

News Briefs

Support nursing research

The Sigma Theta Tau Development Committee has set a new goal: Increase the research endowment fund by \$100,000 annually. To learn about giving options, please visit www.nursingsociety.org/philanthropy or call 1.888.634.7575.

Map out your career

Available on the Sigma Theta Tau Web site, *CareerMap* offers tools for nurses to manage their careers with purpose. Visit the "Careers" section of www.nursingsociety.org and search for a new job, get customized career advice, discover scholarship opportunities and strategize your career path.

Going once... going twice... SOLD!

To help the society meet the increased demand for nursing research funding, the board of directors again is hosting a silent auction at the biennial convention in November. Chapters and members interested in contributing items for auction may contact Rachael McLaughlin at 1.888.634.7575 or via e-mail: rachael@stti.iupui.edu.

Why did you renew?

We're looking for the #1 reason you renewed your Sigma Theta Tau membership. We would like to include your response of 35 words or less in print or online. Send your response, including your name, credentials, title and chapter name, to amy@stti.iupui.edu.

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Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing

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Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow gears up for campaign launch

In 1999, a small group of organizations started discussing a joint communications crusade to address the nursing shortage. Now 30 members strong, Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow is about to launch its much-anticipated campaign.

The coalition of leading national nursing and health care organizations, with Luci Baines Johnson and Elizabeth Dole as honorary co-chairs, has developed a national campaign designed to boost the attractiveness of nursing as a profession. The campaign targets middle and high school youth, although retaining current nurses is also an objective.

"Sigma Theta Tau is proud to serve as fiscal agent and founding partner of Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow," says Patricia Thompson, RN, EdD, president of Sigma Theta Tau International. "The campaign reflects our unwavering commitment to nursing's future."

Initially the campaign will feature seven print advertisements and one television public service announcement (PSA). The coalition plans to add a radio spot, brochures and other materials if more funding is secured.

"Nursing. It's Real. It's Life." serves as campaign tagline

"Nursing. It's Real. It's Life." was selected as the tagline for Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow. Developed by campaign sponsor JWT Specialized Communications, the tagline will be incorporated into all of the coalition's communications materials, including the print and broadcast advertising campaign.



◀ **Featured in the advertising campaign are (front row, left to right) Janice Phillips, Garry Olney and Sharon Brigner, (back row, left to right) Aurora Hernandez, Jeff Jefferies, Sandra Lea and John Wesolowski, Jr.**

"It's Real" shows young students that nursing is hip, it's cool, it's exciting, it's respected, it demands real brain power, and it provides incredible benefits to all humankind," says Greta Sherman, senior partner of JWT Specialized Communications' health care group. "It's Life" reminds students that humankind would not exist as we know it without the nurturing, life-saving aspects of nurses and the nursing profession," Sherman continues.

Campaign features seven nurses

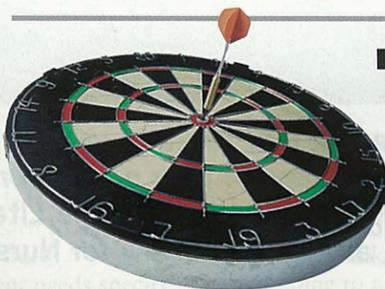
As a silver sponsor of Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow, JWT Specialized Communications donated \$250,000 in research and creative

services to the coalition.

The agency's focus group research with students in grades two through 10 indicated that young people are not receiving adequate positive information about nursing as a profession. The Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow advertising campaign features specific messages aimed at improving the image of nursing while encouraging young people to enter the profession.

In addition to showcasing clinicians, the campaign features successful nurses in a wide range of work environments and positions. Communicating the message that nursing is

NURSES FOR A HEALTHIER TOMORROW PAGE 2 ▶



Targeting the problem

Assessing business and performance needs

By Hona Matthews and Pamela Klauer Triolo

Picture this...one morning as you walk onto the unit, the change of shift is in full swing. As you pass by the break room, you notice four nurses sitting around the table in the middle of report. Abruptly, one of them moves her chair away from the table, shakes her head and says loudly to the team, "It's impossible to get an accurate report around here. All I want to know is what happened last night and my patients' status, but I'm just getting mixed information. This is no way to run a unit. This place is going down the tubes..."

You return to your administrative office puzzled. You sit down and start thinking about recent unit events. Tempers have been flaring more than usual lately. And staff members are acting out more toward one another. To top it all off, your patient satisfaction survey results are the lowest they have ever been. Physicians have been troubled

about the quality of care. You know your unit has problems, and you need help fast. What do you do?

Many organizations have access to management consultant services, or if they are very fortunate, an internal organizational development department is available. For administrators who use these services, the initial phone conversation with a consultant may go something like this, "My unit staff is having a hard time communicating, and a few of them are acting out. One of the biggest breakdowns in communication revolves around change of shift report, and it's happening primarily on first and third shifts. Communication among staff is stifled. Also, patient satisfaction scores are the lowest they've ever been. The physicians are restless and dissatisfied. I need help! How soon can we meet?"

If administrators do not have access to these services, recognizing and verbalizing the

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Alzheimer's research provides guidance, hope to caregivers

Synthesis of 300 studies to be presented in online journal

By Fay L. Bower and Cynthia S. McCullough

The numbers can be staggering. Four million people have Alzheimer's disease in the United States today. By the year 2050, the Alzheimer's Association projects that the number will escalate to 14 million. Partly in response to the growing prevalence of the disease, research efforts are intensifying.

While we know how to manage some symptoms of Alzheimer's disease (AD) and what problems caregivers face, there is a continuous need to learn more about making a definitive diagnosis and when to intervene to decrease the rate of functional decline.

To make research findings and their implications more available to caregivers, including nurses and family members, we conducted a comprehensive review of

ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH PAGE 4 ▶



Sigma Theta Tau International
Honor Society of Nursing

for everyone, the campaign also includes men and minorities. Nursing is portrayed as a career in which professionalism, teamwork and leadership are key.

The following seven nurses are featured in the campaign:

- Sharon Brigner, RN, MS—Senior Health Policy Analyst, National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare in Washington, D.C.
- Aurora Hernandez, RN—Staff Nurse, George Washington Hospital in Washington, D.C.
- Jeff Jefferies, RN, CEN—Staff Nurse, Emergency Department, Laurel Regional Hospital in Laurel, Md.
- Sandra Lea, RN, CNOR—Clinical Administrator, Diagnostic Clinic Center for Outpatient Surgery in Largo, Fla.
- Garry Olney, RN, BSN, MBA—Chief Executive Officer, San Dimas Community Hospital in San Dimas, Calif.
- Janice Phillips, RN, PhD, FAAN—Program Director, National Institute of Nursing Research in Bethesda, Md.
- John Wesolowski Jr., RN, CRNA—Staff Anesthetist, R.A. Cowley Shock Trauma Center, University of Maryland Medical System in Baltimore, Md.

Each nurse in the campaign represents one of the many opportunities and attractions of the nursing profession. Their biographies are featured on the Nurses for Healthier Tomorrow Web site, www.nursesource.org.

"It's an honor to have been selected to work on this campaign. It's a campaign that's really needed to boost awareness of our image among the public, specifically our youth," says Sharon Brigner, RN, MS, a member of the Honor Society of Nursing. "There are so many opportunities within the profession, such as policy, research, pharmaceutical sales, news and media reporting, and education. For me, nursing has been a real springboard to these different avenues."

Janice Phillips, RN, PhD, FAAN, also an Honor Society of Nursing member and the first African-American to receive the American Cancer Society professorship in oncology nursing, strongly believes that nurses need to be a part of the nursing shortage solution.

"We need to revitalize and re-energize those who are in the profession to help recruitment," Phillips says. "We really need to work on enhancing our image rather than waiting for others to help us. If we can go back to the real reasons we selected nursing as a profession, continue to strengthen our ties, talk about the issues and be proactive, I feel optimistic that we can make a difference."

Distribution to begin this summer

Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow will

use both formal and grassroots methods to distribute the advertising campaign this summer. Due to limitations with usage rights, the ads must be placed as public service announcements and not as paid advertising.

The 30-second television PSA will be distributed to 200 television stations nationwide. The distribution list will be available on the Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow Web site. Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow encourages everyone to contact stations in their area and ask to air the PSA. For \$100, organizations, facilities and individuals will be able to order a PSA kit via the Web site to distribute to their local stations not included in the initial distribution. For an additional cost, an organization's logo can be placed at the end of the PSA.

The seven print ads may be viewed on the coalition's Web site this summer, along with a mechanism to request copies of the ads for local distribution.

Campaign directs prospective nurses and funders to Web site

The Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow campaign directs audiences to the coalition's Web site, www.nursesource.org, developed by silver sponsor VitalCareers.com. With an estimated 40 percent of nurses using the Web today, the site has been a critical tool in the coalition's recruitment and fund-raising arsenal.

VitalCareers.com, an Internet company focused on career content for health care employers and professionals, was the first organization to sign on as a major sponsor of Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow.

The Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow ads will direct prospective nurses to the Web site, where they will discover more about nursing. The site is being redesigned to complement the look and feel of the ads, and more content will be added, including career profiles of nurses, career resources and links to educational programs.

The site is linked to an interactive health careers job-bank database, operated by VitalCareers.com, allowing Internet users to search for career opportunities nationally. The site also provides links to the home pages of all coalition members.

"The Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow site not only is a great tool for attracting new members to the nursing profession, but also provides health care career options based on personal and professional needs," says Maurice Salter, chairman of VitalCareers.com.

Other sponsors join the cause

Joining major sponsors VitalCareers.com and JWT Specialized Communications, Nursing Spectrum is now a bronze sponsor of Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow.

"In addition to donating advertising pages in our seven magazines, we expect to make contributions of online and editorial coverage," said Patti

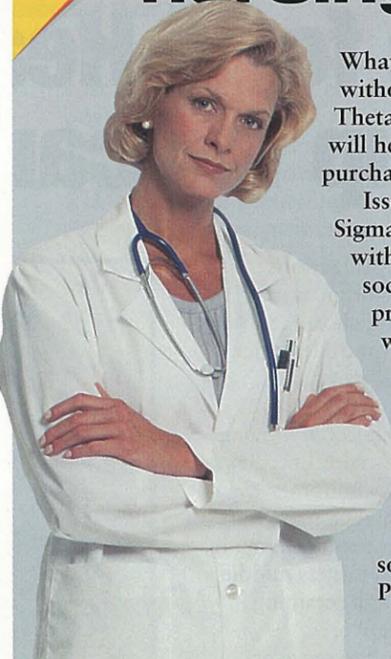
Rager, RN, MSN, MBA, president and publisher of *Nursing Spectrum*. "Our mission, to support and recognize registered nurses, is at the heart of all we do at Nursing Spectrum. We are dedicated to programs that further nursing's public image and that encourage today's nurses to stay in the profession. We admire Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow's united efforts to address the nursing shortage with an innovative communications campaign."

The Helene Fuld Health Trust, HSBC, Trustee, whose purpose is the improvement of the health, welfare or education of student nurses, is also a bronze sponsor. Their major grant was

used to produce advertisements and will help place them across the country.

Other major contributors to the coalition include the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation, Independence Foundation and Kaiser Foundation Health Plan Inc.

Nurses for a Healthier Tomorrow continues to seek tax-deductible monetary contributions to help fund production and placement of radio spots and recruitment brochures, as well as efforts to reach guidance counselors. To make your pledge, please contact Kathy Bennison at bennison@stti.iupui.edu or 1.888.634.7575 toll free. You may also pledge online at www.nursesource.org. ■



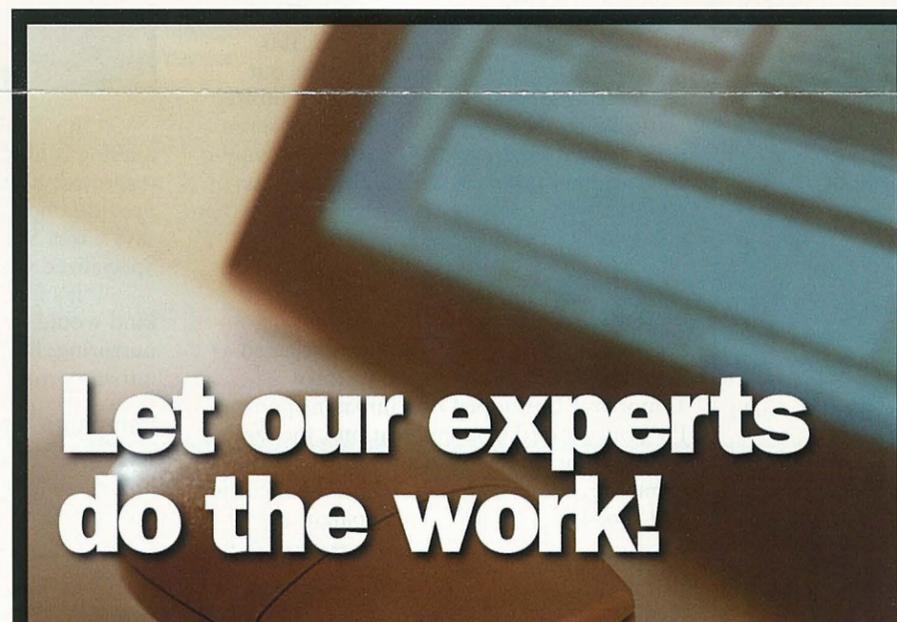
Help support nursing research!

What if you could contribute to nursing research without actually donating money? With Sigma Theta Tau's upcoming credit card program, you will help support our programs with every retail purchase you make.

Issued by MBNA America Bank, N.A., the new Sigma Theta Tau credit card provides members with a convenient opportunity to support the society's efforts and promote the learning and professional development of nurses. This card was selected because it provides competitive rates and benefits to our members.

MBNA is the largest independent credit card lender in the world and has a longstanding reputation for providing exceptional customer service.

Details about this new program, as well as application forms, will be available on the society's Web site, www.nursingsociety.org/new. Please look for updates in the very near future.



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How you can affect the future of nursing

By May Wykle

With every challenge comes opportunity. And today, nurses are facing their share of both. From severe staffing shortages and fewer young people entering the field to sicker patients and information overload, many nurses are being stretched to maximum capacity. Unfortunately, the "big picture" of opportunity sometimes gets lost in the commotion.

Affecting the future of nursing in this hectic environment takes leadership—nurses who are committed to their vision of nursing and facilitate the growth and experiences of others. If this sounds like too large a task for one nurse to undertake, consider this. Leaders are nurses who in their own way, whether large or small, are working to impact the future of nursing.

Sigma Theta Tau provides many opportunities for its members to become leaders at local levels through chapter involvement—and at an international level. I encourage you to join us this year and reap the benefits of nursing leadership.

2001 Biennial Convention

"I chose to become a nurse because I wanted to deliver care in a way that was different from medicine," says Lynne Royer, RN, MSN, FNP, clinical director at Community Hospital in Indianapolis. "When I attend Sigma Theta Tau's biennial convention, I am surrounded by a community of bright nurse leaders who not only share my passion for nursing, but are also setting the direction nursing takes in the future."

"It's exciting to discuss ideas and solutions with such well-known figures in nursing," Royer adds.

Attracting clinicians, educators, researchers and administrators, the 2001 Biennial Convention features information uniquely targeted to nurses in today's environment. Throughout the November 10-14 event, speakers will cover a wide range of topics, including clinical excellence, global leadership through nursing research and how to gain knowledge to accomplish goals.

"The biennial convention offers an opportunity to collaborate on research and literature and hear new ideas from nursing leaders throughout the world," says Richard Smith, RN, MN, assistant professor with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences College of Nursing. "One morning at convention, I sat at the breakfast table with Luther Christman as he shared his perspective on nursing. Listening to him reinforced my own philosophy of our profession."

For more information about the schedule of events, registration and



Dr. May Wykle

accommodations, please visit our Web site or call toll-free: 1.888.634.7575 (U.S. and Canada) or +800.634.7575.1 (International). Register for convention today!

International volunteer positions

Following each biennial convention, the board of directors makes appointments to the Sigma Theta Tau International standing committees, building corporation and foundation boards, task forces, and review panels. Whether you have a penchant for communications or a desire to join one of our diverse committees, serving as a volunteer has great benefits.

"As a member of the international public relations committee, I have had the opportunity to expand my network of nursing colleagues and learn new skills," says Beth Brooks, RN, PhD, senior consultant with HR Partnerships in Chicago. "I also feel more connected with the organization and able to contribute to nursing as a whole."

No matter which volunteer position interests you, you have an opportunity to impact the future of Sigma Theta Tau and nursing, work toward a common goal with nurses from diverse backgrounds, and extend your network of colleagues to a regional, national and international level.

For specifics about the volunteer positions available, visit www.nursing.society.org in late summer or call Sandy Abel at 1.888.634.7575 (U.S. and Canada) or +800.634.7575.1 (International) or e-mail sabel@stti.iupui.edu.

May Wykle, RN, PhD, FAAN, is president-elect of Sigma Theta Tau International and dean and Florence Cellar Professor of Gerontological Nursing, Case Western Reserve University, Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing.

Did you know that being involved could improve your health? You'll reap the benefits of an extensive network of Sigma Theta Tau colleagues and friends, a strong sense of community, increased self-image as a nurse and more.



To determine the cause of problems at your organization and increase overall success, strategically evaluate your business and performance needs.

TARGETING THE PROBLEM FROM PAGE 1

existence of a problem remain the first step. The next move in either case is to identify the specifics of the problem and discover its causes. Patient satisfaction and the other behaviors cited above are often only symptoms of deeper issues.

Identifying the problem is achieved by implementing a comprehensive assessment of the situation. Asking the right questions and drilling down through multiple employee levels and customer types ensures getting constructive feedback from the individuals closest to the problem.

In their book, *Performance Consulting*, Robinson and Robinson identify four types of needs: business, performance, training and work environment.

- Business needs are defined as the goals for the unit.
- Performance needs are on-the-job behavioral requirements. Determine what level staff members are currently performing versus how they should be performing.
- Training needs identify what staff members must learn to perform their jobs successfully.
- Work environment needs specify what systems and processes are essential and which require modification for performance to be achieved.

So how does the administrator or the consultant determine the cause of what is happening on the unit? Begin the assessment process by listing the facts and asking specific questions. Using the above phone call to a consultant as an example, the participants determine:

- **Business needs**—Patient satisfaction scores are the lowest they have ever been. It's important to have a clear understanding of patient flow, volume change, census issues, as well as the operational goals of the unit and how they are measured.
- **Performance needs**—Communication between shifts is stifled. Work behaviors reflect a break down in communication, since accurate

information is not being communicated. What is the turnover in the area? Use of agency or staff in orientation?

- **Work environment**—The shift report process sounds broken. Inaccurate or no communication is taking place among staff during report. Is there a team environment in place?

After the initial assessment, the next step should be to interview unit staff and the client team. This may or may not involve all staff members. In the above scenario, interviewing all unit staff may not be feasible since it appears the problems are occurring with only two shifts. However, it may be important to interview all three shifts to assess how the entire unit is doing. Remember this: the assessment process is initiated to identify the problems and the underlying causes. Take the time to interview all necessary audiences, as their feedback will determine what interventions are implemented. Interviewing should always be conducted in a neutral tone without making any assumptions or jumping to a premature diagnosis. Conducting unbiased interviews led by a trusted colleague makes for great results.

What types of assessment questions should administrators or consultants be asking? Pinpointing the business and performance goals will help determine what training or work environment interventions to implement. Robinson and Robinson recommend a variation of the following questions to assess business and performance needs.

Business needs

- What are the major business needs for your unit? What are your patient care needs?
- How are your business/patient care needs measured operationally? Do you have a dashboard or scorecard to measure your success? Are all staff members aware?

- What factors will help you achieve your business goals?
- What types of transitional factors, such as a merged or new unit, are at play and what is the impact on overall culture?

Performance needs

- How are staff currently behaving and how is this impacting your business goals?
- What should staff performance look like to achieve your business goals?
- What performance areas are most critical to the success of the unit at this time?

The above questions are not an exhaustive list; however, they give an

idea of what questions should be asked during the assessment process—a process that helps the administrator determine the cause of problems on the unit and increases his or her overall success.

Robinson, D. G. and Robinson, J. (1996). *Performance Consulting: Moving Beyond Training*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Hona Matthews, MA, is director, Organizational Effectiveness, with Methodist Health Care System. Pamela Klauer Triolo, RN, PhD, FAAN, is chief nursing executive and senior vice president of The Methodist Hospital in Houston, Texas.

Alzheimer's research. In late summer, the synthesis of 300 AD studies will be published in *The Online Journal of Knowledge Synthesis for Nursing (OJKSN)*.

While reviewing the research, some startling facts were revealed:

- AD can only be definitely and accurately diagnosed on autopsy. While living, patients are diagnosed based on health history, physical examination, neuropsychological testing and laboratory studies (Richards & Hendrie, 1999; Burgener & Dickerson-Putman, 1999; Kuhn, Ortigara, & Farran, 1997).
- The cost of caring for a person with AD is twice as high as the cost of caring for patients without AD (Schumock, 1998). The cost of nursing home care is projected to be \$148 billion by 2007, and AD affects 50 percent of those in that setting (Gottlieb, 1999). Studies have concluded that the cost of residential care is substantially less expensive in assisted living facilities when compared to nursing homes (Leon & Moyer, 1999; Snow, 1996).
- The impact on the family caregiver(s) of a person with AD is more devastating than the disease itself because of the number of persons affected and the toll it takes on their lives. Caregivers spend an average of 70-100 hours per week in caregiving activities (Max, Webber, & Fox, 1995). The emotional, physical and financial stresses associated with caring for a relative with AD can lead to caregiver burnout (Dijkstra, Sipsma, & Dassen, 1999).
- Research has also shown that there are a variety of ways to help AD caregivers. For instance, caregivers who participate in awareness training and problem solving programs cope better with the AD patient's behavior, such as wandering, hoarding and inappropriate sexual aggression (Nadler-Moodie & Wilson, 1998; Farran & Keane-Hagerty, 1994).
- Caregiver activities can affect the patient in different ways. For



As the number of people affected by Alzheimer's disease escalates, health care providers seek research-based care for patients and their families.

instance, caregiver interventions are most effective for the patient when they are initiated in the mild to moderate stages of the disease, reinforcing the need for early diagnosis (Richards & Hendrie, 1999; Kuhn, Ortigara, & Farran, 1997). Also, when caregivers attend support groups and receive counseling, admission to a nursing

home for the AD patient, and the cost associated with it, can be postponed.

- Pharmacological and non-pharmacological management of AD symptoms, according to the research so far, is promising. The use of cholinesterase inhibitors corrects biological derangement for patients with mild to

moderate AD (O'Connell et al. 1999; Nordberg & Svensson, 1998; Delagarza, 1998). Validation, music and massage therapies have shown promise in the control of AD behavior (Richards & Hendrie, 1999; Clark, Lipe, & Bilbrey, 1998; Delagarza, 1998; Nordberg & Svensson, 1998; Anderson, Culliton, & Brill, 1995). However, since none of these interventions stop the inevitable progression of AD, more research in this area is necessary.

Data of this sort are important as health care providers seek ways to care for persons with AD and their families, particularly as we project the number of people who will be affected in the future as the population ages. By creating a synthesis of the current AD research, we hope to provide busy caregivers with a reliable and valid resource. To subscribe to the OJKSN, visit the library section of the society's Web site, www.nursingsociety.org.

Fay L. Bower, RN, DNSc, FAAN, is the editor for books at Sigma Theta Tau's Center Nursing Press and chair of the Department of Nursing, Holy Names College, Oakland, Calif. Cynthia S. McCullough, RN, MSN, is senior consultant with HDR, Inc., Omaha, Neb.

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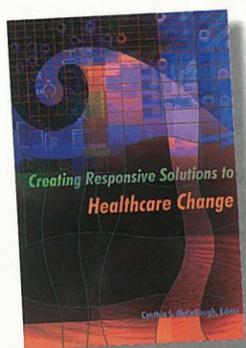
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- Students educate public about nursing

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