A NEED Fulfilled

Xavier’s new program responds to national nursing shortage by attracting career-changers. p. 4
SEEING IS BELIEVING

The annual service trip to Guatemala lets Occupational Therapy students see how their work benefits others—no matter where they are.
A Message from the Dean

GREETINGS FROM XAVIER UNIVERSITY AND THE COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL SCIENCES.

I’m pleased to present the spring 2017 issue of Communitas. This issue features several stories highlighting Xavier’s strengths in the area of health-care training and direct service. In January alone, we launched an innovative blended-learning Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing and announced a ground-breaking strategic partnership with TriHealth that will result in the construction of a new Health United Building on campus. We also showcase our cutting-edge efforts to promote the health and well-being of people suffering from memory diseases by applying Montessori educational philosophy, pedagogy and materials.

As impressive as these projects are, I’d also like to reflect on another aspect of the Xavier experience—our focus on reflection, advocacy and service. I recently returned from an international immersion experience in Haiti and the Dominican Republic as part of the Ignatian Colleagues Program. Although I’ve traveled abroad many times, this experience was unique in that I was able to bear witness to, and reflect on, systems of oppression, poverty, resilience, innovation, sickness, health and joy in a unique way. I came away learning as much or more about myself as about the cultures I visited. The goals of the immersion trips are for “participants’ hearts to be broken open so that they might become more personally aware of those who live and struggle in our world, so that these experiences will permeate their thinking and reflecting as they engage the people and projects back on their home campus.”

I returned to campus with a profound sense of gratitude for my life, hope for our students’ futures, and commitment to the Jesuit ideals of magis, solidarity and kinship, cura personalis and service. I’m eager for College faculty and students to have similar experiences. On page 11, you can read about how Laney Bender-Slack is leveraging her past experience leading students on immersion trips to Peru to take local K-12 educators on a similar trip this summer. Other immersion and service trips are regularly conducted in Nicaragua, Guatemala and Cincinnati. I recently endorsed an innovative proposal that will enable faculty and students from our Health Services Administration and School of Education divisions to participate in an Interprofessional Population Health immersion trip to Central America.

You may have experienced a similar trip when you were at Xavier and the profound effect it had on your life. Your generous donations to the College will help support our efforts to provide funds for those students who otherwise would not have that experience.

In this issue of Communitas, you will see how our faculty and students are learning together, achieving together and serving together. And together, we are changing the world.

Paul Gore, PhD
Dean, College of Professional Sciences
In the middle of an empty field sits the Hoop House. Christened in 2013 as the Xavier University Rec Center Butterfly Urban Farm, the Quonset hut-style structure sheathed in plastic is surrounded by a pleasant white, wooden fence and rows of tillable garden just waiting for the summer growing season.

The fact that the words “Rec Center” are part of the name was an acknowledgement that a replacement for the dated O’Connor Sports Center on the other side of campus was in the works for that patch of land.

Now, its time has come. By 2020, the Hoop House butterflies will have fluttered over to the Nexus Garden, and on that grassy field between University Station and the Commons Apartments will rise the Health United Building—already known as The HUB.

The building will be large, encompassing approximately 150,000 square feet—the size of an average Costco.

“It’s big,” says Paul Gore, Dean of the College of Professional Sciences. But he notes its construction wouldn’t have been possible without an equally big partner in TriHealth, the fourth largest employer in Cincinnati that was formed in 1995 when Bethesda and Good Samaritan hospitals joined together.

“It’s the result of the joint dedication, commitment and contribution of Xavier University and TriHealth,” he says.

President Michael Graham, S.J., calls it a landmark agreement for both Xavier and TriHealth that is another example of the Jesuit term, magis, taken to the next level.

“It will enable us to dramatically improve health and wellness facilities, services and overall health for our students and employees,” he says.

Mark C. Clement, TriHealth President and CEO, concurs. “This affiliation is uniquely focused, like no other in the country, on caring for the whole person—mind, body and spirit,” he says.

The new building is the most visible manifestation of the 10-year affiliation between Xavier and Tri-Health that was announced in January. But it will be so much more. As the focus of Xavier’s health and wellness initiatives, the building will be the home of a new recreation center as well as a comprehensive physical and mental health care center for students, offering health and wellness programming. Plus
it will house up to five health-related academic programs in the College of Professional Sciences that are now housed in distant locations far from the heart of campus, including the School of Nursing and the departments of Occupational Therapy, Health Services Administration, Radiologic Technology and Sport Studies.

As with many long-term plans, multiple delays in building a new recreation center through the years ultimately created a unique opportunity for an even grander vision that is now The HUB, Gore says. “It wasn’t until last fall when the partnership revealed itself with some clarity that it gave us the opportunity to rethink the building,” he says.

With planning for a new rec center already done, the challenge is to integrate academic housing for faculty, staff, students, classrooms and labs. But even before the first shovel goes into the ground in January 2018, the immediate benefit to students will be a substantial upgrade in health-care services.

“It’s been a very neat progression to see this whole thing happen,” says Dr. Stephen Cleves, a Xavier alum and medical director at the McGrath Health and Wellness Center.

His decades-long association with TriHealth through Good Samaritan Hospital and Xavier gives him a unique perspective. “The advantage is that students will now be offered a dramatically increased and robust level of services with a wide range of specialists becoming available at the current site of the McGrath Health Center because of the relationship to TriHealth,” he says.

As far as the fate of the current rec center, Leslie Dulle, director for Recreational Sports, looks forward to crossing Victory Parkway to their new home in the center of campus. She reflects on the many visions and revisions but has no doubt the final version will be a star attraction on campus tours.

“It’s been a long road,” she says. “But we’ll be on a level playing field with other universities” with multiple courts and extensive individual and group fitness options.

She also won’t mind the additional company if it’s bringing more students through the door. Right now, 65 percent of students use the O’Connor Sports Center, and they have a significantly higher retention rate. So, she reasons, increasing the percentage of students who use the rec center also contributes to the overall health of the University.

Having approximately 25 percent of the campus population, at any given time, in a building that doesn’t exist yet will have a profound impact on life at Xavier. Academically and professionally, Gore envisions a learning environment that brings out the best within those walls and beyond.

“We’re going to have all these disciplines in the same building,” Gore says. “One of our emerging areas of expertise and national recognition is our capacity to provide interprofessional collaboration.”

These are students who are going to work together in the same type of facilities when they graduate and get jobs. In a world challenged by rising health-care costs, the Xavier-TriHealth collaboration transforms the road to wellness into a superhighway.

“Putting a medical office in with a rec center plus wellness facility is where health care is going,” Cleves says.

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**HUB VITALS**

**WHAT IT IS**
- A 10-year exclusive affiliation between Xavier University and TriHealth to develop the Health United Building.
- Location: Cleneay Avenue/Musketeer Drive.
- Schedule: Targeted to open in the fall of 2019.
- Projected size: Approximately 150,000 square feet.

**ITS MISSION**
- To become a national model of excellence for collegiate health and wellness, and for advancing population health.

**WHAT’S INSIDE**
- New recreation center replaces the O’Connor Sports Center.
- New student health center replaces the McGrath Health and Wellness Center.
- Five academic programs in the College of Professional Sciences: Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Health Services Administration, Sport Studies and Radiologic Technology.
New ABSN Program Provides Path for Those Wanting Career Change

Brianna Prescott was ready for a change. The 27-year-old from Cleveland had earned a bachelor’s degree in human biology in 2012. Working part-time jobs as a nanny and in a doctor’s office, she wasn’t sure what career path she wanted to follow, but she knew she wanted to further her education.

The catch was deciding what she wanted to do with her life. After a lot of thought and a good bit of research, she decided on nursing.

“I was researching accelerated nursing programs throughout the state, and Xavier was one of the ones on my list,” she says. “I knew Xavier has a successful and well-known four-year nursing program, which was very appealing.”

Xavier also had something new—the ABSN second-degree Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. Specifically designed for adults with a bachelor’s degree in a non-nursing field, the program allows students to leverage their education to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in just 16 months.

Students participate in online coursework, hands-on labs and clinical rotations throughout their four semesters. The curriculum design, led by ABSN Associate Director Cheryl Leksan, RN, prepares students for today’s dynamic and ever-changing health-care environment.

“The aspects of the program that I found most appealing were the 16-month duration and the fact that courses are online,” Prescott
Someday just got closer.

BECOME A NURSE IN 16 MONTHS

acceleratednursing.xavier.edu

Says, “I wasn’t sure originally if I was going to have to work while completing this program, so the flexibility that comes with online courses was a huge plus.”

Plus, Prescott says, the advising made her transition easy.

“My advisor was absolutely incredible,” she says. “He answered all of my questions, provided tons of additional information, and was so unbelievably supportive. He called me every week to check in and honestly, I have never felt such support from an advisor. I could tell based on him alone that the entire team must be amazing, and they have been.”

The hands-on nursing labs in the new ABSN Learning Center on Elsinore Place in downtown Cincinnati prepare students to assist with patient care during clinical rotations. They work alongside faculty from Xavier’s School of Nursing, who help develop critical thinking and decision-making skills in a controlled, risk-free environment.

The simulation labs allow students to practice the advanced skills needed for complex patient treatment, emergency preparedness and medical team collaboration.

But the program is also providing a much-needed resource, helping prepare educated nurses to fill a nursing shortage being felt here and nationwide. According to the American Nursing Association, demand for nurses is constantly outpacing supply, and by 2022, it’s expected that 1.2 million vacancies will exist for registered nurses.

“We recognize there’s a shortage,” says Susan Schmidt, PhD, director for the School of Nursing. “We have an opportunity to address that problem with quality nurses of diverse backgrounds.”

After receiving conditional approval from the Ohio Board of Nursing last September, the program admitted its first class of 11 students in January.

To enroll, students must hold a non-nursing bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution, have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.70, and complete three prerequisite courses with a “B-” grade or higher (a “C” or higher in statistics).

“The program has been tough. I would be lying if I said it wasn’t,” Prescott says.

“The best part is the immediate hands-on learning experiences, the support from all the staff, and our cohort group. From the moment we all met for our first lab, we began application and hands-on training.

We were literally learning assessments of certain body systems by week 2.”

The faculty and staff have also been a big help.

“It truly is an amazing feeling to know that everyone is in your corner and wants you to succeed,” she says. “That is something that I personally never experienced in undergrad. Lastly, I feel very fortunate for the individuals in my cohort group. Since it is a smaller group, we have already become close with one another. We are all there for each other.”

Lauren Weaver, a 25-year-old Cincinnati native, earned a degree in evolutionary anthropology at another university in 2014 and took a job as an assistant coach for the George Washington University Swimming team. In January, she discovered Xavier’s ABSN program.

“So far, the faculty has been phenomenal,” she says. “They made themselves available and have been very receptive to suggestions and concerns we may have. We are immersed in the material through course work, labs and clinicals. It is this immersion that enables us to learn and develop into nurses so quickly.”

Schmidt also explained that due to Xavier’s Jesuit philosophy of holistic care, the ABSN program creates nurses who understand the importance of a calm mind, healthy body and true “wellness society.”

“Here at Xavier, we are looking at primary care,” Schmidt says. “We don’t want to just treat patients when they’re sick. We want to ask the question, ‘How do we keep people healthy?’”

DID YOU KNOW?

OUR PARTNERS:
- MERCY HEALTH
- CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL
- TRIHEALTH
- THE CHRIST HOSPITAL
- HEALTH NETWORK
xavier.edu/absn
Kathleen Farfsing could not believe what she was hearing. The workshop on how Montessori techniques open windows in the minds of people with dementia made so much sense, but it brought her so much pain as she recalled how her father declined rapidly in his failing state and then was gone forever.

Who knew Montessori was the key? She recalled his last words 20 years earlier when they were in the car that he once spent hours tinkering with. He rubbed his hand across the dashboard and murmured, “Boy, I miss this.” It was the last time his words made any sense to her.

“I just sat in the back and cried,” she says about the Chicago workshop she attended in 2011. “I thought, oh my gosh, it makes so much sense, and I felt so bad about what my father went through. I came out thinking, we can do this so much better as a society.”

Farfsing, a 1983 and 2000 graduate of the Montessori bachelor’s and master’s degree programs and former Xavier Lab School staff member, was so inspired that she helped establish a Montessori Dementia Program at Xavier, funded by a $150,000 grant from the Harold Schott Foundation. As the program coordinator, she trains Montessori teachers, social workers, nurses and caregivers about how to use Montessori methods to benefit people with dementia, like her dad, so their last years can be lived in a way that includes dignity and choice.

Since March 2016, she’s been at Twin Towers, part of the Life Enriching Communities retirement centers in Cincinnati. It was the first of three facilities to contract with Xavier for training in using Montessori methods for people with dementia. But she soon discovered she was up against a long-entrenched culture of caring and doing for people who, it’s been thought, can’t care or do for themselves. Montessori turns that concept around, so that people with dementia are encouraged to...
care for themselves within a framework of safety and support. “The focus is to maintain the activity of daily living, to maintain the skills they have for independence and do things for themselves, like fold their own laundry,” Farfsing says. “It’s a culture change to allow people to do for themselves.”

The value of the Montessori approach was highlighted at the Dementia Care Summit at Xavier on March 14. A workshop by Montessori authority Cameron Camp emphasized letting older people with dementia create their own communities and, in doing so, engage in activities that allow them to still be contributing members of society.

Community is one of the major elements of the Montessori philosophy of education. So is the importance of work, routine and repetition, independence, individuality, choice and meeting a person’s individual needs—no matter the age.

Camp showed examples of retirement communities where people with dementia were creating their own groups—like a beer-brewing club in Oregon—proving that people with dementia can still learn new things. Other clubs make jams and jellies, roast their own coffee, train dogs, save kittens, make cheese, take photos and raise their own funds.

“This is about giving control to the residents,” Camp said. “We need to look with new eyes and not see only the disability.”

Since Farfsing introduced Montessori training at Twin Towers’ Memory Support Unit, director Marcia Wessels, RN, says change is evident. The TV is off and residents are participating more, staying out of their rooms longer and doing things like setting the table, cleaning up, arranging flower vases for the tables, and marking the days on the calendar.

“They want to be the person to call bingo instead of the activity leader,” Wessels says. “They’re more involved in their daily life, so they’re not waiting for life and activities to happen for them.”

One upside is there are fewer injuries because people aren’t wandering into each other’s rooms and falling. They’re busy doing other things, like reading. Every day there is a reading circle, either in the living room or, on good days, on the patio outside. On a recent weekday, about 15 residents and a staff member took turns reading from large print books on topics familiar to folks in their 70s, 80s and 90s—Mickey Rooney, Gene Kelly, the Statue of Liberty.

Maria, with a shaking leg but strong voice, reads the loudest and longest, and even directs the others. “Now we go to page 6,” she says, then reads: “Money was raised in many different ways.”

One woman protests, “I’m too old for all this.” Another says, “I’m not hearing what page.”

It’s not easy—but it’s not mindless television either. And it’s working. “I love to read any place, any time,” Maria says. It’s a big change, Wessels says. “It used to be the activity leader reading to the residents. Now the residents are actively engaged in reading and having a discussion about what they’re reading. Some people who were not talking before are talking now because they have to read.”

Eventually, Wessels says, she wants to see residents choosing their own clothes and dressing and grooming themselves.

A study by Miami University’s Scripps Gerontology Center shows encouraging early results of Xavier’s Montessori Dementia Program: increased activity for residents, more reminiscing about their lives, and less passivity.

Farfsing knows it would have been good for her dad. “I saw my father slip quickly and accelerate at lighting speed as soon as he was kept from doing things,” she says. “We need to not create a hospital or hotel for these people—but a home structure instead.”

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

**IN 1965, XAVIER BEGAN THE FIRST GRADUATE MONTESSORI TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM IN THE COUNTRY.**

xavier.edu/montessori

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**TENETS OF MONTESSORI DEMENTIA CARE**

**THE GOALS OF THE MONTESSORI METHOD ARE TO MAXIMIZE A PERSON’S INDEPENDENCE AND ENGAGEMENT WHILE DECREASING ISOLATION IN PEOPLE EXPERIENCING MEMORY LOSS.**

**THE MONTESSORI DEMENTIA APPROACH:**

**IS PERSON-CENTERED**

- Meets the individual’s unique needs in the moment.

**HONORS THE INDIVIDUAL**

- Lets people do for themselves with or without support.
- Recognizes each person’s abilities and preferences when creating activities.

**ALLOWS CHOICE**

- Gives a person a sense of control.

**ESTABLISHES ROUTINE**

- Provides consistency and predictability.

**VALUES WORK**

- Providing meaningful activities helps improve skills and reduce negative behaviors.

**CREATES COMMUNITY**

- Being part of a community provides purpose.
When Deb Henretta’s mother died, so many people showed up for her funeral in Rochester, N.Y., that police were needed to direct the nearly 1,000 visitors who came to pay their respects.

The woman known for sending cards to everyone on their birthdays had left a legacy of friends, family and colleagues who came to pay their respects to the nurse who inspired so many through her passion for nursing.

But Carol Bieck Henretta was no typical nurse—especially for her era. She went beyond the basics of earning her RN certification, adding a master’s and a doctorate and serving as a nurse, nurse educator and nursing professor at the University of Rochester in a career that spanned 40 years.

“Her role was not just as a scholar but also as a practitioner and a leader of nursing,” Henretta says.

In honor of her mother, Henretta and her husband, Sean Murray, have set up the Carol B. Henretta Nursing Scholarship to benefit Xavier nursing students. But because her mother was a nurse educator and a leader, Henretta says the scholarship will reward those aspiring nursing students with financial need who also have a talent for leadership.

“We think the scholarship can go to an individual who shows leadership in those areas and is not just book smart,” she says. “It was the practitioner care that made my mom special as it relates to nursing.”

Her mother is perhaps best known for developing the program to educate doctors, nurses and parents about how to protect babies from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, known as SIDS, back in 1977. She later joined the nursing faculty to promote nursing education, and also served as assistant dean and director of admissions for the school.

After retiring in 1997, she continued to support the University of Rochester and her community with countless volunteer hours. Carol Henretta died in February 2016. She was 79.

Helping nursing students thrive at Xavier is a natural next step for Deb Henretta and her family, who have considerable ties to the University: They’re former parishioners of Bellarmine Parish, her husband earned a master’s at Xavier, and their daughter is a pre-med major. And Henretta, a retired Procter & Gamble marketing executive, has served on the advisory panel and as a mentor for the Williams College of Business and is now a member of the University Board of Trustees.

So when she learned of the School of Nursing’s newest programs to make nursing education available to more students, she realized her family could support nursing education and honor her mother—all at the same time.

“That history of the nursing school and (Dean Paul Gore’s) commitment to make it a signature program is what influenced us to support it,” she says.
THAT’S WHAT MENTORING DOES:
It allows a student to “test drive” a career. But it also can work the other way around. Who knows? The mentee you mentor might be your next great hire.

GO ON A TEST DRIVE

xavier.edu/beamementor
He left four years ago, but Craig Hockenberry is still tethered to the school—and the kids—he began saving more than 11 years earlier. Hockenberry, MEd ‘98, is the principal who convinced the Cincinnati Public Schools to expand Oyler Elementary into a high school so it could enroll some of the 85 percent of former Oyler students who dropped out before 10th grade.

The caveat: he had to find them and bring them back. So he started knocking on doors in the mostly Appalachian neighborhood of Lower Price Hill.

“I had to find about 190 kids to fill the school,” he says. “We enrolled a lot who were in really bad shape academically.”

His success bringing so many students back to school was rooted in the personal relationships he developed with the students’ families and the community learning center he created at Oyler that offers tutoring, mentoring, weekend food and an on-site health clinic providing vision, dental and mental health care.

The school now graduates over 60 percent of its seniors, from 30-50 students a year. About half go to college. When New York Mayor Bill DeBlasio toured the school in 2013, National Public Radio tagged along and was so impressed, it committed to creating a documentary by following the school for a year. It took two.

“Oyler: One School, One Year” first aired in May 2015 and has been touring America ever since. Though now superintendent at Three Rivers Schools, Hockenberry stays in touch with Oyler and often travels with the film to cities across the U.S. In October, he and a panel of Oyler administrators showed the film to Xavier education, psychology, social work and counseling students and faculty. The discussion focused on the challenges of urban education—for both students and educators.

“We are slowly breaking the cycle of poverty,” he says. “Poverty is brutal … but the film helped a lot of them to achieve because so many people reached out to encourage and help them.”
KATRINA AND THE WAVE

Hal Leftwich knew they were in trouble the moment the wave of water came across the parking lot and poured into the hospital’s first floor. They had followed their disaster plan—securing the building, transferring patients out and moving the remaining patients to the main floor of Hancock Medical Center, away from the windows. They were ready.

But Hurricane Katrina took an unexpected turn and bore down on the Mississippi coast without pity. With 80 staff and 34 patients still in place, the hospital was right in its path.

Leftwich, a 1980 Master of Health Services Administration alum, was the CEO at the time. He was grateful they’d practiced their disaster preparedness drills that summer of 2005, but he had no idea how truly valuable it would be.

Nothing teaches a lesson better than reality, which is why Sr. Nancy Linenkugel, director for Health Services Administration, started the Health Care in Practice program in 2011. Since then, 10 health professionals have presented real-life stories, one each semester, to students across the whole range of health care professions at Xavier.

Leftwich presented his Katrina story in September. “My message to students is you’ll be faced with things in your career you never expected, and you’ll be asked to take on roles using training you think you’ll never use,” he says.

He told how the 32-foot wall of water forced them to change plans and quickly move patients from the flooded first floor back upstairs, using sheets as slings to carry them when the elevators went out. In the days after the storm, they moved the remaining patients from one side of the building to the other to keep them in the shade, their O2 lines draped out the windows. For weeks, Leftwich and his staff slept outside.

The hospital eventually reopened at a cost of over $40 million. But the most important outcome was no one died. “We took the drills seriously, but you just never know when you’ll be called into service in response to something that you do not normally do,” he says.

TAKING THE PERUVIAN PLUNGE

Laney Bender-Slack just can’t get enough of Peru. She’s helped lead Xavier students there for a cultural immersion program four times already. Now it’s the teachers’ turn.

“It’s important that K-12 educators engage in experiential learning through immersion in order to develop intercultural competence and meet the needs of their second-language and international students,” she says.

A nearly $90,000 grant from the Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad of the U.S. Department of Education is allowing Bender-Slack to lead educators on their own immersion trip to Lima, Peru, for four weeks this summer. The project, Going Global: Internationalizing Teacher Education through Teacher Immersion, offers educators the chance to learn new ways to connect university and K-12 students in both locations and better meet their needs.

From June 11-July 9, she and 12 educators will study at the University Antonio Ruiz de Montoya and learn about indigenous cultures in Cuzco, Andahuaylillas and the Sacred Valley.

KATRINA SURVIVOR EXCELS AT XAVIER

In August of 2005, Patara Williams and her family barely escaped Hurricane Katrina, getting out of the way only a few hours before she struck Mississippi.

When Williams came home a few days later with her mother and brothers, the house was a moldy, soggy mess. They slept outside, ate military meals, and gratefully accepted an invitation from their Texas cousins to move in. Despite the trauma of Katrina, the experience became, for Williams, an opportunity for growth. Katrina changed her life, leading her to a new home in Texas, where for the first time she was treated as an equal with her white peers and excelled in both high school and college. It also gave her a new perspective of herself as a servant-leader, one she is fulfilling now at Xavier, where she’s studying for both a Master of Health Services Administration and an MBA.

“The perspective I have now was shaped by my experiences and will be critical in the role I ultimately play,” she says. “Being a servant-leader is being able to lead by example.”

Williams has come a long way from that August when she was only 13. Now 24, she’s grateful for the opportunity to attend Xavier, made possible by a $40,000 Corris Boyd scholarship that promotes minority scholarship. She plans on leading a health care organization with the kind of compassion she experienced after the hurricane.
I-O PSYCHOLOGY JOINS UNITED NATIONS COMPACT

The Industrial-Organizational Psychology program was recently accepted as a member of the United Nations Global Compact, a large-scale corporate sustainability initiative that has over 12,000 members.

Xavier’s is only the third I-O program to sign on, which makes Professor Morrie Mullins excited to be able to make professional connections with the other two—Purdue and George Mason universities.

Member organizations, also known as signatories, agree to support the Compact’s 10 principles pertaining to human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption. For Xavier, that means incorporating the material into the curriculum and pursuing research related to those areas, Mullins says.

“Given that Xavier is a Jesuit university, the principles are ones that fit nicely with what and how we already think about educating our students, so now it’s a matter of finding ways to do scholarly activity around the principles, including encouraging student theses on various relevant topics,” he says.

The I-O master’s program, one of three graduate psychology programs at Xavier, teaches students how to apply science-based techniques to business and workplace issues. I-O psychologists help companies make better business decisions about their employees by combining their knowledge of human behavior with a scientific approach, so students learn by conducting their own science-based research.

“Being part of a network with over 12,000 signatories in 170 countries makes our I-O program part of something pretty big and gives us access to a network that I’ve not even begun to fathom how to tap,” Mullins says. “There is a lot of potential for applied projects as we search for potential partner organizations, and that could lead to education and training opportunities both for our graduate students and our undergraduates.”

CONFRONTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN BELIZE

Shortly after graduating last May with a Health Services Administration degree, Kelsey Minix found herself in Belize, Central America, working in public health. She welcomed the chance to use her degree to help others.

But the position and the people she met while living in Punta Gorda led her in a direction she did not expect—helping stop domestic abuse.

A summer internship in the Public Health Scholars Program at Columbia University led to her position with Hillside Healthcare International, a clinic that provides free health care and education in Belize.

“I counseled patients on hypertension, diabetes, family planning, oral hygiene, the Zika virus,” she says. “I was also involved with the Belizean Ministry of Health, which allowed me to educate at schools and health fairs.”

But after witnessing women being abused, she came up with an idea to start a women’s group and built a curriculum around topics including self-esteem, confidence, family planning, nutrition, depression and anxiety, stress, leadership, parenting methods and abuse.

Several women showed up at the first meeting and went on to start six different women’s groups in their villages.

“Because domestic violence is a taboo topic in their culture, it wasn’t something I could advertise to them,” she says. “My hopes were that if something was going on at home, these topics would allow them to talk about it and seek help.”

Minix found two Peace Corps volunteers to help her get started and carry on after she left. “I wanted to create a sustainable program that could thrive after I was gone.”
DATA FOR THE GREATER GOOD

In the realm of clinical psychology, practice not only makes perfect. It makes theory more practical.

Second-year students in Xavier’s clinical psychology doctoral program are putting theory to good use with the real-world intention of helping school-age students faced with immense challenges. By the end of the course, they’ll have the data, and the grade, to prove it.

The course, “Issues in Applied Psychology,” has been taught for the last decade by Kathleen Hart, chair of the Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology, and Kathy Burklow, a clinical psychologist. The course challenges students to review a program and answer the key question clinicians face throughout their career: Is this approach working?

Hart sums up the challenge: “The psychology students are learning the process of working with an organization to help the organization understand what information they have.” And also to create strategies based on that information.

But now the challenges are real as they’re working with actual student data from the Catholic Inner City Schools Education Fund. By reaching out to groups like CISE, Xavier students are engaging in an evaluation of educational programs that impact real lives, not just testing theories. Real students plus real data equals real results, for everyone—plus real pressures.

“We’re fast-tracking this for the sake of our students on how to do this with other organizations,” Hart says.

The prognosis? Future clinical psychologists gain valuable experiences, and a philanthropic organization gains a free service that would cost thousands of dollars otherwise.

EYES OPEN TO PREVENT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Since social work faculty member Jessica Donohue-Dioh helped Harold and Dancy D’Souza escape from what they could only describe as slavery, the three have teamed up to form a non-profit organization aimed at protecting people from human trafficking.

The goal of Eyes Open International is “to prevent human trafficking, eliminating this human rights exploitation for future generations.” The trio launched the site at eyesopeninternational.org in January and are raising funds to support its mission.

Its name, she says, was deliberately chosen. “When people are traveling across the world for opportunities, we want them to know what they’re getting into, their potential rights, and to do it with their eyes wide open.”

Their partnership developed after the D’Souzas arrived from India in 2003 with their two sons. But they soon realized the family friend, a man they once called “Uncle” who had promised a great life in America, had other plans. He kept their money and papers and forced them to work in his restaurant. They fled in 2004. By 2007, they were desperate, but a local church introduced them to Donohue-Dioh, who suspected they had been trafficking victims.

A 2004 social work graduate, she’d discovered human trafficking while studying for a master’s degree and is now researching prevention for her PhD. She first became the director of the Houston YMCA’s prevention program and has since become a national authority on the subject, helping found several organizations, including in Cincinnati. She says human trafficking for sex or labor is the second fastest-growing criminal network in the world.

“The most important thing I did for them was to identify what had happened to them as human trafficking,” she says.

That designation allowed D’Souza to be certified as a victim, which qualified the family for services and employment. Now permanent U.S. residents, they want to turn their harrowing experience into a way to protect others from becoming victims themselves. The non-profit will offer workshops in India and Cameroon, where D’Souza will describe what to expect in the U.S. “We want to empower people on the other side so they have the information before they come and are subject to that exploitation,” she says.
A NEW VIEW ON PUBLIC HEALTH

Could a Xavier nursing student become the next Spielberg or Scorsese? Maybe—if local, state and national luminaries have anything to say about it.

Direct Entry as Second Degree (MIDAS) nursing students at Xavier produced video documentaries as part of their final grade, says Kelly Knight-Bohnhoff, assistant professor in the School of Nursing. The students then shared copies of the videos with local, state and national folks, including U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown, former First Lady Michelle Obama, Ohio Gov. John Kasich and former Vice President Joseph Biden.

“My hope was to provide students with the opportunity to share their learning and understanding of key concepts associated with a multi-step, population-based community assessment and analysis, while making a difference in the lives of vulnerable populations in Cincinnati,” she says.

The video documentaries are:

• “Off the Record,” which shares students’ experiences serving parents in Over-the-Rhine with health prevention and education.
• “Un Pasito Adelante: A Small Step Forward,” which shares students’ experiences serving the Latino immigrant population in Springdale, Ohio.
• “Caring in Cincinnati,” which focuses on serving women involved in the criminal justice system with a dual diagnosis of mental illness and addiction.

’30 UNDER 30’ ROCKS

Xavier alumna Sherrie Brown is a millennial who is getting noticed—at least within the world of human resource management.

Brown was included in the Society for Human Resource Management’s (SHRM) newest “30 Under 30” list of next generation “HR rock stars…who are leading HR into the future.” These are emerging leaders who demonstrate creativity, accomplishment, diversity, innovation, service and leadership.

Brown, who graduated in 2013, says she owes her early success to Xavier’s Human Resource Development program. The skills she learned in the program are the foundation of her success, but the cohort style of the program provided a lifelong network of friends and colleagues.

Her accomplishments since graduation include working for the Office of the Missouri State Auditor, where she started an HR department from scratch and is now HR director. It’s what caught the attention of the folks at SHRM. She says it has been a humbling experience.

“I am grateful to SHRM for taking time to acknowledge the contributions that a new generation of HR professionals make every single day,” she says.

JEFFREY SUSI: 2016 PRECEPTOR OF THE YEAR

Jeffrey Susi, President and CEO of Indian River Memorial Hospital in Vero Beach, Fla., is Xavier’s Preceptor of the Year for 2016. The annual award, which has been given since 1969, recognizes service provided to Xavier students by an outstanding administrative residency preceptor. Susi, who graduated with his Master of Health Services Administration in 1979, is the 53rd awardee. MHSA students complete an eight-to-12-month health-care residency, typically with a health-care executive who serves as a mentor and facilitator. The award recognizes preceptors who demonstrate leadership in the profession, commitment to three or more students, and support for the graduate program. “Jeffrey Susi more than met the criteria,” says director Sr. Nancy Linenkugel.

“The preceptor role is invaluable to students, providing critical advice, support and guidance throughout the Xavier residency experience.”

Sr. Nancy Linenkugel
NURSING STUDENTS SCREEN SCHOOLCHILDREN

Thanks to some graduate and undergraduate nursing students at Xavier, about 450 schoolchildren from the Three Rivers Schools have received health screenings.

About 17 nursing students visited the K-12 campus over five days last fall to help the school nurse complete the screenings.

“This community is an underserved area, and many of these students get no health care locally,” says nursing professor Sonia Hissett. “Our students provided excellent, compassionate care.”

The children were screened for vision, hearing and scoliosis. Though other universities turned them down, Hissett saw multiple benefits from the partnership.

“I felt this would be an excellent opportunity to provide a community service while educating both undergraduate and graduate nurses,” she says.

VIRTUAL OPERATIONS

Tom vonAhlefeld, a Master of Health Services Administration student, is on the leading edge of an effort to adapt virtual reality for the medical community.

As an administrative resident at Children’s Hospital of Omaha, Neb., he collaborated with a radiologist, a pediatric surgeon and a radiology tech to create a holographic image from CT scans of a patient’s tumor. The holographic image was then used by the surgeon to assist in planning the surgery to remove the tumor.

As part of his mission to bring new technology to the hospital, vonAhlefeld and his radiology tech partner used 3D imaging software to create an exact digital copy of a CT scanned tumor, which was imported into Microsoft’s new HoloLens headset for conversion to a holographic image.

The HoloLens allows the viewer to “peel away” the layers of tissue and bone so the tumor can be visualized.

SPLENDID SPLINTERS

Move over, Crosstown Shootout. You’ve got some healthy competition. The Crosstown Splint Off, now in its sixth year, brought more than 100 students from Xavier, Mt. St. Joseph and the University of Cincinnati together for a virtuosic display of thermoplastic art. That’s the primary material used in splinting, and it was on display at the February event at Mt. St. Joseph.

While splints are created by occupational therapists for therapeutic purposes, the Splint Off takes the material in an artistic direction—a sculpture competition.

Claire Morress, clinical faculty for Occupational Therapy, is their coach and advisor. “They spend three weeks working on their sculptures, almost every day,” she says.

In fact, there are so many entries that each school now sends only their top four sculptures to the competition. The rest are entered in a Best of the Rest event.

It’s all in fun with a serious purpose—to give health-care students an opportunity to feel comfortable with the material and process of splinting before they ever encase an arm in a real cast.

Like the Shootout, Xavier finished second and came back to win the Best of the Rest consolation prize.

“Finally being able to import an actual CT image of a heart, which is a single image, was huge.”

Tom von Ahlefeld
JUST PUBLISHED


Curriculum Leadership, Beyond Boiler Plate Standards, 2nd ed. Leo Bradley, Professor, School of Education; Meyers, Mark, Associate Professor of Education; Curtis, Shirley, Clinical Faculty, Educational Administration; and Kessinger, Tom, Associate Professor, School of Education, (2017). Lanham, MD, Scarecrow Education, Rowman and Littlefield. www.rowman.com.

MHSA WINS SECOND INAUGURAL AWARD

When Master of Health Services Administration students turn to sustainability in Sr. Nancy Linenkugel’s Professional Development course, she doesn’t limit them to just what’s in the text. They visit area hospitals to study the interplay of buildings and technology with the needs of doctors and patients.

There’s a lot to consider: bed configuration, parking, historic structures. In one case, a giant amphitheater once used to demonstrate medical techniques to a gallery of eager medical students now sits largely unused. But its historic legacy means it remains in place, forcing new construction to be built around it in sometimes unplanned and unsustainable ways.

The students also look at newer construction using technology and planning that saves energy and money, resulting in better health care for patients and better work environments for staff.

Xavier’s novel approach to teaching MHSA students about sustainability and the environment is emphasized throughout the entire program, says director Linenkugel. And it caught the eye of the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME), which awarded the first CAHME/Canon Solutions America Award for Sustainability in Healthcare Management Education and Practice to Xavier.

It’s the second inaugural award for the program in as many years. Last year, Xavier won the CAHME/Ascension award for leadership development. “We’re winning because we’re a top program in the country,” Linenkugel says.

GRANTING HOPE FOR TEENAGERS

Since completing the Human Resource Development program in 1996, Diane Egbers has squeezed every possible benefit out of her degree. She’s provided leadership development to thousands of clients through her business, LEI Consulting, and she wrote a book, The Ascending Leader, in 2013 about proactive strategies to ensure newly promoted leaders succeed.

“I’ve leveraged all aspects of the HRD program, and thousands have benefited,” Egbers says.

So has Xavier, where she returns to lecture or sit on panels. Now she’s turning her considerable talent toward something more personal—developing mental health awareness for high school students in memory of her son, Grant, who took his life in 2015. He was 15 years old.

“Grant was such a loving, caring, charismatic individual,” she says. “We just had such an outpouring of support, and we are grateful to his friends who are now seniors in high school. There was a tremendous loving response to our son because even though he struggled, he shared joy, humor and unconditional love to all.”

Grant suffered from the effects of four concussions during his life, including severe migraine headaches and depression, and was working with specialists at Children’s Hospital. The support her family received led Egbers to form a non-profit she named Grant Us Hope to advocate for the kind of support that would help high school students like Grant.

“We want to build awareness around mental health and have standard preventive assessments so we’re diagnosing kids earlier to seek help, so fewer families have to go through what we as a family have experienced,” Egbers says.

Grant Us Hope has a board and a development director. Its event, Walk for Hope, was on April 28 at Friendship Park on Cincinnati’s riverfront. More information about the group’s mission can be found on the website at grantushope.org.

“We believe if we collaborate with others to create a common message and work together, we can have a more positive impact on youth who struggle and their parents,” she says. “Our next goal is to get legislative support for basic mental health prevention so that it’s a standard service in all high schools.”
LEADERS IN HEALTH CARE

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