

Supporting Nursing Research

Partnerships to foster excellence

Nursing has a rich tradition in research. The University of Virginia has always been in the vanguard of that research, establishing the first nursing PhD program in Virginia in 1982 and the first Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program in the state in 2007. National emphasis on translational research, or research closely connecting basic research to patient care, is a natural fit for nurse scientists.

The University of Virginia has developed a strong, interdisciplinary research program and boasts **several leading centers** including the Rural Health Care Research Center, the Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry, the Center for the Study of Complementary and Alternative Therapies, and the Southeastern Rural Mental Research Health Center. **Other research areas include patient safety, oncology, domestic violence, and issues of elder care, as well as preventive health and disease maintenance.** Not only can studies in these areas help improve patient outcomes, but many could also help to reduce national health care costs. Society greatly benefits from nursing research, but only if there is enough visionary investment in its early stages of development.

Seeding Faculty Innovation

To stimulate new research in any of the above areas, gifts in the range of **\$25,000-\$50,000 are needed for awards enabling researchers to undertake new pilot studies and develop new lines of scientific inquiry in this area.** Seeding these studies puts faculty in competitive positions for major grant funding.

Supporting U.Va. faculty resources will give the school a competitive advantage amid a serious national shortage of nursing faculty. The average age of doctorally-prepared nursing faculty in the United States is 55, meaning many vacancies are imminent. An academic environment that gives faculty the support to freely pursue research critical to patient care will have a competitive advantage in recruiting a diminished faculty pool in coming decades.



Training emerging student researchers

The research idea stage offers an ideal opportunity for collaboration between faculty and students. Students are keen to become more involved in research activities, but their opportunities are limited because of insufficient funding for stipends to support their work. These stipends are simply another necessary start-up cost of research.

The School of Nursing seeks investment at the \$50,000-\$100,000 level to establish incentive awards for student-faculty research teams. A portion of the award would fund pilot research for one or two faculty investigators, and the balance would provide a stipend to a student researcher. **A gift at the \$10,000-\$20,000 level could fund a dissertation award for a doctoral student.**

Nursing faces a serious shortage of research faculty members nationwide, and the U.Va. School of Nursing is committed to providing undergraduate and graduate students meaningful opportunities to engage in research with faculty mentors that will spark interest in nursing science.

For more information about supporting any of these efforts please contact Mary Beth Knight at 434-924-2627, email marybeth@virginia.edu or Lori Cwalina at 434-924-0097, email cwalina@virginia.edu.