

SBU AWARDS ACADEMIC HONORS TO HEALTH SCIENCES STUDENTS

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – The Southwest Baptist University Mercy College of Nursing and Health Sciences held its Spring pinning and awards ceremony for the [Associate of Science in Nursing](#) graduates on Wednesday evening, May 13, with an online celebration.



"We want to recognize and celebrate our future nurses as they reach the final moments leading up to their entry into the nursing profession," said Dr. Brittney Hendrickson '08, '11, '12, dean of SBU's Mercy College of Nursing and Health Sciences. "To say we are proud of these students is an understatement."

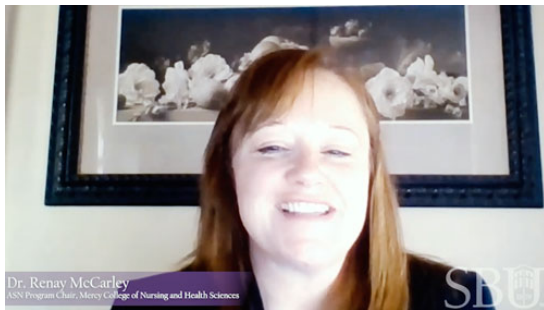
The nursing pin has a rich history dating back to the Crusades, as early as the 12th Century, with the practice of pinning new graduates becoming standard throughout the United States by 1916.

"The ceremony is a time to honor and celebrate our students' journey in becoming a professional nurse devoted to serve the healthcare needs of society," said Dr. Renay McCarley, chair of SBU's ASN program. "It is our hope and prayer that each of you will care for the needs of your patients with the love and grace of Christ as you continue learning and growing in your roles as a professional nurse."

ASN awards presented on Wednesday evening, included:

Associate of Science in Nursing: Clinical Excellence Award – Drew Richards; Academic Achievement Award – Jeff Wischmeyer

Alpha Delta Nu Nursing Honor Society Beta Phi Chapter inductees: Bailey Blattell, Shelly Culp, Harley Dobby, Kristen Eden, Mikayla Goughenour, Brooklyn Hunter, Sedda Hyder, Tiffany Ketel, Chandler Park, Malachi Knoll, Madison Lundgren, Bobby O'Keefe, Alicia Pryor, Drew Richards, Dinshaw Silva, Rachel Shults and Jeffrey Wischmeyer.



Florence Nightingale Award – Andie Arnone. The recipient is voted on by the ASN Program faculty and presented to one student based upon: Servant Leadership – interaction with peers, faculty, clinical sites, the community, patients and their families; Academic Excellence – ability to apply their knowledge of theory and clinical concepts in the delivery of safe, quality, and compassionate patient care; and Professionalism – attendance and punctuality, positive presence in the classroom and clinical settings, passion for the profession of nursing.

Additional awards previously presented include:

Master of Science in Nursing: Leadership Award – Tracy Cook; Clinical Excellence Award – Yvonne Callahan

BSN Leadership Award – Marresa Ross; Judy Mitchell Award – Anna Williams

RN-BSN Completion Program: Highest GPA Achievement Award – Chelsea Barnett; Clinical Excellence

Associate of Science in Radiography: Outstanding Attendance Award – Allie Haden; Outstanding Clinical Excellence Award – Benjamin French; Highest Academic Achievement Award – Tara Johnson

The ceremony closed with the Blessing of the Hands.

"Hands are the direct means through which nurses administer God's healing," McCarley said. "Hands are the instruments that enable nurses to reach out and bring comfort to those in need. This is our public witness to the belief that we are one chosen people to be instruments of healing and God's ministry of healthcare."



Dr. Lee Skinkle, provost of SBU, shared how he appreciates the passion and preparation nurses put into their education and careers.

"Over my many years of working alongside nurses within education, and particularly within the Mercy College of Nursing and Health Sciences, I've come to appreciate many things – the passion that you bring to the task at hand, and the preparation that you've put into succeeding in anything that you take on," Skinkle said. "I appreciate the camaraderie that you experience with each other. And, most importantly, the desire that you have to see your patients moved on a path toward recovery, or to see their pain ease in times of duress."

"Thank you, graduates, for your hard work and perseverance as you have fought to reach this point, often neglecting involvement with family to reach this day. Take a deep breath, reflect on how far you have come. Not even a pandemic could keep you from reaching this point. And, what we have definitely seen through the COVID crisis is the need that the world has for the caring service that you can provide."

"I have no doubt that each of you will go forth and shine both as nurses and as tremendous examples of caring Bearcats, seeking to make the world a better place."

SBU will broadcast three Spring commencement ceremonies online at 10 a.m., Saturday, May 16, to honor all associate, bachelor and graduate degree recipients. The ceremonies will be available for viewing simultaneously and also available for viewing for at least one year after May 16, 2020. Visit www.sbuniv.edu/academics/commencement/ for updates and more information about the ceremonies.

PHOTO 1: The SBU ASN faculty share encouraging words as they gather via Zoom to ask God to bless the hands of the ASN graduates.

PHOTO 2: Dr. Renay McCarley, chair of the ASN department, presents the history of pinning and leads the pinning ceremony.

PHOTO 3: Dr. Shannon McKinzie welcomes the ASN graduates to the nursing profession.

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