Beverly Malone of the NLN visits the Dixon School of Nursing

On Tuesday, October 18th, 2011 Dr. Beverly Malone, Chief Executive officer of the National League for Nursing, visited the Dixon School of Nursing and Abington Health. Dr. Malone is among America’s most vocal leaders in the national conversation about the nursing and nurse educator shortage, and ensuring access to safe, quality, culturally competent care to diverse patient populations, domestically and globally.

From left: Robert Infarinato, chairman, Abington Health Board of Trustees; Debby Hines, chair, Dixon School of Nursing; Beverly Malone, chief executive officer, National League for Nursing; Barbara Wadsworth, AMH senior vice president patient services/chief nursing officer; Meg McGoldrick, AMH executive vice president and chief operating officer; and Larry Merlis, Abington Health president and chief executive officer.

Dr. Malone met with faculty at the Dixon School of Nursing and discussed various contemporary topics for nursing education. Afterwards, she met with a group of Dixon students to talk about their perspective on the progress in nursing education and discussed their ideas and hopes for the future. Tamica Chen (E/W 2012) reflected on Dr. Malone’s talk, saying “It was great meeting with Dr. Malone and I was proud to be part of the same profession as she. She was very inspiring and easy to talk to.”

Later on that afternoon, Dr. Malone visited Abington Memorial Hospital. There, she addressed the leaders, administrators, and staff of Abington Health on the topic of Diversity in Healthcare. Overall, Dr. Malone was an inspiring speaker and the School was honored to have her as a guest.
When visiting the School’s East Wing, stop by to see the faculty/support staff Recognition Bulletin Board (outside the faculty/support staff lunch room) to view photos and a brief biography of members of our educational team, honoring them as Dixon School of Nursing Essential Pieces. Be sure to congratulate them for making a difference. Honorees for the month of November are Mary Ann O’Connell MSN, RN, Clinical Instructor, and Barbara Butynskyi RN, BSN, CPN, Course Coordinator/Instructor.

Dave Stokes (left), security guard, lives in Maple Glen with his wife Christina, son Ryan (3 1/2) and daughter Rachel (1). He has been an AMH employee for 11 years and his favorite part of working security at the Dixon School of Nursing is interacting with the students and the staff.

Ray Bleiler (right), security guard, lives in Chalfont with his wife Sharon, and sons Andrew (10) and Eric (8). He has been an AMH employee for 14 years and his favorite part of working security at the Dixon School of Nursing is how much security is valued and respected by the students and staff members.

Instructors Present Posters in Baltimore
- Krystyna Hopkinson, MSN, MEd RN, CRNP, CNE

On Saturday, October 22, 2011, Anita Fennessey, DrNP(c), RN, CNE, Course Coordinator/Instructor and Krystyna Hopkinson MSN, MEd RN, CRNP, CNE, Course Coordinator/Instructor recently attended the 38th annual National Conference on Professional Nursing Education and Development sponsored by Villanova University and held in Baltimore, Maryland. Both Anita and Krystyna were poster presentation participants. Krystyna’s poster topic was “The Chemically Dependent Nurse: The Road to Recovery” and Anita’s poster was entitled “Back to Basics: Utilizing the Chalk Board to Ensure Student Learning.”

Debby Hines, MSN, RN, CNE, NEA-BC and Judy Young, MLS (shown above), presented a poster on The Use of Pet Therapy to Relieve Test Anxiety in Nursing Students at the National League for Nursing Education Summit. The meeting was held September 21-24 in Orlando. The poster describes the DSON’s 2-year study using pet therapy with two groups of students from the Evening/Weekend option and demonstrated the positive outcomes for the intervention group on the test anxiety inventory administered at the start of the study and the end of the first semester. There was great interest in our findings and many people called the study innovative. The poster is on display in the Library.

Celebrating Dixon’s Essential Pieces
Evening/Weekend Class of 2012 Projects

The Evening/Weekend Class of 2012 has several exciting events planned for community service! Tiffany Rivel, E/W 2012, volunteered to take the lead on the projects for the class. Other project members include, Christine Dornhecker, Tricia Olmos, Dean Miller, Emily Hunter, Shannon Johnson, Chuck Nicholson, and Jackie Murphy as the class faculty advisor for community service projects. The class has chosen Shriners Hospital for Children to support.

On October 13th, the class held a Halloween Bake Sale in the Pennwood lobby. Most items were only a dollar—the class raised $351.00 and has raised $967.20 for Shriners so far! Several students and faculty donated baked goods for the sale and 100% of proceeds went towards the Shriners fund.

On Saturday, November 26th the class is hosting “Breakfast with Santa” at Applebee’s in North Wales, from 8-10am. Tickets are $7.00 for adults and $5.00 for children under 10. Tickets are on sale now and can be bought from E/W students Tiffany Rivel or Chuck Nicholson. Santa will be there to greet the kids and a holiday crafts area will be set up. Volunteers are also needed to help run this fun holiday event! There is a green sign up sheet in the student lounge for any interested volunteers. It’s a great chance to log some volunteer hours while having a great time with family and friends.

In December, the class will be having a Holiday Cookie Sale, with more details to be announced soon! Great job, Evening/Weekend class!

Evening/Weekend Students are “Hungry for Knowledge!”

The N303 Evening/Weekend Class of 2012 and student Shannon Barletti has started a fun, educational (and delicious!) way to prepare for the NCLEX! The class has been holding “Hungry for Knowledge” events: Hungry for Knowledge events are a fun review, played similarly to a trivia game, based on the content for the upcoming exam. About 25-30 NCLEX style questions are reviewed. Dinner is provided during the events for a donation of $4. The proceeds from these events are donated to the SNAP E/W 2012 fund which supports the Ronald McDonald House. Dinners provided have included mouth watering choices such as BBQ pulled chicken sandwiches, potato chips, pretzels, and soda. There is usually homemade dessert donated as well! Everyone is invited to join in these fun sessions! The events are held the Thursday evening before each exam, about once a month. So far the event has raised about $250 alone from these sessions! Students have a lot of fun, and most importantly, they are more prepared for their exams! Please RSVP to Shannon Barletti via e-mail at sbarletti@amhdixonson.org if you plan to attend.
Vital Signs, a newsletter for the students, faculty, support staff, and friends of the Dixon School of Nursing, is published throughout the academic year. Articles are always welcome and should be forwarded electronically to Erica Messerschmidt, BA, Editor, at emesserschmidt@amh.org.

Congratulations Station
Mary Theresa Stec PhD, RN, CNE is the recipient of the Mary B. Walker Honorary award presented by Widener University. The award was initiated by Barbara Chamberlain PhD, RN and her husband in honor of Mary Walker for recognition of her support of students as they pursue their doctoral education. Faculty of Widener awarded this honor in recognition of students who exemplified leadership and scholarship. Mary Theresa Stec was presented the award by Dr. Chamberlain on Oct. 1, 2011 at the annual alumni breakfast. Congratulations Mary Theresa!

Debby Hines, MSN, RN, CNE, NEA-BC has been selected to serve as a Program Evaluator for the NLNAC. She will be attending an orientation in Atlanta, Georgia this February. Congratulations Debby!

Student Loan Debt and Defaulted Loan
The number of student borrowers currently in default has risen to 225,271 students nationally for 2007, which is a 10.2% increase from 2006 and is expected to increase with the impact of the recession for 2008, 2009 and 2010. This represents $1.279 billion dollars of student loans that are in default. A student loan is considered in default if a student is delinquent in their monthly repayment obligation of more than 270 days. There are serious consequences to the student when they default on a student loan. Their credit report is damaged, wages can be garnished, seizure of federal and state tax refunds, legal action can be taken in federal court, they can lose state occupational licenses and may be turned down for jobs. In some cases, students can get a deferment or a forbearance that allows them to temporarily stop making payments on their loan.

You must repay your student loans, even if you don’t graduate, can’t find work in your field, or are dissatisfied with your educational program. **Borrow Wisely! Loans Add Up!** Be sure to explore all of the resources available to you: scholarships, employer tuition reimbursement, savings, as well as state and federal grants. If you do need to borrow student loans, keep a track of how much you are borrowing. You can access the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) at www.nslds.ed.gov for your federal loan borrowing history. You will need your federal pin # to access your account. You can also decrease or cancel any portion of your current student loan during the academic year. For more information, please contact Claire Tatlow, Financial Aid Coordinator at 215-481-5549 or ctatlow@amh.org.

Financial Aid News
- Claire Tatlow, Coordinator of Student Financial Aid Services

Nationwide Emergency Alert System Test
On November 9th, 2011 at 2:00 pm EST, the nationwide Emergency Alert System (EAS) will be tested. The test will last up to three and a half minutes. During this period, regularly scheduled television, radio, cable, and satellite shows will be interrupted as the system is being tested. Please be aware of this event and that it is just a test, not a real emergency event. A national test will help federal partners and EAS participants determine the reliability of the system, as well as its effectiveness in notifying the public of emergencies and potential dangers both nationally and regionally.

Dixon Decorates Pumpkins
The Reward and Recognition Committee of Abington Memorial Hospital sponsored the annual pumpkin decorating contest. Members of the Dixon School of Nursing showed their creative skills when they created the “Falls Risk” pumpkin. This pumpkin adorned the materials signaling a patient with a risk for falling: a red robe, red slippers, and a red flag. This pumpkin display demonstrated safety procedures for falls risk—and what could happen without prevention! Congratulations to pumpkin creators Jackie Murphy, Kelly Szatkowski, Barbara Butynskyi, Ruth Ann Kiefer, and Erica Messerschmidt, who won 2nd place in the Willowood contest!

Cathy Evans, Course Coordinator/Instructor created her artistic rendition of the Caring Tree, Abington Memorial Hospital’s new framework for nursing practice. The branches include all of the values and concepts based on Watson’s Caring Theory. Her pumpkin was displayed at the Hospital. Great work, Cathy!

From left: Jackie Murphy, Kelly Szatkowski, Barbara Butynskyi, Ruth Ann Kiefer, and Erica Messerschmidt pose with Icabod the Falls Risk Pumpkin!

Cathy Evans’ depiction of the Caring Tree—in pumpkin form!