BSN CLASS OF 2018
HONORS IN NURSING

Erika Nichole Adams
Advisor: Megan P. Williams, EdD, MSN, RN, FNP
Implementing Fast-Track Extubation Protocols for Cardiac-Surgical Patients: A Review of the Literature
I always knew that I wanted to go into a profession that serves people. As a child, I was very sick and spent many days in the hospital. It was my nurses who encouraged me everyday, saw me in my darkest hours, comforted my family, and fought for me until I regained my own strength. Nursing is so much more than a career path. Nursing allows me to care for people in a unique and intimate way. I hope that my patients feel strengthened, loved, heard and cared for—just as I once was. I chose nursing to give back.

Harry Adams*
Advisor: Hudson Santos, PhD, RN
Predictors of Psychological Distress in Low Income Mothers
I did not always have a vision of going into nursing. I was completing my bachelors of science in psychology and knew that I wanted to pursue a job where I was able to give back and help others. Nursing seemed like a perfect fit, as I was a caretaker for my mom and grandfather during high school. I hope that I can take these skills to make a difference in not only my future patients’ lives, but also in researching improving the lives of people undergoing psychological distress through the Hillman Scholars Program of Nursing Innovation.

Jacklyn N. Balliot
Advisor: Deborah K. Mayer, PhD, RN, AOCN, FAAN
We Need to Talk: A Review of the Literature Addressing the Unmet Needs of Adolescent and Young Adult (AYA) Cancer Survivors
I was inspired to pursue nursing because of my nurses who cared for me during my cancer treatments. They had the largest impact on my life during that time, and I quickly learned all of the roles they played: advocate, educator, expert, caretaker, mediator, researcher, friend… the list goes on and on. I realized quickly that I possess all of the necessary qualities that it takes to become a nurse. These qualities, combined with my passion for caring for people who have cancer, have driven me to where I am today. I could not imagine doing anything else!

Lilian Guadalupe Bravo
Advisor: Megan P. Williams, EdD, MSN, RN, FNP
Designing and implementing a study to investigate the role of culture on the perceptions of mental wellness in HIV+ Latino men: Lessons learned
Nursing’s perspective is all-encompassing, which was the primary pull when I started looking at health care careers. We are the patient’s champion, the first respondents, we care for them, and fight for their needs. I knew I wanted to be part of something so powerful and rewarding, especially when I thought about how I could best serve my Latinx community. The disproportionate rate at which Latinx individuals are affected by chronic illnesses and the lack of cultural sensitivity I had experienced first-hand drove me to want to be part of this beautiful profession.

Emily Ann Briggs*
Advisor: Beth Pivy Black, PhD, RN, FAAN
Critique on the Use of Language Regarding Transgender Health in U.S. Women’s Health Publications Since the Advent of Healthy People 2020.
I chose nursing because I wanted to make a positive impact on my community, to have a hands-on role in making a difference in the lives of my patients from the bedside. Growing up, I always wanted to know how things worked. I was fascinated by science and medicine, and nursing landed at the intersection of my desire to spend a lifetime learning and to care for the childbearing family across all stages of life.

Morgan Elizabeth Barnes*
Advisor: Louise Fleming, PhD, MDN, Ed, RN
Exploring Nurse-Perceived Challenges and Rewards of Caring for Long-Term Ventilated Patients in an Intensive Care Unit
I was drawn to nursing through a string of “bad luck birthdays” as a child. I celebrated multiple birthdays in hospitals alongside loved ones going through procedures such as open-heart surgery and illnesses such as shingles. Through these experiences, I met incredibly smart and selfless nurses who modeled excellent care. After receiving my own first aid kit, I sprang into action and treated every scrape while babysitting or playing with cul-de-sac friends, wanting to emulate the care nurses from my “bad luck birthdays” displayed. I strive to make a difference by helping patients and families through difficult times.

Abigail Burroughs
Advisor: Megan P. Williams, EdD, MSN, RN, FNP
NCCC Nurses’ Perceptions on the Effectiveness of Non-Pharmacologic Pain Interventions for Neonates
I chose to pursue a career in nursing to advocate for those in their most vulnerable states. I chose to be in a career where I can provide care to those going through a frightening time in their lives. Throughout school, I have only grown more passionate about nursing and the support we get to provide to patients and families. I am excited to be part of a profession that gives so many pathways for continued growth and learning to better care for others.

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Nkki Defreitas
Advisor: Luxe Fleming, PhD, MSN, Ed, RN
The Use of Music Therapy in the Pediatric Oncology Setting
I chose nursing because I wanted to make a difference in people's lives on a daily basis. I have always wanted to work in the medical field, but in the years leading up to nursing school I realized that my passion for holistically caring for patients and supporting patients at the bedside aligned perfectly with the duties of a nurse. I have further developed a love for working with pediatric patients and families. Pediatric patients are incredibly resilient, even at one of the most challenging points of their lives. This motivates me and is one of the many joys I get from being a nurse.

Allison Karen DeSarro*
Advisor: Rhonda L. Lanning, RN, MSN, CAM, LCCE, BC/CLC
Innovation in Practice: Preparing Doulas to Support Cesarean Births
Growing up, I was always fascinated by the human body and knew I wanted to pursue a career in the medical field. I decided to pursue nursing after recognizing that the profession offered the perfect blend of caring for patients and utilizing critical thinking skills. I appreciate the diverse opportunities available to nurses within the profession and aspire to pursue an advanced degree in nursing to be a leader in the field.

Cassandra Dictus
Advisor: Anna Song Beeber, PhD, RN, FAAN
The Role of Nursing Assistants in Managing Nursing Home Residents' Pain: A Scoping Review
I wanted a challenging and diverse career that allowed me to continually learn and to make a difference in people's lives individually and at a systems level. Becoming a nurse will help me to improve the lives of those served by and working in long-term services and support systems.

Ndeye Codou Dieng
Advisor: Jennifer T. Alderman, MSN, RN, CNL, CNE
Providing Culturally Competent Care to Pregnant Women
I have chosen to do this project because about five years ago, I was a patient in a local health department's pregnancy clinic; I was a Non-English Speaker, and I had just moved to the United States. After doing my maternity nursing rotation, I realized that the care that I received five years ago is not the same as the care being provided to English speaking patients. I thought that it could be because of language barriers and lack of understanding of cultural differences. After meeting with members of a local health department's leadership team, I understood that there was a need to provide nursing care for pregnant patients with educational materials about various cultures of patients who receive care at their clinics. I feel passionate about helping educate nurses about providing culturally competent care and hope that my project makes a difference for patients from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Michael Duda
Advisor: Jennifer T. Alderman, MSN, RN, CNL, CNE
The Cost and Causes of Medication Omission Errors: A Discussion and Literature Review
My mother was a nurse and has a great influence on my life. I believe that we are all called to serve each other and that a nurse is a special way of serving humankind.

Sara C. Floyd
Advisor: Cecelia Rossignol, RN, BN, PhD, CAPN
The Sexual and Reproductive Health Experiences of Women Labeled with Cognitive Disabilities: Implications for Healthcare Professionals and Sexual Health Services
Five years ago, I was hospitalized with sepsis and spent the next six months recovering from the infection and multiple blood clots that developed secondary to my illness. This experience was understandably life-changing. Unable to act or advocate for myself, I relied heavily on nurses and nursing support staff for basic health needs. In admiration of the support I received, I chose to pursue a career in nursing. As nurses, we have the opportunity to support others in advocating for their needs, their health, and their lives; and I have yet to find anything more valuable than that.

Tabitha George
Advisor: Janna Dieckmann, PhD, RN
Bridging the Gap Between Animal and Human Medicine: Implementing the One Health Initiative to Improve the Health of All Species
I worked in wildlife biology before entering the nursing field. If an animal needed care or veterinary intervention, I knew it needed to occur quickly and without eye contact, as this could induce a predator-prey response and lead to undue stress. I decided to go into nursing once I realized my passion for delivering care, but understanding that I also needed to be able to communicate with my patients and reassure them of their safety and my intent. I look forward to being a part of the most trusted profession and utilizing all resources to therapeutically communicate with my patients.

Virginia Hamilton*
Advisor: Suzanne Thoyre, PhD, RN, FAAN
Parent Identification of Stress Cues in NICU Infants: A Pilot Study
I decided to pursue nursing because of the unique relationships nurses build with patients. Nurses care for people in some of their most-vulnerable and difficult times, and the impact that this has on both is undeniably. It requires a combination of critical thinking, service, skill, and patience, and is a career that will continually challenge and push me. I am thrilled to begin this journey.

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Jaimie R. Joseph
Advisor: Far Mathilde Ginigole, RN, MSN, WHNP-BC
Shedding a New Light: Non-Pharmacological Nursing Interventions and Factors Affecting Lengthy Hospital Stay Seen with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome

Joey Kivett
Advisor: Mary H. Palmer, PhD, RN, FAAN, AGSF
Smoking Cessation: Is Motivational Interviewing Effective When Guiding Vulnerable Patients to Quit?

Tiffani J. Hilton*
Advisor: Cecelia Rasigian, RN, MN, PhD, CNRN
A Qualitative Meta-Synthesis of Family Experiences and Needs Regarding Health Care of Newly Diagnosed Children with Traumatic Brain Injury in the Acute Care Setting

Charity Lackey
Advisor: Cheryl L. Woods Giscombe, PhD, RN, PMHNP-BC, FAAN
A Review of the Literature on the Strong Black Woman and Superwoman Schema Frameworks

Tristan Keith Jarrett
Advisor: Lisa K. Woody, MSN, RN, CNE, CHFN
A Review of the Opioid Epidemic: Interventions Nurses Can Use to Address Addiction

Anna Rothfuss Matthews
Advisor: Shawn M. Kneipp, PhD, RN, ANP-BC, APHN-BC, FAAN
Migraine Self-Management: Pathways to Learning

Shannen Marie Kane*
Advisor: Karen Valcher, MSN, RN
Boarding Psychiatric Patients in the Emergency Department: Perceptions of ED Nurses and Nursing Assistants

Derrick McCarter, Jr.
Advisor: Christina Leonard, RN, MSN, FNP-BC, CNL
The Prevalence of Violence Amongst ED Nurses and Effective Interventions to Mitigate Violence

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Madison E. Morgan  
Advisor: Ashley Leak Bryant, PhD, RN, OCN  
Coping with Grief and Preventing Compassion Fatigue in Outpatient Oncology Nurses: A Review of the Literature and Current Practice  
I chose to pursue nursing because I wanted to interact with patients at the point of care. I was inspired by oncology nurses and am passionate about providing excellent cancer care. Nurses provide physical and psychosocial support and bring a unique perspective to the health care team by advocating for the needs of their patients.

Kaitlyn Brooke Pickert  
Advisor: Deborah Mayer, PhD, RN, AOCN, FAAN  
Cancer Caregivers’ Safe Handling of Contaminated Excreta with Antineoplastic Drugs: More Research is Needed  
My desire to pursue a career in oncology nursing began when my aunt passed away from a brain tumor. I was moved by the dedication and passion that the nurses had for my family during some of our darkest times. I decided then, I wanted to dedicate my career to oncology nursing to provide compassionate, supportive, and knowledgeable care to patients and families during their battle.

Taylor Ross  
Advisor: Tamara Gingrich, MSN, RN, WNNP-BC  
A Review of the Literature: The role of Tranexamic Acid in decreasing Maternal Mortality through its Contribution to the Prevention and Treatment of Postpartum Hemorrhage  
I have loved taking care of others for as long as I can remember, whether it be my brother’s sports injuries or my friend’s hurting heart. There is something about having the ability to make an impact on people when they are experiencing some of their lowest lows that drew me to nursing. I got to have the opportunity to make a small, but significant difference in their lives, and for me, there’s nothing else I’d rather do.

Kimberley S. Rumley  
Advisor: Mark Toler, PhD, RN  
Quality Improvement in Nursing Homes: Evaluating the Quality of a Nurse’s Patient Teaching near the Day of Discharge to Home  
After a trip to a small town in India, I realized the value to the world around me of having a basic understanding of simple first aid. I also realized that I had access to the resources and education I needed to gain the knowledge of health care that would benefit others. This was my launching pad into discovering my love for and pursuing an education in nursing. With nursing as my second career, I feel fortunate to have found a career that allows me to couple my skill and passion in order to care for my community.

Natalie Scharf*  
Advisor: Ashley Leak Bryant, PhD, RN, OCN  
Can we prevent burnout and compassion fatigue in the oncology nursing population? Findings from a Systematic Review  
I chose nursing as my profession so that I can bring comfort to patients and families dealing with difficult situations. Nursing challenges me regularly and provides endless opportunities to learn. My experience with patient care thus far has been extremely rewarding and I look forward to applying the knowledge and skillset I have learned at UNC in my future practice.

Lauren Thomas  
Advisor: Anita Tesh, PhD, CEA-I, CNE, ANEF, RN  
End-of-Life Decisions and Conversations: A Reflective Journey and Review of the Literature  
As a first year at UNC, I began volunteering in the Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Clinic in the UNC Cancer Hospital every week. I loved being there, and I got to see how the nurses cared for and interacted with the patients. Through that experience, I realized that was what I wanted to do as well. I decided to pursue a career in nursing and make a difference in the lives of my patients and their families every day.

Jamie A. Weiner  
Advisor: Lisa K. Woodley, MSN, RN, CNE, CHPN  
Sibling Reactions: How Childhood Cancer Reaches Beyond the Afflicted  
Serving others has always been a passion of mine ever since I was young. I have been able to witness firsthand the importance of getting to know and understand every person as a whole, which is why I chose nursing. As a nurse, I am able to serve patients and their families by simply sharing a smile, helping to relieve physical or emotional pain, or holding a patient’s hand in the midst of a crisis. I am very excited for my future nursing career and I cannot wait to see the lasting impacts that I will have on my patients.

Julia Zhao*  
Advisor: Suya P. Davis, MSN  
An integrative review and an educational tool development for multimodal pain management and recovery after total hip and knee arthroplasty  
My interest in nursing emerged during high school when my father suffered from a disc protrusion that caused him to be bedridden for six months. During this time, I took on the responsibility of caring for my father along with my mother. Through this, I came to understand how rewarding it was to see someone progress in health and heal. Nurses impact patients’ lives for the better, but the gratification goes both ways. When I think about becoming a nurse, I look forward to the people I will meet, how I will impact their lives, and how they will impact mine.

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