


STUDENT HIGHLIGHT

Kiara Morelli



By Josh Friesen

Kiara Morelli, a second-year student pursuing her bachelor's degree in nursing from the OHSU School of Nursing, defines her upbringing as “nontraditional.”

She never attended high school — at 14, she crisscrossed the country working merchandise booths at country music festivals. At 17, her mother, who had developed a substance use disorder following a surgery, lost her life. Her grandparents, who'd helped raise her, passed away some years later.


Morelli's lived experience influenced her mindset and galvanized her resolve. She has a heart for people, pursues challenges and never shies away from being uncomfortable. Those traits have led her to OHSU, to be elected president of the Oregon Student Nurses Association and to the OHSU All-Hill Student Council as a School of Nursing representative.

Despite the hurdles along her path, Morelli has always forged ahead.

“Life is fragile, uncertain and ever-changing,” Morelli said. “If you can become comfortable with change and take this culmination of experiences and choose how you respond to them, you'll be OK.”

Morelli's values are reflected by the OHSU School of Nursing. As she continues her educational journey, she is confident she's at the perfect place to succeed, thrive and grow.

“There are people here from different backgrounds, different thoughts, different ideas, different visions of how to make health care better,” she said. “I don't think every university is built that way, and that's important to me. It feels like being home here. I think OHSU gets me in a way that a lot of places wouldn't have.”



Use QR code to read full interview

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Award winner focuses on heart failure education

By Anna Lageson

OHSU School of Nursing 2023 Distinguished Alumna Award winner, Amy Corcoran, B.S. with a major in nursing '05, pushes herself toward excellence, consistently looking for processes to improve the quality of care provided by OHSU's Cardiovascular Intermediate Care Unit.

She even thought about improving patient care when she was recovering from the birth of her first child.

Corcoran and her husband were told they could not be discharged until they attended an in-patient hospital class for new parents. Other new mothers in the class asked questions Corcoran hadn't thought to ask and she realized how much she did not know. She felt a powerful connection to this community of new parents and realized that a mandatory class for heart failure patients might offer similar opportunities for support.

Inspired by the parenting class she attended, Corcoran designed and launched Heart Failure University in 2013. Adults who had suffered heart failure and their caregivers were required to attend these classes in person while still in the hospital. The classes provided them with tools to improve self-care and quality of life.

Corcoran takes her cue to welcome, support and inspire students and newly graduated nurses in her unit from one of her own mentors, Abby Laughlin, R.N., M.S. '01.

When she was a nursing student, Corcoran remembers feeling threatened by her pending rotation on the cardiac floor at OHSU.

“Abby was so inspirational. She took the scariness out of it,” Corcoran says. “I always tell her that I started my career in cardiac because of her.”

Eighteen years later, Corcoran is still thankful for Abby Laughlin and for all of the nurses who she says inspired her to work to the top of her license and scope in cardiac care at OHSU. Her goal now is to inspire other nurses to feel they have permission to make changes, particularly bedside nurses who she sees as the most overworked and in danger of burnout.

“My vision is to support those nurses at the bedside role, empowering them to make changes – to do quality improvement, to join national associations, to get their certifications, to partake in research projects,” Corcoran says. “Because that was so empowering for me.”

To read the extended story visit [ohsufoundation.org/stories/nursing-distinguished-alumna-award-amy-corcoran/](https://ohsufoundation.org/stories/nursing-distinguished-alumna-award-amy-corcoran/)

WEBINARS

FALL 2023

December

4

Noon PST

OHSU School of Nursing Southern Oregon Street

Nursing Team



November

13

6 p.m., Miller Auditorium, Vey Conference Center, 10th floor, Doernbecher Children's Hospital, (with online availability)

Teri A. Murray, Ph.D., PHNA-BC, RN, FAAN

Equity and Justice in Health and Education

Puhaty Lecture:

UPCOMING WEBINARS

For more information please visit [ohsufoundation.org/alumni/school-of-nursing/ohsu-nursing-noon/](https://ohsufoundation.org/alumni/school-of-nursing/ohsu-nursing-noon/)

Join us for our Fall program of OHSU Nursing@Noon presentations! We'll be hearing from Dean Susan Bakewell-Sachs; Teri A. Murray, Ph.D., PHNA-BC, RN, FAAN, professor and dean emerita of the Trudy Busch Valentine School of Nursing at Saint Louis University; and the OHSU Street Nursing Team at the Ashland campus.

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OHSU is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution.  
10/23 (130)

BY THE NUMBERS | OHSU School of Nursing degrees awarded in 2023

Total degrees awarded at 2023 Commencement

463



Doctoral and Masters level degrees

99



Bachelor of Science degrees

364



NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

DAISY Award for Faculty

- Beth Doyle, Extraordinary Nursing Faculty

- Jane Hagen, Extraordinary Nursing Faculty

- Jodley Bondurant, Extraordinary Nursing Faculty

DAISY Award for Students

- Edgar Perez Rivera, Ashland

- Madeline Hollis, La Grande

- Kiara Morelli, Portland undergrad

- Kristi Castillo, Graduate program

Andrew McHill received a new R01 grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Ruth S. Tadesse, Ph.D., M.S., R.N., has been awarded an Interprofessional Hartford Award for Research and Practice.

Hiroko Kiyoshi-Teo, Ph.D., RN, on her most recent Hartford Award for Research and Practice.

The future of nursing begins at OHSU: changemakers leaders inclusion discovery excellence



Learn more about undergraduate, graduate, doctor of nursing practice, and doctor of philosophy programs throughout the state. Online options are available for some programs.

SCHOOL OF NURSING CONNECTIONS

Connections

A PUBLICATION FROM THE OHSU SCHOOL OF NURSING

FALL 2023



Teshia Wilburn takes a moment to smile for the camera during new student orientation.

Hello Friends of the OHSU School of Nursing,

By Susan Bakewell-Sachs, dean and vice president of nursing affairs



I am pleased to share that the School is meeting our mission of *Healing, teaching, and discovery to optimize health, prepare nurse leaders, and transform health care.* We graduated 463 students this year and are growing to help ease the nursing workforce shortages. The Ashland-based SoN Street Team was awarded a competitive HRSA grant (one of four currently supporting progressive work at the school) and is expanding across southern Oregon, with students and faculty serving many people experiencing homelessness. An inspiring OHSU nursing student is leading in the school, on the OHSU All-Hill Council and as the elected President of the Oregon State Nurses Association. And we are proud to share that emerita faculty, Dr. Mary Ann Curry-McCammon, was posthumously recognized by the UCSF School of Nursing with its Alumni Humanitarian Service award for her tireless efforts to improve the health of women and girls in the US and across the world. We are also planning to honor her work next spring with an exhibition, so please stay tuned.





DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION



Adriana Sanchez, an undergraduate nursing student at the OHSU School of Nursing’s Ashland campus, provides a foot bath for a client on May 17, 2022. Since 2015, OHSU School of Nursing faculty and students have offered foot soak clinics, which offer a judgment-free space for local residents experiencing homelessness to address their foot issues, which are more common among the unhoused.

Nursing Street Team expands to Klamath Falls

**By Dawn Weinberger**  
For people experiencing homelessness, the ability to move around comfortably on foot is critical. “If you are living by collecting cans and bottles, you can (walk) up to 20 miles a day just trying to collect them,” says Rachel Richmond, M.S.N., RN, an assistant professor of clinical nursing in the OHSU School of Nursing Ashland campus. “That is a lot of wear and tear on the feet.”

This is where OHSU’s Nursing Street Team comes in. Based in Ashland and serving unsheltered people in and around the Ashland and Medford areas, the Street Team receives funding through a four-year, \$3.9-million grant from U.S. Department of Health & Human Services’ Health Resources & Services Administration.

Nurses, nurse practitioners and nursing students all serve on the team, providing a variety of direct support (including care coordination, referrals, transportation vouchers and harm reduction education) to people experiencing homelessness. Initial contact, however, is often through the Street Team’s Foot Soak Clinics, where people can get respite for their feet while simultaneously connecting and building trust with members of the local medical community.

The overall mission, Richmond says, is to help eliminate barriers to care by meeting people right where they are and on their own terms — without an agenda (i.e. to convince them to go to a clinic or to seek help for an addiction).

Richmond coordinated the launch of the program back in 2015, beginning with weekly foot soak clinics in Ashland. Later, the program expanded to Medford. Now, the clinics are happening a few times a week at parks, urban encampments, community centers and other locations in both cities, as well as in Klamath Falls — a new addition to the program as of this fall. Community partners include local organizations like LaClinica, AllCare Health, Rogue Community Health, Max’s Mission, Paradigm Clinic and Jackson Care Connect. These partners provide everything from follow-up services and mental health evaluations to supplies and additional sources of funding. (Jackson Care Connect, for example, contributed funds to help start the program in 2015..

Street Team members also check-in regularly throughout the community — student/faculty teams round four days per week, and the program’s designated mental health nurse practitioner, Helena F. Turner, M.S., PMHNP, rounds two days per week.

“Overall, the Street Team assists thousands of people in southern Oregon,” says Heather Voss, Ph.D., RN, the Associate Dean for the School of Nursing’s Ashland campus. This number includes 605 encounters in the Spring 2023 academic term alone. Of the 605, 112 started off with a foot soak.

“If you are living by collecting cans and bottles, you can (walk) up to 20 miles a day just trying to collect them. That is a lot of wear and tear on the feet.”

– Rachel Richmond, M.S.N., RN, Ashland campus

Along with Richmond, Voss and other faculty members, the program relies on the involvement of nursing students, many of whom serve on the Street Team as a part of their studies. Scholarships are even available to qualified students through an application process and a one-year commitment.

“This gives students the opportunity to work with populations with barriers to gaining access to care,” Voss says.

Recent graduate Ryan Villani, ’23 spent four academic terms serving on the Street Team in some capacity. Now an emergency department nurse at Asante Rogue Regional Medical Center in Ashland, Villani says her involvement in the program was extremely valuable, giving her fresh insights into the barriers unsheltered people face each day.

“This experience can be translated into any type of nursing that we do – not only community-based healthcare. Whether you are working in family care or oncology or surgery, you will come across people that are experiencing (challenges like) homelessness,” she says.

“Ideally, the expansion of the foot soak clinics into Klamath Falls is just the beginning of new growth for the Street Team,” says Richmond. Along with bringing even more services to the Klamath Falls community, the ultimate goal, she says, would be to create a blueprint of sorts — something that other nursing schools could use as a model for developing similar programs in their own communities.



Dedicated Education Units to Enrich OHSU SoN Clinical Learning

**By Dawn Weinberger**  
Asante Health and OHSU School of Nursing are teaming up to create two dedicated education units at hospitals in Southern Oregon.

“The project is the result of \$100K donation to the school from a family that was deeply and positively impacted by the care their family member received from an OHSU nursing student,” says Heather Voss, Ph.D., RN, the Associate Dean for the School of Nursing’s Ashland campus.

One unit will be at Rogue Regional Medical Center in Ashland; the other will be at Three Rivers Medical Center in Grants Pass. Both are existing acute care units.

The purpose of the dedicated education units is to give students enhanced clinical training while also providing professional development opportunities for Asante nurses. Groups of eight students will work at the sites for 10 straight weeks, under the supervision of one or two specific nurses.

“It gets our students (learning) at the bedside and it gives nurses the (chance) to see what it is like to be a teacher,” Voss says.

“Additionally, it will alleviate the workload of nursing school faculty members, who are often working with students in clinical settings while also teaching classes, planning courses and grading tests and papers,” Voss adds.

As for the students, it will allow them to really immerse themselves in the experience by getting to know patients and staff and working closely with veteran nurses.

Because the program is still in the development phase, a launch date is not yet known. Voss, however, says she hopes students, faculty, nurses and patients can benefit from the dedicated education units sooner — rather than later.

COMMENCEMENT 2023

Graduation awards

This year the OHSU School of Nursing awarded 463 degrees. And now for the awardees:

Statewide student awards

**The Jean E. Boyle Memorial award**  
*Undergraduate recipient:* Adriana Valenzuela, Monmouth  
*Graduate recipient:* Kate Ballard, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner

**The Community Service Award**  
*Undergraduate recipient:* Terrisa Gardner, Portland  
*Graduate recipient:* Sayre White, Nurse-Midwifery

**The Carol A. Lindeman Award**  
*Undergraduate recipients:* Erica (Nadermann) Orozco, La Grande and Anna Abel, Monmouth  
*Graduate recipient:* Antita Kanjanakaew, Ph.D.

**The Henrietta Doltz Puhaty Award**  
*Undergraduate recipient:* Jessica Norton, La Grande  
*Graduate recipient:* Cassandra Hwa, Nurse-Midwifery

**The Rural and Frontier Nursing Award**  
*Undergraduate recipient:* Amanda Vieira De Melo, La Grande  
*Graduate recipients:* Zenaida Gabriel and Nancy Ferrer Barr, Family Nurse Practitioner

**The Transcultural Nursing Award**  
*Undergraduate recipient:* Joseph O’Brien, La Grande  
*Graduate recipient:* Vivian Enyo Dzata, Psych Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

**The Agatha Hodgkin’s Award**  
*Graduate recipient:* Benjamin Hughes, Nurse Anesthesia

Campus awards

**Undergraduate awards**

**The Elnora Thompson Leadership Award**  
John Church, RNBS  
Six Nava, Portland  
Grace Hull, Klamath Falls  
Madison Conklin, La Grande  
Bailey White, Monmouth  
Kofi Nunes, Ashland

**The Golden Lamp Award**  
Susannah Nelson, Portland  
Marisela Flores-Pena, Klamath Falls  
Jessica Norton, La Grande  
Pamela Morigeau, Monmouth  
Jessica Mosher, Ashland  
Matthew Schenck, RNBS

Campus-specific awards

**The Dorothy L. Johnson Award**  
Yanele Santo-Moto, RNBS  
Carmen Powell, Portland

**The Gloria Krueger Award**  
Abigail Kollar, Ashland

Faculty awards

**Excellence in Teaching Award**  
*Undergraduate recipient:* Emily Elliott, Portland  
*Graduate recipient:* Amy Ross, online

**Diversity and Inclusion Award**  
Diana Siltanen, La Grande

Below: Rutha Pedro celebrates with her family after the La Grande campus commencement event.

Below: Six Nava addresses the crowd as the student representative for Portland commencement.

Middle right: Emily Hoskinson, student speaker for the OHSU Monmouth Campus Convocation & Pinning Ceremony, celebrates with loved ones after the ceremony.

Bottom: Bailey White (left on stage) receives the Monmouth Campus Elnora Thompson Leadership Award, presented by Judy Borgen, Assistant Professor of Clinical Nursing, and Dr. Angie Docherty, Campus Associate Dean and Associate Professor.



UCSF Recognizes Dr. Mary-Ann Curry McCammon

**By Mark Kemball**  
The University of California San Francisco (UCSF) Alumni Association has posthumously recognized Dr. Mary Ann Curry-McCammon with its Alumni Humanitarian Service award. Dr. Curry-McCammon served on the OHSU faculty from 2001 to 2010, retiring as an emerita faculty member. Those nominating Dr. Curry-McCammon for this award included OHSU emerita faculty members Dr. Pat Archbold, and Dr. Bev Hoeffer.

Together they honored Dr. Curry-McCammon’s substantive career research contributions “to our current understanding of the complex interrelationships among pregnancy, abuse and intimate partner violence, abuse in disabled populations, and the assessment of dangerousness.”



Dr. Curry-McCammon

Following her academic retirement, Dr. Curry-McCammon volunteered at the Coffee Creek Correctional Institute in Wilsonville, Ore. and at the Gynocare Fistula Center in Eldoret, Kenya. Though their settings and populations are worlds apart, Dr. Curry-McCammon recognized the shared need to reconstruct the lives of women who are economically challenged and vulnerable in their societies.

Dr. Curry-McCammon used quilting to address the profound psychosocial consequences suffered by women experiencing abuse and violence, and who have limited or no access to health care and other essential resources. Quilts for Empowerment – a multi-focus program to improve the health and economic security of fistula repair survivors and girls who survive sexual violence – was a direct outcome of this work.

“Mary Ann has worked tirelessly to improve the health and welfare of women and girls affected by poverty, pregnancy, abuse, and disability through her practice, teaching, and research,” wrote Drs. Archbold and Hoeffer. “Her lifetime of inspirational work makes her an ideal recipient of the Humanitarian Service Award.”

The OHSU School of Nursing is planning a recognition of Dr. Curry-McCammon in spring 2024.