

Gardner-Webb University

Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

5-20-2016

GWU Studies Help Nursing Supervisor Make a Difference in her Profession

Office of University Communications

Claire Coile

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive>

Recommended Citation

Office of University Communications and Coile, Claire, "GWU Studies Help Nursing Supervisor Make a Difference in her Profession" (2016). *Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive*. 897.
<https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive/897>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Gardner-Webb Publications at Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@gardner-webb.edu.

GWU Studies Help Nursing Supervisor Make a Difference in her Profession

webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/gwu-studies-help-nursing-supervisor-make-a-difference-in-her-profession/

jbridges9

May 20, 2016

Susan Cannon ('16) Receives National Recognition for Project on Nurse Burnout

Would providing a spa-like atmosphere in a peaceful room help nurses deal with the everyday stress of their jobs? While earning her Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) at Gardner-Webb University, nursing supervisor Susan Cannon ('16) of Lincolnton, N.C., decided to find out the answer.

She researched compassion fatigue and nurse burnout and presented the results in her Capstone project, "Rekindling the Passion for Nursing." Based on her findings, Cannon created a serenity room for a nursing unit at Carolinas Healthcare System Lincoln in Lincolnton, where Cannon is the assistant vice president of inpatient nursing services. Nurses were also invited to attend "Caring for the Caregiver Day," which included education about self-help interventions. Because of the positive response from the nurses in the unit, administrators covered the cost of establishing serenity rooms for the other units. An outside patio was transformed into a serenity area as well.

The rooms are equipped with massage chair inserts, art supplies, aromatherapy, soothing sounds, spa-like decorations, and dim lighting. Organza fabric drapes the walls, and purple flower and butterfly wall decals improve the décor and also help create tranquility. A room divider separates the breakroom table from a recliner that also has a massage cushion. An aromatherapy diffuser disperses essential oils in the room.

"The teammates feel appreciated to have an area designed for them where they can rejuvenate during their busy shift," Cannon explained. "Positive verbal feedback was received immediately after the serenity room was created. One nurse said she was able to get through a busy shift by 'sitting in the massage chair while doing art.' This nurse created art during her shifts and put them on her coworkers' lockers. Nurses stated the smell of lavender in the room made a difference in their day. A group of night shift teammates utilized the art supplies to create flowers to give to a patient. Another teammate utilized the essential oils to help a patient sleep."

Statistically significant results were found. Nursing staff on that unit reported less risk for burnout and a lower secondary trauma stress level. Patient satisfaction scores increased with patients reporting the nurses communicated with them more and addressed their

emotional needs more frequently.

Cannon has presented her project at several national conferences. At the 50th anniversary celebration for the GWU Hunt School of Nursing, her poster on the topic won the People's Choice Award. She also had the opportunity to hear from her theorist, Dr. Jean Watson, who was the keynote speaker for the anniversary event. Watson is an expert in the field of caring science, which is the idea that nursing is not just about the physical, but also about the spiritual, emotional, and all other aspects of being human.

Cannon came to Gardner-Webb, because her boss and mentor received her Master of Science in Nursing from GWU and spoke highly of the School of Nursing. She also liked that Gardner-Webb offered a Christian foundation, and she knew Dr. Sharon Starr, GWU Dean of the School of Nursing, from the school where she received her Associates Degree in Nursing.

“Having Dr. Starr as the dean was confirmation I was making the right choice,” Cannon affirmed. “I began my nursing education with Dr. Starr. It seemed fitting to receive my DNP with her as well. I have learned so much in the program and feel my Capstone project has made a difference for nursing. I have no doubt I simply followed God’s plan in obtaining my DNP at Gardner-Webb.”

Not only has her Capstone project helped nurses at her facility, but the concept will be implemented in other facilities in Carolinas HealthCare System. She will also have an opportunity to educate the system’s department leaders about transformational leadership, a topic she learned about in Dr. Nicole Waters’ class at Gardner-Webb. Transformational leaders pursue excellence and motivate others to strive for their best.

“I strongly believe all I have learned and assignments completed in my classes will come to fruition in the future,” Cannon assessed. “I felt the program was designed just right. The assignments were beneficial to my daily work so it never felt like useless work. The intensive week was great and allowed the cohort to be together. The online portion allowed us to complete assignments at home, around our busy work schedules. The professors were great to make themselves available for questions about any assignments.”

Cannon also appreciated learning in a Christian environment. “The devotions and scriptures we received throughout the program from our professors were inspiring, motivating, and kept me going through assignments and work,” she shared. “Gardner-Webb is an amazing school with genuine professors who have your best interest at heart. The professors are knowledgeable, motivating, and encouraging. The best I have ever seen. If I chose an institution for another degree or for my daughters, I would choose Gardner-Webb. The mission and values of Gardner-Webb are evident in the staff I had the opportunity to meet.”