

RUTGERS

School of Nursing

NEWSLETTER

December, 2021
Issue 11

Department of Student Engagement

Welcome Month Recap

After almost a year and a half of hybrid operations, online classes, and virtual events, students, faculty, and staff alike were all excited to return to campus for face-to-face interactions. Faculty could be fully back in the classrooms with their students. Staff could welcome students back to their offices. Students could connect with their peers to study or have lunch together. Along with all the great things we missed about being on campus, there were also some challenges that came with readjusting from most things being virtual. To support students' return to campus, the Division of Student Services and RUSON student organizations put together a variety of events for Welcome Month in September 2021.

Graduate students kicked off this academic year with our annual Graduate Student Mixer! Though it was virtual, the mixer still had a great impact, especially for our new students in attendance. The mixer was led by four current graduate students who answered questions related to their experience at RUSON including how they manage work, personal responsibilities, and a full course load. With over 30 students in attendance, they provided each other with encouragement and tips to navigate their graduate degrees. Attendees expressed, "It was great to interact with students who were ahead of us in their program and get their advice" and "The student panel was honest, helpful, and provided recommendations. The variety in the panel was excellent." Special thanks to our panelists (Rachel Delp, Mario Viscardi, Barbara Uwumwense, and Veleze Patel) for helping to make this event a success!

Undergraduate students participated in a combination of virtual and in-person programs. Student leaders across the New Brunswick, Newark, and Blackwood campuses collaborated with Student Engagement to host tabling events to reintroduce their organizations to the student population. They also conducted campus tours for students. The Advising Center hosted How-To Sessions and Pop-In Advising to support students with course registration. The Office of Academic Success also facilitated workshops to help students organize and plan for the semester. We are grateful to the departments and student organizations that made a successful Welcome Month and fall semester!

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Wednesday, September 1st
Wednesday, September 8th

[Click to Join Zoom Meeting](#)

or use the information below to join via Zoom:

Join by SIP
92403660828@zoom.us

Meeting ID: 924 0366 0828
Password: 142184

Find your local number:



RUTGERS
School of Nursing

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

RUSON Reflections on Returning to Campus

Student Engagement asked RUSON students to reflect on their transition back to campus and here's what some of them had to say.



It has been quite an adjustment planning and hosting in-person events, but finally being able to see old and new faces IN PERSON enjoying their time, making new friends, and learning from our events makes the arduous process worth it."

Rheana Reyes

Newark Traditional Student



Going through junior year in a virtual format proved to be difficult, as it took a toll on our physical, mental, and emotional health. Now that we are back to campus, especially in our final year as seniors in RUSON, it is so much easier to learn from, engage with, and enjoy lectures in the classroom. Most importantly, building a relationship with our professors, creating new memories with our peers, and sharing our individual struggles as a class have become the driving force behind our enthusiasm in waking up early in the morning to attend in-person classroom instructions. The transition from online learning to an in-person one has allowed us to enjoy our experiences so far, restore our interest in learning about nursing, and motivate us to continue embodying a Rutgers nurse."

George Henson III

New Brunswick Traditional Student



“At the start of my 2nd Degree Program in June, my face-to-face interactions were limited to my lab instructor and my lab group. During this Fall semester, I was excited to see the rest of my cohort face to face. Although, there is an additional drive time, there is a benefit for me to sit and interact during lectures. Thus far, my experience has been positive this semester.”

Juan Floriano

Newark Second Degree Student



“I honestly enjoy being back on campus. When you get to meet the members of your cohort in person, it helps establish a sense of solidarity. We’re all in this together and we’ll always help each other to make it through. There’s definitely a bonding experience while being in person, especially within a clinical or lab group, and I feel I’ve established many new friendships from in-person learning.”

Julia Lombardi

New Brunswick Traditional Student



“It has been great to see my professors and peers in person. After such a long time remote or hybrid, it is encouraging to be in person for lectures and clinical experiences. I just wish we didn’t have to wear masks and that there were more places to eat snacks!”

Kiersten Zinnikas

Newark Second Degree Student

“I am so happy to be back on campus for my senior year. Going to class and seeing all my friends and peers is something I look forward to each week. Now that we are all back, I encourage everyone to get involved and go to the fun events happening on campus!”

Narjis Moosavi

New Brunswick Traditional Student



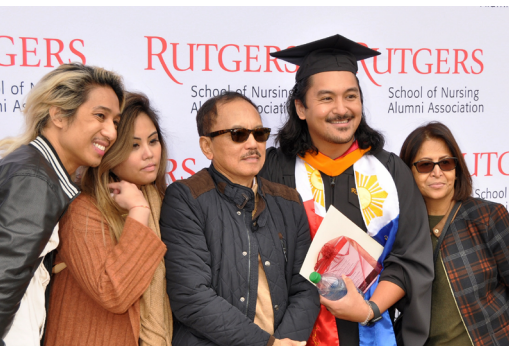
Celebrating the Classes of 2020 and 2021

By Michael Varano, Associate Director of Student Engagement

On Sunday, October 24, 2021, the School of Nursing, along with other schools from the RBHS and New Brunswick campuses, were finally able to celebrate the accomplishments of the Classes of 2020 and 2021 in-person in New Brunswick on the Livingston Lawn. Graduate and undergraduate students, faculty, staff, family and friends all were present to celebrate our graduates for the first time since May 2019. These new alumni were able to hear their names called, walk across the stage in their regalia, and have their moment in the spotlight, acknowledging all of the years of hard work and dedication spent earning their nursing degree. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic both of these graduating classes were unable to participate in an in-person Commencement and Convocation ceremony, which made this celebration so special and memorable.

The ceremony on October 24th was also the first in-person School of Nursing graduation for Dean Flynn at the helm. Prior to being appointed Dean of the School of Nursing in June 2020, Dean Flynn served as the Interim Dean starting in September 2019, which would have made the May 2020 Convocation her first as Dean. In her address to our 2020 and 2021 graduates she stated that, "It has been a long journey, and the graduates we honor today overcame unimaginable and historic circumstances to finish their nursing education amid a global pandemic." These words couldn't be more true.

Members of these two classes were faced with the immense challenge of finishing an already rigorous academic program virtually including lectures, testing, simulations, and much more in an unprecedented time and climate. Along with the academic challenges, these students were also faced with the health and financial hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these obstacles they still pushed forward and are now instrumental members of the healthcare profession. We once again congratulate the Classes of 2020 and 2021, and we continue to be inspired by your strength and determination.





Educational Opportunity Fund Gives Back

BY Lori Van Walters-Truell, Senior Counselor, Special Programs,
Educational Opportunity Fund Program

Seen in this picture in front of the "November is Gratitude Month" bulletin board, student leader representatives from the SN-EOF Leadership Board (Jaisuan Martinez Vice President, RESNA; Nidhi Patel, President, RESNA; Liliana Ventura President, Nurse Science; and Keyleen Ubiera, Member, BRIDGE Club) have assembled to deliver items to the food bank.

Despite the pandemic, the SN-Leadership Board and the student club members have been actively involved in efforts for the benefit of their peers and the community. In May 2021, they had a virtual raffle fundraiser to buy items to fill "COVID Care Bags for the Homeless" at St. Augustine Church in Newark, New Jersey. On October 29, 2021, they had a "Halloween Fun Friday Kick Off" Zoom event where Keyleen Ubiera was one of the prizewinners of the Kahoot game. For the month of November, they created a display for "November is Gratitude Month" in collaboration with the SN-EOF Department. The picture of this display has been entered into the School of Nursing "Inaugural Holiday Door Decoration Contest". Concurrently, they initiated a Food Drive and collected non-perishable items, which were donated to the Rutgers Food Pantry and delivered to Paul Robeson Campus Center on November 22, 2021 in holiday gift bags. Currently, they are collecting donations of diapers for the Senior Leadership Project and will actively participate in the planning of the SN-EOF End of Semester event. Their compassionate acts of kindness are greatly appreciated.



Student Leadership Retreat

BY LAURA STONE

Senior Student Program Coordinator

On Saturday, October 16th the Department of Student Engagement held its annual Student Leadership Retreat. Approximately 40 student leaders representing all of our student leadership organizations attended the retreat. This included the Student Senate, Peer Mentors, RSNA, and Men in Nursing with representations from all of our undergraduate programs and campuses. At the Leadership Retreat, student leaders participated in a variety of sessions to support their leadership, professional and academic growth. These sessions included Advocating for Yourself as Learners, Working with Student Engagement, and Nursing Experiences Outside the Hospital.

The session Advocating for Yourself as Learners was hosted by Dr. Amy Sweeney, Lecturer and Clinical Learning Coordinator for the Blackwood Campus. Dr. Sweeney's session focused on how students can self-advocate as nurses in educational settings. This includes both the clinical setting and in the classroom. Students came away with tools that they can use to better advocate for their learning as future nurses.

The Out of Hospital Nurse Residency Program hosted the Nursing Experiences Outside the Hospital workshop. In this workshop, student leaders learned about the various career opportunities that are available to nurses outside of the hospital setting. The workshop centered on emerging fields of nursing as well as the opportunities that are available at Rutgers University to gain experience in out-of-hospital settings.

The last session was Working with Student Engagement with presenters Michael Varano, Associate Director of Student Engagement and Laura Stone, Senior Student Program Coordinator. In this session, student leaders were introduced to the Student Engagement Staff on each campus as well as the roles student engagement staff have within the School of Nursing. Students also learned the best ways to collaborate with Student Engagement for student programming, development, and advocacy.

The Department of Student Engagement would like to thank all students, staff, and presenters who made this event possible. We look forward to hosting the next retreat during the fall 2022 semester!





OAS Adds Tutor Certification; Expands Opportunities for Student Leadership

BY Stephanie Pfeifer

Academic Support Specialist, Office of Academic Success

Many students become familiar with the Office of Academic Success after meeting with a Faculty Nominated Peer Tutor for help in a nursing course. What you may not know is that the peer tutor helping with your classes has not only passed your class successfully, but is a certified peer tutor.

Earlier this year the Office of Academic Success earned Level 1 certification from the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA)'s International Tutor Training Program Certificate (ITTPC). As a peer tutor, students complete ten hours of training across the academic year. The ITTPC training builds not only practical skills related to tutoring, but advanced strategies related to critical thinking, motivation, role-modeling, self-regulation and assessment. Peer tutors who achieve Level 1 certification gain valuable leadership skills related to peer tutoring, while enhancing necessary skills for future work as a nurse educator.

The Office of Academic Success is actively recruiting students for Spring and Summer semester tutoring opportunities. If you are interested in joining the tutor team, visit the OAS website for more information and to submit an application.

sites.rutgers.edu/sn-oas/home/join-our-team/





Wellness Wednesday with RUSON Students

BY Angelic McDowall, Administrative Assistant and Sara Faisal, Rutgers University Student

Wellness is often perceived as an individual initiative. However, the community can play a major role a person's wellness. The School of Nursing designated the month of October to support its students' wellbeing by hosting the Wellness Wednesday series. Each Wednesday, one of our nursing students hosted live Instagram sessions to promote wellness with activities that promote stress reduction, calmness, and positive energy.

The first live session was held on October 13th by Widnie Fadel, a Traditional student on our Newark campus. She introduced students to methods for a calisthenics workout session and shared how to prepare a healthy meal by using an air fryer. Widnie explained that calisthenics are simple stretches that are good for beginners and only require a clean space and a wall. She recommended that even a beginner should have a workout session of at least 30 minutes. A simple warming exercise one can do to get started is a wall sit. This involves sitting against a wall and forming a right angle at the hips and knees. Widnie suggested trying to hold a wall sit for at least 30 seconds. This can be challenging for a beginner so if it is your first time starting out, try to pace yourself. For a simple, balanced meal, Widnie recommended purchasing an air fryer. It can help to reduce one's oily food intake. A typical day for Widnie includes breakfast with oatmeal, and a simple yogurt or low-calorie chips for lunch. For dinner, she uses her air fryer to fry meat with rice and veggies on the side. Widnie also recommended that one can try out new recipes with an air fryer to have fun while switching over to a healthier lifestyle.



The second live session was held by New Brunswick Tradition student, Julia Lombardi on October 20th. Julia explained how one can add to their aesthetics by doing an easy stress-relieving DIY project: making an affordable lava lamp. Julia used low-cost household items to create the lava lamp: a clear mason jar with a lid, water, canola oil, food coloring, and glitter of your preferred color. The steps to make a DIY lava lamp are as follows:



- Fill the 1/3 of the way with water.
- Fill 1/4 of the jar with canola oil.
- Put 3-4 drops of food coloring in the jar.
- Add some glitter to the jar.
- Close the jar securely and shake it really well.

There you have it; your lava lamp is ready! Julia explained that it might take a few tries to get the perfect ratio of water to oil but she encouraged that it is a really easy and fun craft to spend some time on!

The final live session was held on October 27th by Romnie Cesar, graduate student in our DNP program. Romnie shared



some yoga techniques with everyone and explained how it can be soothing and calming for one's state of mind. She encouraged that once yoga becomes a habit it can be a life-lasting one because it helps with anxiety and calms one down.

To get started with yoga, first find a quiet room and light some scented candles or play calming music in the background to create the atmosphere. Romnie shared these steps to begin: come to a comfortable position on your mat, set your intention about what you want to achieve in the session, and do some warm up exercises. An example could be the following pose. Take your right hand and place it over your heart. Then, take your right hand and place it over your stomach. Sit up straight. Find your breath. Inhale to fill up your lungs and exhale slowly. Try to sigh deeply with your exhale. Do this exercise 3-4 times. Then do slow neck circles in a clockwise position to relax your posture a little and continue doing stretches and poses of your preference.



Romnie also shared a great tip for journaling. She explained how doing yoga can cause people to think about a lot and that if they want to get these thoughts out, the perfect time to put pen to paper would be as soon as they have finished a yoga session.

If you missed any of these amazing wellness sessions, videos are posted on Student Engagement's Instagram page @ru_engagedson.

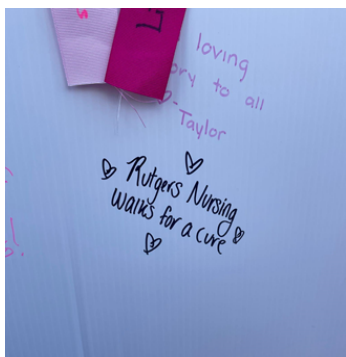


RUSON Walks for Breast Cancer

BY Elaine Vuong, New Brunswick Traditional Student

Rutgers School of Nursing attended the Point Pleasant Breast Cancer Walk on October 17th. Upon arrival, students checked in at the tent where the school was welcomed with open arms by the event volunteers. Participants walked approximately 3 miles with amazing volunteers passing out waters at stations along the route. The weather was beautiful that day and it was a great time being surrounded by those walking for the same cause. There were families that were walking in honor of their loved ones living with breast cancer or those who have passed away due to it. There were also survivors who wore a sash that showed people that they are a survivor and it evoked emotions from those who saw the sash.

The money raised from the walk will go towards the American Cancer Society, which invests in "groundbreaking research, provide free rides to chemo and places to stay near hospitals, and 24/7 answers and support for those facing the disease" (Making Strides Against Breast Cancer). The School of Nursing has been a part of this event in past years and now that we are back on campus, we are more than thankful that this event was in person and that we could be a part of it again.



Food Drive Contest

Congratulations to the Blackwood campus on winning our Food Drive Contest! Students donated over 90 items to the Food Bank of South Jersey. Each student who donated from the Blackwood campus will receive an "I Heart Nursing" shirt. Thank you to all students who participated in the contest in support of Giving Back Month!



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