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NURSING & HEALTHCARE

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Direct mentoring: Bringing culture home

The National League of Nursing (NLN) 2016 Summit choose priority goals annually to enhance and improve excellence among our most noble profession. This years' topic was a global focus-the theme focusing "Beyond Borders". The NLN promotes excellence in nursing education to build a strong and diverse nursing workforce to advance the health of our nation and the global community. Culture is and has always been a dynamic and relevant virtue to the healthcare delivery system more than ever in the current worldwide milieu taking into consideration the political and economic issues that cannot be ignored. The International Council of Nurses (ICN) collaborated with the NLN to establish the ICNEN-a forum to address nursing education worldwide which was launched in Durban, South Africa in July 2009. It is an innate characteristic among nursing as profession to ultimately become paradigm shifters with common ideas as we continuously evolve. In 2006, I was invited to join Hope for a Healthier Humanity, an NGO affiliated with Catholic charities of Central and Caribbean America. I was chosen through a data base of bilingual ob/gyn nurse practitioners to volunteer some time to visit El Salvador to teach, evaluate and focusing on imparting health information to "promoters", members of local churches who can learn how to deal with health needs as medical care is sparse if non-existent. The main focus was to investigate and evaluate why maternal/infant mortality and morbidity was so prevalent. What was to turn out to be a one-time trip, converted into becoming curriculum director and consultant for Central American countries, El Salvador, Honduras over 10 times, Panama and the Dominican Republic for seven years while working at the college. After constant refining of curriculums according to needs of each country, creating practical physical exam elements for practice, climbing mountains with minimal equipment and assessing the best I could as I shared the information. Higher the mountains, the more deplorable conditions are, no sanitation, no soil to grow vegetation only ash from the fires that burns garbage and so many other things too awful to mention. I met with archbishops and cardinals to try to make sense of all the violence and unending poverty. I had traveled once or twice with colleagues from other colleges but I realized, I should not be creating nor viewing these experiences alone. I asked my Dean of Nursing, the CEO Mary Sedutto of HHH and Dean of International Studies if I could bring graduates on these medical missions to be witness and learn that there is so much happening behind their backyards. I began to create live footage with each trip as my students quickly learned the curriculum and taught objectives.

Biography

Lisa Fernandez is an Associate Professor of Nursing at SCCC. She is a lecturer, clinical instructor and course coordinator for Maternal/Child Health Nursing. She is also a lecturer, lab instructor and course coordinator for Health Assessment. Her diverse responsibilities in the Nursing Department make it possible for me to meet and interact with many students from both classes - which is probably her favorite aspect of her job.

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