

St David's
COMMUNITY HEALTH FOUNDATION
Care in Action

FOCUS ON THE HEALTH CARE STAFFING SHORTAGE

A national epidemic affects Austin

You can't spell cure without Kocurek

Two the hard way: Kocurek Scholar stories

The Newsletter of St. David's Community Health Foundation | www.sdchf.org

What's causing the shortage? To a great extent, the driving forces are national: more people, an aging population, new technologies and the skills they require. But some of the factors are local. New hospitals must be staffed, and too few openings for training health care professionals exist.

We asked three local experts about the looming crisis and what can be done. Mary Lou Adams is associate professor of nursing at UT. Steve Jackobs is executive director for Capital IDEA, a nonprofit that helps unemployed and underemployed Central Texans prepare for high-skill careers. Randy Stone heads human resources for St. David's HealthCare.

There aren't enough health care professionals in Central Texas. Today, it is a largely manageable shortage. But within three to five years, it could become acute.



Q: Is there a nursing shortage in Austin?

Randy: Absolutely. As an employer we routinely have 100 to 150 openings for RNs. There are three new hospitals with 300 positions opening in 2007-08. Where will the nurses come from?

Steve: Demand is increasing exponentially. Our community's capacity to train people can't keep up.

Mary Lou: The demand for nurses with baccalaureate degrees is increasing. For a hospital to function well, it needs to have a strong cadre of registered nurses with managerial skills.

Randy: And it's not just nursing. The shortage is as acute in pharmacy, respiratory therapy, and physical therapy.

Q: What is driving the demand?

Steve: In this city there are two hospital networks, and there's every doctor's office, every school, clinic, and outpatient facility. Everyone needs RNs.

Mary Lou: Hospital patients today are in more acute condition than in the past. Hospital stays are shorter. Patients are released sooner. Critically ill patients who once would have stayed in ICU are now on the floors. So hospital nurses are caring for much sicker patients.

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SOME BIG SHOES TO FILL

Facing the Future.

Within three to five years, Central Texas could be facing a shortage of health care workers that could affect us all.

The "perfect storm" is gathering – growing population, aging demographics, more new hospitals, more sophisticated treatment regimens, and limited capacity to train health care professionals. In this issue, we bring you local perspectives on this difficult issue. I'm optimistic that our community can rise to the challenge. Texas State University's recent announcement of a new nursing school in Williamson County will add training capacity. We're seeing more high school students interested in health care careers and seeking out programs like Lanier High School's Health Science Academy. As awareness of the need grows, I believe support for solutions will follow. One solution is to help students bridge the financial gap. Each spring, one of my great joys is helping to interview candidates for the *W. Neal Kocurek / St. David's Scholarship*. What incredible young people! When they come to interview with the committee, they are a little nervous, but we quickly find that they are committed, motivated, caring, involved and determined to succeed. The future of our health care couldn't be in better hands. Congratulations to our 2006 Kocurek Scholars! And if you have any comments or suggestions, drop us a note at newsletter@sdchf.org.



Dick Moeller
Dick Moeller
St. David's Community Health Foundation
Chief Executive Officer

You can't spell cure without Kocurek.

This spring, seven AISD seniors opened their mailboxes to find that they had been selected for the W. Neal Kocurek / St. David's Scholarship program. That's seven students whose dreams to work in health care are now on the way to becoming a reality.

"It's completely life changing," said Vincent Johnathon Hernandez, a 2005 Kocurek Scholarship recipient now entering his sophomore year at Texas Lutheran University. "Now it's all up to me."

As the endowment nears \$1 million, this is the largest scholarship fund in AISD history. The funds are dedicated to helping AISD students with economic need pursue careers in health care. As it grows, the fund could provide higher education tuition support for as many as 20 students each year.

Talk to people about **Neal Kocurek**, and everyone describes a mentor:

"A **visionary**, leader and very patient person."

"He could make a good idea **great** by getting it to more people."

"A **true** believer in public education."

The fund was created to honor the late Neal Kocurek (1936-2004), president and CEO of St. David's Health Care System. A visionary, scientist and civic leader, Kocurek touched many lives by bringing people together to solve community-wide problems in creative ways.

"Neal cared deeply about public schools, higher education, and health care access. The scholarship is a perfect way to turn Neal's passions into a legacy," said C. W. Hetherly, Board Chair, St. David's Health Care System.

For the community, the scholarship fund responds to a shortage of qualified health care workers, a national problem that is affecting Austin. It also opens up opportunities for students who might not otherwise be able to afford college.

"Neal saw education as the doorway for oppressed people to come up. He saw education as a way to move away from your circumstances so that your

circumstances never define who you are," says Rev. Sterling Lands of Greater Calvary Bible Church.

Kocurek's passion for education had roots in his own experience. The son of an immigrant, he graduated as salutatorian of Austin High School and earned a Ph.D. in electrical engineering from the University of Texas. In 1998, he retired from Radian International, the engineering firm he helped found, and became leader for St. David's.

The 2006 scholarship recipients feel honored. "I am representing Neal Kocurek and his family, as well as myself. It's made me determined to do well in school and afterwards," said Amanda Moreno, a 2005 recipient and graduate of Akins High School. She is attending UT-Austin.

"When you meet these kids, you see that St. David's is clearly making a difference in their lives," says Neal's son Kelly Kocurek, a Scholarship Committee member. As long as students keep up their grades and take a full course load, their scholarships will be renewed annually. After they graduate, a new group of applicants will have the opportunity. Reaching \$1 million means the fund will endure. After all, sustainability was another of Kocurek's passions.

"The scholarship is not the end of the message," says Kocurek's friend Bobbie Barker. "It's the beginning of a legacy."



Marc and Suzanne Winkelman along with Dick and Joyce Moeller share a moment with Asleep at the Wheel's Ray Benson at the Best of Benson fundraiser.

Putting the **FUN** in Fundraising

What do the **Blanton Museum of Art, Grammy Winner Ray Benson, Chef David Bull of the Driskill Hotel, and UT Coach Darrell Royal** have in common? They were all part of this spring's **Toast of the Town** events, which raised **over \$218,000**.

An Austin tradition, Toast of the Town parties blossom each spring. They feature musicians, artists, chefs, celebrities, and heroes — all gathered for fun and fundraising. More than 675 Austinites attended this spring.

In its 22-year history, Toast of the Town has **benefited health-related community needs** ranging from neonatal equipment for premature births to helping the elderly with basic needs like food. Currently, Toast of the Town is the primary fundraiser to **endow the W. Neal Kocurek / St. David's Scholarship Fund**. Each dollar raised is matched dollar-for-dollar by St. David's Community Health Foundation, bringing this year's total to **more than \$400,000**. The fund will almost certainly **exceed its \$1 million goal** by next spring.

"It's an honor to be able to help create an opportunity for deserving kids to pursue their dreams," said Dan Listrom, a commercial real estate broker who chaired the 2005 and 2006 Toast committees. "Seeing last year's recipients receive their awards gave all of us renewed energy for Toast of the Town 2006."

Some of the committee members are medical professionals who see the needs firsthand. Others like Listrom just want to help. Together they produced a fabulous lineup of parties. Among the highlights:

- Appearances by UT coaches Darrell Royal, Augie Garrido, and Rick Barnes
- Food and wine pairings orchestrated by Michael Vilim of Mirabelle and Castle Hill
- Disco at the Chateau featuring Dysfunkshun Junkshun at the Blais Home

The **matching grant** by St. David's Community Health Foundation made the effort **twice as rewarding**.

"I wanted to help specifically with something to honor Neal and his life work," Listrom said. "To be able to fund his scholarships and share hospitality and friendship was terrific!"

Most likely to **succeed**



2006 Kocurek Scholarship award winners

(top, left to right) Ashley Criswell, Christina Ramirez, Diego Villa (middle, left to right) Mario Marchan, Marisol Alvarado, Ricardo Gonzalez (bottom) Sherrill Rose



The GROWING health care professional shortage.

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Steve: Then there are the aging baby boomers. We're all cycling, running, playing extreme sports, playing tennis, tearing up our knees and joints. That's more demand.

Q: Why can't ACC and UT graduate enough nurses?

Randy: Nursing education is very expensive. There are faculty-to-student ratios that must be met. And nurses must get hands-on clinical experience in hospitals, infant care, pediatrics, and psychiatric settings.

Mary Lou: Even if everyone waiting in the pipeline got into a classroom, there aren't enough clinical sites to complete their training. And there is a serious shortage of nursing faculty and classroom placements as faculty ages.

Steve: The pipeline has leaks and bottlenecks. Everyone has to go through certain points, and if they're pinched, it doesn't matter how big the rest of the pipeline is.

Randy: St. David's and Seton are partners in sponsoring faculty at ACC. We each contribute \$150,000 a year toward faculty at ACC. But there are still over 300 students in the pipeline who can't get into that program. If you're a high school student hoping to get into ACC's nursing program, there are 450 of you competing for 100 slots. You could be looking at a six-year wait.

Steve: There's no guarantee that you'll ever get in even if you're on the list. It's rank order. If someone with a 4.0 applies, they go ahead of you.

Q: What other obstacles do students face?

Steve: A lot of people missed their shot at high school. Now they're 28, 29, and have a young child. They don't want their child to see them as a minimum wage earner forever. So there is a renewed determination: *'I'm going to make it work*

this time.' But they don't have the resources.

Randy: The folks Steve is talking about are on time, willing to work an extra shift. They get it; they appreciate it. But they need support.

Steve: I could tell you a hundred stories. Take Melissa. Right out of high school she had a baby. She was working for \$2.13 an hour plus tips. She got married and had a second child. Then she came to Capital IDEA and got help. Three years later, she's graduated as a cardiac sonographer. She's gone from \$2.13 to ten times that. Now her kids look at her and say, *'Mom, I'm*

going to be just like you.' She's the first in her family to go to college, but not the last.

Mary Lou: The cost of education is a huge barrier for a lot of people. I'm honored to be on the St. David's committee that offers scholarships for nursing and medical education. Having these funds available can make the difference.

Randy: True. If your family didn't go to college and didn't have that experience to pass on to you, it's just one more hurdle in your lane.

Steve: The good news is, the graduates have the right stuff. They're passing State nursing boards at very high rates. But most folks can't get into the programs. There is a danger that if we don't solve the pipeline problems, we're going to create a lot of frustration and false hopes.

Q: What would make the greatest difference?

Mary Lou: The more our community understands the shortage and how it can affect their own lives and health care, the more support we will have for solutions.

Steve: It must become a priority for the community and State to invest in universities and community colleges. Where will the \$100 million needed to upgrade nursing education come from? That's the magnitude of the problem.



St. David's Responds

The W. Neal Kocurek Scholarship Program

Kocurek Committee

A special thanks to the community volunteers on the W. Neal Kocurek Scholarship Committee. They are hard-working and diligent, spending many hours to insure the recipients are the most deserving.

Mary Lou Adams

Associate Professor of Nursing, UT-Austin

Kelly Kocurek

Attorney, DuBois, Bryant, Campbell & Schwartz

Libby Malone

Director of Community Relations, Grande Communications

Dick Moeller

President and CEO, St. David's Community Health Foundation

Jane Nethercut

Positive Behavior Coordinator, AISD

Gary Valdez

President, Focus Strategies

Charlotte Winkelman

Assistant Director for Student Support Services, AISD

Kocurek Scholars 2006

Student	High School	College
Marisol Alvarado	LBJ	Rice University
Ashley Criswell	Crockett	Austin Community College
Ricardo Gonzalez	Crockett	Texas A&M University
Mario Marchan	Johnston	University of North Texas
Christina Ramirez	Lanier/Kocurek Health Science Institute	University of Texas
Sherrill Rose	Garza	University of Texas
Diego Villa	Lanier/Kocurek Health Science Institute	Texas State University

For more about these students and other Kocurek Scholars, go to www.sdchf.org/programs_scholarship_2006.htm

Apply Yourself

To apply to become a 2007 Kocurek Scholar, students must meet the following criteria:

1. Attend high school in AISD
2. Be admitted to a college health science program in Texas (two or four year)
3. Demonstrate worthiness and economic need in a formal application, complete with a short essay describing their career goals and individual interests in becoming a Kocurek Scholar

Applications are due in early spring for the following academic year. Forms are online www.sdchf.org/scholarship_2007.php

Upcoming Events

KOCUREK/ST. DAVID'S SCHOLARSHIP DINNER:
August 10

DENTISTS' APPRECIATION EVENT: October 22

BOARD APPRECIATION DINNER: November 2

Kocurek Scholars: **Two the hard way.**

Beating the Odds

"One week into my junior year of high school, my water broke. It probably would have been a comic episode, but I was only 26 weeks pregnant. This was dangerous."

Not your typical college essay, but so begins the story of one of this year's Kocurek Scholars, **Sherrill**

"Charlie" Rose. At 18, Charlie is a single mother with a toddler. Despite missing a semester during her junior year because of medical complications, she persevered and graduated #2 in her class at Garza High School.

One of 14 children, Charlie left San Antonio to attend high school in Austin, where she lived with an older sister. As she sips on coffee with soy milk (she's vegan) and smiles at her 18-month-old son napping next to her, Charlie talks about wanting to be a doctor and travel with her son. "Doctors Without Borders," she says dreamily, the way other teenage girls talk about clothes or dates.

This fall, Charlie starts classes at UT-Austin, majoring in pre-med and math in Plan II, a rigorous liberal arts and science curriculum. "It's the best place I could go in Texas to get a good education and get into medical school," Charlie says.

The Kocurek /St. David's Scholarship will help with Charlie's tuition. She and son Cae (pronounced *Kie*), will live in UT family housing, where she can meet other student-parents and find bilingual day care for her son. "I hope my son will grow up with Spanish." Cae, as though on cue, rolls over, wakes up, and rewards his mother with an angelic smile.



Never Give Up

When her mother was ill, **Maribel Sandoval** spent time at the hospital. As a young teen holding her mother's hand, she saw nurses and doctors doing what they do best – helping patients get well. But what she didn't see affected her, too.

"I didn't see many nurses who spoke Spanish. I saw a need and thought I could help," said Maribel.

And so began the hard work of preparing for a career in health care. Admittedly Maribel wasn't a scholastic star at McCallum High School. But she took difficult science and math courses and still managed to bring up her GPA. She mentored younger students. One of five children, she worked summers to save money.

She did it all with the hope of going to college – but without the means. Then a teacher told her about the W. Neal Kocurek / St. David's Scholarship. Winning it has allowed Maribel to go to ACC. In her freshman year, she has made mostly A's.

And her story gets even happier. This fall, Maribel will attend UT-Austin. She might become a nurse – her original goal – but now she is considering pre-med. Her eyes brighten as she talks about the possibilities.

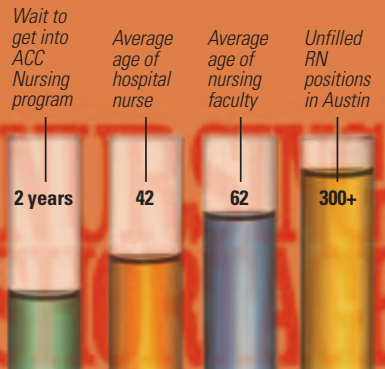
"I really like kids, and I'd like to think about becoming a pediatrician," she says. It's a dream made possible by knowing that she will get support whichever route she goes. Her own hard work has opened a world of options.

For Maribel, obstacles exist to be overcome. Her message to high school students: "Never give up!"

That Shrinking Feeling

- In the past 3 years, colleges and universities nationwide have **turned away 32,000 qualified applicants** because of a shortage of nurse educators.
- Experts predict that the shortage of nursing and medical technology will reach a **crisis in years 2008-09** just as baby boomers need more health care.
- Each year in the U.S. **more than 13,000** new medical laboratory professionals are needed just to fill vacant positions, but **only 4,000 individuals** are graduating in these fields.

Coming Up Short



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