College of Nursing Endowed Chair

SUPPORTING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES.

WHAT IT TAKES
The Campaign for MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
ELEVATING GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN NURSING.

An endowed chair in the College of Nursing will build on master’s and doctoral programs in nursing and serve as a role model and mentor for students and faculty pursuing research.

RESEARCH THAT SERVES MONTANA.

The high-caliber researcher and educator selected as Nursing Chair will advance the college’s mission to enhance the health of Montanans. This individual will lead students and faculty in programs of research consistent with the College of Nursing’s areas of practice, including health disparities, rural health, and human resilience.

ADVANCING NURSING RESEARCH PROGRAMS THAT ARE RELEVANT TO THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF MONTANANS. $2 MILLION IN PRIVATE SUPPORT WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE.
Recruit and retain more nationally and internationally recognized faculty.

Increase curricular experiences for students that integrate learning, discovery, and engagement.

Raise the percentage of graduates pursuing advanced degrees.

Expand the number of graduate students presenting at national symposiums.
JAN OSTERMILLER

From CPA to FNP, Jan Ostermiller’s healthcare career path has not been linear, but exceptional research faculty in the College of Nursing at MSU kept her on the path. It began back in high school for Jan with a part time job at an assisted living facility in Billings. With her first bachelor’s and master’s degrees in accounting, Jan returned to work in the business office of the same elderly care facility. Over time though, Jan realized that she longed for more contact with the residents so she returned to MSU to pursue a nursing degree.

As a nursing undergraduate, Jan was introduced to healthcare research through a study of the dental health of children in Montana. This research experience triggered in Jan an awareness of the need for healthcare research in rural practice settings.

With her bachelor’s in nursing, Jan started working as an RN at St. Vincent’s Cardiac Telemetry Care unit in Billings, where she was drawn back to the care of elderly patients. “I love working with older patients—and in Billings we see many folks from the outlying areas who have such interesting stories to tell.”

Jan wanted to help patients in more profound ways though and knew research was key to understanding the issues of post-incident cardiovascular care. Enrolled in MSU’s graduate nursing program, she launched a study to examine the accuracy of illness beliefs of individuals diagnosed with heart failure. “I was overwhelmed when I first started, but my thesis chair, Dr. Dale Mayer, had very high expectations for my research, helped me define it, and guided me through the process.”

“Working with cardiovascular patients, I get to know families because post-incident care almost always involves other members of the patient’s family.”

Faculty and graduate students at MSU, like Dr. Mayer and Jan Ostermiller, are creating evidenced-based nursing practices through their research. An endowed chair in the College of Nursing will advance these programs of research, with impacts for rural and isolated populations around the country and the world.