



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Nursing

ANNUAL REPORT



A MESSAGE FROM **DEAN KOITHAN**



Dear friends,

Our WSU College of Nursing community is committed to an exceptional academic environment where students and scholars dream big, and innovate across our education, research, and practice missions. As I reflect on this past academic year and our accomplishments, I am grateful to the dedication that contributed to our successes. Our priorities this year focused on:

- Developing and implementing a new Strategic Plan (2023-2026) that aligns with the WSU System priorities;
- Successfully completing our CCNE and Washington Board of Nursing undergraduate and masters program accreditation process;
- Expanding our faculty practice and clinical scholarship initiatives;
- Revising our PhD and MN programs to align with community needs and research strengths; and
- Stabilizing and evolving departmental structures and processes

The new mission clearly states our purpose – to advance optimal health and well-being through education, scholarship, practice and community engagement in order to create a healthcare system that is just, accessible, and relevant throughout Washington and beyond. And, our new strategic plan identifies our 3-year plan to achieve this vision with outcomes that can be tracked from year to year.

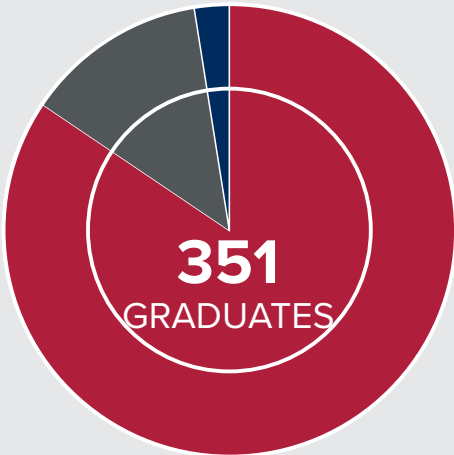
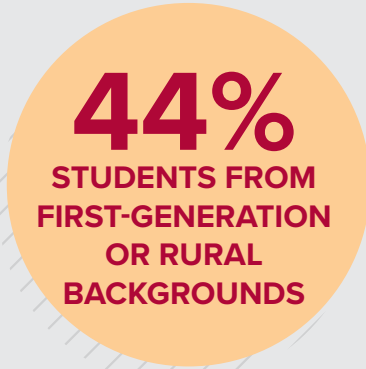
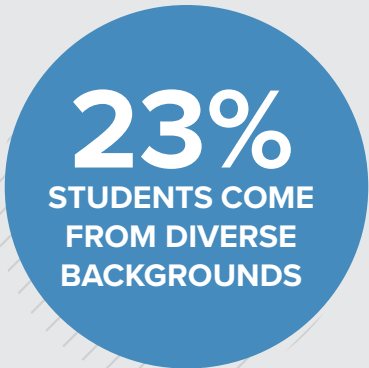
I invite you to read our 2023-2024 Annual Report and join me in celebrating the many achievements of our College. Everywhere you turn in Washington, you can find evidence that Coug Nurses CARE.

Go Cougs!

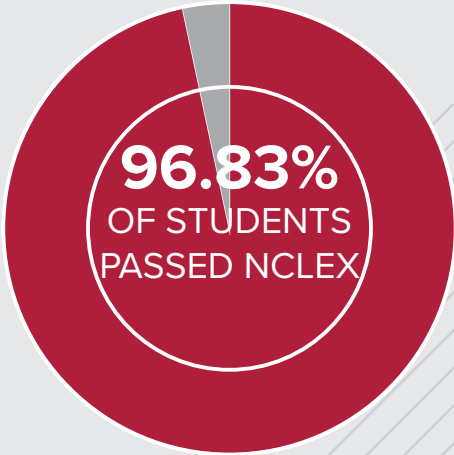
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Koithan".

Mary Koithan, PhD, CNS-BC, FAAN
Dean, Washington State University College of Nursing

BY THE NUMBERS
2023-2024



297 BSN
46 DNP
8 PhD



WSU COLLEGE OF NURSING REDEFINES MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

The Washington State University College of Nursing recently undertook a significant initiative to redefine our mission, vision, and values. The guiding principles of this revision were to align the college's goals with an evolving healthcare landscape; to recognize our essential role in the health of our communities; to align with WSU's strategic plan; and to reaffirm our longstanding commitment to excellence in nursing education.

Mission: Advancing Optimal Health and Well-being

Our mission is the cornerstone of our purpose. We wanted a mission statement that reflects our commitment to and impact on our communities and public health, in addition to our traditional dedication to educating future nurses. Our new mission statement: Advancing optimal health and well-being through education, scholarship, practice, and community engagement.

"We need to be accountable to the larger community and be aware of the changing demographics, challenges, and learning styles that our students are arriving with and what they need to succeed and belong to WSU," said Chris Sogge, Director of the Center for Student Excellence.

Vision: Shaping Healthcare Delivery Towards Justice and Accessibility

Accompanying our revised mission is a new vision statement: The WSU College of Nursing will shape healthcare delivery to be just, accessible, and relevant through innovation and meaningful community engagement. This vision reflects our commitment to drive positive change in healthcare through innovative practices and community involvement.

Values: The Foundation of COUG CARES

At the heart of the WSU College of Nursing's ethos are our values, called COUG CARES:

- **Compassion:** Demonstrating empathy and understanding towards students, community partners, and colleagues.
- **Accountability:** Taking responsibility for one's actions and decisions in the pursuit of excellence.
- **Respect:** Valuing the dignity, diversity, and contributions of all individuals.
- **Excellence:** Striving for the highest standards of performance and continuous improvement.
- **Social Justice:** Advocating for fairness, equity, and inclusivity in healthcare and society.

These values guide students, faculty, and staff, shaping their actions and interactions within the college and beyond.

Driving Forces Behind Change

The decision to redefine our mission, vision, and values at the College of Nursing was not taken lightly. We hadn't updated these foundational statements since 2017 and wanted to ensure they reflect our current state of affairs:

- **Evolving Healthcare Landscape:** Rapid changes in healthcare delivery, technology, and societal needs drove a reassessment of the college's strategic direction to ensure our continued relevance and effectiveness.
- **Commitment to Excellence:** As a leading institution in nursing education and research, the WSU College of Nursing is committed to upholding the highest standards of excellence in all endeavors.
- **Community Engagement:** Recognizing the importance of community engagement in shaping healthcare outcomes, the college sought to reaffirm our dedication to meaningful collaboration and service to diverse communities.

Building on a Legacy of Innovation

The College of Nursing was built on innovation and a pioneering spirit. From its inception as part of the Intercollegiate Center for Nursing Education in the 1960s to its present-day status as a premier institution offering a full range of nursing programs, the college has continually pushed the boundaries of nursing education, research, and practice.

Looking Ahead

With its redefined mission, vision, and values serving as guiding beacons, The WSU College of Nursing is poised to shape the future of healthcare delivery. We acknowledge the diverse needs and challenges of the communities we serve. This understanding, in turn, guides our educational offerings, research priorities, and advocacy efforts to address the most pressing needs and promote positive change. As we embark on this new chapter, we invite students, faculty, and partners to join in our mission of improving lives and advancing the nursing profession.





DID YOU KNOW?

This year the WSU College of Nursing was able to hold our first White Coat Ceremony for our DNP students thanks to the generosity of our donors!

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LAND-GRANT STATUS FROM A NURSING PERSPECTIVE

Land-grant universities were founded with a mission of teaching, conducting research, and providing service to communities. The goal: education and its benefits would be accessible to all. Nursing education as it is practiced at Washington State University is a modern-day expression of the land-grant mission. Here's why:

Accessible Education

Land-grant universities, including Washington State University, have a long-standing commitment to educating a diverse group of students. By offering affordable tuition, scholarships, and outreach programs, these institutions help nurture a pipeline of nursing professionals reflective of the communities they serve.

Community Engagement

Nursing is rooted in community health and wellness. Land-grant universities, with their emphasis on community engagement and outreach, provide nursing students with valuable opportunities to connect theory with practice in real-world settings. Through clinical rotations, service-learning projects, and collaborative partnerships with local healthcare organizations, nursing students at WSU gain firsthand experience addressing the health needs of underserved populations and marginalized communities.

Research and Innovation

The land-grant tradition places a strong emphasis on research and innovation that is meaningful to the communities that we serve. At the WSU College of Nursing, researchers pay particular attention to vulnerable populations and the most

pressing healthcare issues. In the last few years alone, nurse researchers at WSU have studied the impact of wildfire smoke on agricultural workers, cannabis use by young people, and best practices in caring for infants exposed to opioids. Additionally, through partnerships with other disciplines and institutions, nursing researchers at WSU explore interdisciplinary approaches to addressing complex healthcare challenges.

Public Health Preparedness

In an era marked by public health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of nursing and public health collaboration cannot be overstated. Land-grant universities, with their interdisciplinary approach to education and research, provide nursing students with the skills and knowledge needed to respond effectively to public health emergencies. By integrating public health principles into nursing curricula and fostering partnerships with public health agencies, WSU's College of Nursing prepares its graduates to serve as frontline responders and public health advocates in times of crisis.

By embracing the principles of the land-grant tradition, WSU's College of Nursing equips its students to become compassionate, competent, and socially responsible nurses capable of addressing the evolving healthcare needs of individuals, families, and communities.

ADDRESSING REGIONAL CHALLENGES THROUGH INITIATIVES

In a landscape where Washington State grapples with multifaceted challenges like healthcare access, educational equity, and community well-being, the activities and outcomes of our new 3-year Washington State University College of Nursing Strategic Plan aim to improve the region incrementally. Through its five strategic directions, the plan addresses not only plans to enhance nursing education but also broader societal issues.

Strategic Direction 1: Student Experience and Access

The WSU College of Nursing understands that addressing the healthcare needs of Washingtonians starts with cultivating a diverse and competent workforce. Therefore, our strategic plan places a premium on engaging students in a competency-based curriculum that equips them to confront various social conditions head-on. Over the next three years, all programs at the college will transition to a competency-based curriculum, where progression is based on mastery of knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for graduates to practice in today's healthcare environments competently and not simply on an academic calendar. We have revised and expanded programs and have added initiatives such as the Bachelor of Social Work program. Through these steps, the WSU College of Nursing ensures its graduates are prepared to serve our communities' many and varied needs.

Strategic Direction 2: Research and Scholarship Innovation

While expanding scholarship and research productivity is always a priority goal of the college, we are also focused on leveraging interdisciplinary collaboration with other WSU

programs, both at WSU Health Sciences and colleges in Pullman and other campuses. Further, we are developing expanded opportunities to partner with external entities to address pressing environmental health challenges, food insecurity, and health disparities. We are also creating opportunities to improve equitable and culturally aligned healthcare and innovations to improve the quality of life individually and collectively. By prioritizing areas for strategic investment, increasing grant submissions, and fostering inter-professional collaboration, the college aims to drive discoveries that mitigate the impacts of climate change and promote environmental justice.

Strategic Direction 3: Community Engagement and Impact

The College recognizes the importance of partnerships and community engagement in promoting accessible, affordable, and equitable healthcare services. Through marketing efforts, stakeholder engagement, and faculty practice opportunities aligned with state needs, the college enhances its impact beyond campus boundaries, positioning itself as a healthcare education and innovation leader. One of the primary initiatives is the development and execution of a robust faculty practice plan that addresses the dominant healthcare challenges facing eastern and central Washington – expanded behavioral healthcare services and increased access to care for underserved populations in both rural and urban areas.

Strategic Direction 4: Infrastructure and Growth

The College's strategic plan prioritizes modernizing physical facilities and improving access to resources across all campuses. The College of Nursing has been recognized over the years as a leader in simulation, but expanded needs due to program growth, transition to competency-based education, and opportunities to leverage advanced technology to educate our students have produced a critical need to update and expand our laboratory and skills development spaces. By partnering to plan and secure diverse funding sources and develop sustainable budget models, the College of Nursing lays the groundwork for growth and innovation, ensuring its infrastructure supports its mission of serving communities in need.

Strategic Direction 5: Employee Experience

Like other organizations, the College of Nursing must recruit and retain a diverse and skilled workforce. The College's strategic plan focuses on creating a supportive and inclusive environment where faculty and staff can thrive. By promoting inclusivity, enhancing professional development opportunities, and implementing initiatives to improve employee well-being, the College fosters a culture of excellence and compassion that extends beyond its campus boundaries.

The WSU College of Nursing's Strategic Plan strengthens nursing education and research and addresses broader societal challenges facing Washington State. By preparing students to deliver high-quality healthcare, driving innovative research, engaging with communities, investing in infrastructure, and supporting its workforce, WSU stands poised to make a meaningful impact in shaping a healthier future for all Washingtonians.

STRATEGIC PLAN **DASHBOARD**

This fall, the WSU College of Nursing will introduce a strategic plan dashboard to provide real-time reporting of our progress toward goals.

This innovative tool will provide clear and precise updates on key initiatives, including completion percentages and objective details. Assigned leads will steer each priority, ensuring focused attention and accountability.

This dashboard provides a visual and interactive representation of the college's strategic goals, key performance indicators, and progress toward achieving these goals.

College leaders are committed to transparency, so the dashboard will be readily available on the College of Nursing's website and disseminated through the quarterly newsletter. Stay tuned to the next issue to explore the different pillars and initiatives.

A SALUTE TO CAPTAIN BARBARA K. DICK: **HONORING A LEGACY THROUGH SCHOLARSHIPS FOR COUG NURSES**

When Colonel William “Bill” Dick, a newly graduated Cougar and soon-to-be officer in Vietnam, filled out his “dream sheet” upon entry into the Air Force in the mid-1960s, he had no idea it would change the trajectory of his life. “I was surprised they honored it,” said Bill, having graduated with a degree in general studies from WSU in 1965. Despite his choice of field of study, Bill had always been passionate about the medical field. “I knew that health care was the best way to help people, and as a fluke, I was picked to serve on the medical field team.”

Before he entered the Air Force and his service in Vietnam, Bill, who grew up in an Air Force family (his father had flown with the Chinese against the Japanese during WWII), sought out WSU to pursue his undergraduate degree while the Vietnam War was already underway. He credits WSU for cultivating his lifelong identity as a proud Cougar and as his gateway into military life, having obtained his commission in 1965 through WSU’s AFROTC program. This catalyst led to a fulfilling career in military health care abroad and in the States. Bill had always been a helper, with experience working with older adults, so his entry into the Air Force Medical Service Corps was a good fit and, as he claims, already a way of life.

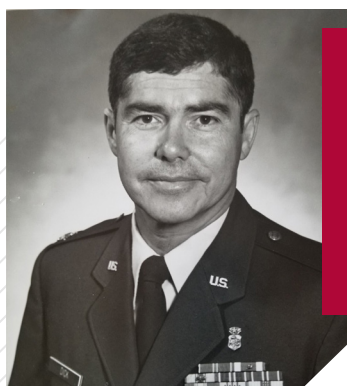


Photo of William “Bill” Dick.

As part of the US Medical Service Corps, Bill held many roles, including Hospital Commander, Hospital Administrator, and senior MSC for Strategic Air Command, the largest Major Air Command in the Air Force at that time. Of all the professions he worked with during that time, Bill had a particular “soft spot” for nurses because, in his opinion, they knew their patients better than anyone else on the ward. It was no surprise when Bill married Captain Barbara “Barb” McKenna, an Air Force nurse who also served in Vietnam.

During their time in Vietnam, Barb served as a ward nurse at Cam Ranh Bay Air Base, while Bill volunteered as an Advisor to the Vietnamese in an open-air former French hospital in An Loc, just eight miles from the Cambodian border, where one of the Ho Chi Minh trails entered the country.

Along with his daily life in the hospital setting, Bill's experiences were marked by the intense realities of war, including a near-miss when the roof of his "hooch" (a living space for soldiers) collapsed after a missile strike. Although Barb did not experience such incidents, both she and Bill interacted with patients with leprosy, the bubonic plague, malaria, dengue fever, and many other severe medical conditions common in combat situations, those that would be considered "textbook cases only" in the US. After both returned to the States, Bill and Barb met by chance in Omaha, Nebraska, at a social gathering following a field inspection/recruiting event, and they were married a year later. Tragically, after only a few years of marriage, Barb passed away in an accident at just 28 years old.

Barb's patient mind and deeply caring nature, along with her years of service to others in the States and abroad, live on through her legacy and her namesake scholarship, the Capt. Barbara K. Dick Memorial Scholarship in Nursing (housed in the WSU College of Nursing), which Bill established in tribute to the lasting impact she had on so many lives. In his words, Barb "epitomized caring and service to others" and was a role model in patient sensitivity, a quality Bill feels is essential in nurses.

Bill's support for nursing scholarships at WSU is a testament to Barb's enduring influence and commitment to advancing health care and educational opportunities for future generations. His vision for his legacy is that of a lasting impact on the lives of Cougar nurses and all those they will eventually serve. The scholarship focuses explicitly on underrepresented students such as those with high levels of unmet financial need, students from underrepresented populations (specifically students who are enrolled members of any federally recognized American Indian Tribe), and those wanting to serve underrepresented populations in their nursing careers. His decision to focus the awarding of Barb's scholarship on Native American students stems not just from his heritage as an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation but also from recognition of the economic disparities experienced by those who have been historically disenfranchised, which he feels honors the responsibility of WSU as a land-grant institution.

As a "forever Cougar", a long supporter of WSU, and a retired Colonel, Bill is proud of the work WSU does to fulfill its mission and hopes that Barb will be forever memorialized through the lasting impact of her scholarship.

If you would like to support the Capt. Barbara K. Dick Memorial Scholarship or have questions about creating your own scholarship fund, please contact Liz Fleming, Senior Director for Development – College of Nursing at liz.fleming@wsu.edu, or call 509-324-7254.



Mark your calendars for April for

cougs give

to make a difference for current
and future Coug nurses!

nursing.wsu.edu