A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

A world in crisis called, and Yale nurses and midwives answered. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Yale School of Nursing (YSN) students and faculty were engaged — answering thousands of phone calls to the Campus Covid Resource Line, caring for patients and bringing calm expertise to a chaotic time. Students, faculty, and alumni staffed mass-vaccination clinics around the country, in some cases creating them from the ground up in abandoned airfields or repurposing athletic arenas. Students and alumni managed health systems responding to variant surges in real time, and our superb faculty focused on bringing nursing and midwifery expertise to pandemic policy debates. Our faculty conducted research from the supply side to the bedside, advancing strategies to promote racial equity in COVID-19 vaccination. Yale nurses and midwives returned to surging units again and again throughout the pandemic, living our mission to bring better health to all people.

At YSN, you are joining an intellectual community that integrates science and practice with a commitment to health justice and to addressing unacceptably long-standing health disparities in the United States and beyond. We do this on a globe that is literally warming up, with plummeting biodiversity, and we recognize that better health is needed not just for the human species, but for the planet itself.

Nurses are the backbone of every health care system in the world (59 percent of all health professionals globally). Our critical functions have become more widely recognized — and tested as never before — during the worst pandemic in this century. As nurse scientists and expert clinicians, we care for patients with compassion and live up to the standards of the nation’s most trusted profession. But our work does not stop when the pandemic’s waves recede, and our advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) are well-positioned to adapt to post-pandemic needs. As the world shifts from emergency response to primary care, health systems will return to the principles of Alma-Ata — health beyond the absence of disease, including mental health. This outlook ensures that our nurse leaders will incorporate lessons learned into future care of patients and pedagogy for students, science, and systems of health.

YSN operates under the North stars of excellence, equity, and sustainability. A YSN education promotes advocacy for structurally marginalized populations and integration of a rigorous evidence base, creating and translating scientific research. In recognition of our outstanding faculty, expert staff, and incredible student community, combined with the excellence of our graduates, the QS World Rankings moved YSN up one spot to number 4 for U.S. nursing schools. Our Graduate Entry Prespecialty in Nursing (GEPN) program attracts students with rich life experience brought to their APRN journey. Several of our Master of Science in Nursing (M.S.N.) specialty tracks are among the most highly rated in the country, positioning graduates to improve care across the lifespan. Our Ph.D. program prepares expert nurse scientists to improve individual and population health. The Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) programs enhance the credentials of experienced nurses across the country, giving those students the tools to shape policy, pursue expert clinical practice, and lead health systems using a pioneering hybrid degree format. The Clinical D.N.P. program enhances students’
clinical leadership skills and develops a clinical area of expertise in the students’ practice areas, all of which will be shaped by COVID-19 for generations.

The YSN community aspires to make a difference in the world now, and we recognize that the system of racism and other structural marginalization is an enduring threat to our mission. We begin by recognizing, acknowledging, and combating the impact of racism as we endeavor to eradicate structural injustices from our school, the broader university, the profession, and national and global communities.

To address twenty-first century needs, our curriculum must be dynamic. Students benefit from our world-class clinical simulation facility, and our committed faculty engage in teaching as well as high-impact research in areas that covers the lifespan, from healthy birth to dignified end of life, including prevention and mental health, in the US and globally. Our dedicated staff are highly committed to the school and to our mission. We aim to build a diverse nursing workforce, and we actively work to further inclusion in nursing academia and the health care sector. YSN’s Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) and our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) plan will guide our efforts for the next five years, and has welcomed feedback and input from students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Finally, but not least, YSN is part of the singular Yale University ecosystem in which the tools of intellectual discourse, available to every student, can become instruments of powerful change in the world. We are one YSN and one Yale, committed, in the words of the University’s mission statement, “to improving the world today and for future generations.”

Thank you humbly for your engagement in YSN. Our faculty, staff, alumni, and I are thrilled to welcome you to Yale and to West Campus.

Ann Kurth, ’90 M.S.N., Ph.D., M.P.H., C.N.M., F.A.A.N., F.A.C.N.M.
Dean, Yale School of Nursing
Linda Koch Lorimer Professor of Nursing