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# Nurse training goes holistic

■ New program aims to produce more nurses during national shortage

By Sue Ryan  
Oregon Daily Emerald

There aren't enough nurses to meet demand in America's hospitals. Health care professionals cite burnout and stress as one reason nurses are leaving the profession.

In Lane County, a coalition of groups focused on changing the national trend started a bachelor's and master's degree nursing program this month in Eugene.

"They're trying to change what they believe to be a broken health care system," said Mary Carpenter, the OHSU nursing instructor for the Lane County program.

OHSU has teamed with Sacred Heart Medical Center, McKenzie-Willamette, the University and the Steering Committee for the Healing Arts to work together on this program. The new program joins the four other OHSU nursing school programs, located in Portland, and satellite locations in Ashland, Klamath Falls and La Grande.

"There is a national shortage," said Catherine Salvesson, the Oregon Health Sciences University director who oversees nursing outreach at campuses across the state.

Some nurses said the strict cost-control-driven atmosphere of health care today has contributed to the current situation, where they say the humanity of care giving is separated from the science of medicine.

"We need to balance the strengths of both sides," said Hannah Thomassen, who coordinates the nursing staff for McKenzie-Willamette Hospital in Springfield.

*"We need to balance the strengths of both sides."*

Hannah Thomassen  
nursing staff coordinator,  
McKenzie-Willamette Hospital

Students in the nursing program will learn about the links between spirituality, health and homeopathic and naturopathic medicine. Their classes are a combination of attending the Acorn series, online work and classroom instruction, Salvesson said.

"It's taking a more integrated approach than western medicine has taken," Carpenter said.

The Steering Committee is in charge of the Acorn Series, which focuses on how nurses can make health care more humane.

"We are working to bring science and humanities together into medicine," said Robin Jaqua, a

psychiatrist and member of the Steering Committee. "Many nurses are avoiding the profession because of burnout and stress. This is a national crisis."

Jaqua and her husband, John, donated \$170,000 to OHSU to fund the nursing degree program in Lane County. Barbara Peschiera, the director of development for the OHSU Foundation, said the gift is the largest amount the School of Nursing has ever received.

"It's major, and funds the entire program for three years," she said.

The Steering Committee's work emphasizes adding nontraditional elements to the caregiver's role.

"It provides nurses the support to practice by giving them more tools to really be with patients the way they used to be," said Netti Garner, a committee member, who works with women's services at McKenzie-Willamette. "It's so much more than giving medicine and taking vital signs."

Twenty-seven students are enrolled for the new bachelor's degree program and nine for the master's program in Lane County. While the Acorn series has been designed for the nursing program, the monthly lectures are open to the public and held at the Knight Law School.

Sue Ryan is a community reporter for the Oregon Daily Emerald. She can be reached at sueryan@dailyemerald.com.

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## Litwer

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was killed on Sept. 11 while working in an upper level of one of the World Trade Center towers.

Though he was saddened by the loss, Litwer said he also feels it is time to act.

"In regards to the events (since Sept. 11), it boils down to a very simple thing: You never get into fights, but if someone ever hits you, make sure they don't ever do it again. If I were to be activated for duty, I'd be ready to respond to the call," he said.

When he finds the time, Litwer also likes to go hiking and ultra-light camping. However, in a typical week, the sophomore keeps the peace as a resident assistant in the Bean complex, one of the University's residence halls. He also attends five classes, totaling 14 credits. As a double-major in psychology and political science, Litwer has his work cut out for him.

A large part of Litwer's life has been community service. Though Litwer started college two years late, he didn't put off college to take a break. Litwer worked for two years doing social work with AmeriCorps and a San Diego organization that works to help kids on the streets. After that, Litwer decided to attend the University to pursue a career in either psychology or law.

Litwer said he strives to have good character, and his colleagues have apparently picked up on that.

Lieutenant Matt Glen of the University ROTC program praised Litwer, his Guard colleague, as a "hard worker" who has "his head

on his shoulders."

Bean co-RA Lindy Albert said Litwer is "very excited and dedicated to being an RA."

"(Litwer) wants to get good experience out of this for himself and to be an influence on others," she said.

Before he had the opportunity to inspire people at the University, Litwer said he was first inspired by other people with great character. Throughout his volunteer work, he met many such motivational individuals. Some of the most inspiring people Litwer met had a common trait.

*"I've really grown attached to the fellow RA's and residents (of Bean), but I'm always ready to respond as needed in times of national emergency."*

Lach Litwer  
Air National Guardsman

"Throughout my experience, I noticed a lot of the people I had admiration for had prior military service," Litwer said.

Litwer noticed a lot of good qualities in his military friends and wanted those qualities for himself. So he joined the National Guard.

The National Guard is different from the "regular" military because, unlike the main active troops, it is run by individual states. Litwer sees the National Guard as a pillar of support for communities around Oregon. Litwer worked with the Guard to help kids read. He also worked along-

side firefighters during some fierce battles, and was "out pounding the ground" with the U.S. Forest Service.

"It's probably the most rewarding part of the job," Litwer said. "We have a large peacetime mission."

But now, times aren't as peaceful. In the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks, President George W. Bush called up 9,087 reservists and National Guard soldiers to active duty. In times of emergency, the state-run Guard has the option to transfer its resources to the federal government. At that time, local troops may be deployed.

Leaving wouldn't be entirely easy, Litwer said. Deployment would mean missing classes and good times in the residence halls.

"I've really grown attached to the fellow RA's and residents (of Bean), but I'm always ready to respond as needed in times of national emergency," Litwer said. "Sure, I'll miss out on things, but too bad."

If Litwer is called into duty, his academic career will not be damaged.

"With any guardsmen or reservists, there is government protection," he said.

Litwer said sometimes, depending on the teacher, deployed students would be able to complete their courses by correspondence. But if not, Litwer said the government guarantees that reservists' grade point average and credit information will stay intact.

"When it is such a random act of violence," Litwer said, "I'm very ready to respond if the time comes."

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