

# SCHOLAR PRACTITIONER

## NURSING PROGRAM NEWSLETTER



Spring/  
Summer  
2018  
Edition



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**SickKids<sup>®</sup>**  
THE HOSPITAL FOR  
SICK CHILDREN

**TORONTO**  
Public Health

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# Greetings,

... on the conclusion of the 2017/2018 academic year!

This scholarly thread was also seen within our graduating cohort, who have challenged the system in their cumulating performances, transformative practicum evaluations, and prospective offers of employment.

Graduates, you are now ready to be challenged with the upcoming NCLEX licensing examinations to commence your future nursing careers. You now possess the tools to engage in the complex and challenging health care system.

Congratulations to our graduating cohort of 41 learners as we wish you all the best in your commitment to lifelong learning within your nursing profession!



**Baiba Zarins**  
Program Manager



## SPP Welcomes RNAO President

The NU SPP was proud to welcome the RNAO President, **Angela Cooper Brathwaite**, to the NU SPP inquiry phase to speak with year two learners on the topic of **Nursing Leadership**, in May 2018.

Angela has more than four decades of nursing experience, including 25 years of nursing leadership in acute care as a director of nursing at Lakeridge Health Oshawa, regional manager in primary care at Grenfell Regional Health Services in Newfoundland, and program manager of public health and nutrition in the Prevention of Injury and Substance Misuse Program at the Regional Municipality of Durham. Along with her current tenure at RNAO President, Angela is an adjunct professor and part-time educator at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology, where she teaches in the undergraduate and graduate programs in the department of health sciences.

During her engaging presentation, Angela shared her insightful perspectives and revealed that the best leaders are knowledgeable, authentic, visionary, and lead with a servant's heart. They lead by example, acting as role models and collaborating with nursing colleagues and the public to improve the health of Ontarians. Angela's extensive experience in leadership models and styles allowed her to weave her personal narratives into cinematic storytelling, thus providing a rich platform of inspiration and reflection for all attendees.

**Best Practice Spotlight Organizations (BPSOs)** are health-care and academic organizations selected by the RNAO to implement and evaluate the RNAO's best practice guidelines. Nipissing University was awarded \$105,000 in funding to become a BPSO, as announced during a launch event held on June 12th, 2018 in North Bay, Ontario.

There are 5 specific Best Practice Guidelines chosen as a focus within the theory and clinical training of undergraduate nurses at NU, which include:

- Preventing Falls and Reducing Harm from Falls, 2nd Edition, 2017
- Assessment and Management of Pain, Third Edition, 2013
- Assessment and Management of Pressure Injuries for Interprofessional Team, 3rd Edition, 2016.
- Engaging Clients who Use Substances, 2015
- Person and Family-Centered Care, 2015

### **Opportunities for SPP learner involvement!**

Developing evidence-based practice is a key component to improving the health outcomes of clients through professional nursing care. Over the next three years, Nipissing Nursing Faculty will be utilizing the 5 guidelines as key topics within theory course discussions and assignments, as well as clinical instruction opportunities.

As an SPP learner, you have an opportunity to join a network of 'Practice Champions' who share professional interest in influencing guideline development and implementation within our nursing curriculum. Further information on ways to become involved online as a Practice Champion will be provided during the upcoming semesters. Ask your program faculty mentors or our SPP learner Champion, **Jelena Grabeljsek**, about how you can join, promote and align coursework to the BPSO initiative at Nipissing University!

### **An RNAO BPG Champions Workshop will be hosted by Nipissing University SPP in Toronto!**

**Date:** Friday November 9, 2018

**Time:** 0830-1600

**Location:** 87 Elm Street, Toronto, ON M5G 0A8

**Building:** YWCA Toronto (Nancy's Auditorium)

Registration is free and can be credited as clinical educational hours. **Register Here:** <https://bit.ly/2BEAWEA>

**Note:** A student focused workshop is also being hosted by the NU North Bay campus School of Nursing on October 16, 2018, with registration link pending.

**BPSO LAUNCH EVENT, NORTH BAY, ONTARIO**  
l-r. Dr. Louela Manankil-Rankin, BPSO Co-lead and Assistant Professor, Scholar Practitioner Program; Dr. Karey McCullough, BPSO Co-lead and Director of the School of Nursing; Dr. Arja Vainio-Mattila, Provost and Vice-President, Academic and Research; Dr. Rick Vanderlee, Dean, Faculty of Applied and Professional Studies





# THE MICHENER INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION AT UHN

EDUCATION REPORT  
2017/2018

## Michener Institute at UHN Recognizes SPP

Nipissing University's innovative **Scholar Practitioner Program (SPP)** is featured in the **Education Report for The Michener Institute of Education** at University Health Network (UHN). The Report highlights key achievements in education across the UHN over the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

The story on the SPP, titled "Partnering for Success", discusses the value of the partnership between Nipissing, UHN, Sick Kids Hospital and Toronto Public Health and how the SPP effectively prepares nurses for the challenges they'll face in their careers.

**Baiba Zairns**, Program Manager for the SPP, discusses the birth of the program and the highly unique one-on-one mentorship and preceptorship model it utilizes.

"The result is learners graduate meeting and exceeding the minimum standards for entry to practice as regulated by the College of Nurses of Ontario, which licenses nurses in Ontario. The licensing exam pass rates are higher than average, and more than 90 per cent of the program's graduates obtain full time employment in their unit of choice with one of the program partners. For example, Sick Kids has hired 100 per cent of the grads that were placed at Sick Kids over the past few years," states the report.

You can view the entire report (beginning on page 10) on the Michener Institute website at: <https://bit.ly/2Msse7G>

# SPP Student Earns Humanitarian Award from UHN

**Chante Ellis**, a nursing student in Nipissing's Scholar Practitioner Program, has earned a prestigious 2018 Sopman Humanitarian Award from the University Health Network.

Chante is one of fourteen nursing students that was nominated at UHN. She was in her first year of the Scholar Practitioner Program, and also holds an honours degree in Life Sciences from McMaster University.



"When I learned about the award, I was definitely in shock, then felt extreme gratitude that my professor and preceptor recognized my ability to provide compassionate care in practice," said Ellis. "Awards that commend student nurses are invaluable because they encourage the development of exceptional future nurses."

The awards were established by the Sopman family nearly four decades ago to recognize emerging physicians, surgeons and nurses who, in addition to their academic and clinical excellence, have demonstrated profound compassion toward their patients and colleagues.

Mr. Archie Sopman initiated the Sopman Awards in memory of his wife Belle, and in recognition of the humanitarian care given to her by a student nurse.

The Sopman Humanitarian Fund seeks to encourage characteristics of humanity, compassion, understanding, and the ability to communicate amongst nurses and doctors in training at UHN.

# Alumni Achievements

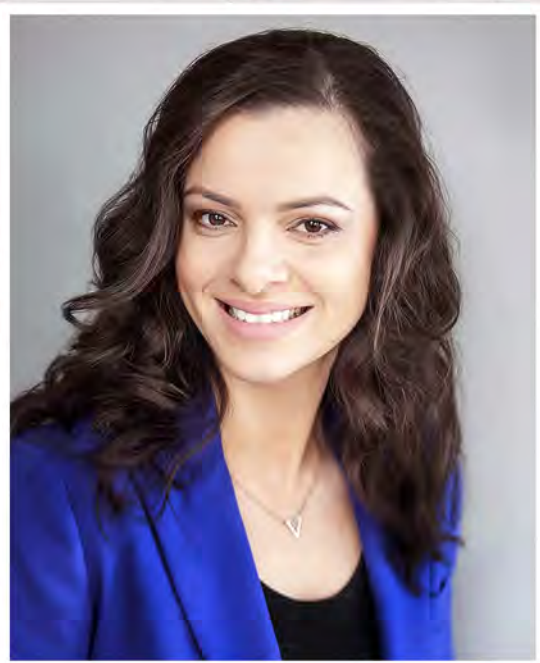
A meaningful opportunity to witness the acknowledgement of a NU SPP nursing graduate occurred during a scheduled final evaluation visit at Sick Kids Hospital in late July.

**Jack Jorgenson** is an NU SPP alumni who precepted a current NU SPP learner this past semester. During this evaluation visit, Jack was unexpectedly surprised by the assembly staff and administration of Sick Kids Hospital. He was recognized for his outstanding contributions at the point of care.

The **DAISY** (Diseases Attacking the Immune System) award is an international recognition program that honours and celebrates the skillful, compassionate care nurses provide every day. A DAISY Award recipient is a nurse who clearly understands the vision of supporting the most meaningful and healthy future for all children, youth and families. Their clinical skills, and their ability to deliver exceptional child and family-centred care, exemplify the type of nurses our clients, families, and staff recognize as an outstanding role model and leader. Throughout the year, Sick Kids honours a nurse – nominated by their colleagues, students, volunteers and/or by clients and families—by selecting them to receive the DAISY award. Furthermore, the selected nurse embodies the core values of compassion, equity, courage, resilience, excellence and innovation.



Congratulations to **Jack Jorgenson**, who was nominated by a family of a patient in his care and subsequently acknowledged for his extraordinary nursing care through the Daisy Award!



We are very proud of **Natalia Kusendova**, a NU SPP graduate from the Class of 2016 and now public servant MPP for Mississauga Centre, who is a very active RAO and Assembly member.

Within her elected MPP position, Natalia addressed the Ontario legislature for the first time on Wednesday, July 18, 2018 to compel political action to focus on social determinants of health. She believes that the role of nurses is not only as primary care providers at the bedside or in the community, but also as strong patient advocates and health policy co-creators.

It is an exciting time for healthcare reform! We celebrate Natalia's achievements in speaking up for nursing and health care in Ontario!



# Faculty Announcements

We are pleased to announce the appointment of **Xavier Debrah-Grant** to a 0.5 FTE assignment as an academic Adjunct Professor faculty advisor within our Scholar Practitioner Program. Xavier brings forth international experience within health care and business sectors, along with ten years of Public Health nursing experience at Toronto Public Health. His commitment to lifelong learning includes a Master of Science in Nursing from York University, with a focus on teaching and learning pedagogies in theoretical and simulation lab settings. Welcome to the NU Scholar-Practitioner Program community of learning!

Nipissing University's School of Nursing welcomes **Dr. Tammie McParland** as its new Director effective July 1, 2018, on a one-year term. Dr. McParland came to Nipissing University in 2009 and was granted tenure in 2017. She holds a PhD in Education from Capella University in Minneapolis with a Specialization in Nursing Education, a Master of Nursing from Athabasca University, and a post diploma Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Laurentian University.

"I'm looking forward to serving as director for the next year and working with our faculty and staff to continue to build upon recent successes and grow the School of Nursing to meet the needs of our students, partners, and ultimately, the communities and people we care for," stated Dr. McParland.

Dr. McParland's research focuses on simulation pedagogy, the use of simulation as a teaching-learning strategy for both faculty and students, as well as the use of virtual simulation games in both pre-simulation and simulation education.

Congratulations to **Dr. Ping Zou**, who was awarded tenure and promotion to Associate Professor within Nipissing University's School of Nursing in May 2018! We celebrate your scholarly achievements and many contributions to the Scholar Practitioner Program!

## NU SPP Med-West Lending Library

**"Donate a book, loan a book."**

Your continued contributions of books and learning materials are graciously appreciated in sustaining our on-site community of learning resource centre. Please do return the books once you are finished using them to ensure others can also utilize them. We also lend out blood pressure cuffs and NU issued Mac book laptops, as available. Please see **Baiba** to sign these items out for your learning needs.



# LGBTQ nursing interest group to become the social justice and nursing group!

The LGBTQ nursing interest group was formed this year by four learners to provide support to LGBTQ students, organize learning opportunities and advocate for change.

In the past year, we have:

- organized one student-led LGBTQ health workshop in April 2018
- put up LGBTQ-positive posters in classrooms and hallways
- changed the signs on single stall washrooms to be all gender washrooms
- organized another LGBTQ health workshop by Rainbow Health Ontario for September 2018

In September 2018, the interest group will expand to be the social justice and nursing interest group. We will focus on social justice, Indigenous health, racism, colonialism, LGBTQ health, harm reduction and other issues.

This group will be led by year 2 learners, **Scott Anderson**, **Hossai Sharif** and **Melissa Dash**.

If you have any questions or are interested in getting involved, please contact Scott at: [scottanderson1717@gmail.com](mailto:scottanderson1717@gmail.com)

We will host our first meeting during Inquiry in September 2018. **All are welcome!**

# You Can't Learn Everything from a Textbook

## The Power of "Human" Skills

By Kasia Krolak

I will never forget my own experience, sitting in the waiting room of the Emergency Mental Health unit. I had just witnessed someone close to me restrained, sedated, and taken to a locked room. I had watched helplessly as they called out and pleaded for us to help, to get the doctors away from them. After they were in the room, the doctor came by briefly and told us "he was sorry we had to witness that." I don't remember what else he said because I couldn't bring myself to focus on his hurried words and before I knew it he had walked away. For the next couple of hours, I sat in the waiting room with my family member feeling paralyzed, numb, and helpless. I watched nurses rush by, avoid eye contact, or offer a weak smile, then carry on with their work. I found myself trying to process what had happened and how we got here. As I replayed what I had just witnessed over and over in my head, all I wanted was for someone to tell us it would be okay. I looked at everyone hurrying around the unit and hoped one of them would stop by to provide some small bit of comfort or reassurance, or to sit with us, even if just for a minute.

The journey to becoming a nurse can be overwhelming. There are so many things that we need to learn to prepare ourselves to write the NCLEX and acquire the designation of a Registered Nurse. There seems to be a never-ending checklist of skills and knowledge that we must grasp within a condensed time frame. As soon as we check one thing off the list, we add another one to the bottom. With the pressures of doing well and succeeding, it can be easy to lose sight of the reason we were drawn to this profession in the first place. There is a way we can catch ourselves before this happens.

As much as we tell ourselves that we are all "reflected out", and grumble at the thought of having to write yet another reflection about our experiences, deep down I think we all agree that reflection is what keeps us grounded. This semester my own self-reflection reminded me of why I wanted to become a nurse. Thanks to my preceptor and Ping, who was my faculty this semester, I explored the idea of "human skills" as part of my learning journey. Ping defines "human skills" as those that cannot be acquired from reading a textbook, listening to a lecture or watching a video. We acquire them once we view our clients as people first, as humans above all else. Once we step back and look past the diagnoses, the medications, and the medical procedures we recognize the unique individual who has a life beyond the hospital. Of course, it is just as important to care safely and understand the medical aspect of nursing, but these things are not mutually exclusive. Nursing is about bringing these pieces together. So, how do we do that?

It's simpler than we think. One of the most consistent pieces of feedback I got from my preceptor this semester was not about my clinical skills or knowledge, and that's not because I'm an expert in these areas. While my preceptor did her best to provide me with opportunities to practice my skills she didn't seem overly worried about my ability to grasp this part, rather her main piece of advice was that I smile more. At first this was frustrating, because let's be honest we're all tired and some days concealing that can be quite a challenge. At the same time, we are trying to learn as much technical and skill-based knowledge as we can while we have the chance, so naturally hearing her advice threw me off a little bit. It was only later, and gradually with time that I realized she had a point.

# The Child with the Heart on Their Cheek, and Their Two Belly Buttons

Poem

By Alexandra D'Agostino

Paralyzation, not only in fear,  
Being kept alive by tubes throughout the years  
Various tubes protruding out of the body,  
They are your new little accessories.

Tubes, buttons, connectors, balloons and ports,  
These are the things that put one's life out of sorts.  
The multitudes of stares, whether direct or side glances,  
Realizing all the missed life chances.

Surrounded by stuffed animals turned into tube friends to not feel alone,  
You are defined by your feeding tubes and are well known.  
Inappropriate jokes fly by in a blur,  
But flushing a tube is no different than taking a drink of water.

You hope and pray for the day when you can eat again,  
The longing for the taste of food makes you remember when.  
But the child pre-feeding tube was not living, simply surviving starvation.  
The feeding tube helped the baby to grow into a stronger person,  
While wearing their heart on their cheek.

# My Semester at Toronto Public Health

By Chante Ellis

This past semester I switched from my home organization of UHN to Toronto Public Health. I was unsure what to expect as I had spent the last two placements in acute settings. I expected an environment switch, Monday to Friday 8:30 to 16:30 in an office. I was unsure how to wrap my mind around this fact but I would manage. I was placed in the Early Years stream at the West Mall in Etobicoke. This was ideal for me since I would be able to take public transit to placement.

Fast-forward to the end of May and it is the first day of placement. The familiar confusion of an unknown place sets in as I look for the correct location within the building. I am spotted by a TPH employee who can tell I am lost and brings me to meet my preceptor. From then on my first day of placement consists of administrative things. Over the week, assumptions that I had initially had of TPH were constantly challenged and changed. For instance, I was unaware of how much traveling there was to be done. Many times during the week my preceptor and I were traveling across Etobicoke for meetings or parenting groups. The TTC became my most utilized resource. Since we were constantly on the move my previous assumption that I would be in the office a lot was also challenged. Our team of Public Health nurses was rarely at their desk, the exception being when having to complete the required documentation.

TPH was full of great learning opportunities as I was able to shadow other directorates in the office to gain understanding of different programs. The constant influx of new knowledge was also new to me. With my previous acute setting, I was able to have about 4 days to process what I saw in the unit. At TPH you are there for 3 to 4 days, all day and always learning something new so there was less time to process everything.

Overall my placement this semester was essential in helping me grow as a future practitioner as it challenged my thinking and assumptions. I was forced to drop them and evolve, embodying the values of a Scholar Practitioner.

# Falling Through The Cracks

By Lily S. M. Liu

This is a story that has kept me up at night, paralyzed by a potent sense of helplessness, particularly against the tides of bureaucracy and further exacerbated by my limitations as a student. Names have been redacted and details have been changed to ensure the privacy of the client and her family. AB is a woman in her 20's who escaped from the Middle East after rejecting an arranged marriage organized by her family. She was subjected to months of starvation, verbal and physical abuse, and severe neglect. AB was months away from graduating from university when she was confined; she reports the inability to pursue education freely as one of the most painful consequences of this experience for her.

At the time of admission to the hospital, AB was under the care of her aunt, who had paid for AB's flight to Canada. AB was administered total parenteral nutrition and dextrose IV therapy. She was subjected to blood glucose monitoring every hour, as her glucose levels tended to dip into critical range. AB achieved great strides in her health with ongoing support and education from the nursing team and her family, until the day she received the unfortunate news that her application for refugee status had been denied. Her applications for compassionate care funding/waivers were also rejected. The hospital's accounting department visited her several times to inquire about the overdue hospital bills. The impending financial burden negatively impacted AB's mental health, and eventually led to an attempt to self-harm. Coupled with AB's growing frustration with the side effects of her treatments, AB began to refuse treatment while her vitals and glucose levels continued to decline. Her doctors organized constant security watch over her room and recommended the use of medical restraints to force life-sustaining treatments. It would seem that AB escaped confinement from her family in the Middle East, only to inadvertently become another captive in Canada, albeit under different circumstances.

AB's case is surely a complicated one, but it does well in illustrating the pervasive influence of social determinants on health accessibility, delivery, and outcomes. Healthcare and the system that runs it is far from perfect and many patients will fall through the cracks, especially when subject to bureaucratic inefficiencies and psychosocial neglect. AB has just begun to collaborate with the nursing team again, after much advocacy on AB's behalf to remove the security watch and allow her day-passes to visit home. There is hope and possibility, for while it will be difficult for AB to rehabilitate and heal in an unfamiliar and sometimes hostile environment, there will always be those (her aunt, nurses, and healthcare team) who will advocate and root for her.

# The Continuum of Care


Collaborative  
Poem



[Part 1]

By  
Neshanthan  
Jegatheesakkanthan

New world, new beginnings  
New hope, new possibilities  
Ontario Works; is all we got  
We stay broke, no revenue.  
At the bottom of the chain  
Because fast food , is all we eat  
After the fees are due.  
The struggle is real out here  
No playground for the new kids  
No movies or music for the immigrants  
Just health checks and screening clinics,  
with a very long que.  
But in the end, we got out.  
We left strife, walked miles,  
Crossed oceans and travelled the seas  
And so, we hitherto;  
New world, new beginnings  
New hope, new possibilities

A hand holding a lit lantern in a dark space filled with many small, glowing lights. The lantern is the central focus, emitting a warm, golden light. The background is dark, with numerous small, glowing lights scattered throughout, creating a starry or magical atmosphere. The hand holding the lantern is visible, and the overall scene is evocative and serene.

[Part 2]

By Nneka Kagwachie

I see your feelings that cannot be concealed by the curtains  
As your time is clasped with uncertainty  
I see you anticipating results, and answers for certain,  
For your one true desire is to return to what life was before here, back to stability

Here you are, here i am and here we are,  
In here your strength has built a fortress of hope, fortified by the support of your team,  
Together our unified strengths become a source for your renewal,  
Uplifting, and building your capacity.

Even when your new diagnostic results attempt to unravel your improvements,  
You found new goals and dreams on which to embark on,  
Finding exciting moments to indulge in,  
Even when the journey seems dark.

Through all the bright lights in the middle of the night  
Glorious, glorious is your courage!



[Part 3]

By Air'leth Aharon Altman

Checking in with feelings of veiled uncertainty;  
A procedure will heal what's wounded;  
Informed consent clears this child for surgery;  
With intravenous lines in situ and unoccluded.

Though anaesthesia will render you unconscious and unfeeling;  
You are to be opened from our family decisions;  
A glowing monitor ensures that you're still breathing,  
As a surgeon marks your abdomen with three small incisions.

How long shall you remain in bed silent and sedated,  
As the team watches steadfast for you to recover;  
With postoperative pain subdued and mitigated,  
Your best wishes are with your worried mother.

Your recovery remains onerous and reluctant;  
Though your dressings remain clean, dry, and intact.  
While your morphine dosage may still require adjustment,  
They noticed you couldn't walk today; another setback.

For two days you have seen constant observation,  
And any irregularities are checked and documented;  
Though nurses kindly encourage ambulation,  
The care plan, like clockwork, is implemented.

As nil per os graduates to "clear" and to "as tolerated",  
You slowly reclaim both strength and composure;  
Your first real meal will soon be celebrated,  
As your hospital stay approaches its closure.

"The first few days are always the worst" claim cards and epithets,  
Your determination has brought you far, with hope and baby steps.

[Part 4]

By Caitlin Faulkner

A fall, a blockage, an obstacle to hope.

Through the pain comes the tears

The release of anger, the release of fears.

This is a process, a transition towards a goal.

From helplessness to hopefulness,  
acknowledging possibilities, regaining control.

I see you, we see you, I hear you,  
we hear you, I support you,  
we support you.

Welcome to the team!

Where a trophy does not await you,  
and there's no finish line to cross.

This is not the beginning or the end,  
without a win or a loss.

When you are a member of the team,  
you are never alone.

Like pillars they support us,  
like foundations of a home.

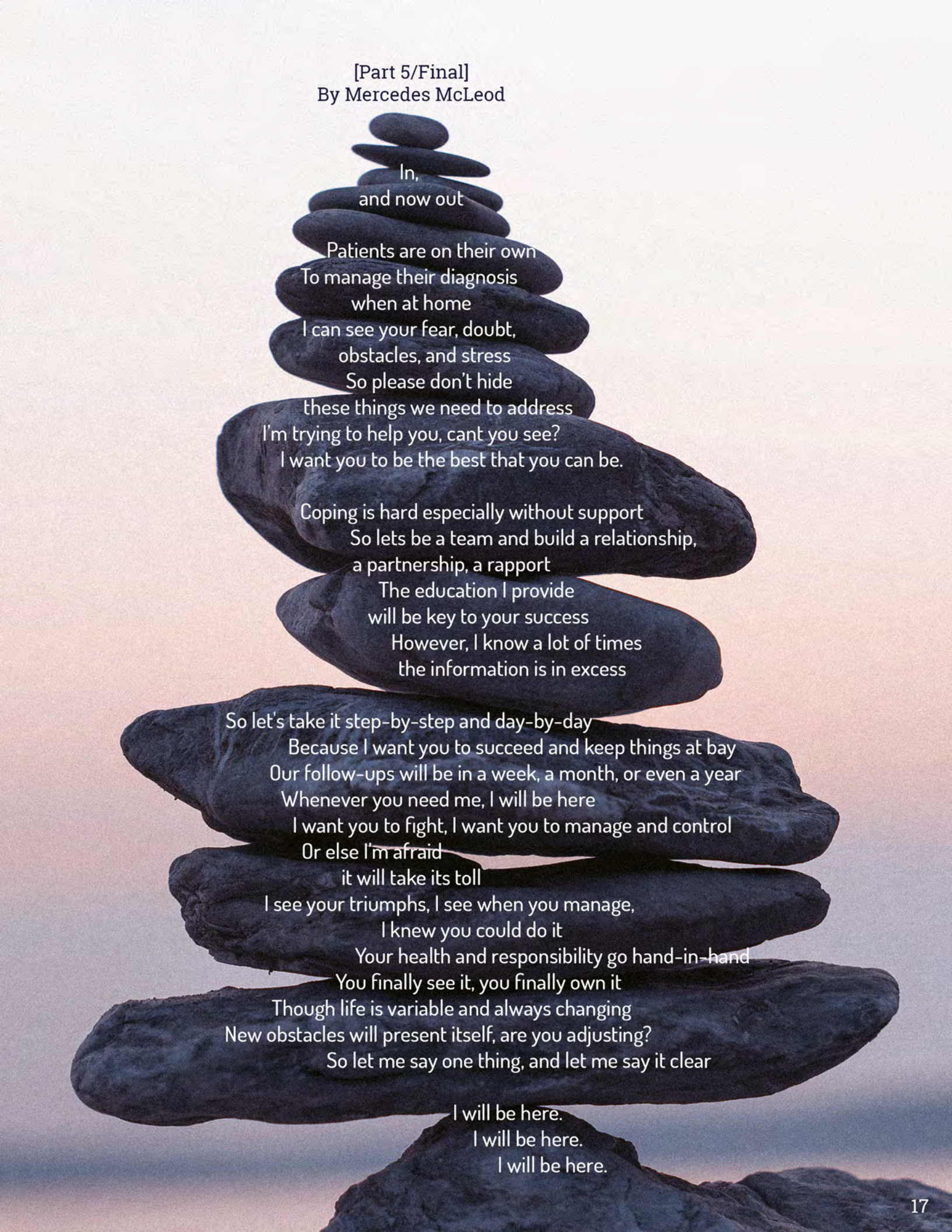
Unified by the language of our bodies,  
we progress, hand in hand,  
step by step.

Health is mercurial,  
ever-changing and unfixed  
And as our stories intertwine,  
they reinforce our strengths.  
Equipped with new knowledge,  
empowered to go to great lengths.

This wasn't done for you but accomplished, together.  
As you take steps towards home, please remember this forever;

This newfound strength was within you all along.

[Part 5/Final]  
By Mercedes McLeod



In,  
and now out

Patients are on their own  
To manage their diagnosis  
when at home  
I can see your fear, doubt,  
obstacles, and stress  
So please don't hide  
these things we need to address  
I'm trying to help you, cant you see?  
I want you to be the best that you can be.

Coping is hard especially without support  
So lets be a team and build a relationship,  
a partnership, a rapport  
The education I provide  
will be key to your success  
However, I know a lot of times  
the information is in excess

So let's take it step-by-step and day-by-day  
Because I want you to succeed and keep things at bay  
Our follow-ups will be in a week, a month, or even a year  
Whenever you need me, I will be here  
I want you to fight, I want you to manage and control  
Or else I'm afraid  
it will take its toll

I see your triumphs, I see when you manage,  
I knew you could do it  
Your health and responsibility go hand-in-hand  
You finally see it, you finally own it  
Though life is variable and always changing  
New obstacles will present itself, are you adjusting?  
So let me say one thing, and let me say it clear

I will be here.  
I will be here.  
I will be here.

# Room 212

Short Story by Shivi Yashi

The world of 8A replaces Toto's "Africa" in Blue's ears. The rains of Serengeti turn into indiscernible medical sounds. **Stick. Squeak. Stick. Squeak.** The old rubber soles make way to the staff office. Patient rooms pass by, and nurses huddle, flip charts, print labels, open drawers. Fresh residents move nervously, and Nadir in housekeeping is busy making the lady on the wheelchair laugh.

Blue comes to a stop at a corner. She glances to the right into room 212 and is convinced she saw a beam of bright red quiver on the floor. She thinks of last night and the mad sirens going outside her glass window which had a similar effect. It was 2 am when the sound seeped into her ears, and she was wide awake with her heart racing. She could be seeing things, she repeated to herself. Hearing things that were not there.

Medications, charting, assessments. This is a ritual, a song, Blue sings. The words are the same, but the tune morphs depending on the day. This time, it is punctuated by pending blood draws, untraceable wails, a grieving wife, and concerned co-workers. With a quick twirl of her long torso, Blue grabs a phlebotomy cart, eyeballs the supplies within in, and walks over to room 212. She doesn't remember the red light from earlier today. Nor her dream. The lady in room 212 smiles as Blue enters. Her soft grey curls which seem to float, and freshly painted lips instantly put Blue at ease.

**"Have you come to take my blood again?"**

**"Yes, we need to monitor your electrolytes frequently. I will be fast",** Blue offers.

**"Can you sit down with me, while you do that?"**

**"Of course... I can do that",** Blue hesitates, thinking of her long list of jobs left. She grabs a chair on the side and pulls it closer to the bed. Her hand gently brushes the lady's skin as she dives into the cart. The skin feels like ice.

**"Your arms are very cold, are you feeling alright?"** She asks.

**"Oh, that's nothing. I'm simply shutting down."**

**"Oh, don't say that",** Blue says, not knowing how to respond to that.

She begins to lay out the supplies on the bed and swiftly ties the tourniquet. She pushes on the fluid-filled skin to feel for a vein. **"It's going to be a slight pinch".** The butterfly needle sinks into the lady's arm, and for a while everything is very still. Blue prepares herself to search for another vein, but then, a liquid flashes through the needle and turns neon red as it flows into the transparent catheter. Blue's eyes widen as the small stream glows brighter. Her hands move mechanically, as she connects a tube which fills with the same glowing liquid. Fast thoughts churn in Blue's head, but before she can say anything, the lady speaks up, glancing at the tube which lies in Blue's palms. **"I know this must be very alarming for you. But I wish to speak about it. Will you hear me?"** For a moment, Blue ignores what she has just witnessed, and the pain on the lady's face moves her. **"Yes",** she whispers.

It was a full moon night when we arrived in Nanaimo. My mother, Toss and me. We wanted to flee a war, an impending destruction of our home. So we used up the last of our allotted energy and flew the ship out, hoping it would not implode as it crossed our galaxy's outer crust. But somehow, we made it. Rationing our remaining resources, and choosing starvation for a dark, single dream.

We lived our days running from the inhabitants and hiding in the mountains but soon, my mother grew hopeless. On the last day of her life, she chose to sacrifice herself so we could wear the human mask. I still remember her blazing red hair go damp and fade away as she held me and Toss. A family on the reserve took us in and I spent a portion of my childhood collecting berries on the mountains and playing wild with the other kids. But all of that quickly ended as the abuse began and I left the reserve for the city when I turned 15, never once looking back. Toss arrives frequently in my dreams now, and so do the nightmares and the abuse. I see my mother's scarlet irises and mine begin to burn. My blood is quiet, no more, it often glows, revealing my true self. I think of the time before Earth, and remember our world not very different from this. It was brighter there, but we held on to the same fears and let hope guide us.

Blue sits there for a while, her fingers wrapped around the frail hands. The lady closes her eyes and Blue knows it's time to go. She walks to the door and turns to look back. The lady lies there on the bed, her skin brown and muted. The light slips into Blue's chest and she feels warmth take over her achy body. This day is almost over.

# Graduation Celebration Event

This semester was the final semester of my nursing school experience and I had agreed to be an organizer of the Graduation Celebration at Steam Whistle Brewery on August 7, 2018, to conclude our experience with a fun celebration. This was also the first year that Nipissing University was able to provide a very generous financial contribution to our celebratory event. With these funds and with our own fundraising, through ticket sales, we were able to organize an event at a stunning Toronto heritage building, where faculty and valedictorian speeches were given to our cohort, family and friends.

In organizing this event, we had a lot of help from our co-learners and loved ones. We had baking trays donated, offers to pick up balloons, assistance in coordinating payments from our program manager Baiba Zarins, people who showed up early to help set up, loved ones who handed out drink tickets and check people in, and lastly, a loved one who built us a stage and podium.

The individuals on the graduation committee, consisting of myself, Rebekah Lindensmith, and Laura Petrunka, spent many hours sending emails, advocating, discussing logistics with the caterer and venue organizer, baking cupcakes, selling tickets, paying bills, and painting the stage and podium. All of these efforts and contributions from Nipissing University allowed for there to be a truly beautiful event wherein we were able to celebrate our classes accomplishments. This event allowed us to really accept the knowledge that we have closed a chapter of our lives and are now one step closer to being fully licenced RNs.

We also are very excited for the convocation event that has been organized by the Scholar Practitioner Program and by Nipissing University to take place October 26, 2018 at the Michener Institute. To be able to have the support of the University to provide us with a Toronto convocation for our Toronto based program, where we will be able to wear a cap and gown, walk across the stage to be pinned and handed our diplomas in front of our peers and loved ones, is very uplifting and greatly anticipated by our whole cohort.

In closing, I would like to end by sharing an excerpt from my Valedictorian speech about a valuable lesson the SPP taught me:

**"It's a very simple truth - we all need love. The Beatles even took this concept one step further and said that "all you need is love". Even Maslow's hierarchy of needs includes this crucial element. It took me a while to make the connection between this life lesson with the foundational lessons the SPP program taught us. But I have come to realize that the SPP program incorporated human connection into their lesson plans with the hope of creating a generation of nurses who can spread this deeper lesson of love and caring in their patient centered nursing practice."**

So, to the future SPP learners please remember love is all you need and the rest will come. The skills, the knowledge, the assessments, the clinical judgement, time management and decision making - they will come, I promise. But using the lessons of love and caring at each turn is what will set you apart and make each of you the best nurses you can be. I wish you all the very best in your final year.

And of course, lastly, thank you Nipissing University for the many enriching experiences over these past two years during my attendance in the Scholar Practitioner Program - it has truly changed my life.

Cheers,  
Jacquie

