



FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

Christine E. Lynn  
College of Nursing



# Community Engagement Report

FY 2023-2024

# 45 Years of Service to the Community

Florida Atlantic University's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing has provided significant support to local communities as it celebrates 45 years of academic excellence in nursing education, research, practice and scholarship.

Since the founding of the nursing program in 1979, the college has grown from six to over 1,200 students and expanded its outreach to underserved populations with the nurse-led Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center and the Florida Atlantic University/Northwest Community Health Alliance (FAU/NCHA) Community Health Center. These clinics serve as pillars of support for local patients and their families, providing crucial health care access and services, further solidifying the college's commitment to improving patient outcomes.

The college recognizes the vital role it plays in promoting health and wellness beyond the campus. Faculty and students actively engage with local communities and partners by conducting health assessments, promoting balanced lifestyles and bringing essential health care services to the Glades and other rural areas.

Through participation in community health fairs, educational events and programs, the college continues to address the specific health care needs of diverse populations in South Florida.



# College of Nursing and Boca Helping Hands: A Partnership Making a Difference

The collaboration between the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and Boca Helping Hands, a local organization that provides food, job training, access to health care and financial assistance to residents, exemplifies the college's commitment to compassionate care and community outreach.

Through this partnership, student members of the college's Nursing Christian Fellowship helped sort food donations, which contributes to the organization's efforts to address food insecurity among local residents.

During the winter holiday season, the college's faculty and staff collected donations for the Boca Helping Hands Holiday Drive to spread a little extra cheer when it's needed most. The organization also generously supports the FAU/NCHA Community Health Center, which provides vital funds that allow for an expansion of services.



**340**  
PATIENTS  
SERVED

**472**  
PATIENT  
VISITS

**74%**  
FEMALE

**26%**  
MALE

# College of Nursing and Boca Helping Hands: A Partnership Making a Difference

“Thanks to funding from Boca Helping Hands, in FY 2023-24, our clinic was able to provide mental health and primary care services to a total of 340 patients during 472 visits,” said Dr. Karen Wisdom-Chambers, associate director, FAU/NCHA Community Health Center. “This is truly a testament to community partnership. Most of the clients serviced with the funding are women from the domestic violence shelters and young adults who have aged out of the foster care system.”

Vouchers given to patients who do not have insurance and are unable to pay for medical or behavioral services can cover complete physicals, basic laboratory workups (CMP, CBC, TSH, Hemoglobin A1C, Lipid Panel), EKG, insulin assistance, diabetes education, free medications and vaccines, mammograms and psychiatric evaluations.

*“Boca Helping Hands has benefited immensely from our partnership with the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, through which we have been able to extend our health care voucher program to provide access to affordable medical care to uninsured clients in the West Palm Beach area,” said Greg Hazle, executive director, Boca Helping Hands. “We are also grateful for the generosity of the college’s student body and faculty in their donations of volunteer time and food, particularly during the holiday season. We look forward to growing the impact of our partnership for the benefit of the underserved in our community.”*



# Walking for a Cause: College of Nursing Supports Community Charities in Fundraising Walks

Faculty, staff and students at the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing are demonstrating their commitment to community engagement through active participation in various fundraising walks.

The Caring Hearts Auxiliary of Florida Atlantic University's Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center within the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing hosted the 17th annual "Keep Memories Alive" Walk-in-the-Mall on Nov. 5, 2023 at the Town Center Mall in Boca Raton. Funds raised from the walk provided adult day care support scholarships to participants who received hours of care and programs for their caregivers at the Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center.

The college was also among the sponsors for NAMI Walks Palm Beach County last November in John Prince Park, Lake Worth, FL. Presented by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the event raises funds to support the organization's mission of education, advocacy and public awareness.

Faculty and staff teamed up to support the 2023 Palm Beach County Heart Walk on Nov. 11 in West Palm Beach, hosted by the American Heart Association. The group joined more than a million people in over 300 cities across America to take a stand against heart disease and help save lives.

As a sponsor for the Make-A-Wish Southern Florida annual Broward Walk for Wishes 5K Walk/Run on Feb. 3, 2024 in Fort Lauderdale, faculty and staff organized a College of Nursing team for the event, which raised funds to help grant the wishes of children with critical illnesses.



# Expanding Access to Health Care Services in Rural Glades

Over the past decade, faculty and students have brought accessible health care to the Glades, a rural area on the east and southern coasts of Lake Okeechobee which is comprised of four towns — Pahokee, Canal Point, South Bay and Belle Glades. Home to a large population of migrant and farm workers, the region is designated as medically underserved and the community suffers from a professional health care shortage. In 2015, Dr. Lisa Wiese, associate professor, began a partnership with community stakeholders in the Glades to provide health screenings and increase awareness of Alzheimer’s disease and dementia among the population.

Since then, Dr. Wiese and nursing students have participated in community health events in the Glades to treat residents. The Caring-based Community & Academic Relationships for Excellence (CARE): Nurse-led Mobile Health Unit, spearheaded by Associate Professor Dr. Beth King, collaborates with Dr. Wiese to provide primary and mental health care services in the area, assist with health fair screenings and work with the VA Fresh truck, which provides nutritional services to veterans in the area.

Dr. King shared that the work of the Nurse-led Mobile Health Unit facilitates students’ understanding of the unique health care challenges for rural and medically underserved populations and allows them to see the direct impact of the social determinants of health on patient outcomes.

“The positive feedback from residents at all the events we attend reaffirms the importance of our work and the deep connections we are building within the community,” she added.



# Expanding Access to Health Care Services in Rural Glades

The student engagement in the Glades this year has been distinctly different, Wiese shared. “Our nursing students are now required to have clinical hours in the community setting, and that has changed the College of Nursing’s visibility in the area. Residents often comment on how wonderful it is to see future nurses at the events. Many students shared they had no idea there was such a high poverty and low-care access region in Palm Beach County, and how meaningful it is for them to be able to collaborate with the local community partners to provide health screenings and referrals here.”

In the past fiscal year, faculty and students from the College of Nursing provided health screenings and assessments in the Glades at numerous community events, including the Men’s Empowerment & Health Fair at Pahokee Elementary School, Go Red Saturday at the First Haitian Baptist Church, the Greater Union Missionary Baptist Church event, the Glades Initiative Health and Wellness Screening and Education Event, the Healthy Eating/Healthy Living Wellness Event, the Amaryllis Gardens event, the Silver Tree Senior Community event, the St. John Missionary Baptist Church Women’s Health Event and Restoration Destination at Pelican Lake.

Through these initiatives, close to 700 residents were served in FY 2023-24, which significantly contributes to the health and well-being of the rural Glades community.

Current community partners include Healthier Glades of Palm Beach County, the Diabetes Coalition of Palm Beach County, Pahokee Housing Authority, Lake Okeechobee Rural Health Network, the Glades Area Ministerial Association, Lakeside Medical Center, Palm Beach County American Heart Association, Health Council of Southeast Florida, BeWell Foundations, West Palm Beach Veteran Affairs Medical Center/Fresh Truck, The Salvation Army Palm Beach County, Vita Nova, YWCA Palm Beach County, Bridges of Belle Glade and Palm Health Care Foundation.



# Empowering Health Equity: Guatemala Study Abroad Programs

Nurse practitioner students and faculty embarked on two transformative missions to Guatemala during the 2023-24 academic year, where they conducted cervical cancer screenings and provided essential health care services to rural communities.

Led by faculty members Drs. Nancy Harris, Debra Hain and Elizabeth Tsarnas, the students treated over 900 patients for acute and chronic illnesses. Nurse educator students also discussed healthier diets with patients that will make a long-term improvement in the health outcomes of the community.

“It fills my heart to see the compassion and humility in my students and to witness their hard work and growth as they serve the people of Guatemala,” said Dr. Harris.

In November 2023, the students treated 331 patients in primary care and 95 in the women’s clinic, three of whom were identified with abnormal cells and treated with life-saving thermo-coagulation.

During the February 2024 trip, 383 children and adults received primary care, and 92 patients underwent cervical cancer screenings in the women’s clinic. Five of them with abnormal cervical cells were treated with thermo-coagulation.

Cervical cancer remains the number one killer of women of maternal age in Guatemala due to a lack of medical care, Dr. Harris shared. “These cervical cancer screenings result in multiple lives potentially saved with the immediate treatment of abnormal cells.”





# Empowering Health Equity: Guatemala Study Abroad Programs

Randi Loomis, Bachelor of Science in Nursing to Doctor of Nursing Practice student, participated in the program. She remarked that the experiences and people she encountered during the trips to Guatemala will stay with her throughout her career and the rest of her life.

“I believe every health care professional should have an opportunity like this, and I hope to be a part of similar trips in the future,” Loomis said. “It’s a reminder of why I work in the nursing field and of what is important in life.”

Working with other students and the College of Nursing faculty in Guatemala taught her to think outside the box and provide compassionate care regardless of language and cultural barriers. The trips, Loomis shared, left her with a sense of fulfillment and overwhelming gratitude for being part of something great.

As part of the program, students stay in Antigua, but see patients in underserved rural communities like Caserio La Buena Esperanza San Martin Jilotepeque.

“We work with Guatemalan doctors and have a pharmacy at our disposal to offer patients the required medications,” Dr. Harris noted. “Students can share their expertise and expand their diagnostic skills.”



# Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center Enhances Community Partnerships

The Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center (MWC) has developed meaningful partnerships with local communities to meet the needs of residents with memory disorders and their family caregivers.

To help expand its community outreach, the Caring Hearts Auxiliary hosted the fourth annual “Share Your Caring Heart” campaign fundraiser event on April 28, 2024, at the Cove Brewery in Deerfield

Beach, successfully raising over \$12,000 to support MWC caregiver programs and day center scholarships for participants in financial need. This yearly initiative is essential in addressing the increasing demand for services among individuals with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias (ADRD).

The spring event traditionally follows the annual “Keep Memories Alive Walk-in-the-Mall” that the Caring Hearts Auxiliary has hosted in November for the past 17 years. Approximately 100 walkers participated in the event in November 2023, which raised more than \$85,000 to provide adult day care support scholarships to participants and programs for their caregivers. The mission of the Caring Hearts Auxiliary is to support, promote and raise funds for the programs of the MWC.

“We aim to eliminate waiting lists for individuals and families in need of our specialized services as quickly as possible,” said Dr. María de los Ángeles Ortega, APRN, professor, associate dean of clinical practice and MWC director.

The Memory and Wellness Center averages about 20,000 visits per year. The MWC offers a wide range of services and programs to individuals with mild to moderate memory disorders, including Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias, and their families. The center conducts research on best practices in care for persons with ADRD while providing practicum experiences for students of nursing, medicine, social work, exercise science, communication disorders and health administration.



# Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center

In July 2023, the MWC received a Boca Raton Regional Hospital Community Outreach grant of \$60,000 for MWC participant scholarship program for those who do not have insurance or financial means. As a state-designed Memory and Wellness Center, the MWC continues its relationship with the Florida Department of Elder Affairs which provided additional funding in the amount of \$1,450,000. Major program goals are to provide comprehensive diagnostic, referral and supportive services for persons living with Alzheimer's Disease and/or related dementias (AD/ADRD) and their family caregivers, conduct service-related research, and develop caregiver training materials and educational opportunities in designated areas of Palm Beach, Martin and Okeechobee Counties.

In September 2023, the MWC was awarded a three-year grant for a groundbreaking project designed to advance health equity and improve the quality of life for individuals living with or at high risk for ADRD. This project will engage new interprofessional community partnerships with health care systems in Broward County.

Elsewhere, the MWC has been working closely with the Acts Center for Applied Research (ACAR) and St. Andrews Estates Acts, acting as a resource for the evaluation of local residents for memory concerns. ACAR and Acts communities and assisted living facilities explore ways of promoting successful aging and enhancing the services available to the older adult population.

"Recent research partnerships gave our residents the opportunity to assess their memory through testing and driving evaluations and helped our health care professionals, residents and resident families better prepare for transitions from acute care to skilled nursing settings," said Bill Tamulonis, managing director, Acts Center for Applied Research, Acts Retirement-Life Communities.

"The driving evaluation has a dual function of making sure the roads are safer and also allowing people to continue to drive if deemed safe, which lets the person maintain their independence," said Joya Marotta, DHA, NHA, HCRM, executive director, St. Andrews Estates Acts.

Marotta shared that the Acts Center for Applied Research and MWC are beginning a study of the effects of long-term COVID on general health and memory concerns which will add to the knowledge base of the aging process. The overall goal is to develop strategies to maintain independence and quality of life as long as possible for people with cognitive impairment.

# Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center

## Looking Ahead

The expansion of the Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center to Florida Atlantic University's Davie campus is expected to take place in fiscal year 2024-25. The center will provide support services to persons living alone with Alzheimer's Disease or Related Dementias (ADRD), improve the quality and effectiveness of programs and services dedicated to individuals aging with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) with ADRD or those at high risk of developing ADRD, and deliver behavioral symptom management training and expert consultations for family caregivers through an evidence-informed intervention.

## Fiscal Year 2023-24 Impact

- Caregiver Program Group Meetings: 195
- Memory and Wellness Center Visits: 1,633
- Adult Day Care Attendance: 3,131
- Support Groups for Family Caregivers: 798
- Caregivers Served: 1,032
- Follow-up Care-Supportive Services: 2,998
- Check-in Calls; Caregivers/Patients: 2,680
- Mental Health Services: 112 visits
- Adult Day Care Center and Clinic Referrals: 801
- Adult Day Care Scholarships: 72

1,633  
EVALUATION  
VISITS

3,131  
ADULT  
DAY CARE  
ATTENDANCE



# FAU/NCHA Community Health Center

## EXPANDING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE: FAU/NCHA COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER SECURES 340B PHARMACY CONTRACT WITH WALGREENS



The FAU/NCHA Community Health Center has reached a significant milestone by securing a 340B Pharmacy contract with Walgreens, which marks a pivotal achievement in enhancing health care accessibility and affordability for the West Palm Beach community.

Sponsored by the U.S. Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) Office of Pharmacy Affairs, the contract with Walgreens allows eligible patients to gain access to prescription medications at a reduced cost. This provision not only addresses immediate medication needs, but it also promises potential savings for the clinic that must be reinvested to expand treatment programs.

The 340B Pharmacy contract is the last contracted service requirement for the clinic to become a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC). Once the clinic is FQHC certified, it could apply for a New Access Point of Care designation, which could result in additional government funding.

Both locations of the Community Health Center in West Palm Beach serve as resources for primary and behavioral health care for the residents. The centers offer a comprehensive range of services, including pediatric and geriatric care, vision and hearing screenings. Clinicians also provide routine sick visits, preventive care and management for chronic diseases like diabetes. With nearly a quarter of the local population uninsured and many dealing with chronic conditions, the center ensures that all patients receive essential health care services regardless of their ability to pay.

“We are excited about the progress we have made in enhancing health care accessibility and affordability for our West Palm Beach community,” said Dr. Monica Roundtree Cleckley, clinic director, FAU/NCHA Community Health Center. “Our partnerships and initiatives, including the new 340B Pharmacy contract with Walgreens, are pivotal in addressing the immediate needs of our patients and expanding our services. We remain committed to providing comprehensive care and engaging with local and federal officials to better serve our residents.”

# FAU/NCHA Community Health Center

In 2023, the Community Health Center received three awards from HRSA for enhancing access to care, reducing health disparities and advancing health information technology.

Local and federal officials have actively engaged with and supported the center to help raise awareness of the services available to residents.

Palm Beach County Commissioner Mack Bernard made visits to the clinic, and State Senator Bobby Powell joined College of Nursing students and faculty in door-to-door neighborhood assessments in October 2023, to better understand the community's health care needs.



Students canvased the neighborhood and visited more than 160 households within a five-mile radius of the U.B.

Kinsey Educational and Community Health Center, and asked residents what mattered most to them in terms of the health care services.

The FAU/NCHA Community Health Center has continued its collaborative efforts with two local hospitals, Good Samaritan Medical Center and St. Mary's Medical Center in West Palm Beach. These partnerships highlight the center's role in reducing emergency room visits, particularly for patients without health insurance. This collaboration extends to providing free care for eligible patients below the poverty threshold.

Looking forward, the Community Health Center plans to start seeing 12,000 patients annually in two years. Building a new facility in Westgate, across the street from the existing clinic, could help achieve that goal. The clinics also hope to offer on-site dentistry services in the future, something that low-income patients often cannot afford.



# FAU/NCHA Community Health Center

## Fiscal Year 2023-24 Impact

**6,142**  
TOTAL PATIENT VISITS

**PATIENT POPULATION**

BLACK 43%    HISPANIC 31%  
WHITE NON-HISPANIC 25%  
DECLINED TO SPECIFY 1%

**51%** OF PATIENTS HAVE HOUSEHOLD INCOMES AT OR BELOW 100% FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINES

**32%** OF PATIENTS HAVE HOUSEHOLD INCOMES AT 101 - 200% FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINES

**30%** OF PATIENTS ARE UNINSURED

### Empowering Kids' Health:

- In July 2023, BSN students and faculty members provided school physicals and information on nutrition to elementary, middle and high school students at The Salvation Army of Palm Beach County summer camp.
- In July 2023, several students participated in the county-wide Back-to-School event at the Palm Beach County Convention Center as part of Florida Atlantic's Nurse-led Mobile Health Unit HRSA grant. The event provided students with access to immunizations and screenings for depression and anxiety.



## Locations

Westgate Community Health Center  
1650 Osceola Drive  
West Palm Beach, FL 33409

U.B. Kinsey Educational and Community Center  
720 Eighth Street  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401

# Community Partnerships Are Making a Difference

*“The YWCA Child Development Center has partnered with the FAU/NCHA Community Health Center for over five years, and the collaboration has been helpful in serving the community and the Child Development Center participants. College of Nursing students conducted health screenings and physicals of the children in the center and as a result, several kids were referred to their medical providers for further testing and treatment for hearing, vision and being above the BMI for their age. We sincerely hope to continue this amazing partnership with the Community Health Center in the future.”*

**LETHARA MILNER, CENTER DIRECTOR OF THE YWCA CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER IN WEST PALM BEACH**

*“The FAU/NCHA Community Health Clinic has been an invaluable partner to Vita Nova and our clients. On countless occasions, the clinic’s staff have demonstrated their commitment and passion for empowering marginalized communities. For many Vita Nova clients the barriers to receiving medical care include transportation, cost of care, stigma and distrust of the medical system. Through our partnership with the Community Health Center, we eliminated all those barriers and created a space where clients can get the treatment they need. By offering services at The Spot, this partnership has created a safe space for judgement-free medical care from compassionate and caring medical professionals.”*

**ROBBRIANNIA JOHNSON,  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
AT THE SPOT, CENTER FOR HOMELESS  
YOUTH AT VITA NOVA**

*“The partnership between FAU/NCHA Community Health Center and the YWCA Harmony House Domestic Violence Shelter is life-changing for our survivors. The clinic makes it easier for survivors to access the much-needed health services without barriers such as transportation and health insurance. The practitioners and interns listen to our survivors and truly help them to understand the importance of putting their health first. This partnership has been ‘literally’ life-saving for our survivors, and we truly appreciate all involved to continue to provide these critical services.”*

**CARQUELLA CLEMONS, DIRECTOR OF  
HARMONY HOUSE DOMESTIC ABUSE  
SHELTER**



# Student Community Engagement

## Student Outreach and Community Involvement

Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing student organizations are highly engaged in educating and treating local residents and supporting community organizations.

## Student Nurses' Association

The Student Nurses' Association (SNA) at the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing is making an impact within the community through fundraising activities in support of the organization and professional development initiatives for students.

Paolina Ignacio-Juan, spring 2024 graduate and former FAU SNA president, said it is important for nursing students to be involved in volunteering and community engagement because it helps them see how nursing care has an impact beyond the bedside.

"There are so many people in our community and globally who do not have access to health care. We can help make a difference," she added.

In 2023, SNA members joined the 17th annual "Keep Memories Alive" walk, benefiting the Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center, and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Light the Night Walk along with Nurses Christian Fellowship members.

Through other projects, the association has helped fellow students gain access to free feminine products on the Davie and Boca Raton campuses by restocking and managing the dispensers provided by FAU Student Government.

Dr. Wanda Morancy, co-academic advisor of SNA, said students made an impact at the recent Florida Student Nurses' Association (FSNA) and National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA) conventions. "Our students participated in workshops that enhanced test taking strategies, skill sets and general knowledge, and had a great opportunity to meet with exhibitors that provided supplemental resources, career development and employment opportunities."

At the FSNA convention in October 2023, SNA was awarded the Breakthrough to Nursing Recruitment Award and Legislative Award, and both association's resolutions, written by Freshman Direct Admit BSN track students Kaydrina Simeon, Stephen Benitez and Paolina Ignacio-Juan, were passed in the House of Delegates.

One of the resolutions focused on the nurse-to-patient ratio's impact on patient outcomes, and the other proposed policy changes called for increased postpartum screenings for maternal mental health issues through the first year of postpartum. At the 2024 NSNA convention in Lake Buena Vista, the chapter's resolution on the nurse-to-patient ratio's impact passed at the national level, as well.

SNA meets once a month during the academic year and organizes events to fundraise, provide community service and develop members as professional nurses.



## SNA Events

- SNA hosted a “Painting with a Twist” Fundraiser on Sept. 18, 2023 which raised nearly \$300 for the group to use for future projects and events.
- SNA hosted an annual Halloween party on Oct. 31, 2023. Faculty participated in the fun that featured ghoulish treats, games and a costume contest.
- SNA collaborated with the Student Council and hosted “Night After Nursing” on Dec. 5, 2023 on Zoom. Four FAU nursing alumni talked about their life after graduation, the careers they are currently working in and NCLEX tips and advice for nursing students.
- SNA students joined the painting party at the Cleveland Clinic on Feb. 24, 2024 and learned about career opportunities.

## HAND-ME-SCRUBS INITIATIVE SUPPORTS NURSING STUDENTS AT FLORIDA ATLANTIC

After a few years of collecting gently used scrubs from College of Nursing graduates, the Hand-Me-Scrubs program was launched in the 2023-24 academic year to help nursing students.

Initiated by Assistant Professor Dr. Mary Ann Leavitt and curated by SNA, the program allows students to check out scrubs for clinicals and preceptorships when having an extra set of clean uniforms is crucial for the four to five weeks of full-time shifts at the hospital.

Paolina Ignacio-Juan, former FAU SNA president, said the program had enough scrubs for all 67 seniors in the Freshman Direct Admit track during the 2023-24 academic year.

Dr. Leavitt said the original idea to create a program reusing the scrubs on the college level came from a group of students in the Accelerated BSN class she taught in summer and fall of 2020. She has been collecting scrubs from graduating students over the last several years.

As students donate their scrubs, they get laundered and sorted by size on a clothing rack. It took a few years to build up enough stock to open it to the students who may need an extra set of scrubs, Dr. Leavitt shared, but in 2023, SNA leaders figured out the check-out process and began distributing the scrubs.

“In the fall, our seniors have two clinicals per week the entire semester,” Ignacio-Juan said. “Getting an extra pair of scrubs can be costly and the Hand-Me-Scrubs program really helps to alleviate that financial stress for our students.”

# Nurses Christian Fellowship

From participating in health awareness campaigns to supporting local food programs, Nurses Christian Fellowship (NCF) students have been actively involved in initiatives aimed at impacting the community and helping those in need.

Assistant Professor and NCF Faculty Advisor Dr. Mary Ann Leavitt shared that NCF students participated in the “Keep Memories Alive” Alzheimer’s Walk in Boca Town Center in October and the Light the Night Walk for Leukemia and Lymphoma in Palm Beach in November 2023.

The fellowship also started a service relationship with Boca Helping Hands. This local charity organization provides food, job training, access to health care and financial assistance to help individuals and families in need.

“A group of our students volunteered at Boca Helping Hands in February and April, where they sorted donated food and helped the staff move a lot of heavy boxes,” said Dr. Leavitt. NCF students also participated in a diaper drive for the Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Palm Beach County, and Operation Christmas Child, a Samaritan’s Purse project that sends Christmas gift boxes and holiday books to children worldwide.

Nurses Christian Fellowship is growing in membership and service, she added. “Our meetings are a place for students to come and enjoy a meal together, learn about and talk about God, share prayer requests and pray for each other.”

She pointed out that nursing students are often stressed and under pressure, and NCF meetings and events offer a calm and friendly environment. Students from all programs and levels meet for support, laughter and the opportunity to volunteer in the community. In the past year, NCF students also participated in a beach clean-up and joined the national NCF Retreat in February.

“We welcome students and faculty of all faiths and backgrounds to join our local NCF,” said Dr. Leavitt. “I am so thankful that our amazing president, Sydney Gibbons, who is a junior, will be around until she graduates in spring 2026. Her ideas and diligent efforts are the reason we have been so active this year.”



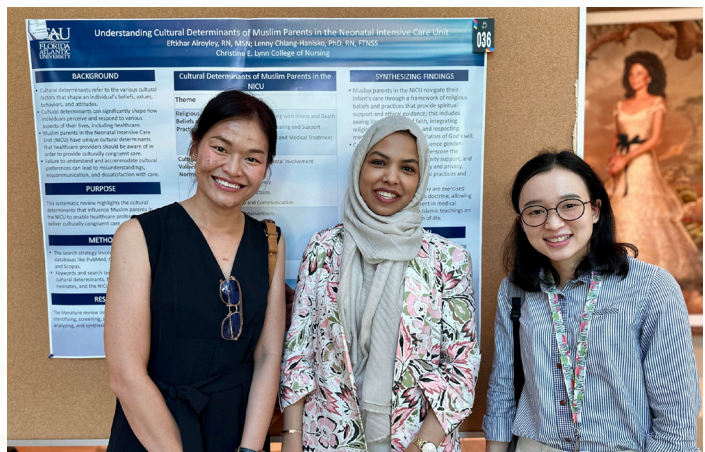
# Sigma Iota Xi At-Large Chapter: Celebrating Achievements and Community Impact

Florida Atlantic's Sigma Iota Xi At-Large Chapter is aligned with the organization's national standards of commitment to professional development, educational offerings and improving worldwide health.

Activity highlights from the chapter include a community-wide event, Healing for Healers Night, hosted in conjunction with the College of Nursing Initiative for Intentional Health and the Florida Nurses' Association. The evening featured a talk by Wellness Coordinator Dr. Miriam Ismael on chakras and how to balance them, along with chair massages, yoga, aromatherapy, Reiki, sound baths, chakra and aura readings and a serene Labyrinth Walk.

The chapter also joined other college groups to support the Walk-for-Wishes in Broward County to raise funds and grant wishes for children with critical illnesses in our local community. Nationwide, Sigma is recognized for its support of scholarship, excellence in nursing practice and funding opportunities in nursing research. Membership is by invitation only to baccalaureate and graduate nursing students who demonstrate excellence in scholarship, and to nurse leaders who exhibit exceptional achievements in nursing.

The Sigma Iota Xi At-Large Chapter, in collaboration with the College of Nursing, hosted Research Day on Nov. 30, in the college's Atrium on the Boca Raton campus. The event highlighted the scholarly projects and innovative research conducted by students and faculty. FAU's Sigma Theta Tau, Iota Xi At-Large chapter, received the Chapter Key Excellence Award from Sigma Nursing International Honor Society during its 47th Biennial Convention in San Antonio, TX, Nov. 11 to 15, 2023. Dr. Armiel Suriaga, chapter president (2021-23) for this biennium, and Dr. Barbara Lovell-Martin, current chapter president, accepted the award. The chapter also received recognition from the Sigma Region 7 for its exemplary efforts and service during the biennium.



## General Student Involvement

- Nursing student Alejandro Castro (Alex) collected donations in fall 2023 in response to an empty food pantry he learned about during clinicals. He gathered an impressive amount of donations from one nursing unit, including \$200 in gift cards for under-resourced people at his place of work, Memorial West.
- Nursing students performed individualized health assessments at the Belle Glade Library on Nov. 21, 2023 as part of the college's "Caring-based Community & Academic Relationships for Excellence (CARE): Nurse-led Mobile Health Unit" grant.
- Fall graduates participated in Broward Health's Graduation Luncheon on Nov. 29, 2023 in recognition of the academic achievements of the Class of 2023 in South Florida. The practical knowledge and skills the students gained at Broward Health will enhance the next phase of their journey in the nursing field.
- Raquel Panos and Ashley Noel represented the College of Nursing at the annual AACN Student Policy Summit, in Washington D.C., March 24 and 25, 2024. Students who attended the summit were immersed in didactic program sessions focused on the federal policy process and nursing's role in professional advocacy.



## Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing Advisory Board Outreach and Community Involvement

- College of Nursing Advisory Board members Christine E. Lynn, Joan Wargo and Cindy Krebsbach, staff and faculty showed up to support the 19th annual Go Pink Luncheon on October 27, 2023, hosted by Boca Raton Regional Hospital Foundation. The keynote speaker was Jaclyn Smith, who is a breast cancer survivor.
- The Royal Palm Yacht and Country Club Luncheon on March 6, 2024 raised approximately \$10,000 for the College of Nursing. The event was supported by the college's Advisory Board.
- College of Nursing Assistant Professor Dr. Rita Gengo met with members of St. Andrews Estates in Boca Raton on Jan. 26, 2024 for a special presentation on "Heart Health Matters: Heart Disease and Self-care." The event was organized in conjunction with the College of Nursing's Advisory Board.



## Faculty Outreach and Community Involvement

- Academic Advisor Matthew Patterson represented the College of Nursing at the Cleveland Clinic Education Fairs in Weston and Vero Beach in July 2023.
- Drs. Nancy Harris and Elizabeth Tsarnas worked with College of Nursing FNP and DNP students at the Back-to-School Expo sponsored by the City of Fort Pierce, on July 22, 2023. The students completed almost 60 sports physicals for the youth of St. Lucie County.
- Nursing students joined Drs. Nancy Harris and Elizabeth Tsarnas to perform over 200 screenings at the ALPI Head Start/Early Head Start Health Fair in Fort Pierce on July 27, 2023 and Port St. Lucie on July 28, 2023. Students performed height/weight, nutritional counseling, blood pressure, hearing and vision screenings and assisted with speech/language screenings for children.
- College of Nursing alumnae Drs. Jinga Oglesby and Flore Jesuca joined Dr. Nancy Harris and DNP students to provide physicals at the July 29, 2023, Pahokee Back-to-School Bash. City Manager Rodney Lucas, Deputy City Manager Jongelene Adams and Director of Community and Economic Development Peggy Boule-Washington also attended the event.
- The College of Nursing joined other Florida Atlantic colleges and units to collect donations for Florida State Rep. Patricia Williams' Back-to-School Community Event on Aug. 12, 2023 at Boyd H. Anderson High School in Lauderdale Lakes. Suzanne Ffolkes, assistant dean for Strategic Affairs and Public Engagement, met Rep. Williams to drop off supplies at her district office. Students also volunteered at the event.
- During Owl Family Weekend, alumni, faculty and staff turned out to join Florida Atlantic University's Health tailgate on Oct. 7, 2023 hosted by the College of Nursing, College of Medicine and College of Social Work and Criminal Justice.





- Community engagement staff attended the Soroptimist International of Boca Raton/Deerfield Beach's 48th annual Women of Distinction Breakfast on Oct. 11, 2023. Christine E. Lynn, who was the 2023 Soroptimist International Women of Distinction Breakfast Honorary Chair, presented this year's "Gloria Drummond Lifetime Achievement Award" to Barbara Schmidt.



- The College of Nursing hosted a Relax, Rejuvenate and Recharge Wellness event facilitated by the Initiative for Intentional Health on Dec. 2, 2023. Activities included a vision board workshop, a labyrinth workshop, an introduction to chakras, as well as various healing vendors.



- As part of the Florida Atlantic University's Health triad, Dr. Louise Aurélien-Buie, joined representatives from the Schmidt College of Medicine and the College of Social Work and Criminal Justice at the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce: Perspectives on Florida's Healthcare Awards Luncheon, on Nov. 9, 2023.



- Drs. Lisa Wiese and Sareen Gropper delivered presentations at the Rotary Club of Boca Raton meeting on Dec. 6, 2023. Their talk covered important topics such as nutrition, brain health, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and the benefits of lifelong learning.



- Dr. Christine Toledo represented the College of Nursing at the 10th annual Holiday Homestead/Florida City WIC Health and Resource Fair on Dec. 9, 2023. The event in the South Dade community provides food, free toys and books for children, as well as resources and education on nutrition, health, safety and wellness.



- The college's holiday gift drive for Boca Helping Hands generated many donations from faculty, staff and students. The gifts were delivered to the organization on Dec. 18, 2023.

- Nursing students from the BSN, MSN and DNP programs conducted health screenings, cognitive assessments, blood pressure counseling and rapid A1C and cholesterol checks at the Empower Clinic Health Fair in Pahokee, FL, on Feb. 3, 2024 with community partners to help promote heart health.

- Joy Fuller (DNP student), Dr. Karen Wisdom-Chambers, Nancy Brinker (founder, Promise Fund of Florida), Shanice Wisdom-Clayton and Jeaneen Muller (left to right) attended the Florida Blue Foundation’s Sapphire Awards dinner. The annual ceremony was held in Orlando on April 3, 2024.

- Several College of Nursing faculty attended the YWCA of Palm Beach County’s Until Justice Just Is luncheon on April 26, 2024. The college was a sponsor of the event.

- College of Nursing faculty and students provided health screenings at the Go Red AHA and Diabetes Coalition event at First Haitian Baptist Belle Glade on May 4, 2024.





FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY  
CHRISTINE E. LYNN COLLEGE OF NURSING

# Experience caring in action

## Advance Your Nursing Career

Florida Atlantic University's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing is recognized for its highly-ranked programs by U.S. News & World Report.

### RN-to-BSN (Online)

#### Master of Science in Nursing

- Nurse Administration and Financial Leadership (Online)
- Nurse Educator (hybrid)
- Nurse Practitioner (psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner, adult/gerontological nurse practitioner, family nurse practitioner)

### Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)

- Online, part-time post graduate program with classes held one weekend day per month
- Full-time BSN to DNP program in family, adult/gerontological, or psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner

### Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

- Online, with classes held one weekend day per month

### Certificate Programs

- Telehealth
- Dermatology CE Program
- Telemetry/Progressive Care
- Compassionate Care of Older Adults at Risk for or Experiencing Dementia
- Caring Science

**SCHOLARSHIPS, TRAINEESHIPS, AND ASSISTANTSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE.**

**561-297-3887 [nursing@fau.edu](mailto:nursing@fau.edu) [www.nursing.fau.edu](http://www.nursing.fau.edu)**

*The baccalaureate, master's and DNP programs at Florida Atlantic University's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. It is the only university in the U.S. to have all its degree programs endorsed by the American Holistic Nursing Credentialing Center.*





FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

Christine E. Lynn  
College of Nursing

777 Glades Road  
Boca Raton, FL 33431  
561-297-6261  
[nursing.fau.edu](http://nursing.fau.edu)

