



## SIGMA THETA TAU INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY OF NURSING BETA OMEGA CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

EDITOR: DONNA J. MUNROE

ASSISTANT EDITOR: AYHAN A. LASH

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF NURSING AND HEALTH STUDIES, DEKALB IL

Spring, 2008

Vol. 1 No. 2

---



Shortly after 3 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 14, tragedy struck the campus of Northern Illinois University. A gunman entered a class in Cole Hall, shooting and killing five NIU students and injuring 18 other students before taking his own life. We join our STTI Beta Omega members and STTI colleagues internationally in sending our condolences to the victims and their families. We echo President Peters, who said, "I have seen expressions of love and togetherness. We will get through this together."

Northern Illinois University has established a scholarship fund to honor the memory of the students slain in the February 14 tragedy. The February 14 Student Scholarship Fund will receive gifts through the NIU Foundation for the general scholarship fund and work through the NIU Scholarship Committee to distribute scholarships to deserving students in the name of those who lost their lives in the shooting at Cole Hall. Visit **NIU Foundation Online Gifts** ([https://webcluster.niu.edu/CreditCard/fdn2\\_step1.html](https://webcluster.niu.edu/CreditCard/fdn2_step1.html)) or call 1-877-GIV2NIU (1-877-448-2648).

We also want to commend our STTI Beta Omega members and nurse colleagues at Kishwaukee Community Hospital (KCH) for their excellent nursing care to the victims and their families. Many KCH nurses returned to the hospital to provide their expertise to this most tragic incident for our community. Thank you!



## Greetings from the President

### Looking Back to See the Future

Hello Beta Omega Members! It is not too late to wish you a very happy 2008. May your work, home, and school life be filled with joy and wonder. We, at Beta Omega, still savor the wonderful memories of our Fall 2007 induction ceremony where we inducted 48 graduate and undergraduate students, and nurse leaders, in recognition of their accomplishments. In spite of the record breaking cold and treacherous driving conditions, many families and friends came to share this joyous occasion with the inductees. We, as the Beta Omega Board, and the members of the chapter, were delighted to have the opportunity to share our pride of our inductees with their loved ones.

I wish to remind you, as you look ahead, to be mindful of your past accomplishments. It is these accomplishments that culminated into a membership in Sigma Theta Tau International (SSTI) Beta Omega Chapter. I ask you: Please do not stop here. Run for STT positions at the local, regional and international levels. For example, Beta Omega elections will be held in May 2008 and we are looking for a President, a Secretary, and a Junior Counselor. Volunteer when the nomination letter arrives. If you are interested in regional and international positions, let Bobbie Downing, at [bobbi@stti.iupui.edu](mailto:bobbi@stti.iupui.edu), know. She would be delighted to hear from you and give you the list of open positions.

In addition, please make a habit of visiting the STTI website to review its grants, projects, and the conferences in 2008. You will see that the 2008 is full of exciting programs such as the 19th International Nursing Research Conference in Singapore from July 7-11.

Let me also remind you, Beta Omega has four chapter grants open to its members. See page 3 of this Newsletter for deadlines and brief descriptions.

Most importantly have a health and happy 2008, and please keep in touch with Beta Omega.

Very Sincerely,  
Ayhan Aytakin Lash, PhD, RN, FAAN  
President, Sigma Theta Tau International, Beta Omega Chapter (Term expires September 2008)



## Sigma Theta Tau Grants and Scholarships

The Chapter Research Grant Committee is currently accepting applications for research projects. Grants are awarded one time each year in May.

Please send proposals to:

Dr. Donna Plonczynski, Beta Omega Chapter Research Committee  
 Northern Illinois University School of Nursing  
 1240 Normal Road, DeKalb, IL 60115

Visit: [http://www.niu.edu/nuhs/studentorgs/stt\\_grants.shtml](http://www.niu.edu/nuhs/studentorgs/stt_grants.shtml) for more information and applications

Name of the Grant	Application Deadline	Forms	Comments/qualifications
<b>Beta Omega Chapter grant</b>	April 1 of each year	Online	Open to all STTI members. Priority is given to Beta Omega members. Five page application form and a letter from research advisor when applicable.
<b>Annette Lefkowitz Fund for Nursing Research</b>	April 1 of each year	Online	Formal enrollment as an NIU School of Nursing students Current membership in Sigma Theta Tau OR Meets criteria for membership in Sigma Theta Tau
<b>Sara Fuller</b>	April 1 of each year	Via Research Committee	Supports SON faculty-student research projects only
School of Nursing Alumna of the Year Award	April 1 of each year	None required	NIU, School of Nursing graduates only



Sigma Theta Tau International, Beta Omega  
Chapter Inductees  
December 2007

## STTI Induction Ceremony December 9, 2007

Despite the icy conditions, 48 members of the NIU family were inducted into Sigma Theta Tau Beta Omega Chapter.

One of the highlights of the ceremony was the spirited presentation by Ms. Corinne Sovik-Haviley, RN, MS, Director of Medical Nursing at the Northwestern Memorial Hospital. Ms. Sovik-Haviley talked about the importance of evidence-based practice for the nursing profession and expressed her confidence that our inductees will be among the future leaders of the profession in using the most current research in caring for our clients.



## STTI Beta Omega Spring Event

Sigma Theta Tau International-Beta Omega Chapter is pleased to announce that **Janet Boivin, RN, Nursing Spectrum's National Editorial Director**, will present at our Annual Spring Event. She will be presenting her experiences with the military nurses in Iraq along with a detailed photo-journal of these brilliant and brave nursing colleagues.

This meeting is to be held on **Saturday, March 12, 2008 at the Northern Illinois University - Naperville**. Registration begins at 9:30 am with the program beginning at 10:00 and ending at noon. Registration is recommended. Cost is \$5.00/students, \$10.00 STTI members, and \$15.00 for non-members. Refreshments will be served. For information and pre-registration, please call, Mary Elaine Koren at 815.753.0469 or [mkoren@niu.edu](mailto:mkoren@niu.edu).



STTI Board Members (from left): A. Lash, S. Nicolosi, D. Munroe, NIU School of Nursing and Health Studies Chair B. Lusk, M.E. Koren, Corinne Sovik-Haviley, J. Popovich, M. Shaw

## Evidence-Based Practice

### Did You Know?

#### **Backrest Angle Does Not Alter Cardiac Output: Additional Evidence**

It has been a common nursing practice to measure cardiac output (CO) while patients are in supine position. However, four doctoral nursing students (Giuliano, Scott, Brown, & Olson, 2003) were aware of the fact that semi-fowler positioning was the recommended position for CO measurement among the critically ill intubated patients who have no contraindication to assume the semi-fowler position. They were also aware of the fact that the supine position was not the most appropriate physiological position for critically ill patients because it may put them at risk. Further, they were aware of the recent evidence that linked the supine position with a greater incidence of ventilator acquired pneumonia (Fleming, Balaguere & Craven, 2001). More importantly, they were aware of the fact, that in spite of the accumulating evidence that the semi-fowler position was appropriate for CO measurements, most nurses were still reluctant to do so.

To investigate the impact of the backrest angle further, the investigators compared the effects of varying degrees of backrest elevation on continuous CO measurements in critically ill patients at three different head-of-bed angles at three different time points: head-of bed angle at  $0^{\circ}$ ,  $30^{\circ}$ , and  $45^{\circ}$  at time points of 0, 5, and 10 minutes after each position change. Using a convenience sampling, data were collected from 26 patients in a 24-bed adult Medical-Surgical/Trauma Unit. A continuous CO catheter was used for all CO measurements, and continuous CO values were indexed to

continuous cardiac index values. Continuous cardiac index, stroke volume, heart rate, and mean arterial pressure were measured while patients were at different backrest angles at different time points. Results were analyzed using four repeated measures analysis of variance for each of the four dependent variables: continuous cardiac index, stroke volume, heart rate, and mean arterial pressure.

The results showed that there were no statistically significant differences in continuous cardiac index values at the various head-of-bed angles and different time points ( $p = .755$ ). Further, no significant differences were found in cardiac stroke volume ( $p = .614$ ), heart rate ( $p = .289$ ) and mean arterial pressure ( $p = .246$ ) based on the head-of-bed angle and different time points. Hence, results showed that as the participants were moved from supine to more elevated positions, there were no changes in the measured CO variables. The investigators pointed out that their findings corroborated earlier research, and the obtained CO measures were consistent with the physiological response of the cardiovascular system to position changes. These findings indicate that in daily clinical practice, with critically ill medical-surgical patients, there is evidence that the supine position is not essential for CO measurement. In fact, the supine position may put some critically ill patients at risk for complications. Hence, it may be unnecessary to reposition patients solely for the measurement of CO.

There are several limitations of the study. Neither the sample nor the backrest elevations were randomized. However, the study had a strong design as it measured the dependent variables at three different bed elevation levels and at three different time

points providing credible evidence that backrest angle does not alter CO.

Ayhan Aytekin Lash, PhD, RN, FAAN, President, Beta Omega, Sigma Theta Tau, International

#### References

- Fleming, C. A., Balaguere, H. U. & Craven, D. E. (2001). Risk factors for nosocomial pneumonia. Focus on prophylaxis. *Medical Clinics of North America*, 85(6), 1545-1563.
- Giuliano, K., Scott S, S. Brown, V. & Olson M. (2003). Backrest angle and cardiac measurement in critically ill patients. *Nursing Research*, 52(4), 242-248.

## **Sigma Theta Tau International's 39<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention Baltimore, MD A Graduate Student's Perspective**

November 2007

Never having been farther east than Columbus, Ohio, I was not prepared for the coastal beautiful of this magnificent city. Only hearing it referred to in the musical "Hair Spray" I guess I was expecting something different. And "different" pretty much sums up my countless experiences in this town! Through the generosity of the Beta Omega Chapter of STTI and the Annette Lefkowitz Scholarship fund, I was afforded the opportunity to be a part of this amazing experience.

Upon arrival to my hotel, the registrar was excited to hear that I was "one of the thousands of nurses' Baltimore was

expecting for this conference!" WOW, I had no idea there would be or could be so many nurses in one place at one time. I registered at the Sigma Theta Tau International desk only to be handed a convention guide almost two inches thick. In it were listed many distinguished leaders, researchers, educators and scientists of modern nursing all attending the same conference with me!. As I thumbed through "The Book", as it became known over the next few days of the conference, I realized I would need much more time to attend the number of break out sessions I wanted to.

The opening plenary session featured Anne Ryder, award-winning TV anchor and columnist. Ms Ryder shared both personal and professional scenarios to illustrate her images of the nursing profession. She showed video from her own experiences working with Mother Theresa. This work would become the very last interview Mother Theresa granted to a journalist from the Western World before her death. Her message was moving and there was not a dry eye in the auditorium. She also strategic planned humor and left the audience wanting more. This capacity crowd provided her with a very long standing ovation as a tribute to her amazing journalistic and speaking skills.

The educational sessions featured everything from Evidenced-Based Practice, to current trends in education, to nursing research, to political issues in nursing practice. Many of our own NIU professors were there to both attend the conference and present their own research findings during their time at the Biennial. I was shoulder to shoulder with a virtual "Who's Who in Nursing", and the most impressive part was how approachable these individuals were. Many colleges and universities were present to share their various graduate and post graduate

education programs. The future educational possibilities are endless.

The fun did not stop after the lectures and seminars ended, either. Baltimore is home to the absolute best crab cakes in the world! Shopping also seemed to be a favorite past-time of the convention attendees-whether it was at the STTI Market Place or the Harbor Shops, fun was had by all-and credit cards were blazing!

I found out that I was just one of 2,186 attendees from 32 countries all around the world, gathered together at the STTI 39<sup>th</sup> Biennial. We all came from different places and different backgrounds but we all converged in Baltimore to share the common love, passion, and respect for the profession that embodies caring and curing: Nursing.

Looking back, it is hard to believe the time past so quickly. Acquaintances were made, friendships were renewed, and the future of the nursing was located in Baltimore, Maryland during the first week of November, 2007! Mark your calendar for the honor society's 40th Biennial Convention, which will be held 31 October - 4 November 2009 in Indianapolis, Indiana. See you there!

Nadine Thornton, BS, RN, Graduate Student Northern Illinois University, STTI Beta Omega member since 2005

## **Alumnus of the Year**

Each year, the Nursing Program at NIU honors an alumnus who demonstrates excellence and leadership in his/her career through research, mentoring, education, public service, and other appropriate activities. Previous recipients include

Daniel Pesuit, Past President of STTI, Julia Norem, and Anna Ortigara.

If you know an NIU Nursing Program alumnus who embodies and demonstrates leadership excellence, please forward that persons' name, a short paragraph about why you are nominating him/her, and his/her curriculum vitae/resume to Dr. Brigid Lusk, Professor and Chair, at [blusk@niu.edu](mailto:blusk@niu.edu).

## **DATE SAVER!**

### **STTI Beta Omega Fall Event**

#### **Sigma Theta Tau International Vision 2020**

As the second decade of the 21st century ends, the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International will be the organization of choice for scholarship, knowledge, and leadership for nurses globally. **Karen Morin, RN, DSN, President -Elect of Sigma Theta Tau International** accepted our invitation to speak at NIU on the evening of Monday, **September 22, 2008** to talk about Vision 2020 and its impact on local chapters and membership. Many of Beta Omega members have met Dr. Morin and agree she is an enthusiastic and ingratiating person. It is sure to be a memorable evening and an honor for Beta Omega to host Dr. Morin. Please join us and bring friends! More details in the Fall Newsletter.

## **STTI Beta Omega Treasurer Report**

Mary Jane Shaw

The Induction Ceremony expenses totaled \$2474. We received fees from National Headquarters (\$2171) and interest on our account (\$1250). The Board approved a budget increase (to \$2000) for the Biennial Convention in Baltimore. As of January 1, 2008, the current balance in the STTI BETA OMEGA account is \$39,240.35.

### **Study Abroad!**



### **Nursing Care, Nursing Education and Health Care Systems in Turkey A Visit to Florence Nightingale**

**June 29 – July 10, 2008**

This study abroad program is the first offered by the School of Nursing and Health

Studies. It is coordinated by the Northern Illinois University Study Abroad Office (SAO), in cooperation with the NIU College of Health and Human Sciences. Koc University School of Nursing located in the European side Istanbul, will serve at the cooperating overseas institution.

The primary purpose of this program is to provide participants with the opportunity to explore emerging health care systems in a developing country, identify major public health problems and health care resources, compare cultural perspectives of health and illness in North America with those in Turkey and explore historical and cultural influences on nursing education in Turkey.

#### **Faculty**

Ayhan A. Lash, PhD, RN, FAAN, is a professor and has been on the faculty of NIU for 18 years. She is a native of Turkey and has publication on various aspects of nursing education in Turkey since 1977. She has also served as consultant to university programs.

Judith M. Popovich, DNSc, APN, BC, is an associate professor and has been on the faculty at NIU for 12 years. She has broad international experiences, conducting several programs in Africa, teaching nursing in Botswana (1998-99) and Swaziland (2002). She also served as an advisor to the Minority International Research Training Program through the University of Illinois.

More information about this innovative study abroad program can be found at <http://www3.niu.edu/niuabroad/Nursing-Turkey-08.htm> .