



'Signature'

The Official NEWSLETTER of Saint Paul's School of Nursing, Staten Island

Vol. 2, Issue 1. Winter 2015/2016

NEW YEAR'S WELCOME

Dr. Abdalla Saudi, Medical Assistant Department Chair

Happy New Year and welcome to a new issue of *Signature!* We launched this newsletter over a year ago to let people know about the latest updates and news from Saint Paul's, and to help promote our school values: harmoniousness, cooperation, and positive communication (to name a few). Though our issues so far are few, I think we are meeting our goals. So that I may focus on the semester at hand I am passing off my Chief Editor duties to our Library staff. I'm confident they'll do a great job keeping its spirit alive, and I hope you will continue to read and share. As always, I'd like to encourage you to consider submitting news items, events, personal stories – anything you find meaningful about your education here is welcome. Contributing is the best way to leave your 'signature' on *Signature*. Best wishes for 2016.



2 Teleport Drive #203 Staten Island, NY 10311

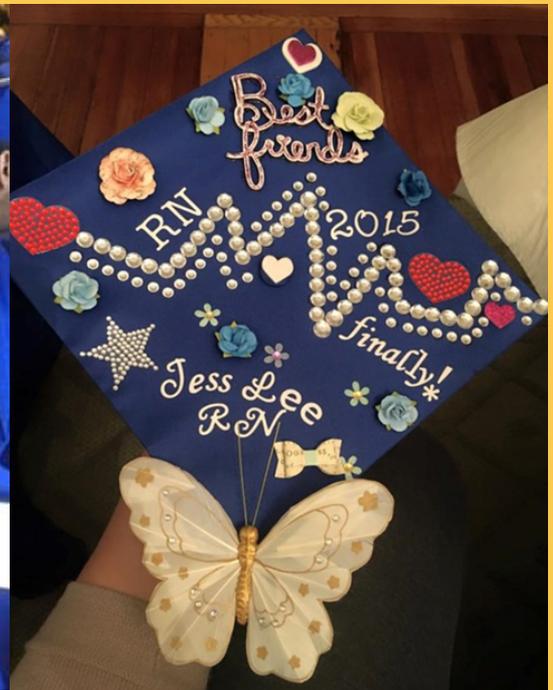
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- Winter Graduation
- Career Services
- New Faculty & Staff
- Spotlight on Students, Faculty & Alumni
- Heart-Health Info
- Upcoming Events
- Academic Honors
- Inspiring Essays

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

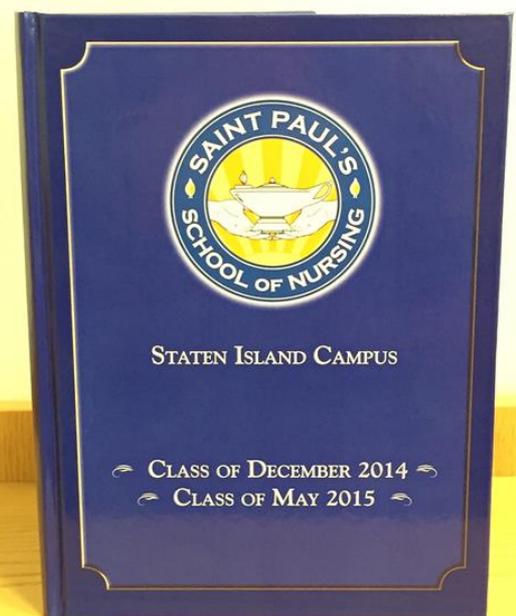
Graduation was held Tuesday, February 4, 2016 at the Hilton Garden Inn with keynote speaker Dr. Deborah Rosenthal. Graduates, faculty, friends and family all enjoyed a wonderful ceremony.



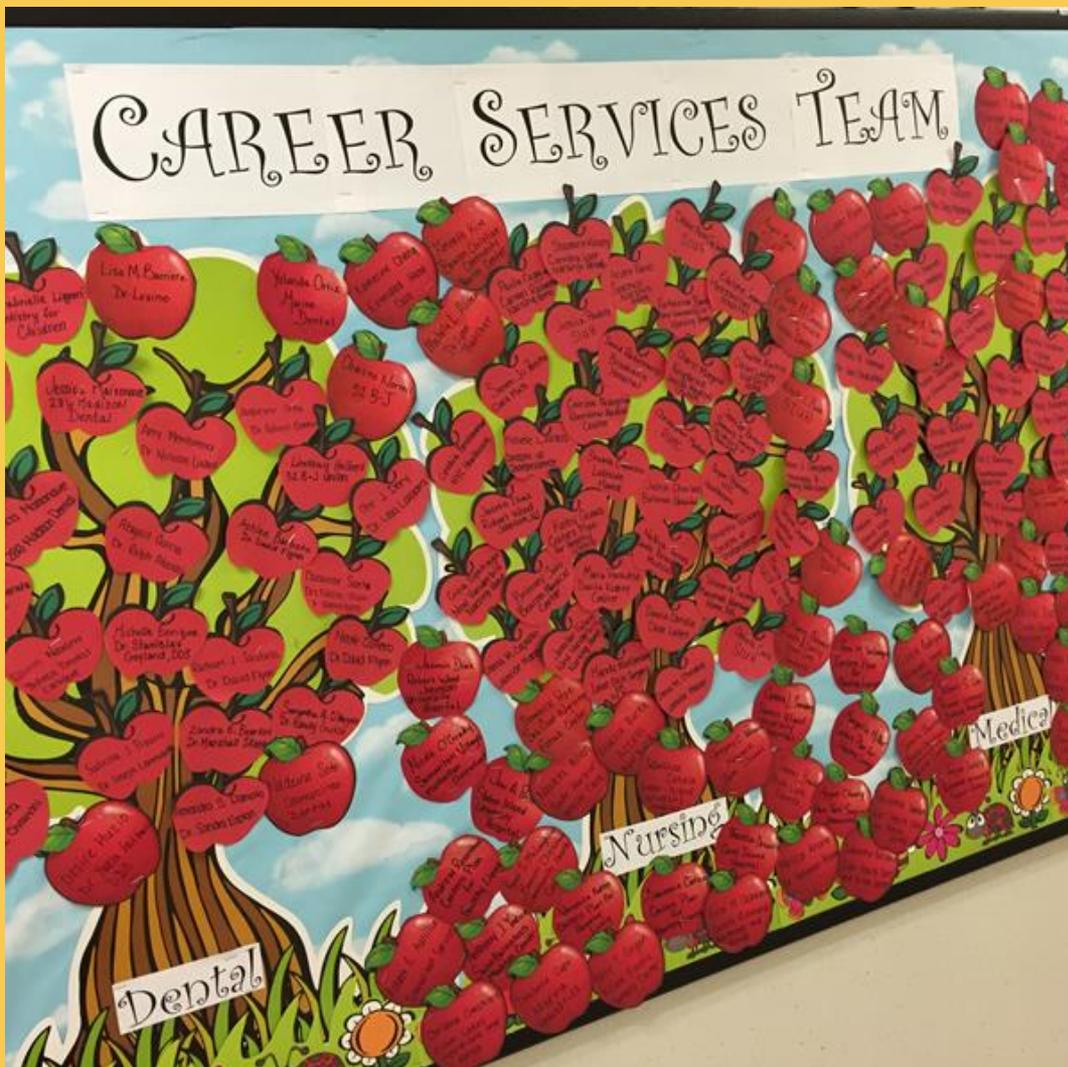


YEARBOOKS ARE HERE

Yearbooks are available for Class of December 2014 and Class of May 2015 graduates of all programs. Visit Career Services the week of February 22-26 between 9 am - 5 pm to get your copy.



Take a first look at our new yearbooks: copies now on display at the Learning Resource Center.



TAKE YOUR CAREER TO THE NEXT LEVEL WITH CAREER SERVICES

Hiring Events:

February 19 10 am - 2 pm

This is a private employer seeking Nursing grads.

March 31 - end of day

Advanced Cardiovascular Diagnostics of the U.S. will meet with Saint Paul's MA and Nursing grads to discuss hiring opportunities with their company -- which provides state of the art cardiac testing in all 5 boroughs -- following a day of health screenings on campus (see EVENTS).

One of the most effective ways our graduates get hired is through our Career Services Department's Employer-Visit Hiring Events. Unlike a large career fair these events showcase 2 to 3 employers in an intimate setting. Recently, Centers Plan For Healthy Living, a long term managed care organization in Staten Island, hired a handful of our Nurses for various positions.

How it works: The Employer leads an informative group overview session, followed by individual interviews with each graduate. Employers have been known to hire on the spot. We strongly recommend you come prepared in business attire, your portfolio, reference letters, license, certifications, etc. Preparation is the key to success!

4 LIFE-SAVING HEART TESTS

In honor of February being a heart-health awareness month and our upcoming visit from Advanced Cardiovascular Diagnostics of the U.S., here are 4 potentially life-saving heart tests you should familiarize yourself with:

Carotid Doppler

Stroke is the third leading cause of death – 75% of people that have a stroke don't know they have a carotid blockage. Carotid ultrasound will detect plaque and stroke risk.

Abdominal Aorta Ultrasound

1 million Americans have an abdominal aortic aneurysm. Two-thirds of people that have a ruptured abdominal aneurysm do NOT know they have an aneurysm. Abdominal Aorta Ultrasound tests detect risk for aneurysms and ruptures.

Ankle Brachial Index (ABI)

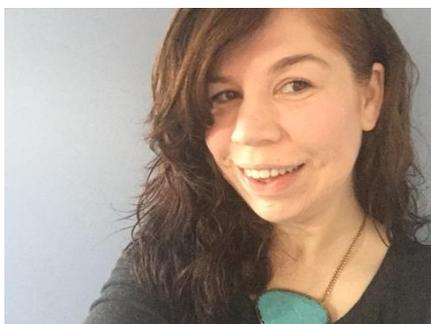
An abnormal ABI gives you a 3-4 times risk of a cardiovascular event. An ABI test detects Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) — blockage in the leg arteries.

Vestibular Exam

69 million American inner-ear disorders that make them 12 times more likely to have serious falls. One-third of these patients are asymptomatic. Advanced Cardiovascular Diagnostics tests for your risk of falls and imbalances.

NEW HIRES

Please welcome our new and interim faculty hires: Genevieve Jensen – current Regional Dean of Nursing for Education Affiliates – is now Interim Dean of Nursing (replacing former Dean Elizabeth Braun). Barbara Byers, current Nursing Instructor, is Interim Assistant Dean of Nursing, lending her many years of nursing education and management skills to this position. Nickeshia Durant has been appointed to the permanent position of Director of Admissions.



NEW AT THE LIBRARY

Karelisa Kimmel joins the Learning Resource Center (LRC) as Evening and Weekend Librarian. Karelisa holds a Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) degree from Pratt Institute in NY with a concentration in Health Information Services. She is a volunteer Library Assistant at Silver Hill Hospital and formerly of the New York Academy of Medicine Library. She looks forward to advancing the Library's technology, helping students with research and writing, and growing the Library's presence on social media.



We bid farewell to Kevin Saw and congratulate him on his new appointment as Learning Resource Manager at Saint Paul's Queens campus. Thank you for all of your outstanding work for the Saint Paul's Staten Island LRC.

New Hours:

Mon. – Fri. 8:30 am – 10 pm

Sat. 9 am – 6 pm

MASTER POSITIVE THINKING

THE beginning of the New Year has begun and as we set our sights on self-improvement and wellness we should keep in mind the important concept of how our *thinking* affects our actions and success. All too often people start out with great intentions and then see themselves fade away due to a perceived emotional or personal setback. We stop performing the way we should, or just give up – similar to the way gym membership and participation increases around January and fades away by March.

It's important to keep in mind your reason for doing what you do and to understand what is important to you:

Why are you here? What do you hope to accomplish? Why do you want to accomplish this?

Without understanding your motivations it will be difficult to chase your dreams and turn them into reality.

Sometimes controlling your environment or changing your life circumstances is not possible. It doesn't mean it's not possible to change how you approach adversity and challenge. How we interpret or think about things weighs-in tremendously as to how we feel both about ourselves and about other people. Our mood,

temperament, abilities, and successes are all a matter of perception.

If you think “failing” means the same as “giving up”, the end result will be a lack of trying on your part. But if by chance “fail” comes to mean something different to you, like “First Attempt in Learning”, you eventually dust yourself off and try again.

Nobody that tries ever fails, because with every failure we learn something new.

In the words of Wayne Gretzky, “You miss 100% of the shots you don't take.”

Popular social media sites like Facebook, SnapChat, Instagram all have motivational and inspirational quotes. There are various funny memes and comics that talk about how to become successful and how to overcome challenges and failures. They all share a common thread: it all starts with a positive thought about a negative event.

The formula for success is simple: control what you can to change what you can't. By Thinking Positively and changing the perceived outcome of something that may have initially been negative, you stop the bad feelings and hopelessness. Be nice to someone who maybe hasn't been nice to you, be respectful to someone who may not have shown you respect. This goes a long way because it not only causes you to be generous, kind and respectful to someone else, it

causes *you* to feel better about yourself and be more mindful of your actions. This alone will cause you to become a better person and have a positive effect on how you see the world and how you interpret things around you.

The importance of positive thinking is profound -- its usefulness will come to alleviate most of the stressors in your everyday life. Most of the things people worry about haven't even occurred yet.

From a biological perspective, your engagement in a positive activity or thought can release “good” hormones and actually change your brain chemistry, giving you more energy and a better night's sleep.

Remember, you serve a purpose; you were put here for a reason. Your engagement in school is so that you can better yourself, your family, your career, your relatives, friends, children, parents, siblings, and anyone and everything else that means something to you.

Louis Rotondo, Psychology Instructor



THE SAINT PAUL'S "FAMILY"

STARTING out on a new path is always a daring and risky proposition. Many students enter Saint Paul's worried they won't know anyone, and are often surprised to find former high school peers or siblings and children of people they went to school with, on the same path. Though they enter as strangers, the Saint Paul's "family" is evident early.

Like every family, Saint Paul's consists of many different personalities, with different interests and abilities. We have people fresh out of high school. There are students who have tried the conventional college route and determined it wasn't for them. And those who are returning to academics after life experiences. Despite their diversity, our students quickly ease into their roles. More than once I've heard a seasoned student referred to as "Mom", or witnessed a younger student influenced by peer pressure.

The closeness of our students has helped many stay on track and pass a class they struggled with. More than one has told me that the intimate atmosphere of our Medical and Dental programs has allowed them to better know their Instructors (and vice versa) and has helped them become a different and *better* kind of student.

Whereas anonymity left them to their own devices in other schools, being known by name here has made them more accountable to themselves and others.

Tameka Kennedy, a Dental Assistant student, says of her first day of class:

"Saint Paul's was the start of new friendships and my new family. Once we all came out of our shells and opened up, it seemed like we knew each other for so long. Our friendships have evolved and we have become closer. In the Dental program, we encourage one another to keep going. It's hard with each of us going to school and having our personal lives, but it makes it so much easier when you are surrounded by a group of people that care for and help each other. We have a Director and teachers who care that we pass, and want us to be the best Dental Assistants they know we can be."

Medical Assistant day students Cassie Pacheco and Flora Molski thought they would be class "loners", but were happy to develop a little family of their own. "The support that we offer each other is irreplaceable. Many of us feel we are bonded for life."

Others, like Ellen Gross, an evening Medical Assistant student who came to our school last winter along with friend and fellow student, Amanda Greene, say it's the "dedication and sincerity" of our teachers that creates the family feeling here at Saint Paul's. That's been true for Nursing student Camille Faccio, too, who found a sense of family in the Library Resource Center's Judy Lee and Lisa Mauro of the school's front desk administration. They "make me feel at home...you don't get this kind of hospitality anywhere. It is amazing to me to find such a true family atmosphere. Overall, I'm truly happy and honored to be among such great company."

Marie Forlenza, General Education Instructor

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Boris Margolin

1. *Your Program and educational background?*
 2. *Hardest aspect of your studies?*
 3. *Favorite classes?*
 4. *An interesting fact about yourself?*
 5. *Plans for the future?*
-

Flora Molski

1. I'm in the Medical Assisting program. Prior to enrolling I was working toward a Bachelor's in Business at Strayer University.
2. The time. We're taking in a large amount of information every 6 weeks. Once class starts, there is a test or homework due every three days or so. It can be hard to keep a cool head and concentrate.
3. This is a hard question because I've enjoyed all my classes. I can't pick a favorite. Ask me when I'm doing my Externship, or after graduation – maybe I'll have an answer then.
4. I'm a work study at the Front Desk.
5. Vacationing at Disney!



1. I am currently in the Nursing program at Saint Paul's in my final and fourth semester. Prior to coming here I attended Kingsborough Community College where I got an Associates degree in Business Management and Marketing.
2. The most stressful aspect of the Nursing program at Saint Paul's is the workload for each class. You can't fall behind because it is nearly impossible to catch up. It all comes down to time management – which is essential to success not only as a student but as a future nurse as well.
3. I have enjoyed every Medical-Surgical ('Med-Surg') class that I have taken at this school. Each Med-Surg class makes you have a totally different view on nursing and nursing care. Also, clinical classes which are held in different hospitals are a big part of the Med-Surg class and allow you to get experience and figure out which field of nursing you will actually want to work in and be a part of.
4. I am a sports enthusiast and my favorite sport is basketball. I am most definitely a New York Knicks fan and have a dream to broadcast a sports talk-radio show.
5. I plan on continuing my education and eventually becoming a Nurse Practitioner. As a nurse I hope to improve the health of my patients by being the best nurse I can be. At some point I would like to be an owner of a nursing home that is known for great patient care and improving their optimal health.

Ryan Meylikh

1. I'm in the Nursing program. I attended Brooklyn College and graduated with a B.S. in Psychology and a minor in Health and Nutrition. I always wanted to work in a medical field. Medical professions are stable and are always in demand, especially male nurses. I enrolled at Saint Paul's because I feel nursing presents a lot of exciting opportunities.
2. The most stressful aspect of the Program is finding balance between work and school, which is not always a given. A luxury in school is sleep, which I do not get any of the night before a test.
3. Anyone can read slides, but making class interesting and enjoyable is very hard. The classes I've enjoyed most are the ones where the Instructors tie the material to their own personal experiences.
4. I've always had an interest in research. I conducted a study in Alzheimer's for which I was published.
5. My goal is to eventually obtain a M.S.N. and become a Nurse Practitioner. As soon as I graduate I plan to enroll in a continuing education program to obtain my Bachelors degree.



Christopher Baboulis

1. I am currently enrolled in the Nursing program. I previously worked for the United States Capitol Police in Washington, D.C. I attended Iona College and graduated in 2001 with a B.A. in Criminal Justice.
2. The long hours – but it's necessary to achieve my goal of graduating.
3. I've enjoyed all my classes especially Anatomy & Physiology because science and math were my strongest areas in school.
4. I was a police officer for 12 years. I also played Division I hockey.
5. My plan is to return back to the Washington, D.C. area after I graduate. I plan on working towards a BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) and starting my new career.



I enrolled at Saint Paul's because I feel nursing presents a lot of exciting opportunities.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Barbara Byers, Interim Assistant Dean of Nursing

What is your position at Saint Paul's and how long have you worked here?

I began my faculty role at Saint Paul's in December, 2010. I currently teach Nursing 102, Therapeutic Communications, Nursing 103, and Math for Meds. I also serve as an Academic Coach.

What is your educational background?

My educational background includes a Master's degree in Nursing Education, Columbia University – Teachers College, New York City; a Master's degree in General Professional Education, Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ; and a Bachelor's degree in Nursing, Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, AL. I am a licensed Realtor in NJ, and a graduate of the Ministry Institute of Oral Roberts University with a Diploma in Ministry, Tulsa, OK.

What motivated you to become a teacher?

Preparing nurses for their roles in the profession, so that they can positively impact the lives and health of consumers. I have held roles as a nurse educator prior to teaching at Saint Paul's, and worked in State Board of Nursing Regulation for the School of Nursing Accreditation and Regulation of nursing practice. I see the need for competent nurses who are compassionate and safe practitioners. This is a motivator for me as a nurse educator.

What suggestions would you give current students to help them through their program?

I would suggest students seriously consider the commitment they're making to provide safe, competent, compassionate nursing care to consumers.



It is critical that students create a written plan of study or calendar each term that includes use of their online student resources from Evolve (evolve.elsevier.com), along with reading their textbooks. The learning materials and homework on Evolve are important and must be completed on-time. They are designed to assist students in developing their critical thinking skills and to apply the content learned in their courses and clinicals. Evolve has practice problems for the Math to Meds course – available to all students actively enrolled in the Nursing program – as well as HESI Case Studies. I encourage students to use these online learning resources to develop their competency and knowledge.

Also, students should make a real attempt to pass their NCLEX–RN Licensing Exam on first testing.

Lastly, completing the HESI Exam Remediation (starting in Nursing Fundamentals) is a must for students to learn the content at the application level.

What would you like your students to know about you?

That I care about them and their professional success. I am here to serve them in meeting their academic goals and in becoming competent, compassionate nurses. Saint Paul's graduates touch and make a difference in the lives of many patients and families – I'm grateful for the privilege of serving as one of their nurse educators.

Mohamed Abdel Hakim, Medical & Dental Instructor

Tell us about yourself?

I was born and raised in New York City. I'm a first generation American with a Middle Eastern background. I lived in Cairo, Egypt for seven years to get in touch with my roots (it's also where I earned my dentist degree and worked). Following, I moved to rural East Africa for a short time to train roughly 120 nurses and doctors, and treat over 2,000 patients. I just moved back to NYC to further my skillset and also to share the knowledge I've obtained from working with different cultures.

Why did you choose Dentistry?

I never intended to be a Dentist - my original major was Astrophysics but I ended up switching after half a semester (sorry, NASA!). I always knew I wanted a career that was practical, useful, and helpful to others - especially those less fortunate. Equipping people with a beautiful smile is not only rewarding from a medical sense, but personally fulfilling. People are so self-conscious of how they look. If I can help someone walk around and feel confident and smile at someone else, that's a very powerful way to brighten the world. It's honestly the best of both worlds because I get to perform surgeries that are potentially life-saving and also cosmetically beneficial.

What has been your craziest experience as a Dentist?

When I was living in Burundi earlier this year I got a call at 3 AM from the Red Cross asking for my assistance with a young man who had been in a motorcycle accident that left half of his face on the pavement and deep lacerations all over his body. An emergency vehicle picked me up and took me to a shabby, poor-resource emergency center where myself and a nurse embarked on 3-4 hours worth of procedures to clean, repair, suture and graft what we could. There was no electricity and little to no medical supplies. I can't emphasize how difficult it was, but it was incredibly rewarding.



What are the challenges of this career path?

Working in the medical field, especially with victims of trauma or life threatening conditions, carries a heavy burden. Many things you cannot *unsee*. There is a great degree of responsibility - the fact that people come to you and trust you is humbling. People think the medical field is advantageous because you "don't take your work home" but there is a personal element that is inescapable. That can either be a good or bad thing depending on how you are able to rationalize what is in your control and what is not.

Any advice to students?

Know your goals and work toward them. If your goal is to help people, find a setting that prioritizes that. If your goal is to make money, find that.

Also, and I know it's cliché: knowledge is power. If you have a phone or Internet you literally have knowledge at your fingertips. No degree is needed to access it - just the desire to expand your knowledge bank.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Chandenie Thakoerdar, *Medical Assisting '15*

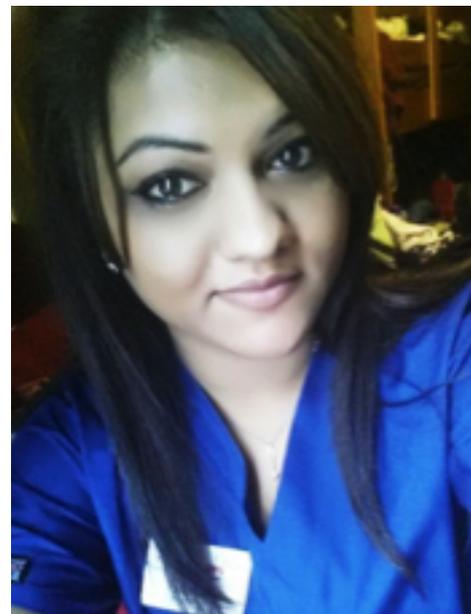
I work in Urgent Care as a Medical Assistant where my duties are divided into two parts: front desk and clinical. The front desk entails welcoming patients, phone communication, registering new patients and updating personal and financial information, keeping medical supplies stocked, and the upkeep of office equipment and office organization. I call in prescriptions to the pharmacy, communicate with insurance companies and make arrangements if we are sending patients to Emergency. We're responsible for making sure our records are correct and sent to respective departments.

Some of my clinical duties include taking medical histories, recording vital signs, explaining treatment procedures, preparing and assisting with patient examinations, performing lab testing - Phlebotomy, electrocardiogram, urine, pregnancy, flu, strep, glucose, eye exam, and centrifuging blood. We make sure contaminated supplies are disposed of correctly and that the exam and laboratory rooms are kept clean.

Carmen Maldonado, *Nursing '15*



My advice to Medical Assistants and those in training is to be compassionate while still maintaining a professional distance. Each day we come across people who are frustrated, anxious, tired, sick and possibly even dying. It is our job to make them feel comforted and provide the best possible care. Also, communication is key: we must convey important information succinctly, but also listen and pay attention to the details that patients are telling us. Most of my work requires multitasking in order to keep track of large quantities of information while keeping up with the treatment and progress of several patients at once. This career takes a lot of time, effort and dedication but it's definitely worth it. While being a Medical Assistant was not originally part of my plan, I can honestly say it has been one of the best decisions I've made for my future.



I chose nursing because I felt I was called to the profession. I'm a RN Care Manager at Centers Plan for Healthy Living, an organization that works to keep member-patients safely in their communities for as long as possible. My main duties are assessing patients via phone, coordinating care with social workers, PCP, homecare, and nursing facilities, and coordinating delivery of supplies. My advice to nursing students: don't overthink things and never doubt your instincts! If you feel overwhelmed, close the book, take a deep breath and start again.

ACADEMIC HONORS

MEDICAL ASSISTING

Presidents' List

1. Delissea Braswell
2. Jennifer Coughlan
3. Larissa Covais
4. JoAnna Cronin
5. Kasandra Cruz
6. Raisa Delgado-Yee
7. Amanda Deluca
8. Anna Dragun
9. Brittany Flynn
10. Theresa Gucciardo
11. Daniella Leone
(*pictured bottom right)
12. Noelia Matos
13. Candice McMaster
14. Lisset Moran
15. Karen Peppe
16. Shaneka Perry
17. Lachele Pierre-Louis
18. Lloidavey Ramirez
19. Desiree Soto
20. Kaitlyn Spano
21. Manisha Thakoerdatt
22. Carolina Torres-Castillo
23. Gabriella Weiss

Dean's List

1. Jessica Andino-Lee
2. Carlos Astudillo
3. Crystal Banks
4. Vanessa Baron-Williams

5. Celia Beard
6. Madea Brewer
7. Dawee Carter
8. Juliana Castellano
9. Katy Cunningham
10. Meghan Domenech
11. Jasmine Edwards
12. Rebecca Ellers
13. Kellyann Evanson
14. Danielle Facciola
15. Jayleen Figueroa
16. June Friend
17. Geena Gallo
18. Lauren Ganz
19. Mary Gentile
20. Amanda Greene
21. Asmeretta Griffin
22. Ellen Gross
23. Sinead Hill
24. Luz Isaza
25. Natalie Italia
26. Jasmine Jones
27. Taylor Keag
28. Alexandra Lynch
29. Susanna Machado
30. Silvia Magzul
31. Nicolette McKenzie
32. Theresa Melton
33. Flora Molski
34. Jaclyn Montanaro
35. Zulaie Montoya
36. Amber Ortiz
37. Cassandra Pacheco
38. Cassandra Paone
39. Christine Spall

Most Improved

1. Leta Dohner
2. Dillon Zettergren

NURSING

Dean's List

1. Sohar Ayesh
2. Lisa M. Balletto
3. Ashley G. Bello
4. Jalmec Carter-Holifield
5. Barbara A. Casuso-Heath
6. Laura Cesarano
7. Nicolette Adelgado
8. Michelle E. Dorsey
9. Nicole Giaquinto
10. Michelle A. Johnson
11. David Jorin
12. Jennifer C. LaMarca
13. Alena Leviev
14. Casey M. Lundgren
15. Tara Malinowski
16. Michael A. Padilla
17. Gina M. Parrotta
18. Roberto Rivera
19. Michelle A. Rizzi
20. Stefanie M. Roy
21. Jaclyn I. Vendittelli



EVENTS



February 15th - Presidents Day - CLOSED

February 19th

Employer Hiring Event hosted by Career Services. Nursing students/graduates only. 10 am - 2 pm on campus.

February 29th - 11 am & 6 pm

Heart-Health Event hosted by the Library Resource Center

1 in 3 women are affected by heart disease in the US, and nearly 44 million American women are living with heart disease. Stop by the Reading Room at 11 am & 6 pm to pick up heart-health info, take our heart disease quiz for a chance to win free printing, and enjoy heart-healthy snacks!



March 31st - starting at 11 am

Health Screening and Hiring Event

Advanced Cardiovascular Diagnostics of the U.S. will be on campus for the day starting at 11 am providing state-of-the-art cardiac testing including but not limited to Carotid Doppler, Abdominal Aorta Ultrasound, ABI for Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD), and Vestibular Test. Screenings will be conducted on a first-come, first-serve basis. If you would like to be seen at a specific time please see Career Services or call 718-517-7770 to schedule an appointment. There is no co-pay and you must bring your insurance card.

They will also be meeting with our MA & RN grads at the end of the event to discuss hiring opportunities. More info at acdus.com.



March - TBD

Alumni Advisory Panel

Saint Paul's Alumni Association is seeking RNs of all levels of practice to participate with faculty in an Academic Advisory Panel. A meeting will be held at the end of March. The work of the group will guide the nursing curriculum. Please send CV and bio to m.wirth@spsnalumni.com for consideration.

April 7th

World Health Day



May 6th-12th

Nurses Week

ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION

Formerly Saint Vincent Catholic Medical School of Nursing, Saint Paul's School of Nursing strives to serve the needs of society by providing excellent education that exemplifies the highest standards for nursing practice. The faculty and staff at Saint Paul's believe that nursing is both an art and a science that works to provide a human service. Throughout our courses, we hope to emphasize the values of respect, integrity, compassion and excellence. In addition to our nursing program in Queens and Staten Island, we also offer a Dental Assistant program and a Medical Assistant program. With all three of our programs, we strive to provide students with a quality education that includes practical, real-world experience.

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of, and should not be attributed to, Saint Paul's School of Nursing.

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