A fundraiser that generates $250 may not seem like much. But to the students at Faulu Academy in the Kenyan village of Mabafweni, it means a great deal.

Student Chelsey Wilson got the idea for a fundraiser as the School of Nursing’s representative on Universities Fighting World Hunger|Auburn (UFWH|Auburn). Formerly known as the Committee of 19 — for the 19 cents a day it takes to feed a child in an impoverished country — UFWH|Auburn is the flagship chapter of UFWH, a growing global network of college and university students who are raising their voices collectively in pursuit of a world free from hunger and malnutrition.

UFWH|Auburn began leading the Auburn War on Hunger in 2004 in partnership with the United Nations World Food Programme.

UFWH|Auburn has had a longstanding relationship with Esther Ngumbi, a 2011 Auburn doctoral alumna and current distinguished postdoctoral researcher in the College of Agriculture’s Department of Entomology. Mabafweni is where Ngumbi was born and raised and where she opened Faulu Academy in 2012. Three years later, she celebrated the opening of the village’s first-ever library.

Wilson said she chose to support Ngumbi as Nursing’s outreach project because “I have a special place in my heart for impoverished children and their families.”

Wilson organized a T-shirt sale last fall, promoted it on social media, and sold almost 40, collecting $250. “We had people buy shirts who were not even in nursing school. Some individuals in Birmingham bought shirts just because they loved the cause we were supporting.”

Ngumbi used the money to buy 50 plastic chairs for Faulu Academy. She said they were facing a shortage of chairs so it was spent where it was needed the most.

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“Thanks for your generosity,” wrote Ngumbi. “We are grateful and very thankful.”
In March, eight Auburn Nursing students, two Nursing faculty, and five Outreach Global staff employees took a trip to Ghana to give their time, talent, and skills to the residents of Accra and Sekondi-Takoradi.

Outreach Global facilitates global education, training, and development, and business and trade programs with foreign universities, governmental agencies, businesses, NGOs, and other external agencies to advance the engagement of Auburn faculty, staff, and student work in all parts of the world.

This was the second time Auburn representatives visited the West African nation, but the first to include Nursing. The trip, led by Outreach Global Coordinator Elizabeth Essamuah-Quansah, a native of Ghana, was part of an outreach and educational partnership with the University of Cape Coast.

With nursing students and Assistant Clinical Professors Valarie Thomas and Tanya Johnson, the Auburn contingent was able to offer free healthcare, including hearing and vision tests, to more than 600 people. The people of Ghana were grateful to Auburn for the care they received.

“"We really represented Auburn well,” said Essamuah-Quansah. "The way we treated people was appreciated in turn.""

The trip illuminated the differences in nations, specifically in healthcare.

“The differences were valued by the students,” said Johnson. “The students brought an energy and enthusiasm and continued to want to serve throughout the trip.”

Student Emily Elston said she learned a lot about herself as she assimilated to the culture and lifestyle in Ghana.

“"This was the trip of a lifetime, for anyone who wants an eye-opening, amazing experience."”

– Emily Elston, Senior
Abby Osborne, co-head cheerleader and senior nursing major, has been selected for the 2018 E. Lynn Harris All-SEC Spirit Team. The Trussville, Ala.-native is the daughter of David and Gail Osborne and is in her third year as an Auburn Cheerleader.

The 2018 Spirit Team is comprised of a representative from each SEC school in honor of former Arkansas Cheerleader and long-time volunteer Coach E. Lynn Harris. Selection recognizes spirit members for their academic success, philanthropic dedication, and overall representation of their university. The team was recognized at the Women’s SEC Basketball Tournament in Nashville this spring.

“We are so lucky that Abby is an Auburn Cheerleader,” said Latisha Durroh, Coordinator of the Spirit Squad for Auburn Athletics. “She loves Auburn and has done an amazing job the last three years representing our program and Auburn University. Abby has done an outstanding job balancing being in the School of Nursing, maintaining excellent grades, and helping to lead our squad the entire year. We will miss her and really appreciate all of her contributions to Auburn University and Auburn Cheerleading.”

Meet Pamela Short

Pamela Short’s path to a graduate degree in nursing was not always easy, but her experience at Auburn made it all worthwhile. At a young age, Short learned that her family needed more health education after she witnessed her grandfather suffer with hypertension. Nursing became a passion. “All I knew is that I wanted to take care of people,” she said.

Short earned a BSN in 1993 and started working in an ICU. She and her husband, an Auburn electrical engineering alumnus, raised three boys, now 18, 20, and 22 years old. It was clear that Short would continue her education at Auburn.

“The faculty loved me and cared about my success in the undergraduate program,” she said. “Who wouldn’t want to go back to that?” Based on the leadership and guidance she received from the faculty as an undergraduate, Short said she knew she could be successful returning to school as a working mother of three.

“The instructors not only teach, but care about the person as a whole,” she said. Short continues to be inspired by those who have helped her along the way and wants to be that source of encouragement for someone else. Her ultimate goal is to “be one of those professors that can pour into students and help them meet personal and career goals.” Her enthusiasm for her career and desire to serve others inspires everyone she encounters.

“I feel so blessed, and I know God gave me this gift in nursing that I need to protect,” said Short. “It’s been an amazing journey.”

Short received her MSN in May.
New EAGLES Center Coordinator

Mike Callihan is the new coordinator of the Engaging Active Group Learning Environments in Simulation (EAGLES) Center. He is responsible for creating and facilitating scenario-based simulations with nursing students, teaching in the undergraduate program, and conducting research into injury prevention and simulation-based education.

New Advisor

Stephanie Wood has changed roles in the School from student services coordinator to advisor. She joined the school as a development coordinator after starting at the university in the Office of Development. Wood earned a bachelor’s in education from Auburn in 2008 and is currently pursuing her Master’s in higher education administration at Auburn. She and her husband welcomed triplets last summer.

New Advisor

Cassie Jones joins the School as a student advisor. The Selma, Ala.-native graduated from Auburn University Montgomery in 2015 with a degree in education. Jones was a member of the Warhawks two-time national championship softball team. In her spare time, she competes in protection sports with her German Shepherds and her husband, Keith.

New Associate Clinical Professor

Robin Farrell has been at Auburn since 1987 when she began working at Student Health Services as a family nurse practitioner. She earned both her MSN and doctorate from UAB. Farrell has been on faculty at Troy University. Her research interests include college and school health, adolescence, and women’s health.

New Clinical Placement Coordinator

Hope Carroll began her nursing career as a LPN at EAMC in 1993 and enrolled in Southern Union State Community College’s first LPN-to-RN class in 1994. Upon graduating with her AND, she worked as a RN at EAMC on the cardiac special care and telemetry units for two years and then home health for four years. She and her husband Jerry owned and operated University Daycare for 17 years. Carroll has been a pediatric and med/surg clinical instructor since 2007. She joined Auburn Nursing in August 2017.

Leadership Changes

Caralise Hunt, associate professor, was recently named the School’s associate dean for academic affairs. A 1991 Auburn Nursing alumna, Hunt joined the faculty in 2005.

Francine Parker, Betty McLendon Fuller Endowed Associate Professor, has returned to the classroom after serving as associate dean since 2014. She has been on faculty for 24 years, transferring from Auburn University Montgomery to Auburn in 2006.

New Certification

Assistant Clinical Professor Amy Curtis recently obtained her simulation certification, making her the first Certified Healthcare Simulation Educator in the School. Curtis is a three-time Auburn alumna, having completed her doctorate in 2016. She has been part of the Auburn faculty since 2011.

Research Symposium

Faculty and students attended Auburn’s This is Research Student Symposium in March, including from left, Assistant Professor Mary Peterson, Assistant Clinical Professor Sarah Watts, graduate students Courtney Cox, Pamela Short, and Leslie Grounds, and Professor and Interim Associate Dean for Research Kathy Jo Ellison.

PKP Awards

Last fall, five nursing students were awarded First Professional Year Awards from Phi Kappa Phi. They are, from left, Madeline Sjobeck, Lindsay Langford, Madeline Tisdale, Madeline Parks, and Alyson Mason. Graduate student Natalie Sherrer, not pictured, was recognized at the college/school level for her poster on “Videos to Improve Self-Care in Heart Failure Patients.”

Darden Scholarship Recipient 2018

Leah Knight, a graduate student in the nurse practitioner/nurse educator program, received a scholarship from the local J.W. Darden Foundation at its gala night in January. Knight works as a nurse at East Alabama Medical Center in Opelika and volunteers at Mercy Medical Clinic in Auburn. She is the mother of two young girls.
IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

The Student Nurses Association partnered with the American Red Cross in January to sponsor a university-wide blood drive on campus. The goal for the three-day event was to collect 375 pints of blood. Auburn collected 376, potentially saving more than 1,100 lives.

The School of Nursing had 100 percent participation in the 2018 faculty/staff campaign.

Ann Lambert and Tanya Johnson were promoted from Assistant Clinical Professor to Associate Clinical Professor in an announcement from Auburn Provost Bill Hardgrave.

The School of Nursing’s newest degree program, a Doctor of Nursing Practice, will begin this summer with 10 students projected in the first cohort. The on-line RN-to-BSN program will commence this fall.

NEW & NOTEWORTHY

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Tiger Giving Day Funds New Home for Tiger Babies Program

Auburn University’s 24-hour, online fundraising event, known as Tiger Giving Day, attracted more than 2,400 alumni and friends, whose giving benefited 31 projects.

Nursing received $17,000 from 145 donors to fully fund its plans for a portable Tiger Babies breastfeeding support station for use at Auburn athletics venues including Jordan-Hare Stadium. It was one of 23 projects to be fully funded. All remaining projects achieved at least 50 percent of their goal.

The School established a Tiger Babies breastfeeding support tent in 2015 as a clean and comfortable environment for mothers to use prior to Auburn football games. With limited areas on campus for mothers to nurse or pump on game day, faculty were able to make the service more accessible from inside the gates of Jordan-Hare.

In just two years, the School has assisted approximately 575 mothers and their babies. This is the only service of its kind offered at any SEC campus on game day.

“I am so grateful for the service Tiger Babies provides for young mothers like me,” said Nursing Assistant Clinical Professor Kelly Strickland. “I can’t tell you how many times I’ve been in a bind having to feed my infant in the back seat of my car, or a dressing room, or a random closet somewhere. It is such a relief to know that when I come to Auburn events, I can count on a sanitary, safe, peaceful place for me to bond with and feed my precious child.

“My son means the world to me, and I am so thankful that Tiger Babies allows me to give him the nourishment he needs, when he needs it.”

After football season, the new Tiger Babies station will be moved to Auburn Arena for moms and their babies who attend gymnastics meets or basketball games.

Disaster Day 2018

Students from Auburn Nursing and the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine participated in a disaster drill response training event in April. Nursing hosted the joint drill because the new building provided the capacity to accommodate such an interprofessional exercise. The skills lab served as a mock hospital where victims were treated. Faculty and administrators supervised nursing and medical students working side-by-side in response to the simulated mass-casualty event.

“I am so grateful for the service Tiger Babies provides for young mothers like me.”

– Kelly Strickland, Nursing Assistant Clinical Professor

In May 97 BSN students graduated, Auburn’s largest cohort to date.

73 August 2017 Graduates had a 100% pass rate on the NCLEX.
Auburn University recently completed the most successful fundraising campaign in its history, raising more than $1.2 billion. Because This Is Auburn — A Campaign for Auburn University surpassed previous state efforts, making Auburn the first university in Alabama to raise more than $1 billion in a fundraising campaign.

The School of Nursing collected $18.45 million from 1,971 donors, including 700 first-time donors. The School was the first college or school on campus to celebrate its achievement with an event on Feb. 3.

The event gave donors an opportunity to interact with faculty and students, tour the new building, and participate in skills lab demonstrations and active learning classroom activities.

“You have helped to shape the future of nursing education at Auburn, and we will see the outcomes of your investments for years to come, not just at the university, but throughout our community, the state, the nation, and the world,” said Auburn President Steven Leath.

Former Dean Barbara Witt was recognized as Dean and Professor Emerita.

Jan McAlister, ‘91 alumna and 2016 recipient of the School’s Distinguished Alumni Award, shared how her life has been enhanced by Auburn Nursing and how she chose to give back through a scholarship named for her younger brother, Charles, a leukemia survivor since the age of 3.

McAlister said that while working on her doctorate, she realized the impact faculty have on students and their ability to succeed. This realization prompted her gift to create a fund for excellence that provides faculty with an ongoing source of funding to support their research, outreach, and instruction.

Jeremy Ellis said he credited the School with making his dreams come true. The 2017 alumnus is currently a nurse at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. He said he and many others realized the importance of giving back to a place that is so influential in their lives.

“Everyone’s generous gift of sowing into the nursing program will pay off,” he said.

“You have helped to shape the future of nursing education at Auburn, and we will see the outcomes of your investments for years to come, not just at the university, but throughout our community, the state, the nation, and the world.”

Steven Leath
Auburn University President

“This school is developing some of the smartest nurses in the world.”

Ellis and Assistant Clinical Professor Karol Renfroe traveled the country during the campaign to share how giving to Auburn Nursing creates opportunities for students to succeed.

Before the Auburn football team participated in the 2018 Spring Game in April, alumni, faculty, and friends tailgated at the School of Nursing, including members of the classes of 1983, 1988, and 2008.
New Outreach Program Combats Poor Health Trends in State

If one Auburn University associate professor has her way, a new outreach program aimed at promoting healthy behaviors in children from neighboring Tallapoosa County will be available statewide.

Linda Gibson-Young, along with fellow nursing faculty Ann Lambert, Tonya Johnson, and Margot Fox, and pediatrician Dr. Eric Tyler, collaborated to create TigerCHAT - Community Health, Awareness, and Training - to establish healthy eating, physical activity, and oral care behaviors among school children.

The program is being piloted this semester at Radney Elementary School in Alexander City, home to nearly 500 students in fifth and sixth grade. Gibson-Young and Auburn Nursing students visit the school for 10 weeks to present lessons on the heart (nutrition and activity), lungs (staying healthy and sleep health), and brain (dealing with emotions like sadness and anger).

With the support of Alexander City Schools and the Russell Medical Center Foundation, TigerCHAT will be offered at Radney for at least the next four years. Gibson-Young said she intentionally integrated TigerCHAT into the school curriculum in order for it to be sustainable and exist beyond the current partnership.

Gibson-Young said she is currently seeking grant funding to share the program in Chambers County schools. She’s also looking to partner with psychology, kinesiology, nutrition, and pharmacy at Auburn, as well as the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine, to help adapt the program. Then she wants to bring the program to Lee County schools, potentially partnering with Southern Union State Community College.

The new outreach program aligns with the university’s mission as a land-grant institution to serve the citizens of Alabama.

Gibson-Young found Alexander City Schools to be an ideal partner as its goals for promoting health, nutrition, and wellness aligned with the TigerCHAT curriculum. Based on statistics from Russell Medical Center, Alexander City has a higher obesity rate than the national average and Tallapoosa County has higher rates of poverty, diabetes, and hypertension than the national average.

“These statistics show a clear need for proactive health interventions,” she said. “TigerCHAT will open the door to improving child health in this community.”

Jack Korte, rehabilitation director at Russell Medical Center, said TigerCHAT “perfectly matched” the strategic objectives of the hospital to address community health.

“It’s exciting to see it in action. Linda Gibson-Young brought this here with this age group in mind. It is well designed and exactly what we were seeking for our community,” he said.

“I would love to see it used throughout the state since Alabama is one of the unhealthiest states in the country.”

Each week, classes of Radney students take turns gathering in the school gym where they learn about specific topics in smaller groups led by Auburn nursing students and Radney and Auburn faculty.

For the week on “activity,” students discussed examples of sedentary and physical activity - playing video games versus playing basketball outside. And then practiced different activities that focused on flexibility, endurance, or balance - like shoulder stretches, bicep curls, skipping, and lunges, to name a few.

Homework for that week was to talk to their families and record how much time they spend on the computer or handheld devices, watching TV, or playing video games. Students who turn in the homework each week earn
prizes, such as a jump rope for those students who talked with their parents about nutrition.

Caralise Hunt, associate professor and associate dean for academic affairs at Auburn Nursing, said TigerCHAT wisely targets children, 10 to 12 years old, because they can make independent decisions at that age about eating behaviors and activities.

While some communities struggle to be healthy because of a lack of resources, such as money to buy a bicycle or access to a park to play, TigerCHAT provided students with the knowledge to make healthy choices no matter their circumstances.

“So much of this discussion is around activities these children can do at home,” said Hunt. “We have to do something to combat the health trends in this area.”

Gibson-Young said the program would not be successful if it told children to stop eating pizza. Instead, it focuses on changing their behaviors and habits so when they eat pizza, they know to be active too.

“I tell our nursing students ‘you are planting a seed. It’s a small seed, but it will grow,’” she said. “The next time these children are at home playing video games or watching TV, they will think about how they can be active.”

Cheryl Prickett Bailey ’88, is the new president of the Alabama Board of Nursing.

The Alabama Board of Nursing strives to promote and safeguard the health of the public through regulatory excellence.

Bailey attributed her career success to her Auburn education and supportive family. A native of Fairfield, Ala., she was raised in two family-owned businesses: Eastern Valley Drugs and Medical Center Pharmacy. Her father and twin brothers are Auburn pharmacy school alumni.

Bailey grew up an Auburn fan and was motivated to study nursing because she “loved helping people, providing hands-on care, and being able to make a difference.”

After graduating from Auburn, Bailey began her preceptorship in OB at St. Vincent’s Health System in Birmingham, then worked at Children’s of Alabama before beginning a 28-year career at Cullman Regional Medical Center.

Although Bailey misses patient care, she said “increasing levels of responsibility provide more of an opportunity to help a greater number of people and help make a difference. Nurses at all levels can impact patient care and patient safety.”

One of her proudest professional accomplishments is being a chief nurse for 17 years. Bailey said “that doesn’t happen often.” But admitted it would not have been possible without a strong foundation, a strong foundation built from her Auburn Nursing experience.

Bailey advised current nursing students to be prepared to study, work hard, and ask questions.

“You can learn something new every day from anyone - if you have your eyes and ears open. You will make a difference. It may be something as small as holding a patient’s hand or actually saving a life. It is the best feeling in the world.”

– Cheryl Prickett Bailey ’88
President of the Alabama Board of Nursing

Auburn Alumna Heads Alabama Board of Nursing

“You can learn something new every day from anyone - if you have your eyes and ears open. You will make a difference. It may be something as small as holding a patient’s hand or actually saving a life. It is the best feeling in the world.”

Bailey and her husband, Paul, also an Auburn alumnus, have two daughters: Samantha, a ’15 Auburn alumna, and Jade, who will be a freshman at Auburn this fall.
Auburn, Nursing Remain in Hearts of Stegalls

Gerrye Stegall ’83, knew Auburn University was for her after she took a university math course one summer in high school. She loved the school, the beauty of campus, and the convenience of not being too far away from her home in Opp, Ala.

Stegall began at Auburn as a pre-med major. It wasn’t a good fit, so she changed to nursing. She was fortunate to have tuition funded through an agreement to work with East Alabama Medical Center after graduation.

Before clinicals demanded her time, Stegall sang for a few years in the Auburn University Concert Choir. One of the biggest milestones for Stegall was participating in the Alabama State Nursing Student Association. She traveled with Dean Mary Woody to a national convention in Boston.

Her inspiration for critical care and pathophysiology stemmed from faculty like Sally Stroud and Pamela Levy who challenged her throughout her time at Auburn. Their influence also led Stegall to earn her master’s in critical care nursing from Emory University in Atlanta.

Before her senior year in nursing school, Stegall married her husband Ken Stegall. The couple did not have children of their own, but did foster a child for a while and also hosted an exchange student from Germany for a year.

The Auburn Family has always been important to the Stegalls.

“We always feel like a part of a big family, and you feel like you know something about the character of anyone who wears the logo,” she explained.

The couple said they want young people to have the same opportunity they did to be a part of the Auburn Family, specifically the Nursing family.

“We want to support students to help them have a special experience like we did,” she said.

The Stegalls enjoy traveling around the world. For the past few years, they have lived in Sydney and traveled in Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, and Indonesia.

“We always feel like a part of a big family, and you feel like you know something about the character of anyone who wears the logo.”

– Gerrye Stegall ’83
Chandler ’83 Received Much More Than an Education From Auburn Nursing

Suzanne Lawrence Chandler believes she made one of the best decisions of her life when she chose to pursue a nursing degree at Auburn. The Birmingham, Ala.-native always had a love for science and nursing was an opportunity to serve others. Auburn - with faculty like Pam Levy and Sally Stroud, Dean Mary Woody and advisor Jimmie Lynn Bounds - provided her with the knowledge and work ethic for a successful future.

“Nursing has given me the opportunity to have a meaningful career and a family life,” she said.

After graduating in 1983, Chandler initially worked in coronary care nursing at UAB and Tanner Medical Center in Carrollton, Ga. Then she became a pioneer in two distinct fields of nursing. Chandler was one of the first legal nurse consultants in Georgia, working for multiple law firms on medical malpractice and products liability cases. She was a founding member of the Georgia Association of Legal Nurse Consultants.

Chandler would begin a new career path at Greenway Medical Technologies, eventually becoming director of clinical content for the company’s flagship product, an electronic health record used in physicians’ offices. Little did she know that she was again to become a pioneer in a new area of nursing - informatics. Chandler was in the first group of board-certified informatics nurses in the US.

During her 15 year career with Greenway, she became an expert in informatics nursing and guest lectured on the subject at the University of West Georgia School of Nursing.

“When I sensed God opening a door for me, I walked through it, even if it was out of my comfort zone,” Chandler said. “I had the confidence to do that not only because of my faith, but also because of my Auburn education.

“Auburn gave me the knowledge base to draw from, and Auburn also gave me many opportunities to learn how to lead others. When an opportunity for something new and different arose in my career, I was not afraid to grab it. For that reason alone, I will always be grateful to God for giving me Auburn.”

– Suzanne Lawrence Chandler ’83

“I want the university to be well-respected and have what it needs to be the best school,” said Chandler. “If I have the means to help, I should help. It’s a spiritual thing for me. Auburn is high on my priority list for charitable giving. Plus, it’s fun to give to Auburn!

“What I love most is the spirit of Auburn, the atmosphere around campus. The Auburn community is also very appealing. The people at the university and in the community are very friendly and open. Auburn University was a great place to go to college.”

While a student, Chandler served two years as a director on SGA Cabinet and spent a year as commander of Angel Flight, the Air Force ROTC auxiliary group. She was rush chairman of her sorority, Alpha Gamma Delta, and was selected for various honor societies, including Sigma Theta Tau, Mortar Board, and Omicron Delta Kappa.
Amy does not settle for average; she reaches for excellence.

Jane Fullum used those words in a letter advocating for Amy Brandon’s selection for the 2018 Distinguished Alumna Award. Fullum, the vice president of patient care operations and chief nursing officer at East Alabama Medical Center in Opelika, Ala., has known Brandon since she first started at the hospital. A 19-year-old Brandon earned a job in the ICU after completing an ADN.

She has seen Brandon grow as a lifelong learner - earning a BSN and MSN from Auburn in 2005 and 2008, respectively, and pursuing professional certifications in Critical Care Registered Nurse, Advanced Nurse Executive, and Adult Health Clinical Nurse Specialist.

She has seen her advance in clinical and leadership roles, from a charge nurse in the ICU to house supervisor, to manager of the cardiovascular ICU and cardiovascular OR, to director of critical care.

No doubt, Amy Brandon is an exceptional young alumna based on her achievements. Even more so, Amy is an exceptional young woman. She leads with a servant’s heart. Her spirit of servitude is evident in her approach to her peers, managers, staff, and most importantly, our patients and community.

Brandon, 38, said she still gets excited and a little teary-eyed when she thinks about her chosen profession, one which she calls “the art of caring to benefit the lives of others.”

“This is an exceptional young alumna based on her achievements. Even more so, Amy is an exceptional young woman. She leads with a servant’s heart. Her spirit of servitude is evident in her approach to her peers, managers, staff, and most importantly, our patients and community.

Brandon, 38, said she still gets excited and a little teary-eyed when she thinks about her chosen profession, one which she calls “the art of caring to benefit the lives of others.”

“I have a passion for lifelong learning, and my professors were great encouragers, influencing my decision to pursue graduate study. I believe we should never stop learning and seeking to better understand the people and systems we serve.”

– Amy Brandon

Brandon clearly excelled at learning at Auburn, earning the Outstanding EARN Student Award and Outstanding Graduate Student Award. As a graduate teaching assistant, she demonstrated a natural ability to mentor and lead.

Through her leadership at EAMC, the CVICU achieved silver-level designation as Beacon Units of Critical Care Excellence. Brandon was recently recognized by the American Association of Critical Care Nurses with a Circle of Excellence Award, one of only 14 nurses in the nation.

Brandon gave much credit for her successes to those around her, starting with her mother, who graduated from nursing school when Brandon was just three years old.

“Receiving this award is truly an honor that I attribute to the support and inspiration from my faith, family, and the group I call my ‘work family’ at EAMC,” she said.
A Letter From the Dean

For nearly four decades, Auburn University’s School of Nursing has offered exceptional programs designed to educate quality nurses to support the state’s healthcare needs. As dean, I am committed to ensuring we maintain the steadfast quality of these programs and that we accommodate Auburn students who wish to pursue a career in nursing. Despite a national nursing shortage in recent years, the School continues to experience significant demand for additional program offerings, faculty, and space.

To accommodate this demand, the School successfully doubled its enrollment by establishing two admissions processes per year, in the fall and spring semesters. While this approach allowed for more students to be admitted to our program, it created an unintended consequence for those students admitted in the spring. These students were only able to complete the medical surgical course required for the major during the summer. The disadvantage to completing one of the most challenging and fundamental courses in the summer lies in the shortened duration of 10 weeks as opposed to 15 weeks in the fall and spring. A careful review of data combined with feedback from students indicates that completion of this course in the summer places our students at a significant disadvantage with regard to readiness, as well as preparation for standardized specialty exams and the national licensing exam. In 2016, the School piloted an extended summer semester calendar in an attempt to resolve the issue; however, that solution created additional problems for students and faculty.

Following a careful review of our processes, and with exhaustive input from faculty and students, the School has amended our admission cycle for the 2018-19 academic year. Admission to the program will now occur in the summer and fall semesters. This change allows our students to complete the medical surgical course in the fall or spring semesters, which is vital to the success of our student nurses and the patients they serve. Additionally, the change provides students with a summer to pursue professional opportunities including internships, study abroad experiences, and clinically related work.

The revised admission cycle does not affect the total number of students enrolled in the nursing program. During the initial year, however, we will admit 50 students in fall 2018, 50 students in spring 2019, and 100 students in summer 2019. Staggering those students admitted in the fall and spring is necessary due to these two cohorts taking the same courses in their third semester thus requiring the same clinical experiences at once. Designing the change the way we have is necessary to ensure all students get the clinical placements they need. We are admitting students in the fall semester, so for many, this change will have no impact at all on their admission date. Similarly, those students who have not completed their prerequisite courses and were anticipating spring 2019 admission may also see no impact. If students are not admitted for fall 2018 or spring 2019 semester, we plan to provide an opportunity for them to take some early nursing courses before the next round of admissions allowing them to continue progressing toward their nursing degree. Following the year of transition, we will admit students every summer and fall semester.

We understand that change can be disruptive and unsettling; however, the decision was guided by our enduring goals of offering Auburn students the best possible nursing education and preparing them to enter the workforce ready to provide safe and effective care. Academic Advisors within the School are conducting application information sessions and hosting individual appointments for students who are planning to apply for 2018-19 admission. We are available to personally answer questions and will continue to provide support for students and families throughout this process.

Gregg Newschwander
Barbara S. Witt Professor and Dean

Nursing Part of Initiative to Provide Mobile Health Clinic in Local Community

The School of Nursing, Office of University Outreach, City of Opelika, Casey Family Programs, and East Alabama Medical Center have joined forces to provide a Mobile Health Clinic in the Opelika area. As part of its Community of Hope Initiative, Casey Family Programs challenge communities around the country to more fully understand issues affecting the stability of families, the safety of children, and the proper and effective role of child welfare systems.

The Community of Hope in Opelika is meant to build healthy families through positive relationships and collaborations. Part of the collaboration is to design and implement a Mobile Health Clinic to reach families beyond current systems of care and provide a full range of medical services at no cost.

Auburn Clinical Professor Jean Dubois said the Mobile Health Clinic will expand the existing Community Health Investment Program in Opelika, an inter-professional student outreach involving the Harrison School of Pharmacy, Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine, School of Kinesiology, nutrition, and social work.

A bus donated by First Transit has been retrofitted to serve as the mobile clinic, providing space for the medical services found at a general practitioner’s office.

“One of the reasons the mobile health clinic model is successful across the country is that by comparison to a brick and mortar large-scale institution, a mobile clinic is agile and flexible,” said Dubois. “Mobile clinics can go wherever needed, adjust its destinations, routes, services, and companions.”

Auburn Nursing will help coordinate clinic staff to include faculty and students from nursing, pharmacy, social work, nutrition, medicine, and other health professionals from the university and the community. The Mobile Health Clinic will start serving in the Jeter and Carver neighborhoods in Opelika this fall, offering preventive screening, health promotion, and primary care services.
Auburn’s New President Announces Plan to ‘Inspire. Innovate. Transform.’ University

Auburn University President Steven Leath articulated an ambitious vision for the university during his formal installation as the school’s 19th president in a March 29 ceremony with the theme, “Inspire. Innovate. Transform.”

“He is a visionary who is not content with the status quo,” said Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey, president of the Auburn Board of Trustees. Ivey, together with Michael DeMaioribus, president pro tempore, installed Leath and presented him with the Auburn presidential medallion in front of 1,200 guests on the Auburn Arena floor. Harold Martin Sr., chancellor of North Carolina A&T State University, introduced Leath via video.

“Dr. Leath will honor our past and embrace what it means to be an Auburn man or woman while transforming our beloved university into an institution that will be as strong in our next 162 years as it was in the first 162 years,” Ivey continued.

Leath, who began serving as president in July 2017, spoke of Auburn’s foremost responsibilities as a land-grant university, which, he said, are to educate and prepare students for life; drive the development of scholarship and research that creates and advances knowledge; and have meaningful engagement and outreach.

“When it comes to fulfilling our role and responsibilities as a public land-grant university, the state of Auburn is strong, but ‘strong’ isn’t enough to take Auburn to the next level,” he said. “As formidable as our research and scholarship have been, and as strong as our engagement and outreach efforts have been, we can do even better. We can do more. We will do more.”

– Steven Leath
Auburn University President

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Auburn experience. Dr. Leath knows we are stronger when each and every voice around the table is heard.”

The day prior to the installation, the university held student-focused festivities on the Student Center Campus Green, featuring performances by student organizations, the pep band, cheerleaders, and Aubie. Hundreds of students participated in games, enjoyed free food, and picked up commemorative T-shirts while mingling with Leath.

“It is a time for us as a student body to change and grow, to foster better relationships with each other, and believe in a stronger university,” Jennifer Eaton, president of the Black Student Union, said after the student event. “With Dr. Leath charging not only the student body to see his vision, but the Auburn Family as a whole, I am honestly excited to see where Auburn is heading!”

New SGA President Dane Block commented, “Dr. Leath will transform our university through innovation in ways that add value to the student experience and create new opportunities for engagement. I am especially excited for Auburn and its students during this time … You hear it a lot, but it is indeed, a great time to be an Auburn Tiger.”

More coverage of the installation—including Leath’s remarks and a video of the ceremony—is available at auburn.edu/auburninspires.
With the passage of the recent tax laws, now is a good time to re-evaluate your estate plans. It’s easy to establish a lasting legacy for the Auburn University Foundation through your will, trust, or beneficiary designation.

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SAVE THE DATES

Sept. 8 – Tailgate
Auburn vs. Alabama State
Bring your own picnic.
School will provide water and desserts.

Sept. 28 – 18th Annual Blue Jean Ball
At Coach Pat Dye’s Crooked Oaks Hunting Lodge, Notasulga, Ala.
Celebrating 40 Years of Nursing

Oct. 13 – Tailgate
Auburn vs. Tennessee
Bring your own picnic.
School will provide water and desserts.