



HAPPENINGS

The "Happenings" column highlights chapter activities and accomplishments. Submit your activities to nsna@nsna.org attn: Happenings.



Lynne Bowden
Happenings Reporter

▲ *SDSU students representing Compassion for African Villages during the local HIV/AIDS Awareness Walk. Photo by Jennifer Ferrell*

School and State Activities



Above, Top to Bottom: SDSU students raising awareness and funds for Compassion for African Villages; SDSU students volunteering during the 2009 San Diego Super Run to benefit Compassion for African Villages. Photos by Jennifer Ferrell

California

Nursing students from San Diego State University (SDSU) are spanning their service efforts as far as Rundongo, Zimbabwe through a non-profit organization known as Compassion for African Villages. This organization was founded by nursing students at SDSU with inspiration from a former classmate and native of the Rundongo village. Tsitsi Mutseta, a former SDSU nursing student, inspired fellow classmates through her personal

stories of hardship and ongoing human suffering in the village of Rundongo where the population has been drastically struck by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In honor of Tsitsi Mutseta and her family, the SDSU students are actively raising money to fund the construction of clean water wells and to provide health education to the Rundongo community.

The magnitude of suffering in Rundongo is evident. With the nearest health clinic over 30 miles away, many villagers die before they can walk the daunting trek necessary to access medical services. Tsitsi is one of only three surviving students from her high school graduating class of 150 students. After losing nearly half of the village population to illness over the past five years, SDSU students realize that Rundongo is in dire need of help.

SDSU students were most inspired by Tsitsi's selflessness as she withdrew from nursing school in order to maintain three jobs and send money home to the village of Rundongo. Tsitsi's efforts alone

provided the finances necessary to send 200 orphans to school with clean uniforms and games to be played. Over the past year, Compassion for African Villages has successfully raised nearly \$2,000, which has provided the finances necessary to send all orphans to school fully equipped with uniforms, textbooks, pencils, and games. In addition, the money raised provided necessary funding to keep the local teachers employed. More recently, Compassion for African Villages raised over \$8,000 through the first annual San Diego Super Run and a Barbecue fundraiser. This money was used to build water wells, toilets, and an agricultural system in Rundongo. SDSU students look forward to continuing their philanthropic efforts throughout the upcoming school year. You can learn more about this program at www.compassionforafricanvillages.net, and remember to show your support for HIV/AIDS awareness on World AIDS Day, December 1, 2009.

Idaho

Members of the Idaho Student Nurses' Association from Lewis-Clark State College (LCSC) used their creative minds to organize a food drive, unlike many seen before. LCSC nursing students recognized that common non-perishable donations often lack the protein necessary for men, women, and children to receive the daily requirements of essential amino acids. Therefore, the nursing students from LCSC banned together with the local homeless shelter, Sojourner's Alliance in Moscow, Idaho, to access the individuals who they believed would benefit most from protein-rich foods. With limited access to refrigeration and cooking supplies, the homeless population often thrives on a diet laden with simple carbohydrates. Through friendly competition with schemes and rivalry, opposing classes pushed one another to collect hundreds of pounds of protein-rich foods such as peanut butter, tuna fish, beans, etc. In the end, the winning team earned a celebratory pizza party and bragging rights. In addition, above all else, the students bonded over the success of their mission to reach out to a local population in need.

Illinois

Students from the Student Nurses' Association of Illinois (SNAI) once again celebrated the success of their 3rd Annual Winter Walk. This one mile, non-competitive walk brings nursing students, faculty, friends, and family together in the spirit of service. Each year, the SNAI chooses one charitable foundation to which the proceeds of the Winter Walk are awarded. *(Continued on page 24 ♦♦)*

This year, students were proud to support the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana. Through generous donations, nursing students across the state raised over \$1,200 to support the families who utilize the local Ronald McDonald House.

In addition to the successful event, students from Illinois were proud to celebrate the addition of a third Winter Walk satellite site in Quincy, Illinois. With this addition, students and faculty members from the southern region were able to join the cause and simultaneously celebrate the event in a statewide fashion. The expansion of the annual Winter Walk successfully linked nursing students across the state and provided an opportunity for neighboring schools to join together in a charitably spirited camaraderie.

Georgia

Through collaboration with the Lillian Carter Center for International Nursing (LCCIN), select nursing students at Emory University are granted an opportunity to gain an exclusive perspective on the healthcare crisis that is currently plaguing our country. Specifically, two students from Emory University are selected each year to participate in the University of Alberta Student and Faculty Exchange Program. This seven week, international clinical experience, provides first-hand exposure to the care and services provided at Canadian medical facilities, which are reliant upon universal healthcare coverage. Throughout the seven week program, students earn clinical hours that are credited towards completion of the BSN curriculum. In addition, students provide daily documentation of their experiences through an online blog, which allows fellow Emory University students and faculty to observe their progress throughout the programs entirety.

In reading the daily blogs and journals of students who participated in the exchange program, one can appreciate the observed similarities and differences between U.S. and Canadian healthcare practices. For example, students shared insight on topics relative to nursing care such as nurse/patient ratios; patient acuity; work environments; adherence to policies; functions of support staff; and much more. As a result of this program, Emory University students also have a unique opportunity to hear perspectives on their own healthcare system through the eyes of a Canadian native who traveled to the U.S. and completed a clinical rotation at Emory University Hospital. This invaluable experience provides students with an international perspective on healthcare policies and functions. ∞

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— Jonathan Buttrick, Managing Editor