

DIMENSIONS

Winter 2018 -2019

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Graduate
School

Chancellor
Introduction

MC Receives
Grant



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Methodist College
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Chancellor's Letter

Dear Alumni,

I am excited to be corresponding with Methodist alumni for the first time in this newsletter as the new Methodist College chancellor. You might have noticed that we changed the title of our campus CEO from “president” to “chancellor.” This change was to align our college with other colleges who use that same university title, and to distinguish us from health care entities and other corporations who have “presidents.” Thus our “vice presidents” are now titled “vice

chancellors.”

I had the pleasure of attending one of your alumni board meetings. There were alumni present at the meeting representing graduating classes from each of the last five decades! It was fascinating hearing about the similarities and differences each experienced during their studies at Methodist (School of Nursing, College of Nursing, and just plain College, as the name has evolved.) Each had a very positive experience in college, as their voluntary service on the board reflects.

We kicked off our third academic year on our new campus. Some of our third and fourth year returning students moved with us from the old downtown campus to our beautiful new campus adjacent to the Grand Prairie shopping complex. Most of our current students have only attended classes in the new facility. The student experience has changed markedly from our old location to the new one. Most significant is that students can no longer walk from the academic building to UnityPoint Health Methodist Hospital. However, the beautiful new campus, state of the art classrooms, laboratories, simulators and computer facilities does make for an optimal academic experience.

I am happy to say that we have our highest enrollment to date this fall semester. As I write these words our student count is 692. This is a small increase over last year (3%) and the year before, but we are inching closer to breaking the 700-student milestone. As you might guess, most of the 692 are baccalaureate-nursing majors. But we do have students enrolled in our bachelor science in health science, bachelor of social work, nursing assistant, medical assistant, and gerontology certificate programs. Also we have five students enrolled in our master of science nursing (MSN) degree program!

For those who have not had the chance to meet me, I'll add a little bit about myself. I was mostly raised in St. Joseph, Missouri, although all my parents and grandparents were born and raised in Chicago. I attended the University of Missouri-Kansas City, completed my master's degree at the University of Central Florida, and earned my Ph.D. from the Johns Hopkins University. I served 23 years on active duty in the military (nine in the Navy, 14 in the Coast Guard). Following that I was the associate provost at Gardner-Webb University in North Carolina and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the University of Hawai'i campus on Kaua'i. I am extremely happy to be back in the Midwest, closer to my roots and extended family. I am honored to now be serving as the Chancellor of Methodist College! I look forward to meeting more alumni during my first year at the college.

Best Regards,

James R. Dire, Ph.D.
Chancellor

Preserving History Through Digitization

The Methodist College Library was awarded an Illinois History Digital Imaging Grant from the Illinois State Library. As technology advances, this grant will help us digitally preserve and make available online images and documents from the history of Methodist College. Over the next two years, the library staff and a digitization expert will be working to scan and upload these images and documents.

However, we need help from our alumni. You, as alumni of this great institution, have so much knowledge about the history that can enhance this project. Michelle Nielsen Ott, Director of Library Services, is forming an Alumni Advisory Group for the digitization project. Volunteers for this group can expect to meet regularly over the next two years to help organize and identify items for this collection.

We are also accepting items, if you would like to donate to this project. Please contact Michelle Nielsen Ott if you are interested in serving on this group at 309-672-4937 or mnienlsenott@methodistcol.edu.

Welcome MOLLIE to the Community

Methodist College introduced our new Mobile Outreach Learning Lab for Integrative Education or MOLLIE vehicle. The MOLLIE project was developed to provide an educational opportunity and hands-on experience for students in the college's social work, nursing, and health science programs by providing health and social wellness education and assessments to the most vulnerable members of our community. MOLLIE will expand the college's service learning programming by engaging students, faculty, and the community that connect community concerns with learning objectives. The vehicle is taken to area communities, where students provide simple healthcare screenings and resource guidance to individuals.

The vehicle is a former mobile mammography unit funded by the Methodist Service League and previously used by UnityPoint Health Methodist. The Methodist Service League generously donated the vehicle to the college. With funding from the Telligen Foundation and the UnityPoint Health Methodist | Proctor Foundation, the college was able to re-brand the exterior of the vehicle and remodel the interior to better fit the intended purpose of the vehicle.

Methodist College welcomes this new learning opportunity for our students and the health resources we can provide the community. Look for MOLLIE in the community!

Methodist Alumni Association Board

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Graduate School at Methodist College

Graduate School Adds MSN-Generalist & MSN-Nurse Leader Executive

Methodist College announces the addition of two programs within the Methodist College Graduate School. Methodist College is now accepting students in the Master of Science in Nursing - Generalist and Master of Science - Nurse Leader Executive. Course work began in fall 2018. The addition of two master level programs and the current Master of Science -Nurse Educator will now form the Methodist College Graduate School.

Graduate school courses are offered online with in-person practicums for a blended learning format that accommodates working nursing professionals. The coursework for each program is structured in a way to allow most students to complete their advanced degree within six semesters. Students in each graduate school program can complete foundational courses prior to choosing which program they would like to complete, or complete a mixture of courses they feel would best meet their career goals.

The **Master of Science in Nursing - MSN (Generalist option)** allows students to select specific courses to meet their educational and professional goals. The Master of Science in Nursing program is a general graduate degree developed in accordance with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing Master's Essentials. Students will complete a core group of courses and have the opportunity to select additional courses to meet their goals. Additional courses will allow students to develop a hybrid of the MSN Nurse Leader Executive and MSN Nurse Educator programs. This program will give students the flexibility to create their own customized Master of Science in Nursing degree.

The **Master of Science in Nursing - Nurse Leader Executive** prepares students to perform as a leader or manager in a variety of healthcare settings. Graduates of this program will develop comprehensive leadership and management skills to look at business models and perform analysis of the healthcare environment. They'll be able to facilitate interdisciplinary teams to evaluate safe patient care and analyze trends in healthcare that impact the nursing profession.

The Nurse Leader Executive program was developed in response to a need by local healthcare organizations. As healthcare institutions look to fill leadership roles, they seek professionals who are educated and experienced to fulfill those critical roles. As many nursing professionals look to advance their career they seek leadership roles, and the Nurse Leader Executive will prepare them to fulfill those leadership roles in healthcare organizations. Each program within the Graduate School at Methodist College will offer comprehensive course work tailored to today's nursing needs, with small class sizes.

We invite alumni who are looking to further their education and career to learn more about the Graduate School at Methodist College. If you are interested in learning more about a master's degree program, please visit www.methodistcol.edu/graduate-school.

Methodist Alumni Reunion

Look for a full story in the next alumni newsletter about the 2018 Alumni Reunion. The recipients of the annual Alumni Awards and the 50 year class celebration will be featured! Photos from the alumni reunion are available for viewing at www.MethodistCOL.edu/news-and-events.

Methodist College Awarded \$2.8 Million HRSA Grant

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has awarded a \$2.8 million grant to Methodist College to recruit and train nursing students and current registered nurses in community-based primary care.



In July, the announcement was made by Congressman Darin LaHood and then Interim Chancellor Dr. Deborah Garrison at a press conference on the Methodist College campus. The innovative new program will educate undergraduate nursing students who want to work in non-hospital settings to improve access to primary health care in medically under-served communities. Students will take specific coursework as part of the program and, in partnership with UnityPoint Clinics and other community-based primary care providers, they will receive clinical experiences with an emphasis on chronic disease prevention and control, including mental health and substance use conditions. Upon successful completion of the curriculum, students will earn a certificate in community-based primary care.

As part of the grant, Methodist College will recruit students in the pre-licensure Bachelor of Science in Nursing and the RN to BSN programs to attain an academic certificate in the delivery of interprofessional, community-based primary care to medically under-served areas, including rural communities. The certificate will include courses in epidemiology, health promotion/chronic disease prevention and control, population health concepts, and mental health/substance abuse. The grant will provide the students with partial scholarships for tuition needs not met by grants or other scholarships, and housing assistance for those students who choose to live in the Prairie Sky Apartments at Methodist College.

The college will also develop a four-module continuing education program to address the areas of health promotion/chronic disease prevention and control, population health and mental health/substance abuse. The grant will provide funding for 25 practicing registered nurses to complete the program in which they can earn a continuing education-bearing certificate in community-based primary care.

The grant will enhance all nursing clinical courses and develop a partnership liaison between the college's clinical partners. In addition, the college will work with UnityPoint Health to strengthen the roles of patient navigators in the area of community-based primary care which will lead to long-term changes to enhance population health.

Pictured above from left to right is Todd Baker, then UnityPoint Health Vice President for Clinical Operations and Regional Development; Dr. Deborah Garrison, then Interim Chancellor; and Congressman Darrin LaHood.

If you are a registered nurse and interested in the continuing education program included within this grant, please contact Dr. Deb Stark, Associate Dean of Nursing at (309) 672-5513 or dmstark@methodistcol.edu.

Alumni Notes

CLASS OF 1937

During the Alumni Reunion we also heard from Ruth (Willson) Bunchman. She is doing well at 102 years old!



The Alumni Association recently heard from a family friend of a Class of 1938 graduate. Ruth (Smith) Dick, is a resident of a senior living community in the Central Illinois area. As we only have a few alumna from the 1930's classes, it is wonderful when we hear from them. Ruth's friend provided the Alumni Association with some information of her days at Methodist and as a nurse, that she had written years ago.

Ruth comes from a family of teachers and she wanted to do something different, which lead her to nursing school. A friend, Edith, entered the same class and the two lived together most of the time at school. When she graduated she took the Rocket train to Chicago for nursing exams. Her last duty as a student was with the Visiting Nurse Association (VNA); a nurse broke her leg and Ruth was asked to fill in. The VNA gave her a Chevy Coupe and she drove all over Peoria. This lead to a permanent job, with weekends off! Through the VNA, she had the opportunity to attend further schooling and earned a Public Health Certificate. She studied in Minnesota and Nashville, Tennessee. While in Tennessee she met her husband.

Ruth stayed in contact with many of her classmates, whom became lifelong friends. She regularly attended class reunions at Methodist. Ruth is pictured above.

PNC Presidential Scholarship

Four students have been selected to receive the inaugural Methodist college PNC Presidential Scholarship. While the PNC Foundation has been a longtime supporter of scholarships for students at Methodist College, this is the first time they have offered the Presidential Scholarship to four incoming students. The PNC Presidential Scholarship will award each student \$5,000 (\$2,500 per semester) for every year they attend Methodist College and meet the scholarship requirements.

The scholarship recipients are new to the college this fall, and they were selected after a rigorous application process. Applicants had to be pursuing a bachelor's degree at Methodist College, have at least a 3.0 GPA for high school or college credit, and submit an essay that demonstrated a passion for learning and how they plan to make a difference in their community upon graduation.



The four students selected for the inaugural PNC Presidential Scholarship are Ashley Jones of Pekin; Jordan Orsini of Edelstein; Collin Sanders of Heyworth; and Cobe Slaughter of Bloomington. All are pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. To celebrate their achievement, the students met with representatives from Methodist College and PNC to share information about themselves and how they have served their communities, and their future plans.

Back Row (left to right) - Methodist College Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Dr. Deborah Garrison, Methodist College Chancellor Dr. James Dire, PNC Regional President for Central Illinois Brian Ray, and PNC Vice President and Director for Client & Community Relations Jenna Cicciarelli Wiesner.

Front Row - Collin Sanders, Ashley Jones, Jordan Orsini, and Cobe Slaughter.



Congratulations Graduates!

Methodist College celebrated graduates and welcomed its new alumni on Saturday, December 16, 2017, and Saturday, May 19, 2018. Friends and family gathered at Bethany Baptist Church to watch as the college awarded degrees to graduates in December 2017 (pictured above) and May 2018 (pictured below). We welcome these new graduates to the Methodist Alumni Association!





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Did You Know?



The Methodist Alumni Appeal continues all year. Your support helps to grow programs and allow students to receive the best education. Our alumni speak of the wonderful education they received and how well prepared they were for healthcare. You can give the next generation of nursing and healthcare professionals the same level of excellence you received.

As many of our students rely on scholarships, you can designate a donation to the scholarship fund. You can also give a general donation that will be used to enhance programs at Methodist College.

If you would like to make a donation, please use the postage paid envelope provided within the newsletter. You may also donate online at www.UnityPoint.org/peoria/donate-now and select Methodist College from the drop-down menu. All donations are tax deductible.

Alumni Board Nominations

The Methodist Alumni Association is seeking nominations and applications for those interested in serving on the Alumni Board. The Alumni Board is a great way to become involved with your alma mater and give back to the Methodist community. The Alumni Association hosts events for current students and alumni. Join the fun, meet other alumni, and stay connected.

The board meets monthly, typically the second Wednesday at 5:00 p.m., at Methodist College in Peoria. For more information, please email msmith@methodistcol.edu.

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