

The Breakthrough to Nursing column presents ideas and perspectives about the importance of cultural diversity in nursing and general recruitment into nursing.

by TJ Tekesky,  
Breakthrough to Nursing  
Director



*Operation Hygiene is a service project that has proven to be successful in reaching out to the underrepresented populations in nursing. Nursing students collect hygiene items, along with non-perishable goodies and Johnson & Johnson Discover Nursing materials, and send them overseas to our deployed service members. I am proud to say that after working closely with Lindsey Bronikowski, the Breakthrough to Nursing Director for Georgia Baptist College of Nursing, the first shipment of care packages arrived in Afghanistan on September 11, 2013! Lindsey is the February/March guest author for the BTN column.*

## Operation Hygiene

By Lindsey Bronikowski, Breakthrough to Nursing Director, Georgia Baptist College of Nursing



Bronikowski

How often do you take cleanliness for granted? Think about it. Every day you are taking a shower, washing your hands, perhaps using hand-sanitizer after pumping gas into your car.

What if small, everyday items like soap, shampoo and hand-sanitizer were not easily accessible to you? This is actually a reality for many of our servicemen and women overseas. Some of the simplest things that can prevent the spread of illness and infection are not readily available to those who are deployed around the world.

The student nurses at Georgia Baptist College of Nursing of Mercer University made it a priority to see that items that prevent infection and illness get to our troops overseas. Operation Hygiene is a program that was created specifically to

collect goods such as baby wipes, hand-sanitizer, toothbrushes, feminine hygiene products and nonperishable food items to send to our soldiers. This program is extremely easy to participate in, yet is hugely beneficial.

Our students fill large collection bins with items to prevent infection and illness, as well as small comforts and reminders of home—who doesn't love Oreos? Every few months, these items are packaged up and sent to our soldiers abroad. With the gracious help of our local American Legion Post 66, a half-dozen large care packages were shipped to Afghanistan at the beginning of September. Our most recent shipment was sent out this past November, so that the soldiers were able to receive their deliveries by Christmas.

In addition to sending hygiene supplies, information was also included on what the profession of nursing can offer these veterans when they separate from

the military. Johnson & Johnson<sup>®</sup> provides excellent, free nursing literature that was included in these care packages.

Students at Georgia Baptist College of Nursing encourage ALL nursing students across America to join us in this opportunity. Consider partnering up with a local American Legion Post to collect hygiene items that can be sent to servicemen and women who are deployed throughout the world defending the freedom of the American people. This project is extremely easy to implement, and the benefits are substantial. Troops are extremely thankful when they receive their packages. It is extremely rewarding to know that our school is doing its part to prevent infection and illness, as well as promote the nursing profession. This is exactly what Breakthrough to Nursing embodies! ∞

For more information, download the BTN Operation Hygiene slide show at: [www.nсна.me/btn-oh](http://www.nсна.me/btn-oh)