

# SREB

## Impact of a Family Nurse Practitioner Project at Four Institutions

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation  
Faculty Fellowship Program

Southern  
Regional  
Education  
Board

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COUNCIL ON COLLEGIATE EDUCATION FOR NURSING

*The W.K. Kellogg Foundation was established in 1930 to “help people help themselves through the practical application of knowledge and resources to improve their quality of life and that of future generations.” As a private, grant-making organization, the foundation provides seed money to nonprofit organizations and institutions that have identified problems and have designed constructive plans to solve them. Most grants are awarded in the following areas: higher education; youth development; leadership; philanthropy and volunteerism; integrated, comprehensive health-care systems; food systems; and rural development. Grants are concentrated in the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean, and southern Africa.*

# Impact of a Family Nurse Practitioner Project at Four Institutions

## Foreword

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Phyllis Horns, D.S.N.  
President, SREB Council  
on Collegiate Education  
for Nursing

Ora L. Strickland, Ph.D., FAAN, captures the atmosphere of the four institutions (the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock; Radford University in Radford, Va.; Southern University in Baton Rouge, La.; and Prairie View A&M University in Houston) where seven Kellogg Fellows are teaching and working as family nurse practitioners. She clearly documents the positive ways these fellows have affected their communities and discusses some concerns and “lessons learned” as the fellows return to practice and teach at their respective institutions.

Although this publication highlights four institutions, similar experiences at 13 other institutions reflect the Kellogg Fellowship’s positive influence throughout the South. The SREB Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing appreciates the foundation’s support of its effort to address the need for faculty in family nurse practitioner programs. We applaud the fellows and all who contributed to their success.

# Background

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The W.K. Kellogg Foundation awarded \$1.2 million in 1995 to the Southern Regional Education Board. This award supported a systematic approach in building the region's capacity to prepare graduate nurse faculty who are clinically and educationally qualified to teach in family nurse practitioner (FNP) programs. Three institutions — East Carolina University (Greenville, N.C.), the University of Tennessee, Memphis, and the University of Texas Medical Branch (Galveston) — offered FNP post-doctoral studies for 23 fellows.

A 10-member advisory committee selected 15 applicants in 1996 and nine in 1997 to enroll in the three FNP programs. Of the 24 faculty selected, 23 enrolled. They represented Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia and the District of Columbia. The fellows now are teaching in 17 Southern colleges and universities.

Table 1

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Geographic Distribution of Kellogg Fellows	State	1996	1997	Total
	Arkansas	2	0	2
	District of Columbia	1	1	2
	Florida	2	1	3
	Kentucky	1	0	1
	Louisiana	0	2	2
	North Carolina	4	1	5
	South Carolina	2	0	2
	Texas	1	3	4
	Virginia	2	0	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>23</b>

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Table 2

Current Location of 23 Kellogg Fellows	Institution	Number of fellows
	Clemson University (South Carolina)	1
	Florida International University	1
	Howard University (District of Columbia)	1
	Louisiana State University Health Center	1
	Medical University of South Carolina	1
	National University (California)	1
	Prairie View A&M University (Texas)	2
	Radford University (Virginia)	2
	Southern University (Louisiana)	1
	University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences	2
	University of Central Florida	1
	University of North Carolina at Charlotte	3
	University of North Carolina at Greensboro	1
	University of North Carolina at Wilmington	1
	University of North Florida	1
	University of Texas at Austin	1
	University of Texas at Tyler	1
	Virginia Commonwealth University	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>

Major activities during the grant period included the FNP program experiences at the three institutions; regional seminars; annual meetings of the deans; and on-site assessments by a consultant. The deans of nursing and faculty coordinators at the three institutions supported the Kellogg Fellows during and after the study period, and partnerships with nurse practitioners and other health-care providers in the local communities also enriched the fellows' learning experiences. The institutions' long-standing relationships with the SREB Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing enhanced the overall regional effort.

Ora L. Strickland, Ph.D., FAAN (Emory University), developed the evaluation plan for the project. The overall plan addressed seven questions:

- Did the number of qualified FNP faculty in the South increase?
- Did new FNP faculty establish new FNP programs?
- Were new practice arrangements begun in nursing education programs?
- To what extent did access to primary health-care providers in underserved areas increase?
- Did the number of FNP graduates in the South increase?
- Where did the new FNP graduates practice?
- To what extent did the project change academic and practice environments that did not have faculty supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation?

Strickland visited the fellows at the three institutions and later collected their observations about their practice settings. She documents the project's achievement of its goals in her reports, which are based on the comments and perceptions of the deans, coordinators, FNP preceptors and Kellogg Fellows.

## Impact at Four Institutions

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During each visit Strickland interviewed the fellows and met with others at the university or clinical practice site who could discuss the fellowship program's impact. These sessions addressed the fellows' influence on the communities' access to primary care, the development of faculty practice roles and the education of others for roles in primary health care. The 1999 site visits showed that the Kellogg Fellowship project had positive effects in Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas and Virginia.

## University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (Little Rock)

Paul Brown, Ph.D., and Mary Hartwig, Ph.D., completed postdoctoral FNP studies at the University of Tennessee, Memphis, in 1997 and returned to the College of Nursing at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS). Although that college lacked a formal plan for faculty practice, participation in project-sponsored seminars helped the dean, Linda C. Hodges, Ed.D., and the Kellogg Fellows to move toward developing a formal plan. Strickland's 1999 follow-up visit found that the college was institutionalizing faculty practice as an important aspect of the faculty role and, thus, a key element in increasing access to primary care.

### *Access to primary care*

Brown and Hartwig work in two established agencies — the Little Rock Veterans Administration Medical Center and the Northern Arkansas Area Health Education Center (AHEC), respectively — that needed nurse practitioners but previously had not employed family nurse practitioners. Hodges and Brown negotiated an arrangement with the Little Rock Veterans Administration Medical Center. Hartwig's arrangement with the Northern Arkansas Area Health Education Center resulted in an expanded role; she now works with medical students, nurses and graduate students there.

The Kellogg Fellows' contractual arrangements enable them to spend at least 50 percent of their time providing FNP services to clients while continuing to work as faculty at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS). Their individual practices are increasing the community's access to primary care, and they also are teaching students and others to provide primary care services.

### *Practice roles*

Under the contract between the UAMS College of Nursing and the Little Rock Veterans Administration Medical Center, Brown works as a nurse practitioner 70 percent of the time. He provides on-site care to VA employees and directs the VA Employee Wellness Initiative. Brown examines VA employees and handles illnesses and injuries incurred by staff members at



Paul Brown, Ed.D.  
University of Arkansas  
for Medical Sciences

the medical center. In this ambulatory care setting, he also focuses on preventive care by assessing employees' safety and educational needs, developing educational programs for employees, and helping to modify employee policies to promote a safer work setting and healthy lifestyles. As a member of the Resolution Committee, Brown contributes to human resources decisions dealing with work-related injuries and individual employees' health. He led the development of the Employee Wellness Program, which assesses employees' health, identifies risks, and offers follow-up educational programs.

Brown's collaborating physician at the VA, Edward Watson, M.D., said Brown's appointment has improved employee health care and has saved the VA money — more than \$200,000 in his first year alone. The wellness program he started has brought significant decreases in absenteeism caused by work-related illnesses and costs for visits to doctors outside of the VA system. Employees who get sick on the job obtain care from Brown and return to work sooner.

Hartwig, appointed as the director of nursing education for the North Arkansas Area Health Education Center, also holds an FNP position. She practices in a family practice clinic and medical-residency training program under the auspices of the University of Arkansas College of Medicine. Because Hartwig can admit patients to the hospital and can write prescriptions, she can manage patients independently, thus increasing patient access to services. Hartwig, a specialist in diabetes, treats a number of diabetic patients.

Hartwig used her FNP skills to develop a quality assurance program for the clinic. She identified major health problems in the community and developed a plan to address them. Her community-focused activities resulted in two grants. One grant aims to provide care and support to teenage mothers; the other is designed to train nurses to be preceptors for sexual assault examiners.

Brown and Hartwig said support from the dean of nursing and from the university has been important in enabling them to remain in faculty positions while serving in unique roles that increase public access to FNP care. Both said that support from UAMS has made possible the successful integration of the faculty and nurse practitioner roles.



Mary Hartwig, Ph.D.  
University of Arkansas  
for Medical Sciences  
AHEC



### *Education of primary care providers*

Brown and Hartwig are preparing others for roles in primary care. In addition to teaching nurses, they supervise students from related disciplines who require primary care skills. For example, Brown teaches two courses each year for the College of Nursing and supervises the ambulatory care work of registered nurses enrolled in the undergraduate program. He also supervises two to four nurse practitioner students each semester in the College of Nursing's adult health and FNP programs. Brown recently received approval for interdisciplinary training funds at the VA and expects to use them in teaching students from other disciplines. Brown is developing a functional minor in managed care for the UAMS College of Nursing in order to help nurse practitioners use their primary care skills for managed care more efficiently and effectively.

Table 3

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FNP Graduates at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences	Year	Number of graduates
	2000 *	18
	1999	19
	1998	13

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\* Projected

Each semester Hartwig is a preceptor for three to four pharmacy students, junior medical students, and nurse practitioner students from the UAMS College of Nursing and other programs in Arkansas. She also teaches two pathophysiology courses for nurse practitioner students at UAMS each year. Through these activities she influences the preparation of primary care providers in several settings statewide.

### *Lessons learned*

Brown and Hartwig said the Kellogg seminars helped them learn to incorporate faculty practice into the teaching role. They had strong role models for faculty practice during their fellowship studies at the University of Tennessee, Memphis.

Brown and Hartwig both said some local physicians resisted their new faculty-practice roles, especially in northern Arkansas, where there is strong opposition to nurse practitioners. By demonstrating their FNP skills and knowledge, however, the Kellogg Fellows and other nurse practitioners have begun to chip away at this resistance.

Neither Brown nor Hartwig finds it easy to balance expectations for teaching, scholarship and practice. Both list professional maturity as an asset in their faculty practice. Prior experiences and contacts also helped them to develop new relationships in the community. Their experiences as Kellogg Fellows helped Brown and Hartwig to adjust to and excel in their new roles and to improve community access to primary health care.

## **Southern University**

Sandra C. Brown, D.N.S., was a 1997 fellow in the FNP program at the University of Tennessee, Memphis. When she returned to Southern University (Baton Rouge, La.) in 1998, she assumed administrative responsibility for the graduate program, including the FNP program. Southern University's master's program in family health began in 1996 as part of Louisiana's Intercollegiate Consortium.

Administrative support enabled Brown to study and to establish practice arrangements. Janet Rami, Ph.D., professor and dean of the Southern University School of Nursing, is a strong advocate of faculty practice. She provided Brown with release time to study and later to practice. Rami and Brown both knew the pressures associated with incorporating new expectations into the faculty role; both recognized the need to refine the existing FNP program. The fellowship experience was beneficial to the Southern University School of Nursing.



Sandra Brown, D.N.S.  
Southern University

### *Access to primary care*

Brown has a practice arrangement with the mobile health unit (Jag Mobile) and with a nurse-managed clinic at the School of Nursing. The 10-bed clinic is fully equipped and is certified to provide selected laboratory tests. The clinic, which opened during the 1994-95 academic year, includes

a children's medical center, an immunization center and a WIC center. The clinic serves 600 Head Start clients.

The fully equipped mobile health unit is a "40-foot clinic on wheels" with two expandable examination rooms. It is designed to promote health and prevent disease in homeless shelters and soup kitchens, churches, low-income housing, and community centers in rural and inner-city neighborhoods.

Capitol City Family Health Center, an inner-city community clinic, also offers opportunities for faculty practice and student learning. This clinic provides medical and dental services to more than 2,600 underserved families with little or no health insurance.

### *Faculty practice*

Brown has adapted the model used at the University of Tennessee, Memphis, for the faculty practice arrangement at Southern University. Three FNP faculty and she collaborate with two physicians: Humara Gull, M.D., internal medicine; and Greta Wilkes, M.D., family medicine. If the Louisiana Board of Nursing gives the faculty authority to write prescriptions, services will improve for more than 2,300 medically underserved residents who are mostly rural and inner-city African-Americans.

### *Education of others*

Brown spends 20 percent of her time in teaching, 30 percent in faculty practice, and the remainder in administrative duties as director of the graduate program. When she returned to Southern University and became director in 1998, Brown used her new knowledge, skills and contacts at the University of Tennessee, Memphis, in initiating changes to the university's FNP program. Brown is active in the distance education initiative of the Intercollegiate Consortium for a Master of Science in Nursing. This initiative can increase access to educational programs for students in remote areas, leading to an increased number of providers of primary care. Brown expects five to 10 FNP graduates per year.

Table 4

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FNP Graduates at Southern University	Year	Number of graduates
	2000 *	5
	1999	2
	1998	5

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\* Projected

### *Lessons learned*

Brown benefited from administrative support, available preceptors in the local community and an established FNP program. Southern University, like other institutions at which fellows were working, lacked a well-defined plan for faculty practice. Brown faced the challenge of a system that emphasizes research and publication, complicating the inclusion of clinical practice in the guidelines for university tenure and promotion. She also faced the challenge of balancing her roles in administration, teaching and practice.

### **Prairie View A&M University (Houston)**

The fellowship program was timely for Christiana Akoma, Ph.D., and Chloe Gaines, Ph.D. When their fellowship period started in 1997, the Prairie View A&M University School of Nursing had received an award from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to develop a master's program for nurses. Akoma completed the postdoctoral FNP program at the University of Texas Medical Branch, and Gaines completed the program at the University of Tennessee, Memphis.



Christiana Akoma, Ph.D.  
Prairie View A&M  
University

### *Access to primary care*

Gaines practices with Northshore Medical Associates, where she works with inner-city clients. She focuses on disease prevention and health promotion for all ages, and she offers services in acute and chronic care. Akoma spends one day each week in a physician's office that serves inner-city clients.



Chloe Gaines, Ph.D.  
Prairie View A&M  
University

### *Faculty practice*

Although the university lacks a formal faculty-practice arrangement, Lillian Bernard, Ph.D., acting dean, allowed Gaines and Akoma to devote 50 percent of their time to faculty practice. Gaines and Akoma have lighter teaching loads and up to two days each week for faculty practice.

### *Education of others*

The Schools of Nursing at the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) and Prairie View A&M University have an agreement for FNP program oversight that illustrates how two schools can share resources. The fellows, mentored by UTMB faculty, are enhancing their FNP practice and administrative skills. They expect five to 10 FNP graduates each year. Eight students now are enrolled in the program.

### *Lessons learned*

Like other fellows, Akoma and Gaines learned that administrative support is critical in combining faculty practice and teaching. The collaboration with the University of Texas Medical Branch demonstrates how institutions in a state can share human resources to attain common goals, such as the preparation of primary care providers and increased public access to primary care.

## **Radford University School of Nursing (Radford, Va.)**

The Kellogg Fellowships were timely for the Radford University School of Nursing, which had received inquiries from nurses and state officials about an FNP master's degree program. Although it was a major sacrifice for the School of Nursing, Janet Boettcher, Ph.D., FAAN, dean of the School of Nursing, released two senior faculty — Mary Hope Gibson and Janet McDaniel — for the fellowships. When Gibson and McDaniel began their postdoctoral study in 1996 at the University of Tennessee, Memphis, and the University of Texas Medical Branch, respectively, Radford University was planning an FNP program. When they returned to Radford in 1997, Gibson and McDaniel used their new FNP knowledge and skills to develop and implement the FNP courses. In addition, both found faculty practice sites where they could refine and sustain their FNP skills.

### *Access to primary care*

Gibson coordinates Radford's FNP program and does health assessments and care management for students at the University Student Health Center. McDaniel is the interdisciplinary clinical services coordinator for the FNP program and a nurse practitioner at a Planned Parenthood Center in Blacksburg, Va. By working as nurse practitioners and helping prepare future practitioners at Radford, these Kellogg Fellows are increasing access to primary care in Virginia.

### *Faculty practice*

Under Radford University's new arrangement for faculty practice, Gibson and McDaniel have one day each week to devote to faculty practice. Radford's most innovative role in faculty practice, however, is developer of the Radford University Interdisciplinary Clinic. This state-funded clinic is unique because faculty in many disciplines — nursing, social work, speech and communication disorders, nutrition and psychology — will work together to provide care to the local community. The School of Nursing is leading the effort to establish this clinic. McDaniel coordinates the entire effort, and Gibson serves on the committee charged with its development. A state-of-the-art clinic building is under construction. The fellows expect the clinic to open during the 2000-01 academic year. Representatives from Carilion Health Systems and Columbia Health have been advisers in planning the clinic. Because Radford University has no medical school, the School of Nursing will coordinate and provide primary care services. The university sees the clinic as a unique opportunity to create faculty practice roles for nursing faculty and faculty in other practice-related disciplines.



Janet McDaniel, Ph.D.  
Radford University



Mary Gibson, Ph.D.  
Radford University

### *Education of others*

Gibson and McDaniel teach FNP core courses for the new program to prepare family nurse practitioners. Gibson coordinates preceptor relationships between FNP students and primary care providers, and McDaniel supervises four to eight FNP students and their preceptors each semester. Both fellows plan to be preceptors for FNP students in the next academic year. They expect 10 graduates per year.

Table 5

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FNP Graduates at Radford University	Year	Number of graduates
	2000 *	10
	1999	13
	1998	10

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\* Projected

Meetings with a graduate of Radford's FNP program and current students indicate that access to primary care in the community will increase. Some graduates already work in the local clinics. Students said they were satisfied with the program's quality and told Strickland they plan to practice in rural areas after completing the FNP program. Ninety percent of the Radford program graduates work in medically underserved areas. When possible, Gibson and McDaniel help students obtain preceptorships at rural sites near their homes.

### *Lessons learned*

As did others involved with the Kellogg Fellowship, Boettcher, Gibson and McDaniel acknowledged the importance of support from the dean and university administration. Although releasing two senior faculty for a year presented problems with faculty workload, Boettcher is pleased with the result: two FNP faculty committed to work at Radford University. Boettcher and the Kellogg Fellows understand better the level of support required for successful faculty-practice arrangements. The Kellogg Fellows and the dean helped other faculty understand some related issues, such as additional pay for practice and release time for practice. They all experienced time pressure in trying to meet every responsibility and expectation. In coping with these challenges Gibson and McDaniel drew support from their faculty role models at the University of Tennessee, Memphis, and the University of Texas Medical Branch.

The Kellogg Fellowship came at the perfect time to help Radford University meet its needs and to help Gibson and McDaniel achieve their career goals. Gibson and McDaniel noted the importance of strong adminis-

trative support (from the institution and FNP program), commitment both on their part and on the part of the School of Nursing, faculty role models for teaching/practice arrangements, and an infrastructure that supports faculty practice.

## Conclusion

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The preceding snapshots demonstrate how the Kellogg Fellowship project improved FNP education and practice in four Southern states. These examples also offer several lessons:

- Administrative support is essential to ensure that the project's goals are achieved after fellows complete their studies.
- Institutional commitment to releasing senior-level faculty for study benefited both the faculty and the institutions.
- Initiating a faculty practice plan requires changes in existing practices and commonly held beliefs.
- Institutions that are developing faculty practice plans would benefit from learning about the experiences of faculty at other institutions who are involved in faculty practice.
- Senior faculty with FNP skills and knowledge are excellent mentors for beginning FNP faculty.
- The Kellogg Fellows enhanced the curricula at their home schools — either by helping to modify existing FNP programs or by creating new ones.
- The Kellogg Fellows increased access to primary care directly through their practice and indirectly through their roles in preparing future nurse practitioners and other providers.

Strickland concludes that the Kellogg project, administered by the SREB Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing, has had a positive effect on the careers of 23 nurse educators and on the nursing programs at 17 Southern institutions. Society ultimately will benefit from these providers of primary health care and from increased access to health care for underserved populations.