

Extra: Lives Outside the Hospital

The Ski Diva Builds Diversity and Safety

by Candace Pearson

Jane Gutierrez, RN, grew up in inner-city New York, playing double-dutch jump-rope in the street. She never imagined that someday she'd be an expert snow skier and an officer in two popular ski organizations—or that her license plate would read "Ski Diva."

Gutierrez, relief charge nurse in the Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, got bitten by the ski bug in college and has since skied all over the world. She is the president of Four Seasons West Ski & Snowboarding Club, a primarily African-American organization and, at 1,000-plus members, one of the largest of its kind. In June 2014, she became vice president of Membership for the Far West Ski Association (FWSA), which has members throughout six western states.

Campaigning for the position with a speech at the FWSA's annual convention in Mount Bachelor, Oregon, Gutierrez emphasized the need to

increase diversity and attract more people of color to the sport. Her slogan: "Let's embrace the future together."

Inspired by her 33 years of nursing at CHLA, where she started as a student nurse, Gutierrez is deeply involved in safety, especially for children. Four Seasons West teaches children to wear helmets, sunscreen and appropriate clothing. Both children and adults get educated about proper nutrition, hydration and the importance of exercise. Each new club member must take a ski lesson from a more senior member. Before ski season begins, the club sponsors "get-in-shape" exercise clinics.

In addition, Four Seasons West works with local Boys & Girls Clubs, sponsoring yearly Learn to Ski Days and subsidizing costs of the sport for less-advantaged children. "One of my favorite things is being able to recruit younger people to skiing," says Gutierrez.



Jane Gutierrez, RN

Another is standing atop a tall mountain, looking out at the snow and sky. "It's so meditative, you feel peaceful," she says. The next moment she's zooming down, muscling her way through a tricky turn, which is, she adds, "exhilarating." ■

Volunteers in Action

Bringing Lifesaving Lessons to Middle Schools

by Elena F. Epstein



Sharon Fichera, RN, MSN, CNS, NNP-BC

As the clinical manager of CHLA's Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit, Sharon Fichera, RN, MSN, CNS, NNP-BC, is on the cutting edge of pediatric care. She has drawn on that expertise often in her numerous volunteer roles through the American Heart Association (AHA).

Her current focus is teaching hands-only CPR to seventh and eighth-graders.

Fichera, who serves as AHA national faculty member for the Pediatric Advanced Life Support Program, joined the association's regional Emergency Cardiovascular Care Committee two years ago and is now working on a new national project to train middle school students on bystander CPR.

"There's still some fear associated with giving CPR—fear of doing something wrong or being uncomfortable with mouth-to-mouth contact," says Fichera, who has been working at CHLA for the past 20 years. "By teaching hands-only CPR to students, we're not only providing lifesaving lessons they can comfortably use throughout their lives, but the students can then share the information with their family and friends, which will help save even more lives."

The American Heart Association's CPR in Schools Program is designed to teach middle school students and teachers these lifesaving skills. Ross Dress for Less is supporting AHA's efforts by providing free CPR training resources to public schools in lower-income areas.

Fichera has been working with 42 middle schools in southern and central California, including schools in Los Angeles, Apple Valley, Victorville, Santa Barbara and Santa Maria, to establish the CPR program. Fichera is the main point person for each school, coordinating with a large network of volunteers who teach the classes and ensuring that all training materials are distributed and all questions and concerns are addressed.

"I feel so fortunate to be a nurse and have the opportunity to give back to the community," says Fichera. ■

'Groundbreaking' Institute Puts Spotlight

by Vicki Cho Estrada



A recent panel discussion hosted by CHLA on post-traumatic stress and hospitalized children included, from left: Kathy Hauck (event sponsor), Mary Dee Hacker, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN, Nancy Blake, PhD, RN, CCRN, NEA-BC, FAAN, Cristie Suzukawa, CCLS, and Jeffrey Gold, PhD

It's no secret that nurses at Children's Hospital Los Angeles provide top-notch care to critically ill and seriously injured children, while providing invaluable support to patients and families during a time when they need it most. It's also widely known that conducting research and implementing evidence-based practice by nurses and other health care professionals lead to improved patient outcomes.

Now, for the first time, the hospital will be harnessing the talent and experiences of its nurses and other Patient Care Services staff and combining these with research, clinical practices and interprofessional collaboration to enhance care for patients and families through the new Institute for Nursing and Interprofessional Research.

Plans for the Institute involve seeking \$10 million in philanthropic support to aid nurses and clinical experts in carrying out research and employing evidence-based practice.

The Institute aims to explore novel questions and conduct studies with nurse-led interprofessional teams; develop a more effective clinical care workforce through research opportunities, education and professional development; and create a model for pediatric clinical research that puts Children's Hospital at the forefront of the field.

Interprofessional focus

Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer Mary Dee Hacker, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN, called the Institute "groundbreaking" for its emphasis on interprofessional research.

"We very much believe that the old model of doing research in one profession is antiquated," she says. "It's not just about biological health, but looking at the expertise of nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists, dietitians and others. It's about paying attention to the developmental, social and medical aspects.

"Every grant that will be awarded through this Institute will have an interprofessional focus," Hacker adds, noting "few hospitals in the country are doing this at our level with a \$10 million endowment. We do believe that we're trailblazers."

When fully launched, Institute teams will develop and study clinical care practices in collaboration with nurses and areas such as Child Life; Pharmacy; Social Work; Nutrition; Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy; and more.



Karen Wirick

The idea for the Institute evolved as Patient Care Services (PCS)—driven by a culture of continuous improvement—looked at how to better manage patient care and come up with new innovations using the expertise and resources within the department.

"All of us understand that our full professional role is to not only be outstanding clinicians, but also have the data to support the way we deliver care and how we improve the health of children and families," says Hacker. "The only way to do that is by carving some time out of our professional lives to find new knowledge and advance improvements. We have a great resource within this institution to facilitate and lead this work."

Fundraising campaign

The Children's Hospital Los Angeles Foundation recently launched a fundraising campaign to create and sustain the Institute. The philanthropic investment includes a \$5 million endowed chair for the director of the Institute. Hacker will be the inaugural chair holder, in recognition of her tireless work and commitment to the hospital for the past four decades.

"It's a great honor, but most importantly, it's a validation of the excellence of our nurses in Patient Care Services," she says.

Funds will also be raised for a \$5 million Interprofessional Research and Innovation Endowment to fuel research that is holistic, collaborative and applicable across many areas. Among other things, this will provide PCS professionals with protected time away from their duties to conduct research with colleagues and physicians, and offer a formal mentorship program to inspire novice researchers.

"Our hospital leadership believes that interprofessional nursing research is critical to advancing our leading role in pediatrics. We are committed to building a significant endowment to support the Institute, and to supporting patients and families with sustained discovery," says Karen Wirick, assistant vice president of Development.

The endowment will harness the combined gifts from grateful patients and families, current and former hospital leadership and staff members, and friends of the hospital who care about children's health. Both the endowed chair and program endowment will exist in perpetuity and provide a consistent and dependable source of funding.



Jill Blitz, PT, DPT, ATP (left) and Diane Altounji, MSN, RN, CPHON

Advancing research

Diane Altounji, MSN, RN, CPHON (4 West), is excited that with the launch of the Institute, research and evidence-based practice will be taking more prominent roles than ever before at Children's Hospital.

As co-chair of the PCS Research Council, a 32-member group existing to promote and support research initiatives and evidence-based practice at CHLA, she has a pulse on the dozens of studies underway in PCS as well as some of the barriers that researchers face.

"There are so many staff members who would be interested in conducting research, but they lack resources or time," says Altounji, who leads the

council's twice-monthly meetings with Co-chair Jill Blitz, PT, DPT, ATP (Physical Therapy). "Having this Institute is really necessary and will advance all of our professions on an interprofessional level. It's the only way we'll be able to truly make a difference in our practice," she says.

Research studies led by PCS staff focus on diverse pediatric health care issues, from congenital heart disease to the effects of chemotherapy on cognitive function. The Institute for Nursing and Interprofessional Research would support researchers like Cristie Suzukawa, CCLS, Child Life lead supervisor in the Emergency Department, who is working with Todd Chang, MD; Inge Morton, RN, BSN, CPN; Loni Chartan, RN, MSN, CPEN; and Joanna Barreras, RN, AND, CPN, to evaluate the effectiveness of Child Life intervention during IV placement.

The Institute builds on the work of the council and other activities at Children's Hospital, including the recent fourth annual PCS Research Day, where hospital researchers showcased their projects.

"We've been working on this for quite a while, and organizationally, we are ready to do this work," says Hacker, adding that she hopes the \$10 million can be raised within the next two years. "Through research and finding new knowledge, we will have the highest-quality, safest care possible because we will be practicing at the highest level." ■



"Treatment of medical disabilities tends to focus on the procedures and medicines that fix or cure them. All-too-little attention is paid to the preparation and recuperation processes that are delivered by the nurses 24 hours a day, seven days a week—including holidays. These can play such a

vital role in what often determines the outcomes from all the inherent unpleasantness of the treatments. Yet the nurses' roles tend to be taken for granted. And with children, nothing is more important than the roles of nurses as the kids face all the pain and trauma of their disabilities compounded by unfamiliar settings and people. It would be hard to overstate the importance and the effectiveness of the sensitive support and comforting that nurses provide children through this most difficult episode of their young lives. I like to 'invest' in efforts that can make a difference. Anything that the Institute for Nursing and Interprofessional Research does that helps make nurses even more effective is an investment in human capital that could hardly have a higher return."

— Bill Hurt, CHLA Board of Trustees

Nurses Helping Nurses

by Elena F. Epstein



From left: Diana Guzman, RN, BSN; Jiffy Ellashek, RN, MSN, CPN; Phyllis D'Ambra, RN, MSN; Feri Kiani, RN, BSN; and Claudia Flores

Young patients requiring specialized care such as a tracheostomy or cardiac pacemaker are well taken care of while at CHLA, but what happens when they return to school, where most nurses lack such high-level training?

CHLA nurses are tackling this issue through innovative community outreach programs that take them out to local schools to teach workshops. One unique part of the effort took place at the hospital in November 2014, when an interprofessional group of highly specialized nurses held a special training day at CHLA specifically for school nurses in the Alhambra and Glendale Unified School Districts.

Hosting 25 nurses at a six-hour training session in the hospital's Las Madrinas Pediatric Simulation Research Laboratory, CHLA nurses shared their knowledge and skills in the areas of gastrostomy tubes (G-tubes), nasogastric tubes, tracheostomies, VPS (ventriculoperitoneal shunts), cardiac pacemakers, in-and-out catheterization and central line care.

"We get a lot of calls from school nurses who need more information and training for these kids," says Jiffy Ellashek, RN, MSN, CPN, nurse care manager in the Division of Pulmonology. "We want to share our knowledge. We want our patients to be well taken care of in the community."

The following CHLA nurses participated in the training program: Phyllis D'Ambra, RN (Orthopaedic), Eileen Duncan, RN (6 East), Elvira Morales, RN (5 West), Margaret Frankel, RN (5 West), Brittni Sanderson, RN (5 West), Valerie Gordon, RN (Urology Outpatient), Sharlene Odhner, RN (5 West), Karena Schneider, RN (5 West), Jennifer Ortiz, RN (5 West), Nicole Freedman, RN (5 West), Julie Hoss, RN (5 West), Stacey Boyer, RN (Cardiology), Claudia Flores (Administration, Orthopaedic), Majella Doherty, RN (6 East), Daniel Mountan, RN (5 West), Julie Hoss, RN (5 West), and Edwin Khatchetourian, RCP (Respiratory Care). ■

Professional Milestones

Publications

Nancy Blake, RN (Patient Care Services): "Reunification of Children in Disaster," *Journal of Clinical Pediatric Emergency Medicine*, December 2014; "Healthy Work Environment Standards: 10 Years Later," *American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) Advanced Critical Care Journal*, accepted December 2014.

Stacey Boyer, RN (Cardiology): "Current Practices in the Monitoring of Cardiac Rhythm Devices in Pediatrics and Congenital Heart Disease," *Pediatric Cardiology*, accepted December 2014.

Elizabeth Daley, RN (Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit): Co-author, "Neonatal and Pediatric Guidelines for Arrhythmia Management: What the Neonatal and Pediatric Critical Care Nurse Needs to Know," *Pediatric Cardiac Intensive Care Society*, permanent guidelines online at www.PCICS.org.

Anna C. Evans, RN, and Mary Baron Nelson, RN (Neuro-Oncology): "Pregnancy in a Patient With a Malignant Brain Tumor Taking Temozolomide: Case Report and Review of the Literature," *Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing*, December 2014.

Monica Horn, RN (Heart Transplant Program): "Teamwork: Achieving True Collaboration in the Care of Pediatric VAD Patients," *the International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation*, Issue 7, November 2014.

Sue Matich, RN (Interventional Radiology): "Keeping in Tune with Parents of Chronically Ill Children," *Journal of Radiology Nursing*, December 2014.

Marilyn Mills, RN (Radiology): "Caring for Children Who Have Severe Neurological Impairment," book review, *Journal of Radiology Nursing*, November 2014.

Nhu Tran, RN; Heather Hackett, RN; Carol Cadaver, RN; and Sharon Fichera, RN (Cardiothoracic Surgery): "Comparison of Calf and Brachial Blood Pressures in Infants: Is There a Difference Between Calf and Brachial Blood Pressures?" *Journal of Vascular Nursing*, December 2014.

Presentations

Nancy Blake, RN (Patient Care Services): "Does a Healthy Work Environment Really Make a Difference?" and "Alarm Management: Tips to Reduce Alarm Fatigue," podium presentations, *Pediatric Critical Care Nursing Contemporary Forums* conference, November 2014.

10th Annual Versant Client Conference, November 2014:

Alejandra Briseno, RN, and Linda Topper, RN (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit): "Focus Directed Re-Education," poster; **Alejandra Briseno, RN; Cindy Rowlett, RN; and Nancy Lavoie, RN** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit): "The Capacity for Excellence: Developing Novice RN Residents Into Clinical Experts, Educators and Nurse Leaders," podium presentation; **Alejandra Briseno, RN; Kimberly Linstadt, RN; and Nancy Lavoie, RN** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit): "Leading From Behind the Scenes: RN Resident to RN Resident Liaison," poster; **Jessica Damasco, RN, and Christina Lai, RN** (5 East): "Protect Our Patients: Increasing PPE Compliance," poster; **Diane Inocencio, RN; Celisse Lee, RN; Sandra David, RN; and Stephanie Marchello, RN** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit): "Knowing What's Up: A Guideline for Assessing Side Effects Associated With Sildenafil," poster; **Cindy Lee, RN, and Leah Carrillo, RN** (6 West): "Drop by for UPDATES! Standardized Reports Between RNs/LVNs and PCSAs," poster presentation; **Megan McNaught, RN** (4East): "CHEMO SAFE GUARD: A Mnemonic for Safe Chemotherapy Administration," poster; **Derek Middagh, RN** (Emergency Department): "Non-Emergent Blood Administration in the Emergency Department," poster presentation; **Crystal Sanchez, RN, and Shawna Munoz Kirk, RN** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit): "Dog Days Are Coming: Pet Therapy for Nurses," poster presentation; **Susan Santner, RN** (5 East): "The Servant Leader—Establishing a Climate of Compassion and Commitment;" **Christopher John Singson, RN** (5 East); **Cindy Rowlett, RN** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit); **Gwen Kimball, RN** (4 West/ Bone Marrow Transplant); **Jessica Klaristenfeld, RN** (Versant RN Residency); **Ruth Paul, RN** (5 East); and **Sue Bugsch, RN** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit): "Sustaining Preceptor Satisfaction: How Do We

Help the Helpers?" **Gina Virgallito Kemp, RN, and Melissa Hallbourg, RN** (4 West): "Say Ahhh! Development of an Oral Care and Hygiene Bundle for Pediatric Oncology Patients," poster presentation; **Sanje Woodsorrel, RN, and Ruth Jacobson, RN** (Float Team): "Prep for Success: How to Best Prepare Skin Before Capillary Blood Glucose Checks," poster presentation; **Natalie Drorbaugh, RN; Danielle Ganes, RN; Jhoanna Katindoy, RN; and Adriana Torres, RN** (Cardiovascular Acute Care Unit): "WAT's a Nurse to Do? Understanding Pain and Withdrawal in Preverbal Patients," poster presentation; **Phuong Duong, RN, and Ciana Reschman, RN** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit): "Early Participation in PI Projects Post-RN Residency Enhances Professional Development and Staff Retention," poster spotlight; **Sandy Hall, RN, and Diane Altounji, RN** (4 West): "Enhancing RN Resident Competencies in Conducting Evidence-Based Practice Inquiries."

Phyllis D'Ambra, RN (Orthopaedics and Neurosurgery): Infection Control and Pain Management seminar speaker; Nurse Competencies With Nursing Leadership and Patient Education—FOCOS Hospital, Ghana, November 2014.

Kim Harder, RN, and Ani Yeremian, RN (Cardiovascular Acute Care Unit): "Partners in Care: Patient Education Begins at Admission," *GetConnected 2014*, *GetWellNetwork* conference, June 2014.

Bill Kenny, RN (IS-KIDS Team): "Early Identification and Treatment of Septic Pediatrics, Children and Neonates," co-presenter, 2014 Cerner Healthcare Conference, November 2014.

Michelle Paige, RN (USC University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities): "Developing and Implementing a Health Care Transition Program for Patients With Genetic Conditions," poster presentation, *International Society of Nursing in Genetics: World Congress on Nursing and Genomics*, November 2014.

Nancy Pike, RN (Heart Institute): "Assessment of Visual, Verbal, and Working Memory in Adolescents with Congenital Heart Disease Post-Surgery," Oral Research Abstract Presentation, 2014 American Heart Association Scientific Sessions, November 2014.

Gloria Verret, RN; Vicky Lin, RN; and Andrea Zaballero, RN (6 West): "Easing the Transition: An Innovative Triad Mentorship Program for New Graduate Nurses," podium presentation, *National Magnet Conference*, October 2014.

Professional Achievements

Nancy Blake, RN (Patient Care Services): Selected for a National Infusion Coalition, Association for Advancement of Medical Instrumentation; elected to the Society of Pediatric Nursing Nominating Committee, 2015; manuscript reviewer, *Critical Care Nursing Journal* and *Japan Journal of Nursing Science*, December 2014.

Monica Horn, RN (Heart Transplant Program): Appeared in "Bridging Two Young Lives to Healthier Happier Futures," CHLA Imagine TV special segment about Berlin Heart patients, ABC7, December 2014.

Flerida Imperial-Perez, RN (Cardiothoracic Surgery): Selected for RN Item Review Panel, National Council of State Boards of Nursing, December 2014.

Sandra Mintz, RN (Rheumatology): moderator, multiple sessions, *American College of Rheumatology (ACR)/Association of Rheumatology Health Professionals (ARHP) Annual Meeting*; appointed chair, ARHP E-Learning; ARHP representative, ACR Committee on Education; invited guest, ARHP Executive Committee; and ARHP representative, ACR Curriculum Task Force, November 2014.

Recognition

Nancy Blake, RN (Patient Care Services), will receive a national Circle of Excellence Award, AACN, May 2015.

Flerida Imperial-Perez, RN (Cardiothoracic Surgery), will receive a national Circle of Excellence Award, AACN, May 2015.

Nhu Tran, RN (Cardiothoracic Surgery), received the Future of Nursing Scholars Program Award, October 2014.

The Pediatric Intensive Care Unit was awarded the AACN's Gold-Level Beacon Award 2015-2018 in February 2015.

Daisy Award Winners: **Christina Cerda, RN** (6 West), March; **Lisa Costantino, RN** (Ambulatory Care Surgery), April.

Academic Achievements

BSN: **Alma V. Ramirez, RN** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit)

Certifications

ANCC: **Colleen Carrelli, RN** (Vascular Access Team)
CCRN: **Jesusa Cabillo, RN, and Jessica Osborn DeVreese, RN** (Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit); **Eva Dunbar, RN; Jonathan Foley, RN; Jenny Kim, RN; Nikola Lazovich, RN; Tiffany Li, RN; and Rebecca Perez, RN** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit); **Ivo Rajagukguk, RN** (Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit)
CPHON: **Jamie Chon, RN; Monica Grover, RN; and Heather Hodges, RN** (4 West); **Gail Covington, RN** (Bone Marrow Transplant)
CPN: **Nubia Zuniga, RN** (Cardiovascular Acute Care Unit)
PNP-AC: **Erin R Messing, RN** (Float Pool)
RNC: **Alma V. Ramirez, RN** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit)

Promotions

Tere Jones, RN—Nurse Care Manager, Complex Care Service
Ani Yeremian, RN—Lead RN, Cardiovascular Acute Care Unit

Life Celebrations

Marriages

Sherry Cauley, RN (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit); **Noemi de Castro, RN** (Cardiovascular Acute Care Unit); **Jennifer Holderman, RN** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit); **Sandra Ibrahim, RN** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit); **Erika Ko, RN** (Cardiovascular Acute Care Unit); **Heidi (Horen) Machen, RN** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit); **Jodi Mercier, RN** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit); **Sandra Mintz, RN** (Rheumatology); **Tracy Pegula, RN** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit); **Jessica Pina, RN** (Emergency Department); **Ivo Rajagukguk, RN** (Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit); **Laura Ann Schneider, RN** (5 East); **Alex Washington, RN** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit)

Births

Cherry Altobar, RN (CV Acute)—girl; **Audrey Arndt, RN** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit)—girl; **Ashley Chauncey, RN** (Pediatric Intensive Care Unit)—boy; **Beth Clark, RN** (Emergency Department)—boy; **Katie Cusick, RN** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit)—boy; **Amy Griffey, RN** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit)—boy; **Kim Hitomi, RN** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit)—boy; **Petra Jovovic, RN** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit)—girl; **Tanisha Kipling, RN** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit)—girl; **Tanya Makover, RN** (CV Acute)—girl; **Brittany Myers, RN** (CV Acute)—girl; **Patricia Rodriguez, RN** (Surgical Admitting)—boy; **Patricia Villanueva, RN** (Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit)—girl

Community

Volunteering: **Dacia Calabretta, RN** (Heart Institute): at the St. Francis Center in Downtown Los Angeles, distributing food to those in need, December 2014; **Jhoanna Katindoy, RN** (Cardiovascular Acute Care Unit): in Costa Rica at a day care for underprivileged children, October 2014; **Erin Messing, RN** (Float Pool): in Haiti with Project Medishare, November 2014; **Ria Sanchez, RN** (5 East): in Pasadena decorating floats for the Rose Parade; also serving food to homeless, Los Angeles Mission, January 2015.

Athletic Achievements: **Carmelita Clark, RN, and Alvin Rocha, RN** (Cardiovascular Acute Care Unit), Long Beach International Half Marathon, October 2014; **Jace Vargas-Weisser, RN** (Post-Anesthesia Care Unit), Star Wars Rebel Alliance Challenge, Disneyland, including 5k race, 10k race and half-marathon, January 2015; **Christina Ng-Watson, RN** (Float Pool), Sports Hall of Fame for Gymnastics, Ursinus College (alma mater), November 2014.



Mary Dee Hacker, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN,
Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief
Nursing Officer

"Never lose an opportunity of urging a practical beginning, however small, for it is wonderful how often in such matters the mustard seed germinates and roots itself."

I love this quote from Florence Nightingale, especially now that we are launching one of the largest nursing initiatives in the country. The new Institute for Nursing and Interprofessional Research represents a spectacular step forward for Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

We are at the beginning of this journey and it will take each and every one of us to plant the seeds that will create a much brighter future for our patients and families. As you will read in this issue of FloSheet's feature article, the Institute is seeking \$10 million in philanthropic support to aid nurses and clinical experts in carrying out research that will allow us to pursue new knowledge and improve patient care.

As demonstrated by the stories you read in every edition of FloSheet, CHLA nurses are leaders and innovators who are consistently delivering care and supporting our families and our communities in profound ways.

The endowment we are building is a tribute to the culture we have created at this hospital—a culture of continuous learning, collaboration, teamwork, research and family-centered care. We want to see every employee invest in CHLA's future with the same rigor and commitment we demonstrate every day in our units. I urge you to consider making a gift in support of this exciting new initiative.

This endowment is the first of its kind, and our combined support will result in yet another CHLA historical milestone. Whether your contribution is what you would normally spend on a week's worth of lattes, or a larger gift, it's the commitment that matters. It will allow the mustard seed to germinate and root itself. ■

Barbara Gross Honored for Cardiac Nursing by Heart Ambassadors

by Candace Pearson



Barbara Gross, RN, MSN, NEA-BC (second from the left), with Heart Ambassadors co-founders Debbi Stern, Jennifer Page and Virginia Gallagher

After 38 years at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, more than half of them spent helping to build a leading heart program, Barbara Gross, RN, MSN, NEA-BC, has logged some impressive accomplishments. Receiving an award named for her may top them all.

On Nov. 15, 2014, Gross, administrative director of CHLA's Heart Institute, received the inaugural Barbara Gross Cardiac Nurse Award from the Heart Ambassadors, an offshoot of the Ambassadors of Children's Hospital Los Angeles, comprising patients, patient families and friends.

"It's such a privilege," says Gross. "Having an award named for you by parents—how can that not be the highlight of your career?"

For the Heart Ambassadors, naming the award in Gross' honor was a no-brainer. "No one exemplifies an outstanding nurse more than Barbara," says Jennifer Page, mother to Max, 10, a Heart Institute patient. "She's the heartbeat of this place, the life preserver you get thrown during the storm, and she does that for hundreds of families."

Page co-founded the Heart Ambassadors, along with Virginia Gallagher, mother to Dylan, 8, and Debbi Stern, mother to Zoe, 12. Both children have been Heart Institute patients.

Gross has taken care of families like theirs in her nearly four decades in management positions throughout the hospital. In the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, she started as a clinical educator, then

moved on to assistant night manager, manager and "just about every role there," she says. She served as acting director of the Emergency Department and supervised the Operating Room and Ambulatory Care.

All that experience came in handy in 1992, when her career path took a definitive turn. She learned that a renowned cardiovascular surgeon would soon arrive to start a pediatric heart program at CHLA and the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery at the University of Southern California (USC). Gross immediately signed on to help Vaughn A. Starnes, MD, realize that vision. (Starnes is now co-director of the Heart Institute, H. Russell Smith Foundation Chair, head of the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery, and Distinguished Professor and chair of the Department of Surgery at the Keck School of Medicine of USC.)

Since that fateful meeting, Gross has helped to open a number of the hospital's units and programs, including the Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit, the Cardiovascular Acute Care Unit, the Pediatric Heart Transplant Program, and the Liver Transplant Program. Today, the Heart Institute is the largest pediatric program on the West Coast and among the elite units of its kind nationwide.

Through it all, the families have remained foremost among her priorities. "For me," she notes, "it's always been so important that our patients have a good experience." ■

FloSheet

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Bedside's Best

Flerida Imperial-Perez Keeps Her Eye on Safety

by Candace Pearson



Flerida Imperial-Perez, MSN, RN, CNS-BC, CCNS-P

Flerida Imperial-Perez, MSN, RN, CNS-BC, CCNS-P, didn't set out to help build a better mousetrap, but it turns out she did just that. Only in her case, it's a more secure IV stand now being used nationwide.

As clinical manager of the Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Foundation Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit (CTICU) at Children's Hospital Los Angeles,

Imperial-Perez focuses her inventiveness on a specific objective. "I want to find a better way to do things for patient safety and a safe, efficient work environment," she says.

CTICU babies typically need multiple intravenous medications at one time, and they have to travel with them throughout the hospital. The CTICU had been using two manufacturers for the medication pumps—a large volume pump (LVP) from CareFusion for meds, fluids and blood products, and a MedFusion® syringe pump for precisely controlled small-volume infusion rates. For greater efficiency, hospital leadership embarked on a trial to assess using an integrated, modular infusion pump system from CareFusion, the Alaris® PC Unit.

Imperial-Perez led the clinical trial in summer 2013. Only a few days into the trial, she stopped it. The problem? The extra weight of the new two-pump modular system—22 kilograms, or more than 48 pounds—was causing the freestanding IV pole to bend precariously during transport.

Imperial-Perez began collaborating with engineers and industrial designers from CareFusion and Pryor Products, a medical equipment manufacturer. The goal was to develop a stand that could safely hold the integrated system and reduce the risk of tipping.

The result is the Pryor "Hitch N Pal IV Stand," which works by securely latching onto the bed via a heavy-duty hitch, much like a trailer fastens to a truck. The stand also has a sturdier six-leg design, versus the previous version with five. Her reaction when she saw the finished product? "So relieved."

The stand was implemented in all CHLA intensive care units in January, and a few months later it was implemented throughout the hospital. In May, Imperial-Perez will present an abstract poster on it to the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses, when she will also receive a Circle of Excellence Award, one of only 25 nurses to be recognized with the prestigious honor this year. ■