the ED at night,” Barreras says. “We have to rely on ourselves and other team members since we don’t have the same resources as the day shift. There’s a real sense of teamwork.”

Barreras is one of 18 nurses in the ED who works 7 p.m. to 7 a.m., a “high-pressure shift because it begins when we’re at our busiest with treatments in progress and patients with a variety of acuity and complexities,” according to **Inge Morton**, RN, CPN, the department’s education manager.

Morton says ED night shift nurses treat a large number of subspecialty patients, such as cardiothoracic and hematology-oncology, not to mention trauma and intensive care patients. They also see non-urgent care patients, such as those with ear infections and colds. “With outpatient services closed, the only option is the ED. We are the after-hours safety net.”

**Stephanie Valenzuela**, RN, who has worked nights in the



(L-R): Jody Castrillon, Jo Ann Barreras, Stephanie Valenzuela

ED since graduating from nursing school four years ago, says, “I like not knowing what I’m walking into everyday, not just shift-to-shift but hour-to-hour. Every day is a brand new day with new patients.”

She acknowledges the job can be stressful, but tries to take things one step at a time and stay calm. “The last thing a parent needs is to see a stressed out nurse.”

Looking for a new challenge, **Jody Castrillon**, RN, BSN, CPN, moved to the ED night shift in March after working nights on 5East for five years. “With so many patients coming through the ED, I’m one of the first to see patients and assess what’s wrong. I feel greater independence, but I also feel like I need to be more on my toes.”

For these nurses, it’s the camaraderie that keeps them up

at night in the ED. “I wouldn’t have been able to work nights for so long if it wasn’t for the people I work with,” says Barreras. “We feel like a family.”

### Emergency Department Night Shift RN Team

**Mercedes Alonso**  
**Jo Ann Barreras**  
**Anabel Costa**  
**Jody Castrillon**  
**Tom Cottrell**  
**Judy Demello**  
**Mariella Flores**  
**Armstrong Hao**  
**Laurie Irwin**  
**Ron Lee**  
**Natasha Monteith**  
**Sharon Noonan**  
**David Pichardo, Jr.**  
**Amanda Silver**  
**Paloma Stincer**  
**Valorie Tripoli**  
**Stephanie Valenzuela**  
**Judy Wong**

## Getting to Know ... CHLA Radiology Nurses



(L-R, top row): Veronica Wallace,  
Marilyn Mills, Denna Jung, Linda Kelso,  
Susan Matich.

(L-R, bottom row): Lynda Chekay,  
Dianne Ito, Martha Jarquin, Yvette Celi

Children’s Hospital Los Angeles’ Radiology Nursing staff includes 15 RNs, five nurse practitioners and two PCSAs. Each month, they care for more than 600 young patients coming to the department for an MRI or a CT needing contrast and/or sedation or general anesthesia. The nurses’ various tasks include starting the IVs, inserting catheters, giving contrast and monitoring during imaging procedures. The charge nurse is continually working the schedule through the day to get patients in and keep the rooms filled. The nurse practitioners complete the pre-anesthesia evaluations for all patients receiving sedation or anesthesia as well as ordering the contrast for CTs and MRIs.

They also provide the post anesthesia recovery monitoring for approximately 300 patients a month. Radiology nurses must have knowledge of the various modalities, radiation safety, contrast pharmacology, MRI safety and interventional procedures done with imaging. An area of growth and cutting-edge technology is the department’s work in Interventional Radiology, where the nurse works in coordination with the radiologist, anesthesiologist and radiology technicians.

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# Versant RN Client Conference Brings Together Nurses From Around the Country

The 6th Annual Versant Client Conference was held in Las Vegas, Nev., in September 2010, attracting 150 nurses from around the country. The successful Versant RN Residency in Pediatrics Program began at Children's Hospital Los Angeles in 1999 and has since grown to more than 80 hospitals nationwide.

The keynote speaker at the conference was Marlene Kramer, PhD, RN, FAAN, a renowned nurse leader and researcher who has been recognized by the American Academy of Nursing as a "Living Legend." Eleven nurses from Children's Hospital attended the conference, many making a poster or podium presentation. The nurses from Children's Hospital were:

**Robert Briscoe, RN, Semhar Hailemichael, RN, Naterra Weathers, RN, (6 East); Ale Briseno, RN, Gena Favero, RN, Cindy Rowlett, RN, (Pediatric Intensive Care); Jessica Klaristenfeld, RN, Edahrline Salas, RN, (Versant RN Residency Program); Irene Klecha, RN, (Institute for Maternal-Fetal Health); Debbie Reid, RN, (Patient Care Services); Mary Dee Hacker, RN, (vice president, Patient Care Services, chief nursing officer).**



(L-R, top row): Naterra Weathers, Irene Klecha, Debbie Reid, Mary Dee Hacker, Semhar Hailemichael, Robert Briscoe. (Bottom row): Edahrline Salas, Marlene Kramer, Jessica Klaristenfeld.



(L-R): Jessica Klaristenfeld and Irene Klecha



(L-R): Semhar Hailemichael and Robert Briscoe