

# Nursing

PROGRESS NOTES SUMMER 2010

A Publication for a Community of Exceptional Nurses Engaged in Extraordinary Practice

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

MDAnderson  
Cancer Center

Making Cancer History®

## We're Magnetized Again!



This year, the American Nurses Credentialing Center granted MD Anderson Magnet recognition status for the third time. Congratulations are due to each of our 3,000 nurses for their hard work, high standards and unwavering commitment to excellence in patient care. We were among the first 50 organizations to be Magnet designated when we initially received the honor in 2002, and in 2006 when we were eligible to reapply we were redesignated. Currently, only about 6.47% of U.S. hospitals are Magnet recognized, according to the American Hospital Association.

## And the Award Goes to...



### Peg Fields

Advanced Practice Nurse  
Gynecologic Oncology

Ethel Fleming  
Arceneaux  
Outstanding  
Nurse-Oncologist

“I wanted to be a nurse from the time I was a girl. I love the idea of helping others and providing care to those in need. I was inspired by nurses that I encountered caring for ill family members when I was a child and wanted to be just like the nurses that helped my family so much.”

Years as a nurse: 26 • Years at MD Anderson: 4

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## Excellence in Clinical Practice-Inpatient

**Jalen Bartek**

Clinical Nurse  
Nursing Unit P4

“I wanted to become a nurse to help people in need and hopefully make a difference in their lives. In nursing, you get to spend a lot of time with the patient and walk through difficult situations with them and hopefully make those situations a little better.”

Years at MD Anderson: 3.5



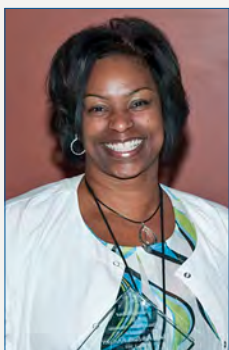
## Excellence in Clinical Education

**Ricci Hans-Stephenson**

Clinical Nurse  
Nursing Unit P7

“There are so many reasons, but mainly I became a nurse because I knew this was a profession in which I could impact the life of another. To be of assistance to an individual when they are transitioning from illness to wellness is amazing.”

Years as a nurse: 12  
Years at MD Anderson: 12



## Excellence in Clinical Practice-Outpatient

**Sonya Polk-Davis**

Clinical Nurse-Outpatient  
Lymphoma/Myeloma Clinic

“I became a nurse because it was a lifetime dream for me. I love taking care of people and making a difference in my patients’ lives. Being a nurse means not only taking care of my patients’ physical needs but incorporating their mental and spiritual needs also.”

Years as a nurse: 18    Years at MD Anderson: 5

## Excellence in Clinical Leadership

**Mary Lohmann**

Clinical Nurse, Nursing Unit P9

“It seemed like a good fit for me...I like science, I like working and interacting with people, and I like problem-solving. I like that my career in nursing can be so broad and I can do so many things like work as an inpatient nurse, or go back to school (like I am right now) and become a nurse practitioner. I liked the variety nursing had to offer.”



Years as a nurse: 6    Years at MD Anderson: 6



## Excellence in Clinical Trials

### Warner H. Tse

Research Nurse  
Thoracic/Head and Neck Medical Oncology

“I decided to become a nurse after my deployment as an Army Engineer in 1990-1991 for Operation Desert Shield/Storm. I was impressed with the Army field hospital I visited during the war. When I returned home, I continued college through the Army GI Bill and finished my degree at UT Health Science Center School of Nursing in Houston. In 2003, I was commissioned in the U.S. Air Force Reserve Nurse Corp. I served during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2005 in the Air Force Theatre Hospital in the operating room and trauma wards.”

Years as a nurse: 16    Years at MD Anderson: 15

\* 2007 Air Force Association Citation Kellogg Blue Suit Award for Outstanding Company Grade Officer

## Excellence in Advanced Practice Nursing

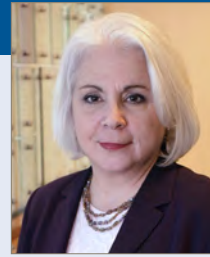
### Mary Cline

Advanced Practice Nurse, Nursing Unit P9

“In 1972 when I completed high school, female graduates were encouraged to become a teacher or a nurse. Being a nurse has allowed me to grow both personally and educationally.”



Years as a nurse: 23    Years at MD Anderson: 19



## A Message from our Chief Nursing Officer

Dear nurse colleagues,

In August, MD Anderson received Magnet Recognition status for the third time. In 2002, we were one of the first institutions to receive this prestigious international recognition for nursing excellence. With redesignations in 2006 and 2010, MD Anderson has retained this honor continuously for the past eight years.

I'd like to thank the members of our Magnet Core Team, Magnet Special Agents, our nursing community, and all of our interdisciplinary partners, for the hard work you contributed in developing our Magnet application, as well as preparing for and participating in the site visit. It's an honor to work with such an exceptional team of professionals.

Nurses - you demonstrated to the appraisers that you can and do provide some of the best nursing care in the world to our patients every day. Your knowledge, skills, processes and innovations in patient care delivery are stunningly clear. The visit could not have gone better.

No less important or impressive are the intangible qualities you bring to your profession. Your enthusiasm, your energy and your caring are absolutely phenomenal. They permeate the entire atmosphere here. And it is precisely those qualities that moved so many of you to speak to the appraisers. You are the reason patients feel safe and hopeful.

I've told you before that I couldn't be more proud to be part of this Community of Exceptional Nurses Engaged in Extraordinary Practice. Throughout our Magnet Journey, I felt that pride and so much more. I was reminded of why I became a nurse in the first place. I felt a marvelous kinship with a group of professionals who are all striving toward the same goals. It has been a humbling and inspiring experience, and I want to thank all of you for a job done extremely well.

MD Anderson appreciates you – our nurses – at all levels of the organization. In this issue of Nursing Progress Notes, you can read about some of the ways nurses are recognized and rewarded at the unit and center level.

Barbara L. Summers, Ph.D., RN, NEA-BC, FAAN  
Professor and Chair, Department of Nursing  
Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer  
Head, Division of Nursing

# Dear Nurses: We Appreciate You

Annual excellence awards, recognition development models, leadership programs and team awards are just a few of the many ways MD Anderson recognizes and rewards nurses.

Nurses are appreciated by patients, managers and peers at the unit and entry level, too.

## Proton Therapy Center Hosts Ice Cream Social

Whether it's a gift certificate for a nurse who's exceeded expectations or a stress-relieving Jeans Day for all, Carolyn Allsen, left, believes in showing Proton Therapy Center (PTC) employees that they're valued and appreciated.



Last summer, Allsen, who is the PTC nurse manager, even hosted a team building/family fun day for staff at her home. On Hawaiian shirt day in February, the center provided a catered lunch, tropical drinks and leis for employees

and patients. The center was decorated in a tropical theme. Many employees wore Hawaiian shirts; some wore grass skirts over their scrubs. In March, Allsen donned an apron and a paper cap and dished out ice cream with all the fixings at a PTC ice cream social. Nurses, clinic and business center employees were all invited.

"It's nice," says Rainelle Vanpelt, patient services coordinator. "Sure, we've got the pay and benefits and everything. But something like this, to know you're thought of and appreciated by the people you work with – that's very nice."



▲ L-R: **Kathia Mandujano**, receptionist; **Tina Alvarado**, patient services coordinator; **Sylvia Romaguera**, patient access specialist; **Diana Amaya**, clinical nurse-outpatient



**Maria Tee**, clinical nurse-outpatient



◀ **Elizabeth Traje**, patient access coordinator



**Evangeline Hubbard**, clinical nurse-outpatient (left) with **Carolyn Allsen**, nurse manager

# Pampering the Stars on G11



Super stars roam the halls on G11, MD Anderson's stem cell transplantation and cellular therapy unit. Recently, paparazzi caught up with some of these celebrities at an afternoon tea party, a real see-and-be-seen event organized by their agents (managers).

Well aware of the pressures faced every day by this talented and hardworking group of glitterati, agents take every opportunity to pamper them between gigs (patient care activities).

They receive Super Star Awards, too. Recently, for example, a Super Star Award was given to Jessica McLellan, clinical nurse, for her "stellar documentation." According to Patty Johnston, director of clinical nursing, employees are acknowledged on G11 for a number of reasons, such as excellent patient care delivery, working as a team and supporting each other. They also may be recognized for things like Best Point-of-Use Compliance and Best Discharge Time.

When patients or family members compliment their nurses, whether through patient satisfaction surveys or during leadership rounds, Johnston makes sure those nurses are acknowledged for their good work.

"We care for stem cell patients for months and months sometimes," she explains. "Patient acuity is high and so is the stress. One of our roles is to help transition patients from acute, curative care to comfort care, and many patients share the grieving process with their nurses." Jackie Ascuna is one clinical nurse who recently was recognized for excellent end-of-life care.

So next time you're on G11, don't be intimidated by the nurses – those giants of exemplary patient care, with their badge bling and glowing faces. Go ahead, ask for an autograph. Tell them you're a fan of their work. They won't mind, because patient care is what they do and they're proud of it.

That's just how they roll.



**Patty Johnston**, director of clinical nursing, says employees on G11 are acknowledged for a number of reasons, such as excellent patient care delivery, working as a team and supporting each other.



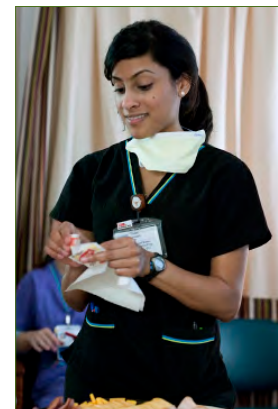
**Agnes Shepard**, per diem nurse; **Jessica McLellan**, clinical nurse; **Sylvia Brown**, clinical nurse



**Jennifer Olsen**, clinical nurse



**Ashley White**, clinical nurse



**Dyney Joseph**, per diem nurse



**Jessica Remmen**, clinical nurse, shows off G11's Super Star Award board.

# Expanding Inpatient Capacity



## New Floors, New Amenities

By Debbie Sharp

To meet the growing demand for inpatient beds, MD Anderson is adding new floors on top of the existing Alkek Hospital. The first three of these floors will open in November 2010, with five more to be added over the next few years as needed. The addition of all eight floors will increase hospital size by 445,000 sq. ft.

The new patient care units on these floors are being designed in a manner that promotes patient- and family-centered care, while also maximizing efficiency of work effort for the care team and promoting interdisciplinary collaboration.

The patient rooms, once completed, will be larger in size than on the older floors to allow easier access to the patient, and will include ergonomic and design considerations that recognize the needs of nurses as they deliver care.

“We’ve gone from a centralized to a decentralized nurses’ station,” says Patty Johnston, director of clinical nursing. “Many advantages have been adapted into the new design including view windows from the staff stations so nurses can see the patient, locked areas to store medications at the bedside, and supplies readily available to improve efficiency of care delivery.”

The units are designed with cut-through corridors so nurses can more directly travel around the unit, decreasing the time and steps required to get from one point to another. In addition, space for a nurse tranquility room was incorporated on some floors to give nurses a place to rest and recharge, which will help decrease fatigue associated with errors.

“Since the layout of these floors is so different from what the nurses are used to, it will take a significant amount of time to get ready to practice in this environment,” says Barbara Summers, Ph.D., vice president and chief nursing officer. “However, we’re looking forward to all the wonderful amenities and space that these new units will provide for our patients and our nursing staff.”



### OTHER KEY FEATURES INCLUDE:

- Supplies at the bedside
- Caregiver work area inside the patient room
- Wider doors and more room around beds
- Bathrooms all ADA accessible
- Toilets on the outboard window wall for increased nursing staff visibility
- Hand washing sinks inside patient rooms and in corridors
- Alcoves for easy access to PPE equipment outside rooms
- Distributed supplies and linens
- Night lights at patient doors
- Electrical outlets positioned higher
- Standardized headwalls with duplicate oxygen, air and two suction outlets on each side of the bed
- 54 computers per 24-bed unit
- Team rooms for interdisciplinary team member meetings
- Enclosed medication rooms to decrease distractions
- Family alcove in room
- Large equipment storage rooms and ample alcoves for housing of carts



# OPENING OF P6 and P3 Nursing Units Adds Beds

By Erika Hargrove

**With the recent opening of the Purple 6 (P6), and Purple 3 (P3) nursing units, MD Anderson gained 48 additional beds and even greater insight into the value of our nursing teams.**

The nurses that serve on these floors learned new skills and work processes to enter their new roles at the highest level of competence. P6 is a primary care floor for Thoracic/Head and Neck Medical Oncology patients and a secondary care floor for Leukemia patients. So in many cases, nurses who volunteered or were recruited to work on that floor required new training to serve this special population.

Hyacinth Gordon, associate director of nursing for P6, says the nurses remain excited about the new unit and the learning opportunities that are ahead. "The unit opened flawlessly with employees welcoming patients with smiles and applause. So far, everything is going according to the plan, and we're all happy to have a new 'home' for our patients and staff."

The reopening and reorganizing of P6 is a result of nursing unit moves in recent years to allow for the Alkek Hospital Expansion Project. Leukemia patients previously occupied the P6 location and now have returned to the Alkek Hospital, G10W location.

The opening of P3A has helped the hospital to transition patients out of the Emergency Center hallways and into beds after they are admitted.

Patricia Hannon, director of Clinical Nursing, and Marcela Benitez-Romero, nurse manager, say that there once was a time when you could walk into the Emergency Center and see patients lined up on stretchers in the hallways. "This new unit gives us a transition area for our patients to go to, which increases throughput and patient satisfaction," Hannon says.

The hope is that P3A will have the same success that P3B has had in helping with throughput. P3B, the transition PACU, consists of 16 beds that opened in 2007 for 23 hour observation and surgery patients discharged from PACU waiting for a bed.

The latest patient satisfaction results that were released confirmed that patients were pleased with the results that P3B brought to their patient care. They are hoping that the changes to the other units will bring the same results.

Both of the new units are staffed with a combination of experienced nurses from within MD Anderson and outside hospitals. New nurses also are part of the nursing teams.

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## Nursing PROGRESS NOTES

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## Gisela Sanchez-Williams: The Making of an Exemplary Nurse

By Erika Hargrove



For her family, her patients, and all her other passions in life, Gisela Sanchez-Williams is known for giving 100 percent. For that work ethic and much more, the advanced practice nurse in Neurosurgery's spine program was named the 2009 Ethel Fleming Arceneaux Outstanding Nurse-Oncologist.

**Exemplary, award winning nurses don't suddenly appear fully formed. What goes into the development of such a nurse? What decisions are made along the way?**

Every nurse comes to the profession in his or her own way, and every nurse's career trajectory is different. Sanchez-Williams' story illustrates how someone with a passion can work hard and build an immensely satisfying professional nursing career.

She took the first step on her journey when she was just a teenager.

### The Snow Storm That Changed Everything

A native of Puerto Rico, Sanchez-Williams moved to New York at age three with her family. She realized her inner calling to become a nurse at age 14, answering a plea for volunteers at a hospital during a "horrendous" snow storm. Soon after, she became a candy striper and enrolled at a vocational high school to study nursing.

### LVN to RN

At 17, Sanchez-Williams, a licensed vocational nurse, went to work at a lower Manhattan hospital. Inspired to complete a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, she enrolled at Keuka College in upstate New York and completed her degree at Colegio Universitario Metropolitano in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, working her way through college as a hemodialysis technician.

### New Nurse at MD Anderson

After graduating in 1984, Sanchez-Williams spent seven years at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York. In 1991, Michael Andreeff, M.D., Ph.D., invited her to join him as a senior research nurse in MD Anderson's Department of Leukemia.

### An Advanced Practice Nurse is Born

In 2000, Sanchez-Williams completed the advanced practice nurse program at The University of Texas School of Nursing at Houston, and received a Master of Science in Nursing before joining the Department of Thoracic/Head and Neck Medical Oncology.

### An Amazing Career

The holistic needs of patients are so important to Sanchez-Williams, now in Neurosurgery, that she formed a spine tumor support group. She has written educational materials for the group and brings in speakers monthly to share valuable information. The forum provides patients with the opportunity to share experiences and ask medical and personal questions about their disease.

"Developing a support group for spine tumor patients has allowed me to learn about the priority needs of this population. It's also allowed me to gain greater insight into their concerns and long-term issues," says Sanchez-Williams. "Their ability to embrace each other, express the details of their cancer journey, and offer unique ways to improve their quality of life has been an amazing experience for me."

## Academic Nursing Cohorts

**Are you pursuing an initial or an advanced nursing degree from an accredited school of nursing?**

**Nursing Workforce Planning and Development offers a full range of academic nursing cohorts, including:**

- LVN-to-RN
- RN (A.D.N.) - Associate Degree program (must graduate from an A.D.N. program by December 2015)
  - A.D.N. new grads hired at MD Anderson are required to complete a B.S.N. degree within six years.
- RN (B.S.N.)
- RN-to-B.S.N.
- M.S.N.
- RN-to-M.S.N.
- Post-Masters Certification
- Nursing Doctorate (D.N.P. or Ph.D.)

**Participants in the cohort programs may receive the following benefits:**

- Increased amount of Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) money to be used for tuition, fees and books (\$5,250 maximum per fiscal year)
- Up-front system for payment of tuition, fees and books
- Payments made directly to the colleges/universities through third-party billing arrangements between MD Anderson and participating colleges/universities
- Academic and personal counseling
- Social opportunities with other cohort participants
- Paid release time for attending classes (selected programs only)

**Contact Nursing Workforce Planning and Development at 713-792-7924 for more information.**