

UC San Diego

Spring 2017 - UC San Diego Health Journal of Nursing: The Unique Power of Nursing

Title

Oh, the Places You Go! Sharing the Stories of Outstanding UCSD Advanced Practice Nurses

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9342b47c>

Journal

UC San Diego Health Journal of Nursing, 10(1)

Author

Martin, Rhonda, MS, RN, CNS, ACNP-C

Publication Date

2017-04-01

Peer reviewed



Oh, the Places You Go!

Sharing the stories of outstanding UCSD Advanced Practice Nurses

By: Rhonda Martin, MS, RN, MLT (ASCP), CCRN, CNS/ACNP-C

I've always contended that nursing is a vocation. It is a strong, innate calling and desire to help others. Because of this, every nurse has a journey; every person has a story. Sometimes, these great stories are right in front of us, but hidden from view. I became aware of this fact some years ago while working as a manager with a staff nurse named Lily Fernandez in the SICU. She was quiet, dignified, extremely knowledgeable, and humble. It wasn't until I learned from her peers that she was one of the first ICU nurses at UCSD, and was the first manager of 5 West Surgical ICU; in other words, a critical care pioneer. Another example is Dr. Marguerite Jackson. For those of us lucky enough to have worked with

the former epidemiologist, Director of Infection Control, and Nursing Research and Education before her retirement, we remember her many entertaining classes, and Southern drawl and wit. What many nurses don't realize is that she and a nursing colleague from Seattle developed and implemented the concept of Universal Precautions. Every time a health care provider pulls on a pair of gloves, you have Marguerite to thank.

The beauty of Nursing is that there are so many directions you can take over the course of a career. With the wealth of experience we have in our UCSD Healthcare Advanced Practice nurses, I wondered, what other journeys and stories are there to tell? So I sat down with some of our peers to learn their stories.



Rhonda Martin, MS, RN, MLT(ASCP), CCRN, CNS/ACNP-C

received her AA from Allegany College, BSN from the University of San Diego, and Master's Degree and Post-Master's from California State University, Long Beach. After a career that included being nurse manager in SICU/Trauma, CNS in Nephrology, the first inpatient-based critical care NP (for Liver Transplant/Hepatology), and NP with VIR, she retired from fulltime work in 2015. Her latest adventures are part-time careers as NP with UCSD VIR, SCLC Hepatology, publishing, and lecturing.

"You have brains in your head.

You have feet in your shoes.

You can steer yourself any direction you choose.

You're on your own. And you know what you know.

And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go..."

Dr. Seuss, Oh, The Places You'll Go!



JOAN (JOANNIE) SALOTTI, RN, MSN, ANP, CCTC Liver Transplant Nurse Practitioner-Coordinator

What prompted you to become a Nurse?

I have always wanted to be a nurse, ever since I was a little girl. Even though I was the baby of the family, I wanted to help everyone around me, to help others.

What other jobs or careers have you had?

In junior high school, I worked in a candy store. During nursing school, I did duty in a maximum-security prison in Texas. Now, that was interesting. After I graduated from nursing school, I was the only registered nurse on night shift on an oncology/stroke unit. It wasn't uncommon in those days to put a new grad by herself on the evening or night shifts. After that, I worked in ICU for four years; IVs in glass bottles, using a calculator to regulate the drip rates. Then I went to the Transplant Unit at Ochsner Medical Center in New Orleans, where we performed liver and kidney transplants. This was when you had to wear full barrier garb in any transplant room-gown, hat, mask, shoe covers. OKT3

was the new second-line rescue antirejection med, and God the side effects! Then I was an agency ICU nurse in San Diego on night shift, before joining the SICU/Trauma staff at UCSD. I worked the night shift, every weekend for 2 ½ years while in graduate school.

Why did you become an advanced practice nurse?

For the challenge. I wanted to do more, and be part of something bigger. The NP/Transplant Coordinator is a hybrid position, which means every day is different. However, I do miss inpatient nursing sometimes.

What honors or accomplishments are you most proud of?

Being able to have a relationship with my patients. Your patients become your extended family. I learn so much from them, especially how to deal with life, and how to persevere. Precepting SDSU masters students, and seeing their excitement about nursing, gives me a great sense of accomplishment. I just completed orientation manuals for graduate

students in transplant, and new liver transplant NPs.

What do you do for FUN?

My husband and I just bought new bikes, but haven't used them as much as we would like. I love hiking, especially at Torrey Pines State Park.

What's in the future for you?

Mentoring the next generation of liver transplant NPs and coordinators. Also making more room for fun in my life.

In a phrase or sentence, sum up your Nursing or Life Philosophy.

Be in the moment, be present, be kind and respect others-differences and all. Remember to educate and do your best.

"When you're in a Slump, you're not in for much fun.

Un-slumping yourself is not easily done."

Dr. Seuss, Oh, The Places You'll Go!

KAREN PERDION, MSN, CNM

Director, Nurse Midwifery Service, UCSD Health Care

What prompted you to become a Nurse?

I went to nursing school, because I have always wanted to be a midwife. Ever since I was a little girl, I have been fascinated with birth. I knew I did not want to go medical school or do surgery, so the midwife role was a good fit for me.

What other jobs or careers have you had?

I worked as a student nurse as a per diem in Labor and Delivery (L and D). After graduation in Cleveland, Ohio, I worked in med/surg for two years, which was not my dream job. I also did ICU/renal care for a brief time. Then I went back to L and D to make sure it was for me. After graduate school, I started looking for jobs in warmer places near the water. I had a book with all

the cities that fit the bill, and San Diego and Tampa, Florida were the top choices. So my next job was as a midwife in Victorville, CA for six years! It was a great place to learn, you did everything on your own. Then I came to UCSD. Really, I've worked at five places in my career.

Why did you become an Advanced Practice Nurse?

I have always wanted to be a nurse midwife. I tried other areas, but L and D is my home.

What Honors or accomplishments are you most proud of?

In terms of accomplishments, our team published in the Journal of Perinatal and Neonatal Nursing about our Midwife-Led Birthing Center. I am very proud of our joint practice; it is interdisciplinary, and unique. The midwives are also more involved with teaching

the residents. I am a founder of the Nurse Midwifery Business Network, and help with the administrative aspects. I also went with Anne Fulcher, Doula Program Director, to China. We went to two hospitals to present on how they could improve their L and D practice. That was way out of my comfort zone, but very rewarding.

What do you do for FUN?

Reading, and previously spending time with my dog, who just passed. Rowing on the weekends with my club.

What's in the future for you?

Getting another dog, and growing our practice at UCSD.

"You're off to Great Places!

Today is your day!

*Your mountain is waiting,
So... get on your way!"*

Dr. Seuss, Oh, The Places You'll Go!

ELIZABETH (LISA) WALKER, BA, BSN, MHS, CRNA

Senior Nurse Anesthetist

What prompted you to become a Nurse?

Initially I wasn't particularly interested in nursing, *per se*. I initially wanted to be a biologist. Becoming a nurse was the best career move I ever made, but it happened over a period of time.

What other jobs or careers have you had?

I've worked as a veterinary assistant at an animal hospital, and a pharmacy assistant. While earning my BA in Biology from UCSD, I worked at the Scripps Institute of Oceanography. Money was an issue for me in college. To supplement what I made at Scripps, I cleaned houses, and was a house painter. Finally I started searching classified ads for other opportunities beyond minimum wage positions, but trying to find a job for someone who is an expert in sheepshead fish was not going to happen. I saw ads for nurses, and the pay looked very good. I had the prerequisites for a nursing program, and applied on the outside chance I would be accepted. I was not very familiar with nursing, and honestly, I thought nurses were not as smart as people in other disciplines. I found out that is NOT true! I came to realize how hard it is to balance ALL the roles nurses perform, and it is a part of nursing that I love.

I worked as a certified nursing assistant at a skilled nursing facility while in school, then at Kaiser in Med/Surg and ICU. I think back to the shock I had, when my pay went from \$8 an hour to \$15 an hour as an RN. That was considered great money then. I was a traveling nurse in New York, but wanted to back in San Diego near the water. I had a job in the UCSD Clinical Research Center (CRC) before returning to school.

Why did you become an Advanced Practice Nurse?

I loved science, and had heard about CRNAs, but had never met one. The first one I met was Karen Karp, a great mentor who got me interested in the role. It was SCIENCE: biology, pharmacy, and physiology. Karen is now a Senior Director of the California Association of Nurse Anesthetists.

What gives me the greatest pleasure in my job is waking a patient up, comfortable, pain-controlled, reassuring them, and delivering them to my colleagues in PACU for their next phase of care. I stay until both the patient and the nurse are stable in the situation. At my "check-out time", all is well.

What Honors or accomplishments are you most proud of?

I won the first Teaching Award for the Department of Anesthesia at UCSD. It was because of the positive feedback I received from the medical students.

What do you do for FUN?

Traveling, and socializing with friends. Being in or near the water, which is one reason I love being in San Diego.

What's in the future for you?

In time, eventually retirement. Then I could focus on volunteerism, especially with an organization like Doctors Without Borders.

In a phrase or sentence, sum up your Nursing or Life Philosophy.

Be as helpful as you can, and be of service to others.

"Just never forget to be dexterous and deft. And never mix up your right foot with your left. And will you succeed? Yes! You will, indeed! (98 and 3/4 percent guaranteed.)"

Dr. Seuss, Oh, The Places You'll Go!