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ODU alumnus joins expanded initiative for falls prevention

By Irvin B. Harrell

In the 1960s when now-healthcare consultant Jay Kossman attended Old Dominion University, it was truly a commuter school. He would park at the nearby gas station, head to class, return later and head home off campus. Things began to slowly change before he graduated and ODU inevitably built its first dormitory.



Kossman

After graduating in 1968, Kossman left the Hampton Roads area in pursuit of a career in health care. He and his wife Joyce – also an ODU grad – returned to the area from Connecticut in 2013. The couple noticed that the campus had grown tremendously.

“I came back to Virginia with the intent of trying to do some meaningful things with my life,” he said. “I wanted to give back.”

So the Kossmans met with Alonzo Brandon, ODU’s vice president for university advancement, and Barb Henley, executive director of gift planning, and be-



Balance for Life’s Rachel Simmons works with resident Elizabeth T. Bade.

gan a relationship that led to the College of Health Sciences.

Kossman, an advisory board member at the college since 2014, has forged several relationships along the way and believes he has found his calling through a blossoming initiative called Balance for Life.

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SCHOOL OF PHYSICAL THERAPY & ATHLETIC TRAINING

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Dr. Steven Morrison spearheads the initiative, which provides a variety of assessments to pre-determine a person's propensity to fall. He has joined forces with Kossman, the Strome Entrepreneurial Center, ODU Monarch Physical Therapy and others to explore whether a falls clinic could be developed into a successful business model. His work has gone from research on people with Parkinson's Disease, stroke and Type II diabetes, and Autism Spectrum Disorder, to working with aging, active populations in an effort to prevent falls.

Upon undergoing a demonstration in Morrison's lab, Kossman said he "gained an awareness of the serious nature of falls and the devastating impact a fall can have on the life of a senior."

"It can often be a precipitating event of what becomes a cascading series of events that lead to the end of life," he said.

Morrison and his crew of ODU Ph.D. students have targeted Harbor's Edge, a high-quality retirement community of about 200 in Norfolk. The community was chosen in part for its proximity, demographics, and accessibility. In January, Morrison delivered a Balance for Life talk to residents on Jan. 21 and assessments began a week later at Harbor's Edge.

Joining forces with Australian researcher Stephen Lord, Morrison and his team employs Lord's Physiological Profile Assessment, which was developed by boiling down 400 falls-risk factors to 15 key ones that can effectively provide information on why a person falls.

"While falls are a catastrophic event for many people, I truly believe they can be prevented," Morrison said. "However, the first step (no pun intended) to prevention is understanding why we fall, the reasons and then targeting those reasons to reduce a person's risk."

The assessments look at five main areas: lower limb strength, balance, vision, lower limb sensation, and reac-



Balance for Life's Jessica Prebor explains the assessments to Harbor's Edge resident Jo Thompson.

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Activism for Immunizations

Sylvia Murphy, constituent services director for Congressman A. Donald McEachin, center, met with Shot@Life members and School of Nursing students, from left, Lukia Beverly, Simone Verela, DeJa Simpson, and Professor Janice Hawkins on April 23 in McEachin's office. Their topic of discussion: the importance of immunization funding.

SCHOOL OF PHYSICAL THERAPY & ATHLETIC TRAINING

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tion time. Several graduate students on Morrison's team have backgrounds in fields such as exercise physiology, biomechanics, and athletic training. Right now, the comprehensive assessments come at an out-of-pocket cost of about \$400, but Morrison hopes to develop Balance for Life as a healthcare system component, where patients will be able to use their insurance to pay the assessment fees.

The costs are minimal compared to the cost of a fall injury, Kossman said.

"Balance for Life is a phenomenal opportunity to seniors to be able to identify the likelihood of having a fall," he said.

"Preventing a fall is much more important than treating someone after they have fallen. If we can keep that first fall from occurring I think we have a great opportunity to have people continue in a productive and meaningful, active lifestyle."

Neonatologist funds additional preemies for simulation

Dr. Gary Karlowicz's history with Old Dominion University's neonatal nurse practitioner program goes back almost three decades. Some 28 years ago, the neonatologist at Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters in Norfolk was a lecturer for the program, which was later discontinued in 2001.

In fall of 2016 when the program resumed, Karlowicz continued his commitment to educating its students. Among his roles are helping with prenatal counseling simulation, teaching an embryology course, and instructing students on proper intubation techniques. Intubation requires the insertion of a tube into the trachea to assist in breathing.

Working with babies, particularly preterm ones, is a delicate, critical skill. Worldwide, an estimated 15 million babies are born prematurely every year (more than one in 10), and about a million die from preterm complications, according to the World Health Organization.

Taking his investment in the success of ODU's program a step further, Karlowicz recently donated \$15,000 to purchase three additional preemie simulators for the School of Nursing.

"These high-fidelity mannequins have only been available for about five years," he said. "It's fairly common for medical professionals to have difficulty intubating a preemie."

Two of the mannequins are twins that can be used for procedure practice. They can provide immediate feedback for both successful and unsuccessful intubation, through mannerisms such as chest rise, Karlowicz said.

The third mannequin has all of the mechanical features of the others but is also connected to an iPad for telemetry to practice a variety of scenarios for resuscitation. It can provide feedback such as heart rate, as well as offer more complex practice for nurse practitioner students on comprehensive exams.

The new equipment will give a boost to the neonatal nurse practitioner program, expanding its opportunities for more hands-on simulation, said Karen Karlowicz, the chair of the School of Nursing. Besides the University of Virginia, ODU is the only other university in the state with a neonatal nurse practitioner program.



Dr. Gary Karlowicz in the School of Nursing simulation lab.

Student's military skills fuel his desire to help others

By Irvin B. Harrell

To hear him tell it, Christopher Tucker was a small-town boy with two younger siblings, raised by a single mom in rural Pennsylvania. As far as hobbies, he spent his time reading, wrestling and lifting weights. Academically, he was an “average student,” he says.

But Tucker had an early affinity for science and anatomy, which would play out later in life when he chose to seek a nursing degree at Old Dominion University. He will earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in May, graduating at the top of his class with a 3.98 grade point average.



BSN student Christopher Tucker

When Tucker, 26, left high school, he enrolled in the Marine Corps for five years, where he was stationed in Camp Lejeune, N.C. It was there that he would build a confidence and skill set necessary to catapult him from an average student to an exemplary one.

“In the Marine Corps I learned a lot of discipline, which helped me structure my life now, and really helped me excel,” he said.

After five years in service, Tucker left the Marine Corps in 2015, and he and his wife Holly headed to Virginia Beach. Holly, an active duty sailor in the Navy, is stationed at Naval Air Station Oceana. The couple also have a 1 ½-year-old daughter, Harper.

Tucker says he was drawn to ODU's nursing program because he “heard it was exceptional and one of the tougher ones to get into, and that really appealed to me.” While fulfilling prerequisites, Tucker volunteered with Virginia Beach EMS, the nation's largest volunteer prehospital medical services organization. That experience further fueled his interest in being a healthcare provider.

“Virginia Beach EMS exposed me to a lot of stressful situations,” he said. “In tragic moments such as car accidents, you see a lot of sadness.”

Once accepted by the School of Nursing, Tucker became drawn to critical care, and in his final practicum, he

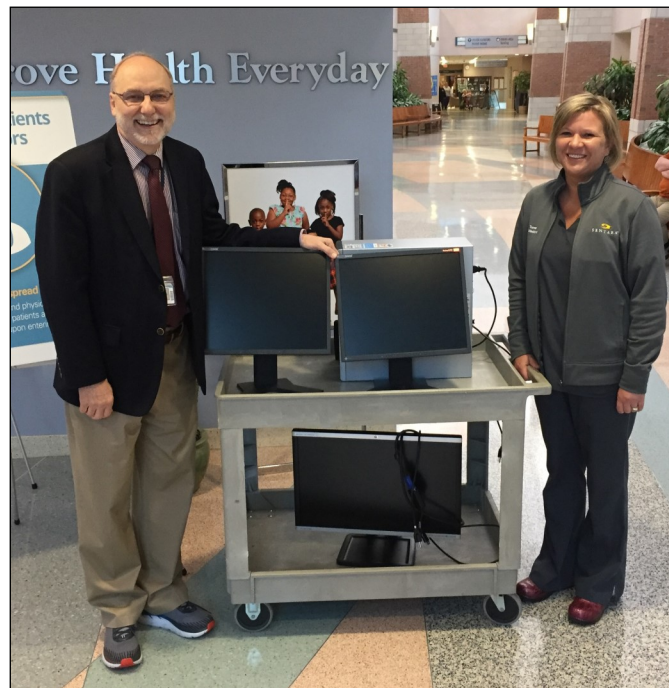
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Hospital donates workstation to nuclear medicine students

Sentara Obici donated an Xeleris Workstation on April 9 to the ODU Nuclear Medicine Technology program. The workstation is a computer system used in nuclear medicine to display, process, archive and communicate nuclear medicine images.

This donation will allow faculty in the ODU nuclear medicine technology program to instruct nuclear medicine students on the processing of images from a variety of nuclear imaging studies (skeletal, renal, gastrointestinal, pulmonary and cardiology).

The workstation will be an integral part of the preparation of students as they move from the didactic to the clinical phase of the program. It will provide hands-on processing and analysis of clinical images. The workstation is functional and to purchase a similar instrument would cost as much as \$35,000.



Program director Scott Sechrist poses with Amy Turner, a 2000 graduate of the ODU nuclear medicine program, a team leader in the Nuclear Medicine Department at Sentara Obici Hospital in Suffolk, Va.

SCHOOL OF NURSING: GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

STUDENT, FROM PAGE 5

worked in the neuro-intensive care unit at Sentara Norfolk General Hospital, a Level 1 trauma center. There he applied his love for serving others with complex medical issues and his critical thinking abilities.

“In critical care, with a smaller nurse-to-patient ratio, you get more time to focus on your patients,” he said. “You can make a great impact in that kind of environment.”

Tucker raves not only about the hands-on experiences he has had in the School of Nursing, but also the academic experiences. Professors have pushed him to excel and were always willing to give up some of their time to make sure he was doing well and an-

swer any questions he had.

“Nursing is about the holistic health of a person, not just their bodily health but the emotional and mental health,” he said. “Here at ODU, instructors were not only concerned about how you were doing academically, but also how you were doing in life. They realize that it’s a rigorous program.”

Upon graduation, Tucker and his family will be moving to the D.C. area, where his wife is being stationed. There he will contemplate his next move as a healthcare professional. Asked what the future might bring for him career-wise, Tucker says he hasn’t given up on the next educational pursuit.

“There’s a drive in me that wants more,” he said. “I’m throwing around the idea of medical school.”

Mini-documentary taps expertise of global health director

“The Black Angels:

The Untold Story” is a mini-documentary intended to bring awareness to the African American nurses who risked their lives to care for patients with tuberculosis when there was no cure and white nurses refused. It gives a scientific look at the disease and how its continued prevalence is affecting the world globally.

The piece, produced by For Nurses By Nurses Production Company, will include an interview with Dr. Muge Akpinar-Elci, the Old Dominion University director of the Center for Global Health. On April 1, the film crew visited campus for a sit-down interview with Akpinar-Elci.



Dr. Muge Akpinar-Elci poses with author/interviewer Denetra Hampton after the shoot.

COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Dean honored for her efforts

During this year’s International Celebration for Spring 2019 at Old Dominion University, Dean Bonnie Van Lunen was named International Administrator of the Year for her work to engage and contribute to the success of the international student community at ODU.



Dean Van Lunen receives the honor from Provost Austin Agho and Ying Thaviphoke, president of the International Student Advisory Board.

Students showcase work for peers, faculty



Dean Bonnie Van Lunen provided closing remarks to the event.



Professor Richard Heller delivered the keynote address on cancer research.



Graduate students Ricardo Squillantini was one of the presenters at the event.

Research on such topics as melanoma, specialty therapy service utilization among children, and chronic ankle instability took center stage on Friday, April 19, at the College of Health Sciences' Research Day in the Darden College of Education's multi-purpose auditorium. There were several oral presentations followed by poster presentations and refreshments.



Potential students

The College of Health Sciences held court on both sides of Hampton Roads this year for Admitted Students Day on Saturday, March 30. While its School of Nursing advised students and their parents at Webb Center, advisers were also on hand for the other schools and programs in the College of Health Sciences building.



CALENDAR

May 2019

- May 2** Exams End
- May 10 & 11** Spring Commencement Ceremonies
- May 13** MDTs White Coat Ceremony, 6 p.m., Goode Theater
- May 28** Memorial Day Holiday (University Closed)

Congratulations Class of 2019!



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