BE THE BEST, KEEP THE BEST

As we reach the end of our fiscal year, it is a good time to reflect.

A wise person once said “the only constant is change,” and that is certainly true of this year and in fact, every year, as the world of health care changes at a rapid pace.

This issue of VMC Nursing News focuses on our Be the Best, Keep the Best initiatives which were established in 2003 to address our ever-changing environment and ensure that we provide the best possible place to practice nursing. While Be the Best, Keep the Best does not have the same name recognition as some of our other initiatives, it is actually the foundation for many of our specific initiatives established since 2003.

Shared governance, retention and recruitment, nurse wellness, nursing leadership development, diversity, clinical workforce, and service improvement are all areas born from Be the Best, Keep the Best. Members of the task forces work tirelessly to make sure these specific areas are addressed and goals are continually updated.

So while each month and each year is full of changes, our nurses, the heart and soul of VMC, have a strong structure that ensures your ideas, your concerns and your voices are heard.

I hope you enjoy this issue.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Dubree, R.N., M.S.N.
nized that excellent staff is key to excellent patient care. With that in mind and to keep ahead of the predicted nursing shortage, the idea for this program began to form almost 10 years ago, and the committees were officially convened in 2003.

To decide which committees to form, leaders looked at nursing and out-of-industry literature on what keeps nurse retention rates up and what retains staff in other industries. They also did their own focus groups and surveys to get VMC-specific data.

“With that information, we were able to see the areas that were most important to staff and form appropriate committees that would meet those needs,” Dubree said.

Be the Best, Keep the Best leaders return to satisfaction data and surveys each year to ensure that the work stays aligned with the goals set and raises the bar for next year’s performance.

Dubree said Be the Best, Keep the Best absolutely contributed to VMC’s Magnet designation.

“Every aspect of these committees promotes excellence in nursing and is an essential part of our goals in nursing,” she said.

The program is striving for nursing excellence during a time of rapid growth and change and will be integral to nursing’s continued evolution, she said.

“My hope for the future is that we would always be open to what is changing to keep our programs robust and continue to support patient care. It is critical to respond and adjust to changes as they arise,” she said. “We can’t be satisfied with where we are or what we have achieved. We must constantly look for ways to make it better.”

For more information on each of the committees and their co-chairs, see page 3. Nurses and others are invited to contact the co-chairs of the appropriate committee to share their ideas and suggestions.
BE THE BEST COMMITTEES

DIVERSITY
This committee helps develop and implement nursing’s diversity initiatives: to cultivate an inclusive culture that respects and values uniqueness at all levels of nursing and to build a reputation of inclusiveness and fairness.

Ongoing diversity initiatives include developing a diversity brochure, cultural sensitivity workshop, and nursing diversity toolkit, the launch of a diversity Web site, and active participation with the Metro Nashville Public Schools’ Health Partnership Council.

Co-chairs are Laura Kelley, R.N., M.S.N., program manager, Diversity and Inclusion-Nursing, and Donna Williams, R.N., M.S.N., administrative director of Perioperative and Procedural Services at Children’s Hospital.

FIRST TWO YEARS RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT
Recruiting, selecting, orienting and retaining top quality nurses is the purpose of this committee. It has driven many changes to the orientation of new nurses and the orientation processes of experienced nurses, preceptor development and peer interviewing.

Co-chairs are Pat Givens, R.N., E.D.M., chief nursing officer at Children’s Hospital, and Julie Foss, R.N., M.S.N., MICU manager.

“To be the best and keep the best, an organization has to start with attracting top candidates and having a selection process that identifies them as such and helps to find the right place for them,” Foss said.

LEADER DEVELOPMENT
This committee identifies and implements strategies that support excellence in clinical practice and customer service, enhance the work environment, promote professional and personal development, and foster a workplace of participation and collaboration.

It is making recommendations around span of control for managers and working to define specific performance behaviors related to job description evaluation scoring. It has also designed a leadership pathway for staff nurses in partnership with the Professional Development Committee.

Co-chairs are Robin Steaban, R.N., M.S.N., administrative director, Vanderbilt Heart and Vascular Institute, and Betty Sue Minton, R.N., M.S.N., patient care manager, Perioperative Services.

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT
This committee identifies and resolves issues in obtaining resources, such as supplies and equipment, needed for patient care that are hindering the work of nurses.

It has overseen the implementation of a tracking program for environmental services needs and is developing a matrix to break down staff responsibilities in cleaning patient rooms and equipment. Additionally, this group is currently working on “service agreements” that will define the commitment and expectation of both clinical staff and the support staff in relation to patient care activities.

Co-chairs are Brent Lemonds, R.N., M.S., administrative director of Emergency Services and Specialty Nursing, and Todd Reimer, Clinical Engineering Services.

SHARED GOVERNANCE
This committee’s goal is to foster a dynamic staff-leader partnership that promotes collaboration, shared decision-making and accountability for improving the quality of patient care, safety, and enhancing work-life. Recently, it has
enhanced and expanded unit and clinic boards and restructured and supported four active nursing staff councils.

Co-chairs are Mary Duvanich, R.N., M.S.N., administrative director, Outpatient Surgery Patient Care Center, and Connie Ford, R.N., M.H.A., director, integrated service line for Pediatric Hematology/Oncology.

“The task force encourages staff to use their voices and leaders to be facilitative in coaching this process, evaluating outcomes and making recommendations for sustaining this culture,” Ford said.

**CLINICAL WORKFORCE**

This committee ensures staff resources are deployed properly, providing consistent, safe, quality care, which meets the highest clinical standards. Current projects include focusing on flexible shifts and tracking basic life support certification.

Co-chairs are Robin Mutz, R.N.C., M.P.P.M., administrative director of the Women’s Patient Care Center and Nursing Support Services and Vickie Thompson, R.N., M.S.N., manager of Nursing Special Projects at Children’s Hospital.

“We monitor current trends in clinical staffing and research to bring innovative ideas to the executive nursing leadership. We listen to staff and create recommendations to provide safe, evidence-based, and high-quality care to patients and families,” Mutz said.

**NURSE WELLNESS**

Focusing on all facets of nurse wellness, this committee is currently sponsoring programs for the maturing workforce and for cultural enrichment, including the Hey Florence! musical. They have also organized a traveling wellness fair that will make stops at locations across VMC. Members of the committee partner with VUPD and others to take periodic walks from buildings to parking lots and garages in order to assess safety for staff.

Co-chairs are Ann Cross, R.N., M.S., M.B.A., director of nursing for Vanderbilt Medical Group Williamson County, and Susan Hernandez, R.N., M.B.A., administrative director of Critical Care Services at Children’s Hospital.

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**NURSES WEEK AWARDS WINNERS**

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<tr>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rosamond Gabrielson Staff Nurse of the Year Award</td>
<td>Monroe Carell Jr., Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt: Betsy Beazley, R.N.2, Pediatric Emergency Department</td>
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<td>Vanderbilt Medical Group: Rebecca MacMichael, R.N.3, General Surgery Clinic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vanderbilt University Hospital: Tonya Beattie, R.N.3, 5 North Cardiovascular ICU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital: Jim Mottillo, R.N.2, Adult 1</td>
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<td>Rebecca Clark Culpepper Education and Mentorship Award</td>
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<td>Vicki Stalmasek-Perencevic, R.N., M.S.N., Case Management (Posthumous)</td>
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<td>Advanced Practice Nurse of the Year Award</td>
<td>Jerita Payne, A.P.R.N., B.C., Transplant Coordinator, Division of Hepatobiliary, Surgery and Liver Transplant</td>
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<td>Licensed Practical Nurse of the Year Award</td>
<td>Betty Slusher, L.P.N./S.T., Pediatric Perioperative Services</td>
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<td>Nursing Research and Evidence Based Practice Award</td>
<td>Karen Adkins, R.N., Research Specialist IV, Neurology Clinic</td>
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<td>Vanderbilt School of Nursing Faculty Award</td>
<td>Nancy Wells, R.N., D.N.Sc., Research Professor of Nursing; Director, Nursing Research</td>
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<td>Staff/Unit/Department Educator of the Year Award</td>
<td>Brent Lemonds, R.N., M.S., Adult Emergency Department and Specialty Nursing</td>
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<td>Transformational Nursing Leadership Award</td>
<td>Martha White, R.N., M.S.N., A.P.N., 9 South and 9 North</td>
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<td>Vivien Thomas Award for Excellence in Clinical Research</td>
<td>Diane Kent, R.N., Preventive Medicine</td>
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<td>Award for Excellence in Research Contributing to a Multi-Investigator Team</td>
<td>Christa Hedstrom, R.N., M.S.N., Ed.D., Clinical Research Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friend of Nursing Award</td>
<td>Sherri Stringfellow, Nursing Education and Development</td>
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SUMMER BRINGS NEW FACES TO CAMPUS

The Nurse Residency Program helps new nurses transition from nursing school to professional practice through hands-on clinical experience, interactive education sessions and the support and guidance of staff. Cohorts are introduced to the one-year program in January and July. Meet the Summer 2009 cohort:

501 Number of applications (representing 175 Nursing programs, 38 states plus D.C., Malaysia and Puerto Rico)

Number of interviews 344 115 Number of residents chosen

3.4 Average GPA for all tracks
  o Number in Pediatrics track = 22 (GPA = 3.5)
  o Number in Adult Critical Care track = 40 (GPA = 3.46)
  o Number in Adult Health Medicine Specialty track = 28 (GPA = 3.43)
  o Number in Adult Health Surgical Specialty track = 25 (GPA = 3.32)

Nursing programs represented 54

59% Residents graduating from Tennessee schools
  Percent with B.S.N. 84% Percent with A.S.N. 14%
  Percent B.S.N. matriculating to M.S.N. 2%

Number of states residents are from 21

VESNIP (Vanderbilt Experience: Student Nurse Internship Program) is an internship program that gives student nurses an eight-week, full-immersion experience in a track of their choice, including pediatrics, adult critical care, adult medicine specialty, adult surgical specialty and women’s health. Students were selected by their individual schools to participate and will be on campus through July 6.

Austin Peay State University 14 students
  Belmont University 22 students
  Cumberland University 10 students
  Lipscomb University 4 students
  Western Kentucky University 12 students

Rebecca Krokosky preps a patient for surgery in the operating room.