



# BELLIN *forward*

A newsletter for alumni and friends of Bellin College

Spring/Summer 2020

**Educating future  
healthcare workers  
in the face of  
a pandemic**

Kelsey Tavs, 2018

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# From the President



Dear Friends of  
Bellin College,

I hope you are well and enjoying the beginning of summer. It has been a very interesting semester for our students and employees. We welcomed our students back after the holiday and we began our semester. A new 15-month option

student group began in the nursing program. We received approval from the Higher Learning Commission to begin a 3-year bachelor's degree program in Radiation Therapy and admitted 10 students to join us in fall 2020.

Things were going exceptionally well, and we were preparing to send our students off for spring break and the word COVID-19 began to show. As we watched the map of spread around the world, college administrators and leaders began preparations for what it meant for us and our students. We never would have thought that the impact would be so significant and for so long. We are uniquely making history with a pandemic called Coronavirus. It is impacting everything we do at the college. So, what have we done to support our students during this trying time? All theory courses were moved to an online format for the duration of the spring semester. Student lab and clinical experiences moved to the virtual world with simulation called i-Human for nursing and Simtics for medical imaging. The remaining spring events were canceled or postponed.

We began to recruit new students through online methods and sent out messages to donors, friends, students and their families letting them know we missed them, and we are still here for them. The college was deep cleaned and is ready for the students' return. We decided to move our graduation to Field of Scenes Drive-In in Freedom. I never thought when I said goodbye to my students just before spring break I would not be seeing them for such a significant amount of time. As we plan for summer, theory courses will remain

online, and we will be allowing students to return for lab in the Health Sciences Resource Center while maintaining COVID-19 safety guidelines. I am hopeful we will be back to some new normal by fall semester.

What have we learned during this difficult time? We know our employees and our students are resilient and prepared to face the COVID-19 challenge. Many of them have worked in local healthcare facilities during this time. Students are confident and prepared, and we know our graduates will continue to make a difference in healthcare. We know upon students' return in fall, the campus will have a new normal — masking, social distancing, temperature checking, questioning and exceptional handwashing, but students still will continue to learn and be the best at their graduation.

I want to thank each of you for your continued donor support as the world changes around us. We are a part of something special and unique and we are very proud of our Future Healthcare Heroes. I hope to connect with you in the future. Please reach out to me if you have any questions.

In closing, be safe, be strong, and know that during your healthcare needs, you more than likely will encounter a Bellin College graduate. Thank you for your encouragement and support, you truly make a difference for Bellin College!

Warm Regards,

*Connie J. Boerst*

Dr. Connie J. Boerst, EdD, RN  
President/CEO

# Student Profile / Sam Grow, BSN class of 2020

## *Student completes program early due to deployment*

Shortly after arriving on the Bellin College campus in the summer of 2018, graduate Sam Grow learned he would be deployed with the Army Reserve for a year sooner than he had anticipated. That meant an already fast-track junior transfer bachelor of science in nursing degree became an even quicker-than-usual pace. Grow was deployed in late January on an undisclosed mission.

Bellin College leaders, including President and CEO Dr. Connie Boerst, worked with Grow to make sure he had all the necessary qualifications to complete his studies early and with the same standards expected of all students.

“We value our students and their education and we knew that if we had a deployment in the middle of his education and he had to come back, it wouldn’t be in his best interest,” Boerst said. “With a degree in hand he’ll have more opportunity when he goes to be deployed. He’ll have a better skill set to serve our country.”

The whole May 2020 graduating class had a different form of graduation this spring. The rest of his class were honored at a ceremony at Field of Scenes Drive-In on May 16, 2020.

Grow is a First Lieutenant and medical operations officer in the



Army Reserve medical service corps. While on deployment, he won’t be serving as a nurse, but will be in a more administrative role. It was recently reported to Bellin College that he earned his registered nurse license by passing the NCLEX exams before leaving the country.

“When I found out I was deploying with the Army Reserve, Bellin College leaders almost

immediately came up with a plan that would allow me to graduate a semester early and take my NCLEX before I left the country,” Grow said. “They worked with me to create a special schedule and made sure I was comfortable with how rapidly I was progressing through the program and offered extensive support throughout my entire journey. I am eternally grateful for all the staff and faculty and Bellin College, and, thanks to



*Pictures from Sam Grow's training missions and location while deployed.  
Submitted by Sam Grow*

*"The reality was, it really did  
take a village for this to happen."  
— Dr. Mary Rolloff, Dean of Nursing*

them, I look forward to working in the nursing field upon my return from deployment."

While on deployment, Grow said he would be doing medical mission planning and support for a surgical team.

Dr. Mary Rolloff was a newly minted Bellin College dean of nursing when faced with Grow's predicament. She sat with Grow and decided to "fast-track an already fast-tracked program" after initially thinking it couldn't be done.

"Sam (Grow) was so responsible in notifying us so early of this anticipated deployment that I started thinking, 'Could we do something different, is there anyway so that he could finish and leave with his degree in hand,'" Rolloff said. "He said he would do whatever he needed to do to make this happen and he has done that and more."

For some of his tailored academic plan, Grow became a section of one and completed group projects and classwork solo, Rolloff said. Faculty, staff and leaders worked to assure all standards were met while working

around Grow's unique needs especially when one two-week deployment last November, became two, two-week deployments, she said.

"Not only did he succeed, but he excelled in the process," Rolloff said. "The reality was, it really did take a village for this to happen."

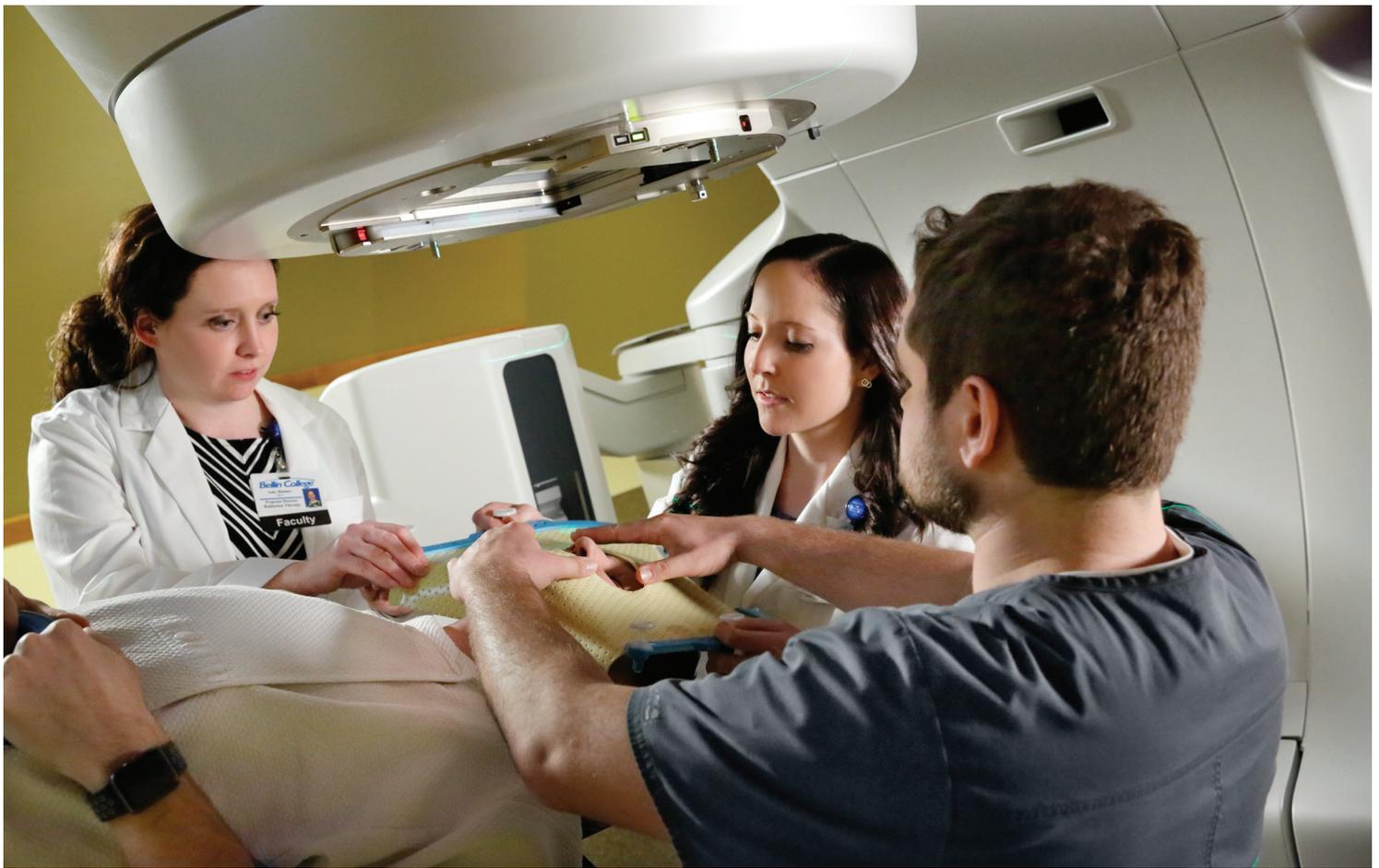
It's not the first time Bellin College has done such a task for a student. Staff members recall at least two recent examples when faculty and staff have assisted military students in order to get them through their education and back to their military obligations.

"After getting my first undergraduate degree from a large state university, I couldn't believe that the staff would be so friendly and receptive," Grow said. "I felt like every one of the staff and faculty truly cared about me and my goals, and wanted me to succeed. The faculty all have a wealth of knowledge and experience and were invaluable resources whenever I had questions about content or skills."

Grow was honored at a special ceremony at the college in early January.



*Sam Grow shows off Bellin College pride on deployment. Submitted by Sam Grow*



*Bellin College Radiation Therapy Program Director Amy Riemer oversees a patient.*

# Radiation therapy program lands Black Tie & Blue Jean proceeds

Beginning in fall 2020, Bellin College will begin offering a three-year Bachelor of Science in Radiation Therapy degree. The program, fully accredited through the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), aims to give graduates of the program the skills and confidence necessary to be a leader in the field.

“The radiation therapy program perfectly aligns with our current medical imaging programs,” said Dr. Mark Bake, dean of allied health sciences at Bellin College. “The unique three-year bachelor curriculum

focuses on the importance of patient care and the continuous technological advancements in the profession. We are excited to be bringing this high-demand program to the Northeast Wisconsin area.”

Students enrolled in the program will be prepared through a combination of state-of-the-art classroom education, clinical experience and laboratory practice. Graduates will be eligible to take the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) certification exam. The final year of the program includes a full-time

clinical internship which will provide the real-life, hands-on experience needed to be successful as a radiation therapist.

Each year, the Bellin Health Foundation hosts Black Tie & Blue Jean Extravaganza. This year’s event was postponed until next year, but the proceeds from that event, held in September, will go toward supporting the radiation therapy degree program’s technology needs. Students will operate the equipment they will use to

**See more, Page 8**

treat oncology patients — using the actual controls to run the accelerator and observing the beam interacting inside the body. By investing in a simulator, Bellin College will be preparing students for success while helping to improve outcomes for cancer patients everywhere.

“The Bellin Health Foundation, along with our volunteers, has a long history of providing financial support for Bellin College,” said Steve Maricque, President of the Bellin Health Foundation. “We respect and continue that tradition whenever we recognize a need that fits with our mission. We are honored to help make this technology need a reality for our future students

and caregivers.”

The Bellin Health Foundation supports the programs and services of Bellin Health and its associated entities by providing financial support made possible through philanthropy.

“The launch of the Bachelor of Science in Radiation Therapy aligns with the mission and vision of Bellin College,” said President and CEO Connie Boerst. “We are experts at educating healthcare professionals and this unique offering is in high demand in healthcare today. Students will walk away with an outstanding education and will be leaders in the profession. We continue to expand partnerships at the local and state level and are

excited to engage in this new endeavor.

The program is unlike any offered in Northeastern Wisconsin. That uniqueness will give students another option when looking for a career. “Our hope is that the program has a successful implementation and continues to grow and be recognized throughout the nation as the ‘gold standard’ for education and preparation of future caregivers,” Maricque said. “We will be proud in knowing that we contributed to a program that truly will make a difference for those in our community who will utilize the service in the future and improve the quality of patient care and outcomes.”

*The legacy you leave behind can be found in the lives you've touched...*

## *What will your legacy be?*

**Are you ready to plan for your future, but you're not sure where to start?  
It's never too late or too early to create an estate plan.**

### **What is planned giving?**

Planned giving consists of designating a gift during your lifetime or at passing that is part of your overall estate plan. A planned gift gives you the opportunity to make a lasting contribution in the lives of others. Examples of planned gifts include bequests, life insurance, charitable gift annuities, memorials, property and endowments.

To create your own planned giving legacy, Bellin College recommends consulting your financial advisor.

### **Bellin College Legacy Society**

The Bellin College Legacy Society is a group of individuals who have decided to remember us in their wills. This special group of people are essential to the advancement of the college and to ensuring that our students have the opportunities to receive a high-level education at an affordable rate.

*Have you remembered us in your will?  
Please let us know.*

***Would you like more information?***

**Please contact Bellin College Development at (920) 433-6654.**

# COVID-19 forces college community into uncharted territory

The impact of COVID-19 was felt throughout Bellin College and also by our alums.

Recent graduate Sierra Bates was working in the Intensive Care Unit at HSHS St. Vincent Hospital during the last several months.

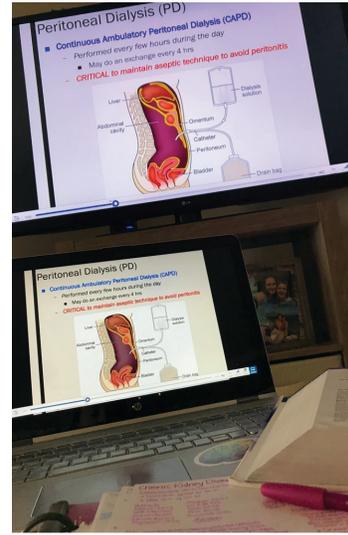
“I am trying to work extra hours as I am using my work experience for clinical credit,” Bates said. “I am also required to pick up extra on call shifts for our COVID-19 ICU. We wear hair covers, face shields and surgical masks 24/7 on the floor. We wear our N95s for all vented patients and any aerosolizing procedures. We also get temperature checked at the door when we come in and interviewed about symptoms.”

Many students are just looking forward to being back on campus and later lending a hand to those already on the front lines of the pandemic.

“It’s definitely been tough being away from my friends and Bellin College family,” said Lauren Harvey, 2021 BSN student. “Learning online just isn’t the same as being on campus. I hope and can’t wait to be back in lecture for my senior year this fall. That puts me one



Sierra Bates, 2020



Lauren Harvey's set up.



Physical therapy fellowship student Capt. Jessica Feda on the frontlines of care.

step closer to graduation and one step closer to joining the profession that’s so bravely on the front lines of this battle we’re facing.”

The doctor of science in physical therapy program and physical therapy fellowship have also experienced changes.

“Many fellows-in-training have been laid off or furloughed, see patients via telehealth, or are providing services beyond PT within their health systems,” said Mark Shepherd, orthopaedic and manual physical therapy fellowship program director. “The outpatient physical therapy world has been really affected.

The upside, though, is our fellowship program is hybrid — meaning all of our didactic content was already offered via online learning.”

Physical therapy fellowship student Capt. Jessica Feda in the National Health

Service Corps, was deployed to the front lines of care. She assisted with screening and treatment of patients with COVID-19. These professionals are learning the best practices in the rehabilitation of the patients who may have ICU-acquired weakness, frailty and pulmonary function that can impact his or her outcomes.

Bellin College alumna Kelsey Tavs, BSN class of 2018, is an RN at Aurora Medical Center in Grafton working to care for COVID-19 patients.

“Everything you see hyped up on social media has a different kind of meaning when you are the one in the room providing care for those in the fight against this virus,” Tavs said.

“COVID-19 has even more so ignited my passion and pride for the nursing profession,” Tavs said. “The distinct characteristics of a nurse have been highlighted tremendously these past few weeks — intelligence, a caring and compassionate heart, adaptability, resilience and even our entertaining sense of humor. When some are told to stay in their home, nurses are the ones running full force toward the action.”

# Faculty and staff learn new skills

Faculty and staff were forced into a new way of working in March when the Safer at Home order was enacted by Gov. Tony Evers. With Bellin College being deemed an essential business, employees were able to access the building to facilitate working from home and conducting online courses.

Faculty who were used to teaching classes face-to-face had to transition to holding classes virtually and also juggling their own family's needs. The nursing instructors had some unique challenges when scheduling virtual classes.

“When the decision was made for classes to be put online, many students, since they are nursing students, scheduled themselves to work to help with the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Heidi Monroe, assistant professor of nursing. “This made it difficult to schedule ‘live’ online classes. To handle this situation, I had emailed all the students in my courses two dates that I expected them to attend a ‘live’ class. The dates and times were those when we would have had class.”

Often, just the task of moving instruction online was a challenge.

“The biggest impacts of the COVID-19 has been adapting the course work to an online format, staying connected with the students, finding ways to supplement clinical content and trying to juggle work, helping my kids with their virtual learning, and family life,” said Andra Sartorelli, radiologic sciences instructor and clinical coordinator. “I



*Assistant Professor of Nursing Lynn Murphy in her makeshift office at home.*

guess in the grand scheme of things, it is a small price to pay to stay healthy.”

Students in the diagnostic medical sonography program were unable to come to campus to use the scanning equipment, which is how they learn and be comfortable with the equipment and scanning a human body.

“Our students will be making up the clinical hours in the summer semester,” said Amanda Hogan, diagnostic medical sonography program director and instructor.

Adapting and learning new techniques was also something instructors faced and led to some different participants in class.

“It forced me to learn how to use Canvas conferences and to come up with some creative ways to conduct class,” Monroe said. “Students really seemed to like the live online class and commented that they preferred it

to just watching pre-recorded lectures. Also, several students who didn’t typically answer questions in the face-to-face class did answer questions online either verbally or via the chat option.”

“I have been using video conferences with the students to try to stay connected as email is not always the best method of communication. Thank goodness for technology,” Sartorelli said.

Some positives have also come out of the pandemic changes.

“One of the biggest positives is that everyone is now aware of, is not taking face-to-face time for granted or the technology that is available to use at the college,” Hogan said. “We have so many wonderful resources in the sonography lab that we take for granted every day. I look forward to the days I can talk in the hallways and see everyone’s smiling faces.”

# Bellin College Golf Classic canceled

The 20th annual Bellin College Golf Classic set for June 22, 2020, at Oneida Golf & Country Club was also affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The golf committee made the difficult decision to cancel the event because of the safer-at-home order and not being able to ensure a top-notch golf outing for participants.

“While we are disappointed that we will not be able to hold the 20th annual Bellin College Golf Classic, it is the right choice to make,” said

Thomas Shefchik, vice president of advancement for the college. “As a college preparing future healthcare professionals we need to set the example and ensure we are doing our part to keep our event attendees and in turn our community safe.”

The annual event is the main fundraiser for the college. Each year, a different area of need is identified as a need for funding. This year the event was set to raise money towards the purchase of an array of educational models to be used by all Bellin

College students in anatomy and physiology courses.

“Many of the attendees have participated in this event year after year and they understand the important role the funds raised have on the quality of the education we provide at Bellin College,” Shefchik said. “Even though the event is canceled for 2020, many of the attendees have decided to make a gift of their event fees and sponsorships because of their dedication to our students. We are extremely thankful for their support.”

# HSRC donates PPE, weathers new normal

One of the areas affected by the COVID-19 pandemic is the Health Sciences Resource Center at the college. Located in the lower level of the building, the HSRC is the resource all students utilize to practice skills they will need when they enter the work force.

Shortly after the need for Personal Protective Equipment, or PPE as we’ve all learned, arose, the HSRC staff and Bellin College went through supplies and were able to donate to Bellin Health. Staff gathered supplies amounting to 640 masks, 172 isolation gowns and 15 surgical gowns to give to the health system to help in the fight against COVID-19.

Since the HSRC is one of the most hands-on areas of the college, it has been paramount to have a plan in place once students are able to return to campus. This summer, only the year-round Bachelor of Science in

Diagnostic Medical Sonography students will be allowed to practice skills.

“We are looking forward to the students return, it just may be a little different than what we have done in the past,” said Bonnie Luebke, HSRC director and simulation coordinator.

While students and staff have largely been off campus, the HSRC staff cleaned and disinfected all areas and supplies that are used in simulation or practice labs.

Along with planning and prepping for the return of students, they hosted and taught a skills refresher course for Bellin Clinic staff, LPNs and medical assistants.

“We had 40 staff members go through multiple stations over two days,” Luebke said. “This gave the clinic staff time to practice skills that they don’t

do at the clinic in order to prepare them for assisting at the hospital if needed especially if a surge occurs.”

HSRC coordinators Bruce Chinen and Sarah Johnson have assisted faculty with nursing classes as well. They have each taken on a group of students to conduct online simulations with to replace vital clinical time using the i-Human simulation program.

When students are back on campus, the HSRC staff has planned and prepared for cleaning and disinfecting and social distancing measures.

“We have determined some limitations on number of students allowed in the learning spaces in the HSRC, adding additional rooms or additional lab sections,” Luebke said. “Students will need to follow the rules set forth by the Student Services department.”



*Bellin College graduation had a different look this year. The ceremony was May 16, 2020, at Field of Scenes Drive-In in Freedom.*

## College pivots to drive-in graduation for 2020 seniors

One of the bright spots for the college during the pandemic has been to provide the 134 graduating seniors with a creative send-off.

After graduation had to be postponed in April, staff pondered how to give seniors that proper ending that all students strive to have. With largely every graduation canceled across the country it wouldn't be surprising if Bellin College needed to do the same.

With some restrictions lifted for drive-in theaters, Bellin College Vice President of Strategic Engagement and Public Relations Matt Rentmeester along with other colleagues started wondering if a drive-in graduation could be successful.

“We wanted to make something special for our students, and we brainstormed a little bit, myself and a few

### CLASS SPEAKERS

- » Max Soda, BSN
- » Victoria Lemke, BSRS
- » McKenzie Scheld, BSDMS
- » Erin Carter, MSN

of my colleagues, and we came up with a drive-in movie theater option, and it's been well-received by a lot of our 134 graduates,” Rentmeester said.

With a little over a week to plan the event, preparations were made the week leading up to the May 16, 2020, ceremony at Field of Scenes Drive-in in Freedom, with a little help from vendors and staff.

Students and family descended to the drive-in with decked-out vehicles in their graduation caps and gowns ready to party like we're living in a pandemic. The ceremony was

broadcast over the radio to those in their vehicles.

BSN graduate Tori Hipke was happy to have an actual ceremony. “Like every graduate, you're always looking to cross the stage and receive your diploma with family and friends, but this is really unique what Bellin College has done for us,” she said.

President and CEO of the college, Dr. Connie Boerst, spoke as well as three of the four student class speakers. A virtual video ceremony with messages from the featured speaker Katherine Reinke, President and CEO of Bellin Health Chris Woleske, and Bellin College chairman Mike Van Asten, along with all four student speakers is being produced and will be distributed to graduates and their families.



# Alumni Spotlight

## Ariana Mohr

### *Mohr lands coveted pediatric residency at Cook Children's Medical Center in Texas*

Ariana Mohr graduated from Bellin College in October 2019. Her journey to becoming a nurse, however, took her from Texas to Arkansas to Wisconsin and, most recently, back to Texas – where she landed a coveted position in a familiar place.

As a high school student, Mohr began volunteering her time at Cook Children's Medical Center in Fort Worth, Texas. There, she met a child life specialist and determined that field was her passion. In preparation to become a child life specialist, Mohr attended the University of Arkansas and obtained a degree in family life sciences with a focus on child development.

“My career plans started to shift when I became a ‘baby buddy’ at Cook Children's Medical Center,” said Mohr. “Baby buddies hold, rock and feed NICU babies. I quickly discovered I really enjoyed the hands-on aspect of that role and decided that I would pursue nursing instead of child life.”

After graduating from the University of Arkansas, Mohr applied for the Bellin College 15-month nursing program, was accepted and started classes at Bellin College in June 2018. Her dad, an engineer and native of Wisconsin, and her mom, a teacher, decided to leave Texas and retire in



the Green Bay area in May 2017. So, oddly enough, the Mohrs were all in Green Bay. After many months of studying, Ariana graduated from Bellin College with her BSN in October 2019. Fun family fact: Both Ariana and her sister, Tatiana, a new Bellin College student, were adopted from Russia into the Mohr family as

toddlers.

Attaining her new role in Texas was hard-fought. Cook Children's Medical Center doesn't hire new graduates. However, nurses can enter as a nurse resident. This is a yearlong program that includes simulations, classes, discussions, further pediatric certification and, finally, an offer for a

permanent position.

To apply, she participated in an information session, completed an initial application and resume, gathered two letters of recommendation and completed five essay responses. Then, she waited for a call. Of the more than 800 applicants, only 250 were offered interviews and Ariana was one of them. Her interview was done via Skype, since she was still living in Wisconsin, and consisted of a one-hour panel interview.



“During the first part of the interview, the panel asked me questions about clinical experience, preferences and scenarios, and the second half was a case study,” said Mohr. “The panel gave me a scenario and asked me to talk through my thought process, asked how I would approach the situation, verbalize a head-to-toe assessment, obtain a health history from the patient’s mother and anticipate doctor’s orders. From there, they furthered the scenario and asked me to verbalize how I would handle

the new events and anticipate new doctor’s orders.”

The panel told Ariana she would hear back within 10 days and one day, at 9 a.m., her phone rang. Cook Children’s Medical Center had one more interview question: Would you like to work for us? Of course, her answer was yes!

“I was well prepared for the case study because of my simulation, health assessment, pediatrics and

public health courses,” said Mohr. “I had wonderful instructors like Sue Poppele, Lynn Murphy, Kathie DeMuth and Megan Liebrecht to thank for that.”

Mohr started her nurse residency on Feb. 3. In the future, she would like to become more involved in leadership, hospital policy, or become a charge nurse or nurse manager. She may also continue her education by obtaining a master’s degree.

Ariana credits Bellin College with having the unique ability to help students prepare for their careers before they even graduate and teaching them how to apply the knowledge and skills attained at Bellin College to real-world scenarios.

Her advice to current nursing students: “Don’t close yourself off to one route or possibility,” said Mohr. “Your passion may change as you interact with more people and gain more experience, so be open-minded.” Congrats, Ariana!

## *Alumni, we're looking for you!*

We are working to update our database of Bellin College alumni. If you have changed your name, address, phone number or email address, please let us know via our online form at [www.bellincollege.edu/alumni/alumni-address-change](http://www.bellincollege.edu/alumni/alumni-address-change) or by phone at (920) 433-6654.

Also please consider joining the Bellin College Alumni Council. Please call (920) 433-6654 for more information.

**Bellin College**

# Accomplishments

## Faculty

■ Stacey May, clinical coordinator for sonography, completed her Master of Business Administration in Healthcare Management in December through Southern New Hampshire University.

■ Dr. Mark Bake, Dean of Allied Health Sciences, published an article in the Radiologic Technologist Journal titled “Healthcare Management.”

■ Dr. Casey Rentmeester, general education program director, presented at the Northeast Popular & American Culture Association Conference in Portsmouth on the topic of the philosophy of music.

■ Chad Dall, BSRS faculty, presented at the National Health Science Conference in St. Louis on the topic of healthcare career exploration.

■ Deanna Shelby, general education faculty, presented at the Family Counseling Services Center in Aurora, Illinois, on the topic of “Understanding the Difference Between Assertiveness vs. Aggressiveness and When to Stand Your Ground.”

■ Dr. Casey Rentmeester and Chad Dall presented at the Great Lakes Student Success Conference on topics related to student success.

■ Dr. Adam Sprague published an accepted titled, “Writing and Communication Challenges for ESL Students Majoring in the Health Professions.” And presented at the Conference on Composition and Communication in Los Angeles.

■ Dr. Eric Chaconas, DScPT program director, presented at two conferences: American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists Annual Conference on the topic of Substance Use, Abuse, and Pain and Educational Leadership Conference on the topic of Development of a Student Pro-Bono Clinic within an Laboratory Course.

■ Dr. Jodi Young, DScPT assistant research director, presented twice at the American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists Annual Conference on the topics of Turning Ideas

into Presentable Products and Mastering Your Mentoring Fundamentals.

■ Kathie DeMuth has begun her second term as the Vice Chair for Friend of Haiti Board of Directors

■ Heidi Monroe:

- Co-authored the article “Determining Postgraduation Readiness to Take the NCLEX-RN” in the February 2020 issue of Journal of Nursing Education.

- Presented a poster on “Collaborative Testing in Nursing Education: The Hows & Whys” at the Kappa Pi At-Large Chapter’s Spring Presentation on March 10, 2020

- Accepted as a presenter on Determining Readiness to Take the NCLEX-RN Exam at the 2020 Nurse Educator Conference in the Rockies.

■ Michelle Pranghofer was elected as the Northeast Regional Chairperson for the Wisconsin Association of Perinatal Care.

■ Mary Rolloff was elected to a second term as secretary for the Association of Nurse Educators of Wisconsin.

■ Dr. Brant Pearson, college assessment program director, recently obtained his doctorate degree in Organizational Development and Leadership, Concentration Risk Management from Ashford University. In May 2020, Pearson spoke at the Ashford University 2020 Research Symposium, where he discussed his research titled “Risks and Paradigm Shifts Associated with an Employee’s Right to Self-Identify on Social Media.”

# New Hires and Promotions

**Bruce Chinen** — HSRC Skills Coordinator  
(position change)

**Claire Dreves** — Admissions Counselor

**Kelly Englebert** — Administrative Assistant for  
Admissions

**Krynn Hanold** — Student Success Center Assistant

**Rachel Moore** — Student Services Departmental  
Assistant

**Benjamin Rieth** — Assistant Director of Admissions  
and Outreach (promotion)

**Elizabeth Roy** — Admissions Counselor (promotion)

**Kevin Stringer** — HSRC Technology Coordinator  
(title change)

**Stacy Thomas** — Nursing Program Faculty

**Jody Wilmet** — Special Project Coordinator

**Kelsey Zastrow** — Nursing Assistant Instructor

## Student accomplishments

- Twenty-four senior BSN students attended the annual Wisconsin Nurses Association Nurses Day at the Capitol. The morning consisted of educational sessions on legislative initiatives that relate to patient safety and professional practice. In the afternoon participants met with their state representatives to speak on behalf of specific initiatives. Five faculty members accompanied the students. Almost 1,000 RN, student nurses and nursing faculty participated in the event.
- Twelve BSN students attended the Wisconsin Student Nurses Convention. Caroline Wagner, BSN class of 2020, presided over the convention as president. Lauren Harvey and Valerie Ehr, both BSN class of 2021, also served on the board of directors. Lauren and Valerie were re-elected to serve on the state board for the 2020-21 year.
- Luke Manderle, BSN class of 2020, was nominated for the WNA Future Nurse Leader award. Unfortunately, the award was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Luke was recognized by the college for his leadership and exemplary performance.
- Forty-eight BSN juniors and senior students were inducted into the Kappa Pi Chapter at Large of Sigma, the nursing honor society. The virtual event was held Saturday, April 25, 2020, with students and family members logging into Zoom for the ceremony. Students are invited based on academic excellence and leadership characteristics.



*Lauren Harvey, left, and Caroline Wagner.*



*Wagner and Harvey also joined together with a few other nursing students from around the nation at WSNA to make a campaign to recruit more members to join NSNA. Their poster won second place.*

# Student exceeds expectations on annual mission trip to Guatemala

Bellin College students traveled on a medical mission with Mission El Faro to the Izabal region of Guatemala on the East Coast in January. One of the 13 students in tow for the trip stood out to Lynn Murphy, Assistant Professor at Bellin College and organizer of the annual trip. That being Max Soda, class of 2020.

Before heading on the trip, Soda reached out to his communities in Princeton and Montello, Wisconsin, to acquire supplies and donations for the trip. Singlehandedly he gathered “a massive amount of medical supplies, monetary donations of about \$5,000 and a small mountain of shoes for the villagers living in Baltimore (the Queche Mayan Village), Rio Salado, Plan Grande Quehueche, and for those living in and around the city dump of Puerto Barrios,” Murphy said. “Max surpassed all of my expectations regarding his ability to reach out to his community to tell the story of the needs of the people of the east coast of Guatemala.”

Each year, the annual Bellin College mission trip travels to Guatemala to bring needed medical supplies, stoves and water filters and they also perform checkups of the residents. This year they provided water filters for 35 families and new stoves for 19 families. The group brought 1,250 pounds of equipment to help support our clinics and teaching activities at the children’s hospital.



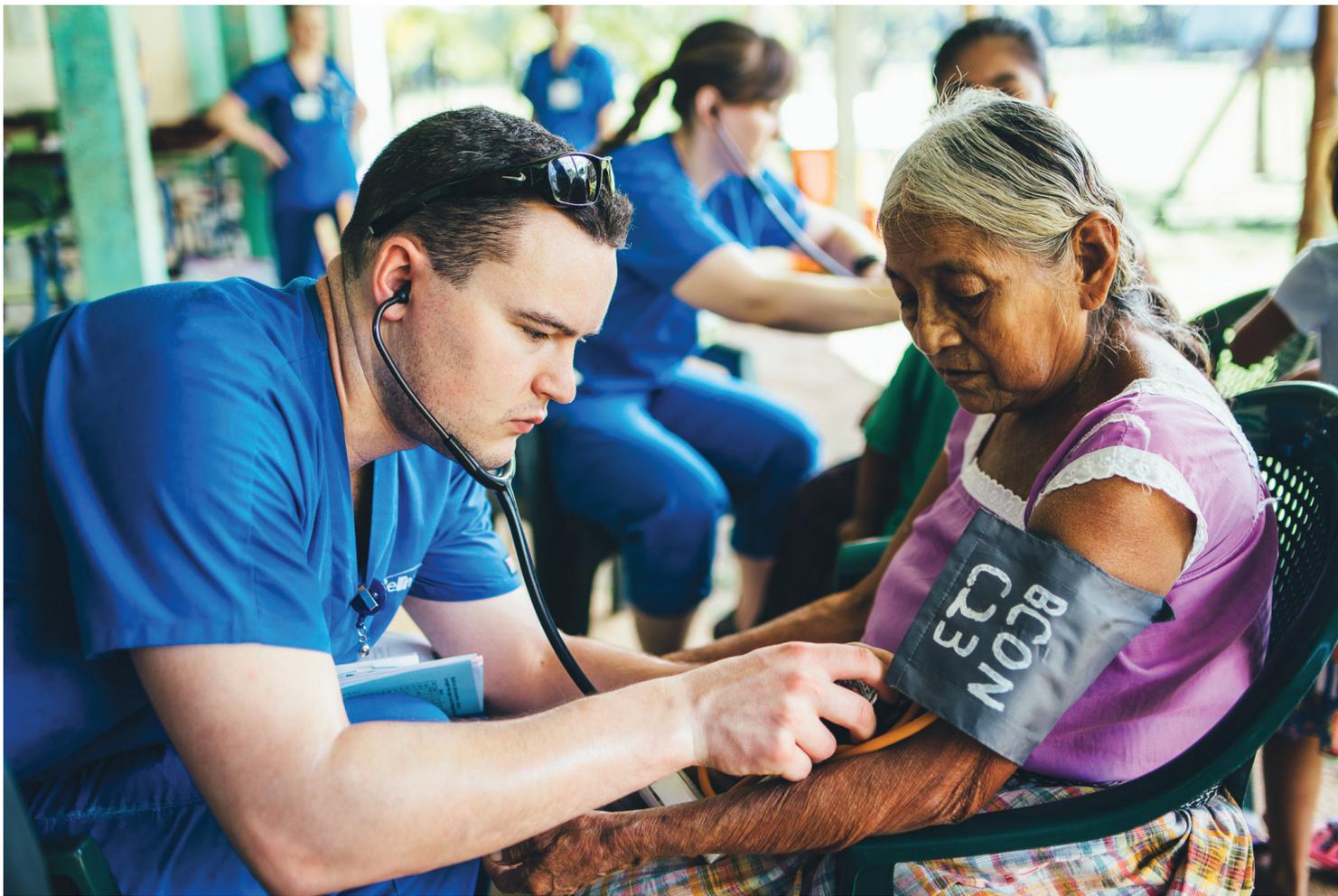
*Max Soda, at left, and Lynn Murphy, second from left, in Guatemala in January 2020 along with the rest of the team.*

“With Max, his selflessness goes a long way,” Murphy said. “He consistently shows a genuine concern for the well-being of others and puts his own needs last. People notice this, and appreciate the rarity of such a quality. He has the ability to easily develop therapeutic relationships with people. This was easily demonstrated by those who supported him and our Mission efforts, but also as he worked with the people of Guatemala in their home villages.”

“I wanted to go to Guatemala on the mission trip for many reasons,” Soda said. “I had never been out of the country and I thought this would be a great way to see more of the world. I had heard about the great need these villagers have, most lacking basic



*Max Soda demonstrates CPR on a manikin to villagers while in Guatemala.*



*Max Soda takes the blood pressure of a resident in Guatemala.*

necessities. I found it shocking people can live in such harsh conditions in our day and age, and only a couple thousand miles away.”

Soda’s collections in the towns as small as Princeton and Montello are, populations of about 2,700 combined, really stood out to Murphy.

“I think Max’s collections are a true testament of how well connected the communities of Montello and Princeton really are,” Murphy said. “That they would be willing to help our Bellin College Guatemala Mission Team in such a dramatic way.”

“While we have our class periods to-

## By the numbers

- » 13 students
- » 1,400 pounds of medical supplies
- » 35 water filters
- » 19 stoves
- » \$8,000 raised
- » 240 patients served

gether throughout the fall semester, learning the about the culture of the Guatemalan people we will serve, most students are still unsure of all of the services which our clinics will provide,” she said. “However, Max excelled in the area of telling the story of need for water filters, stoves that vent smoke out of huts,

anti-parasite medications, vitamins, shoes and the list goes on.”

“I learned much from this experience. It was very eye opening to see the joy that the people expressed when we cared for them and provided for them,” said Soda. “Something so simple that often we do not see with our patients that we care for back home.

I will certainly consider participating in more mission work in my future!”

The team traveling in January consisted of the 13 students, Bellin College faculty, nurse practitioners, nurses who are prior graduates of the college, support individuals and physicians at Bellin Health.

# Alumni, students take time to give back

Bellin College students and alumni gave back by volunteering at St. John's Homeless Shelter in Green Bay on Dec. 17, 2020. On Feb. 18, 2020, they helped cook a meal for those staying at Altrusa House in Green Bay. Volunteering is just one way we can give back as a group. Please watch for future volunteerism opportunities and submit ideas to Jamie Jergenson at [jamie.jergenson@bellincollege.edu](mailto:jamie.jergenson@bellincollege.edu).



*ABOVE LEFT: Students and alumni volunteer at St. John's Homeless Shelter in December.*

*ABOVE RIGHT: Alumnae Dianne Smith and Carol Sharkey Peterson work with student Shannon Mach to clean the kitchen.*



*ABOVE LEFT: The students who helped prepare a meal for the guests at Altrusa House. ABOVE RIGHT: Bellin College nursing students Valerie Ehr, Caroline Wagner and Lauren Harvey help prepare a meal at Altrusa House in Green Bay.*



*The Bellin College Radiology students, class of 2022, participated in the 5th Annual Community Blanket Project for their patient care course. This year, donations for the fleece were received from the Bellin Health radiology technologists. The tie blankets were given to the Bellin Health Pediatric Unit and the HSHS St. Vincent Children's Hospital Pediatric Unit. Each child that is admitted to these units will receive a tie blanket. This helps make their stay a little less scary and gives them something to comfort them during their hospital stay.*



*Bellin College student organizations Love Your Melon, BSNA, and BAAMN put together 100 art therapy kits consisting of various craft supplies, coloring books and crayons on Jan. 21, 2020. They were delivered to St. Vincent Children's Hospital, Bellin Pediatrics and the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin.*

# Workshop tackles healthcare from a different angle

## Phenomenology looks at the philosophical side of caring

Bellin College, along with the Bellin Health Foundation, Bellin Health, and The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities, hosted the sole Phenomenology and Healthcare International Workshop in the United States. Phenomenology is, according to Oxford Dictionary, “an approach that concentrates on the study of consciousness and the objects of direct experience.”

The workshop is based on a project on how to use phenomenology in qualitative research in healthcare by the Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities in England. The project leader, Dr. Dan Zahavi, is a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Copenhagen where he directs the Center for Subjectivity Research and is a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Oxford where he is working on this study. He was not in attendance at the workshop in Green Bay.

Dr. Casey Rentmeester, director of general education and associate professor of philosophy for Bellin College, has authored a book on the phenomenology of



*Dr. Anthony Fernandez, at the event at Ariens Hill in the Titledown District.*

the environment and 18 articles and book chapters. His most recent work focuses on the phenomenology of healthcare. He was integral in securing Green Bay as a location for one of the workshops as he has known one of the researchers, Dr. Anthony Fernandez, since graduate school. The event was held in the Titledown District at Ariens Hill and Titledown Tech near Lambeau Field in Ashwaubenon.

“I think the workshops

went as well as it possibly could have,” he said. “The fact that we had over 80 participants, spanning from providers to professors to students and even patients, come to a workshop on phenomenology, a term that many of them likely did not know before attending, is simply, well, phenomenal. I sit on the Best Patient Experience Committee at the Bellin Health System, and everyone was raving about how excellent it went at our meeting the next day.”

The presenters of the workshop were Dr. Rentmeester, Dr. Fernandez and Dr. Steven Burgess.

Dr. Fernandez is assistant professor of philosophy at Kent State University and a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Oxford, where he is aiding Dr. Zahavi in his research.

Dr. Burgess is assistant professor of philosophy at Benedictine University. He regularly teaches courses in phenomenology.

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(Slatman et al. 1618)

The event began with a presentation by Dr. Rentmeester, Dr. Fernandez and Dr. Burgess before groups were split off to work in small groups for more targeted discussion sessions at Tiletown Tech.

“In the breakout session I facilitated, the faculty were initially carrying the conversation, as might be expected, but the students ended up having some very valuable contributions,” Dr. Burgess said.

Dr. Fernandez was impressed by the workshop attendees, most of which were healthcare professionals from all areas of the industry, or community members involved in advising on patient needs and ideas.

“So many people were willing to share candid stories of their experiences as both healthcare professionals and as patients,” he said. “Their stories really brought the philosophical concepts to life and demonstrated how phenomenology can help us reflect upon aspects of our experience of illness and disability that we’d normally pass over.”

“Most people do not associate the traditional foci of philosophy with healthcare, aside from some questions of ethics; this workshop did not focus on the standard biomedical ethical questions



*Dr. Casey Rentmeester holds a breakout session at Tiletown Tech.*

and instead made use of a field-phenomenology that originated in rather abstract thinking,” Burgess said. “The considerations we discussed: body as object vs. body as lived; the ‘space’ of the hospital room; the unwritten norms guiding healthcare practice; etc., were very concrete and are certainly not ‘side issues,’ but instead essential to providing quality healthcare.”

Phenomenology and philosophy in general isn’t without its challenges and healthcare is no exception.

“I think one of the biggest things we all showed genuine interest in was how to understand the patient’s perspective in order to provide patient-centered care,” Dr. Rentmeester said. “In philosophy, phenomenologists have been working on understanding the perspectives of others

for over a century now, and it is just fantastic that this work is now bleeding into the healthcare setting, since it is so relevant to providing empathetic care to patients.”

After the breakout sessions at Tiletown Tech, the groups reconvened for a wrap-up discussion on what was learned and discovered during those breakouts.

“I really enjoyed our reconvening session where we discussed phenomenologically inspired questions and I think many of those well-positioned at Bellin Health and Bellin College could see the potential for some of these in how routine healthcare can be improved,” Dr. Burgess said.

By all accounts, the workshop was a success to those involved.

“I think that the workshop showed that dialogue between healthcare professionals and academic philosophers is incredibly productive and enlightening for everyone involved,” Dr. Fernandez said.

“I think there is a tremendous amount of room for growth in this field, and this workshop represents just the beginning,” Dr. Burgess said.

One question remains, where does Bellin College go from here with phenomenology?

“For Bellin College, I think it would be great if a full course could be developed on phenomenology of medicine and illness,” Dr. Fernandez said. “While a one-off workshop is a great introduction to the value of phenomenology for healthcare, a full semester of this kind of content and discussions can go a long way toward influencing long-term healthcare practice.”

Dr. Rentmeester said the team will be looking to hold a follow-up to this workshop, possibly in 2021. Other locations of workshops were University of Oxford in Oxford, United Kingdom; University of Iceland in Reykjavik, Iceland; Aarhus University in Aarhus, Denmark; and University of Manitoba in Manitoba, Canada.



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In an effort to help our students who have felt the economic impact from COVID-19 continue their education, we are launching Future Healthcare Heroes Fund. All funds raised will be distributed to Bellin College students who demonstrate significant hardship due to COVID-19's impact on the economy. Funds will be awarded in the form of tuition assistance.

**Donate to the Future Healthcare Heroes Fund  
by going to [www.bellincollege.edu/support](http://www.bellincollege.edu/support)**