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**Southern Connections Subcommittee**

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**Editor's Note - Denise Linton, DNS, FNP-BC**

I would like to thank our current president for her tribute to our co-founder and first president, the late Dr. D. Jean Wood. I believe that Dr. Wood will always occupy a special place in our hearts and I hope that this will stimulate us to become more involved in the activities of our society. A special thank you to the contributors of this issue, as well as previous issues, and I hope that you will continue your involvement as we seek to fulfill our mission and goal. Let us continue to build on Dr. Wood's legacy: become active members, apply for a research award, and assist your state liaison. And, as the summer comes to a close reflect on what you can contribute to our society. Dr. D. Jean Wood is remembered as our "president, teacher, scholar, and colleague;" what will you be remembered for?



Denise Linton, DNS, FNP-BC

**President's Pen - Patricia B Crane, PhD, RN, FAHA**

The board has been busy planning for our next conference and focusing on our strategic plan. One important mission of the organization is the dissemination and utilization of research. Our conference is a venue for presentation of your research. Further, the partnership with the journal, *Research in Nursing and Health (RINAH)*, is another mechanism to foster the dissemination and utilization of research. We will have our first SNRS pages in the next edition! The Awards Committee is busy developing the criteria for the *RINAH* research article award (from an SNRS member).

Patricia B Crane,  
PhD, RN, FAHA

As a board we are also focused on the strategic plan. One strategy to meet our goals is to "develop an avenue to connect the actions of the organization to the needs of the nurse researchers." As such, the board approved a task force to examine our web presence. Under the leadership of Michael Young, this committee provided an extensive report on how we should enhance our web presence. The board is now developing a Request for Proposal document to begin the process of updating our website! We are targeting this update for the fall.

As the summer closes, I want to encourage each of you to submit your posters and late breaking research. The President's message in *RINAH* focused on how we, as an organization, should lead by 'talking.' So, talk to your colleagues and others about SNRS! Be visible to your community as nurse scholar, scientist, and leader. Talk about the importance of nursing research!

### Dr. D. Jean Wood Nursing Scholarship Award: 2013 Award Recipient

It is a great honor to have been chosen as the 2013 recipient of the D. Jean Wood Nursing Scholarship Award. The award was created in honor of Dr. Wood, the first Southern Nursing Research Society President, and is designed to recognize the contributions of a researcher who has enhanced the science and practice of nursing in the Southern region. Receiving the D. Jean Nursing Scholarship Award was a particular delight because it demonstrated acceptance of my work by the larger nursing science community. This was particularly rewarding for me as my research is pre-clinical in nature, but more about that shortly. Further, I was able to share this exciting memory with friends

Charles A. Downs, PhD,  
ACNP-BC

and colleagues who I admire and respect - a memory I will cherish forever.

My research program is directly informed by my clinical experience as a nurse and acute care nurse practitioner in pulmonary and critical care. I am interested in understanding the cellular and molecular mechanisms involved in disease, as well as symptom, development and progression. More specifically I have been investigating how cigarette smoke alters physiologic function in the cells that comprise the alveolus or gas exchanging unit of the lung. Effective gas exchange requires efficient communication between the alveolar epithelium and the microvascular endothelium; communication is easily disrupted when salt and water balance in the lung is altered (e.g. pulmonary edema). The critical regulator of salt (and subsequently water) balance in the lung is the epithelial sodium channel. This sodium channel, which is expressed in the alveolar epithelium, acts like a door that opens and closes to allow sodium to be absorbed from the airway lumen. Reabsorbed sodium is then transported into the vasculature where water follows. A very thin layer of antioxidant-rich fluid lines the lung epithelium and serves as a chief defense mechanism against oxidative injury and dehydration of the thin antioxidant-rich fluid results in a pro-injurious environment that could exacerbate symptoms and/or promote disease development.

In the study, we observed a significant increase in epithelial sodium channel activity in alveolar epithelial cells exposed to an aqueous form of cigarette smoke. Mechanistically we found that reactive oxygen species (ROS), small unstable oxygen containing molecules, activated the sodium channels and that ROS are involved in inhibiting the physiological degradation of the channel. In short, ROS from exposure to the cigarette smoke inhibited channel degradation while promoting inappropriate channel activity. This suggests that oxidative regulation of sodium channels is an important pathway that can be targeted for tailored interventions. I am currently expanding on this work to begin understanding how inappropriate sodium channel activity in the lung may result in symptom (e.g. dyspnea) development using pre-clinical models.

### Senior Researcher Spotlight

Dr. Graham J McDougall is the Martha Saxon Endowed Chair and Professor at the University Of Alabama Capstone College Of Nursing. He received a BSN from William Carey University, MSN from Louisiana State University Health Science Center, and PhD in Education and Cognition from the University of Texas at Austin. His doctoral research, under the mentorship of Drs. Claire Ellen Weinstein and Oscar Mink, focused on the subjective evaluation of memory and implications for cognitive changes in normal aging. He has received funding for his research from the National Institutes of Nursing and Aging. He tested a unique memory training intervention called SeniorWISE (Wisdom Is Simply Exploration) in a Phase III randomized clinical trial funded by the National Institute on Aging. SeniorWISE is registered with the U. S. Patent and Trademark Office. The model has been tested with over 1000 older adults who have participated in various health promotion interventions in which they have learned strategies for

Graham J McDougall  
Jr, PhD, RN, FAAN,  
FGSA

successful aging.

Dr. McDougall has authored over 60 scientific articles and 25 book chapters, delivered almost 200 invited presentations and his research and perspectives have been profiled in high-impact media: The Today Show and O, The Oprah Magazine. Awards and honors for his research include the Mind Alert Award for Mental Fitness from the American Society on Aging and MetLife Foundation; the Edge Runner from the American Academy Nursing; National Academies Keck Futures Initiative; Nurse Scientists: Committed to the Public Trust, Johnson & Johnson; Nurse Scientist Award, Friends of the National Institute of Nursing Research; and Media Award, American Academy Nursing.

Dr. McDougall graciously shared his career path and career advice for young scientists in the following paragraphs.

### **What influenced you to become a nurse scientist?**

I was in high school when my father, a combat veteran from WWII, had an acute recurrence of his post-traumatic stress disorder. At about the same time, my grandmother was diagnosed with dementia. Both of the illnesses I coped with as a teenager had stigmas attached to their labels. To get through those difficult days, I started looking to science for answers to my questions about psychiatric conditions and related family dynamics. I continued studying psychiatric mental health through my nursing education, focusing on Geriatric Psychiatric Nursing in my master's work where, at Louisiana State University Health Science Center, I received a National Institute of Mental Health Fellowship. In my doctoral work, I looked at adult cognition and learning. As a new assistant professor at the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing at Case Western Reserve University, I received the National Institute of Mental Health, Mental Disorders of Aging Branch Faculty Scholar Award under the mentorship of Dr. May Wykle.

My evolution from a clinical focus in psychiatric mental health to my research interest in cognitive aging was the result of incremental learning in graduate school and some excellent mentoring at both master's and doctoral levels. A major focus of my research has been to understand the aging brain and how the subjective evaluation of memory may lead to cognitive decline. The research examines and explains the cognitive difficulties experienced by older adults who are worried about memory loss. As a nurse-scientist, my research has helped shift the emphasis of cognitive aging from traditional models emphasizing decrements and losses to a more enlightened model emphasizing potential and gains.

### **What advice would you like to give to aspiring nurse scientists?**

Some nurse-scientists describe having passion - a high level of emotional engagement - as a major motivational driver of their careers. Coming out of a desire to improve life, this passion is often based in frustration with something problematic, something that we need to learn more about to improve or to change. The commitment to improving life through research is not always an easy road, but your passion will help get you through those difficult days. Nurture the development of your problem solving and critical thinking skills. Utilize your own curiosity and resources to address questions of interest that will be the driving force behind pursuing a research career.

## Report from Membership Committee and State Liaisons Program

Dr. Patricia Messmer, PhD, RN-BC, FAAN is Consultant for Nursing Education & Research at Benjamín León School of Nursing at Miami Dade College, Medical Campus in Miami.

Patricia Messmer,  
PhD, RN-BC, FAAN

Dr. Messmer is the SNRS Director of Membership and Chair of the Membership Committee and oversees the State Liaisons. The goals of the Committee are to increase membership and retain the current membership levels. The SNRS Board of Directors is working on increasing SNRS's presence and return on investment for members other than the annual conference, although we have the lowest dues compared to other nursing research societies.

State liaisons form the Membership Committee for SNRS by assisting in SNRS's mission to advance nursing research, promote the dissemination of research findings, facilitate the career development of nurses and nursing students as researchers, enhance communication among members, and promote the image of nursing as a scientific discipline. The responsibilities of State Liaisons include, but are not limited to the following: (a) Distribution of organizational brochures and convention information to area agencies, (b) recruitment and welcome of new members, (c) data gathering as requested by the Board, (d) recruitment of local researchers for presentations of posters and papers at annual conferences, (e) recruitment of members for participation in Research Interest Groups (RIGS), (f) service as an intermediary to facilitate communication between the Board and the membership (g) collection of news items about local members for inclusion in the newsletter, and (h) suggestion of potential officer and Board members to the nominating committee.

The current State Liaisons, with email links; there is a need for additional State Liaisons in Texas since the conference is scheduled to be in San Antonio, Texas February 12-15, 2014.

### Alabama

- [Kathy Jo Ellison](#), DSN, RN at Auburn University

### Arkansas

- [Keneshia J. Bryant](#), PhD, RN, FNP-BC, Assistant Professor at University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, College of Nursing

### Florida

- [Alice Dee Dee Boyington](#), PhD, RN at MCC-NURSADMIN
- [James Whyte IV](#), ND, PhD, Associate Professor at Center for Research and Evidence-Based Practice, College of Nursing Florida State University
- [Carmen L Caicedo](#), PhD, RN at College of Nursing & Health Sciences Florida International University

### Maryland

- [Susan Dorsey](#), PhD, RN, FAAN at University of Maryland School of Nursing

### Mississippi

- [Heather Carter-Templeton](#), PhD, RN-BC at the University of Alabama, Capstone College of Nursing

### North Carolina

- [Janice Neil](#), PhD, RN at East Carolina University

### South Carolina

- [Barbara Knepshield](#), PhD, RN at Education Service, Ralph H. Johnson VAMC

### Tennessee

- [Mona Newsome Wicks](#), PhD, RN, FAAN at University of Tennessee Health Science Center

### Georgia

- [Lovoria Williams](#), PhD, APRN-BC at Georgia Health Sciences University

### Kentucky

- [Jennifer Miller](#), MSN, RN at Kentucky State University
- [Frances Hardin-Fanning](#), PhD, RN at University of Kentucky
- [Barbara Jackson](#), PhD, RN, Assistant Professor at Bellarmine University Lansing School of Nursing and Health Sciences

### Louisiana

- [Karen Rice](#), DNS, APRN at Ochsner Clinic Foundation

### Texas

- [M. Danet Lapiz-Bluhm](#), PhD, RN at UTHSC at San Antonio

### Virginia

- [Cathy L Campbell](#), PhD, ANP-BC, Associate Professor at University of Virginia School of Nursing
- [Kyeong Mi Oh](#), PhD, MSN, RN Assistant Professor at George Mason University, School of Nursing Virginia

### West Virginia

- [Alvia Nathaniel](#), PhD, FNP-BC, FAANP, Coordinator Family Nurse Practitioner Track, West Virginia University School of Nursing
- [Jennifer Mallow](#), PhD, FNP-BC, Assistant Professor at WVCTSI School of Nursing Assistant Professor

## Doctoral Student Corner - Paula Glass BSN, MSN, PhD, ARNP/RN

### Reflections

I successfully defended my dissertation "Differences among Undergraduate and Graduate Nursing Students' Cultural Competency" and graduated July, 2013 with my PhD. As I reflect on my journey I would like to share the following information with you.

Choose your chair carefully, as that person helps manage your committee. Mentorship behooves a relationship that can continue after graduation and assist publications. Tenured faculty are engaged in research, grant management, committees, and teaching and offer participatory experiences, yet carry heavy workloads that impact reading, response times, and your graduation timeline. Professor emerita may be less active on campus but can devote individualized time and assistance. Chairs and committee members commit selfless time and effort to your dissertation; therefore, PhD students must accept feedback and revise accordingly. Your study must be valuable to multiple stakeholders in healthcare, academia, federal, and professional organizations. You and your committee will bask in the glory of a completed significant study.

Paula Glass BSN, MSN,  
PhD, ARNP/RN

Candidates should be cognizant of publications from inception. When you think you are

finished with your defense and graduation demands, begin thinking or writing for publication so you do not lose momentum. Your research design, whether qualitative or quantitative, creates your area of expertise. Practice with software, data collection, management, and interpretation skills while a student.

My mistakes included: lack of physical exercise, sleep deprivation, and exhaustion while trying to meet university deadlines. These resulted in weight gain, missed opportunities to apply for a doctoral student research grant and publishing while a PhD student. The small window of opportunity for a student grant is after proposal but before final defense. Lastly, hard work and perseverance brings new opportunities, so good luck.

