

 **Message from the Chair**

Welcome to the 8th annual COUPN Awards Ceremony. We are gathered to celebrate the hard work, innovation and passion of faculty members, students, preceptors, and agency leaders who comprise the heart of Ontario's university programs in nursing.

COUPN is pleased to honour 10 award recipients in the areas of teaching and student excellence, teaching innovation, scholarship, and contribution to nursing education by agencies and preceptors.

Thank you for taking the time to join us today to celebrate the spirit and accomplishments of nursing educators, researchers, students and supporters, and to recognize the achievements of these leaders in nursing education.



Jennifer Medves
Chair, COUPN

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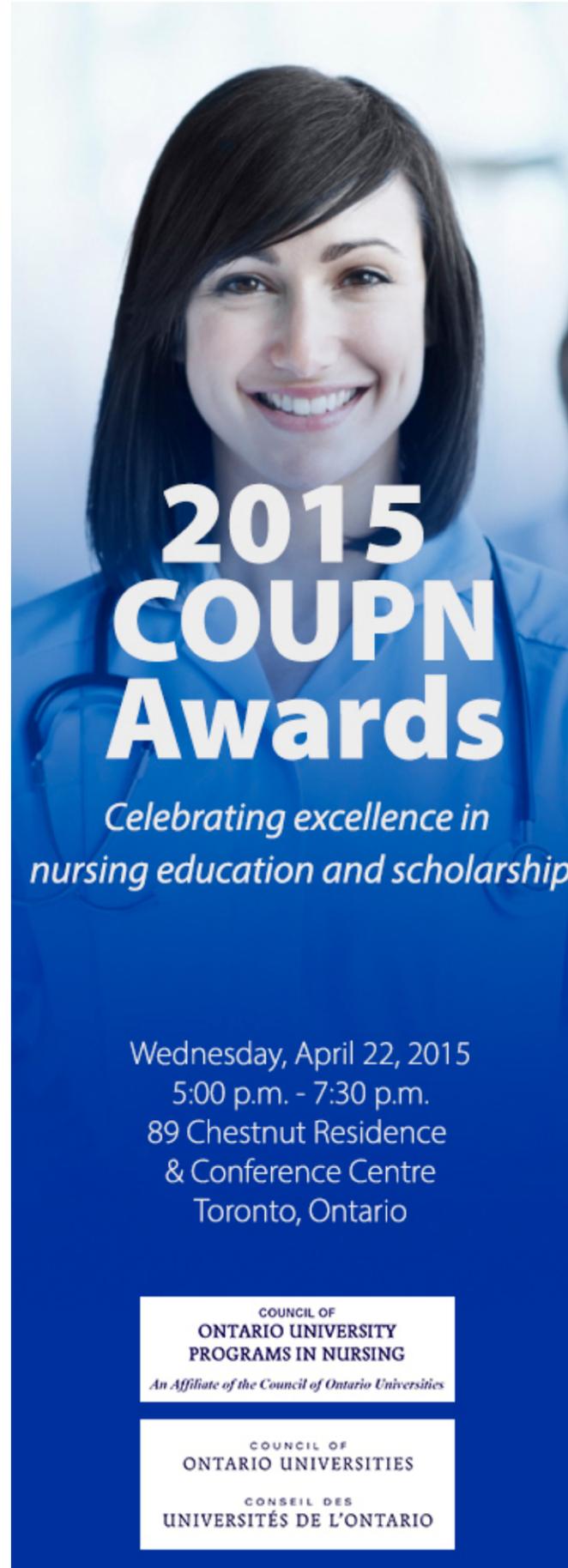
*The vision of COUPN is to
lead university nursing
education and scholarship in
Ontario.*

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**2015
COUPN
Awards**

*Celebrating excellence in
nursing education and scholarship*

Wednesday, April 22, 2015
5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
89 Chestnut Residence
& Conference Centre
Toronto, Ontario

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**Special thanks to this year's
COUPN Awards Selection
Committee:**

**Dr. Linda Patrick
University of Windsor**

**Prof. Karen Poole
Lakehead University**

**Dr. Jennifer Medves
Queen's University**

**Dr. Kirsten Woodend
Trent University**

**COUPN would like to thank
those who submitted
nominations. The level of
excellence demonstrated by
all the nominees was
exemplary.**

**Agency Recognition Award:
Windsor Regional Hospital**



The Windsor Regional Hospital has been described as a gem in the Windsor

region because it educates hundreds of undergraduate and graduate student nurses each year from the University of Windsor's Faculty of Nursing, ensuring they have all the necessary resources for the best possible clinical experiences. Those who practice there are guided by the organization's motto: "outstanding care, no exceptions." The hospital is so dedicated to training the next generation of nurses, it takes the time to provide valuable input each year to the university's clinical placement policies, participates in the university's initiatives to reduce medication errors, and shares its library resources and research opportunities with students and faculty. Its commitment to student-centred education is embodied by all. The Chief Nurse Executive has personally served as a mentor for graduate students, recognizes nursing excellence through awards programs, and even encourages healthy lifestyle programs for staff including fitness classes, Weight Watchers and an on-site gym.

**Doctoral Dissertation Award:
Dr. Abigail Wickson-Griffiths RN, PhD**



There have been significant implications for improvement in the field of aging as a result of a dissertation on the Palliative and Therapeutic Harmonization Program in long-term care homes by Dr. Wickson-Griffiths, who completed her PhD in Nursing at McMaster University last year and is now completing a postdoctoral fellowship. PATH, a

relatively new program designed to help empower frail older adults and their family members to make medical decisions, holds great potential for improving palliative care, and yet the program had not been evaluated in long-term care settings. It is well recognized that there is a great need to improve palliative care in long-term care and to address quality of care for residents and family members. Dr. Wickson-Griffiths' thesis provides valuable direction for future improvement. Key implications include identifying PATH as a strategic approach to help long-term care home staff, residents and family members engage in end of life care planning, as well as a strategy to help staff gain knowledge and build confidence in helping residents and their families make difficult decisions.

**Scholarship into Practice Award:
Dr. Louise Rose**

Dr. Louise Rose, an associate professor at the Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing at the University of Toronto, is an outstanding scholar in critical care nursing,



teaching the latest in evidence-based clinical practice methods for supporting acute care, critical care and high-dependency nursing. Her specific research focus is the care and management of patients requiring mechanical ventilation spanning time spent in the intensive care unit and eventually in the home. Her research - which aims to examine clinical strategies

that reduce the duration of ventilation, improve the experience and perhaps prevent ventilation altogether - has important implications for public policy and health-care funding. One of the most significant contributions is the increased international awareness she has brought to the importance of behavioural pain assessment tools for these patients who report anxiety due to their inability to communicate the pain there are experiencing.

**Excellence in Professional Nursing Practice
at the Undergraduate Student Level:**

Joel Maziarski



Joel Maziarski is a third-year BScN student at Laurentian University. His faculty advisor says he stood out as early as second year, when he surpassed his fellow classmates with a project to teach elementary students about dental hygiene. In his third year, he placed academically at the top of his class of 60 students, achieving a cumulative grade point average of 9.4.

He hardly ever misses a class and has never missed a clinical activity. He is caring, and demonstrates leadership skills and behaviours such as respect, trustworthiness, integrity, effective communication skills, dedication, dependability and professionalism – all characteristics of an exceptional nurse. His nomination for this award was wholeheartedly endorsed in enthusiastic letters of support by his peers, who describe him as a role model. He received many compliments from patients for the care he provided during his clinical placement in acute care in a respiratory unit. Still he finds time to volunteer, walking rescue dogs and working as a minor hockey referee in winter and camp counsellor in summer.

**Excellence in Teaching Award:
Dr. Sandra Merklinger**



Dr. Sandra Merklinger, who teaches two online full-year courses in the Master of Nursing Program at the University of Toronto's Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing, while also working as a Nurse Practitioner in the Cardiac Program at the Hospital for Sick Children, has a tremendous aptitude for fostering the development of nursing professionals. This is due to an

unparalleled enthusiasm for teaching, an ability to motivate and stimulate students to think critically and creatively, and a passion for student learning and well-being. She has been instrumental in developing technologies to improve clinical reasoning skills through an on-line virtual environment and delivering webinars to

students across Canada. Students say Merklinger is so engaged with them in these online courses they forget the course is virtual. She has scored the highest teaching performance evaluations among graduate faculty, with students consistently praising her depth of clinical knowledge, commitment to their success and ability to create an engaging and effective learning environment. She has been described as a role model for students, but also for faculty who seek out her expertise in implementing their own online curricula.

**Masters Student Award of Excellence:
Elizabeth Orr RN, MSc.**



Elizabeth Orr's Master's thesis from McMaster University on the online blogging practices of women undergoing In Vitro Fertilization treatment led to the development of a framework and guidelines for receiving informed consent from people who share their personal experiences in public forums. Ms. Orr set out to study how women respond to IVF by analyzing almost 1,550 blogs posted

about the treatment in Canada and the U.S. After submitting her research protocol to McMaster's ethics board she was asked to provide evidence that it was ethical to access, extract and use data posted publicly online. Her thoughtful arguments to address the complex issues of privacy, ethics and consent led to the development of a framework for seeking consent that can be adopted by others undertaking similar study. She was also appointed to the ethics review committee as a result, and has been invited to lecture on the issue of ethics and online data. She has made recommendations that there is value in supporting women to seek community and support online and that the act of blogging may be therapeutic for some women experiencing infertility. Her research provides a unique insight into the complexity of the experience of women with infertility and will inform approaches that can be used by nurses and other caregivers to provide support to these women.

**Preceptor Recognition Award:
Lisa Knight RN, and Meghan Seaton, RN**



As RNs for almost five years at the Multi-Organ Transplant Unit at the London Health Sciences Centre, Lisa Knight and Meghan Seaton bring learning to life by demonstrating the kind of compassion to patients and staff that embodies the nursing practice students are taught in school. Their non-judgmental approach fosters a supportive learning environment and the connections they make with their

patients have been described as inspiring to those around them. As generous coaches and mentors, Knight and Seaton provide nursing students with the best possible placements that are filled with opportunities and learning activities. In one case, extra effort was made to arrange for a student to have an experience in the operating room, observing a live-donor kidney transplant. The endeavours of both to update and expand their knowledge by completing workshops and courses to provide better and more efficient nursing care are noteworthy.

**Award for Strategic Contribution to
Nursing Education:
Nursing Health Services Research Unit
(NHSRU)**



The NHSRU, a collaborative initiative between University of Toronto and

McMaster University founded in 1990, is a model of community-engaged research that brings concrete evidence to bear on issues affecting the health of Ontarians. A key focus of NHSRU's research is how to better integrate nursing students and graduates into the health workforce, in order to build a higher quality health care system. Studies have included the impact of senior nursing students in long-term care homes, empowerment of new nurses in the workplace, evaluation of provincial programs that seek to integrate new nursing graduates and internationally educated nurses into full-time employment, and factors affecting nursing graduate integration and retention in border cities. The NHSRU is also heavily involved in helping to prepare the future research community through involvement of masters and doctoral students, post-doctoral fellows, and new faculty, in their health services research projects. Recently, a COUPN faculty member partnered with NHSRU to conduct a study on nursing student experiences of their clinical placements, which will help to develop policy recommendations on how to better prepare students for patient care. This is just another example of the many collaborative intersections between the NHSRU and nursing education which have made NHSRU so deserving of this award.

**Teaching Innovation Award:
Dr. Deborah Tregunno**



Dr. Deborah Tregunno has developed and implemented a novel approach to simulated learning that has contributed significantly to the development of nursing curricula in Ontario. After working with 13 universities to develop a standardized method for designing simulation scenarios, including a rubric for outcomes and outcome measures, Dr. Tregunno was able to convince all

13 universities to utilize the new method in a tremendous demonstration of collaboration. Faculty can download the scenarios and upload new or revamped scenarios, and a website is now available to all simulation teachers in schools of nursing across Ontario. She is being recognized for bringing together academics in simulation from across the province and for developing a rubric that ensures consistency across all Ontario nursing programs in the development, implementation and evaluation of metrics. It is the first time members of COUPN have collaborated to develop curriculum that benefits all graduates of baccalaureate nursing programs.