Greetings Radiologic Sciences Alumni and Friends!

It is hard to believe that 2014 is coming to a close! The air is cooler and the holidays are quickly flying by. It seems like just yesterday, the year had started and I was writing to share the news of the NSU School of Allied Health with all of you.

This year we had our first big push to raise funds for our newly developed scholarship for radiologic sciences students. I am pleased to report that many of you have contributed to the NSU Radiologic Sciences Scholarship Fund. We want to thank for making those tax deductible donations to help future radiologic sciences students. We are looking forward to being able to award our first scholarship in 2015.

If you have not made a donation, it is never too late! This edition of the newsletter has information on how you can make your tax deductible donation as well. We can’t tell you how much it means to the NSU School of Allied Health and our students that you support them.

This edition of the newsletter highlights the many things happening with our faculty, students, and alumni. I was so excited to see how much our students, faculty, and alumni are giving back to their communities and our profession. Every time we work on this newsletter, we realize how blessed we are to have such strong support of our alumni and the allied health community. We look forward to your continued support and feedback. It is all of you that make our programs continue to thrive, grow, and be strong.

As always, we look forward to hearing from all of you. Please let us know what we can do to continue to strengthen our programs. Also, we would love to hear what you are doing and how you have been. Please feel free to contact me at: carwilel@nsula.edu. Thanks so much for your continued support and interest in the School of Allied Health at NSU. I hope that you enjoy the newsletter.

Laura Aaron
Students Learn Through Service

Service learning takes ordinary community service and adds a learning aspect to the project. It enhances what is taught in the classroom and helps to foster the development of a sense of caring for others. It also gives students an increased level of civic mindedness and many who engage in these activities in school believe in the importance and are more likely to continue in the future. The NSU Radiologic Sciences Program try to incorporate many service activities into the program in order to allow students to grow and learn in different areas.

Oliver goes to the Hope House

Oliver is a coloring book about x-rays designed by one of our Senior students as part of a previous service project. The Hope House is the homeless shelter for women and children in Alexandria. Our junior students took Oliver to the shelter to read the story of “Oliver gets an X-Ray” to the children. The students colored with the children and talked to them about x-rays and really got to know the children. The students were able to talk to children from different socioeconomic backgrounds, age groups and ethnicities. Their feedback was extremely positive. For example, one student said, “I realized that there are people living in a lower socioeconomic status that haven’t had the best life and can still be happy and smile. It’s important for us to treat this community fair and kind regardless of their life because they are all like us.”

Faculty and Students Get Flu Shots

You will notice in the photo a familiar face! Technologist, Kellye Davidson is administering an influenza vaccine to NSU faculty Becky Farmer. Kellye and her team from Velocity Care gave back to NSU and provided flu shots for students, faculty, and staff on the Shreveport campus. NSU faculty and students are required to get flu shots in order to work, learn and teach in the healthcare institutions in the area. Thanks again to Velocity Care for providing this service for us this year!
Susan G. Komen for the Cure
On October 11, Alexandria radiologic science and nursing students joined 3000 others in Central Louisiana to Race for the Cure. Students made and sold pink ribbons and baked goods to raise money and awareness for this wonderful cause. This year the Cenla students raised almost $1000 for this great cause. Seventy-five percent of all funds raised in the area stay with the local affiliate for grants to provide much needed mammograms, treatment and education. The other twenty-five percent goes to the Komen organization for research.
Statistics show that 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer. Some of the students have been personally affected by this disease. One student said, “Breast cancer has affected many women in my family. So it felt good to be able to walk and give back to an organization that does so much for women affected by this disease.” Another stated, “Being able to participate in this walk made me feel like I was making a difference in finding a cure. Susan G. Komen is a great organization and has been working hard to find a cure for breast cancer”.

American Heart Association “Go Red for Women”
In June, the Alexandria students helped raise awareness about the deadliness of heart disease and stroke at the annual “Go Red for Women Luncheon”. This year the students helped by taking blood pressures, working the silent auction table and serving food. Since heart disease is the number 1 killer in women and stroke is the number 4 cause of death in both men and women, it is a near and dear cause to us all. Each one of us knows someone who has been affected by either heart disease or stroke. The students had a great time learning about the risk factors and educating the community on heart disease and stroke prevention.
This question has and continues to give me restless nights, as we as a program and a profession continue to transition into a fully digital imaging profession. I recount the days when I first started teaching physics, how I had to go back to the world of mAs controls density and kVp controls contrast, but sometimes can change density, OMG!! It took several semesters for me to get to a point where I was very comfortable teaching “old school” radiology physics and then one day (thanks to Dr. Aaron) all that I knew went “out the window” and so did my sense of comfort. I began the pain staking process of letting go to all that I knew about Physics and started the process of learning the new way images are being acquired (or to be more digital savvy, the study of image acquisition). Yes, I can say that I am “that old” and it is hard to “teach an old dog new tricks”, but I am really excited about what I have been able to achieve as our program has embraced this new technology.

You may wonder what the point to all of this is, well, I want to make sure we are all clear on the fact that we are still about “patient exposure”. Not only is this still our primary job responsibility, “remember the ALARA principle?”, but it is still part of what makes us a profession. I have been researching the standardization of exposure indicators (EI) for digital imaging and have been overwhelmed on the amount of inconsistency I have discovered. Not only is there confusion on the definition and purpose of exposure indicators, but there seems to be a lot on how exposure should be handled with digital equipment. Back in the day when I was a practicing technologist, we worked with the two variables kVp and mAs with regards to patient exposure and the outcome of the image. As we began using digital equipment, the idea of using more exposure than with film/screen systems, unfortunately became the norm. This led to the phenomenon of “dose creep” which we all know is unfortunate for the patient and completely against all the laws of radiation protection. The idea that it is better to give the computer systems more exposure than necessary, although true in the sense that the signal to noise ratio is improved and therefore does provide a better “quality” of image, is not the direction the profession should be looking toward. The truth of the matter is that with today’s technology the computers are actually able to process an exposure that in film screen would not even be visible, into an acceptable diagnostic image. With the feed-back loop broken in the digital cycle of image acquisition, meaning that the image is rescaled to appear perfect, we as technologists no longer have the overexposed/underexposed horror of a repeat film due to incorrect exposure. It appears that everyone is doing their own thing with exposure, without any reasoning behind their choices. This makes the need for standardization of the EI number even more necessary, as we have lost the opportunities afforded by “learning from our mistakes”.

With so much confusion in such a highly technical profession, one would think that standardizing exposure would be of utmost importance. Well the truth of the matter is that there is a standard EI, which was determined in 2009 by AAPM (American Association of Physicists)–Task Group 116. So why haven’t we all started talking the same language when it comes to EI readings? Well let’s think about this for just a second. Remember when one type of system could not read another vendor’s images? When the need for a common language between imaging systems was needed, and finally the DICOM was created and accepted by the profession. This standardization of digital imaging communication took several years before it became common to all healthcare organizations. This is what needs to happen with the EI issue, but at a much faster pace. The sooner it’s implemented, the sooner we as a profession can start to address what this number will accurately represent. Having an acceptable deviation index from this standard EI number will again close the feed-back loop between exposure and image quality. Once again, technologist will have the technical ability to protect patients from unnecessary radiation exposure while producing images with consistent quality. Eventually, all exposures should be decreased from that of the “good ole days” since today’s imaging systems are now comparable to a ”relative speed class of 400” and there is now a standard EI number that has a direct relationship to exposure of the imaging plate. So, is it really all about exposure? YOU BET!!

Kendall Delacerda
Radiologic Sciences Scholarship Fund

Do you remember when you were a radiology clinical student?? If you do, you must remember the struggles that you encountered and likely one of those struggles might have been paying tuition. With YOUR help, we can assist a radiology clinical student with their financial burden by offering a scholarship that is funded in part by YOU, an alumni or supporter of this program.

The Radiologic Sciences Support and Scholarship Fund helps maintain the day-to-day excellence of the School of Allied Health by making a difference in every aspect of life at NSU. Because needs and opportunities differ over time, it is important to have a robust Support Fund each academic year to afford vital resources and to seek additional ones. In light of the ongoing limitations in State funding, we must look to private donations and the community for this support.

Your support and positive representation of the Radiologic Sciences Program is appreciated and critical to our continued success! Please consider a donation of any size to help support our students.

Thank you for your tax-deductible contribution to NSU, Radiologic Sciences Program. We greatly appreciate your support.

Make your check to: NSU Foundation / Radiologic Sciences Support Fund

Please mail your check and this form to:
NSU Foundation, Radiologic Sciences
Attn: Laura Aaron
1800 Line Avenue
Shreveport, LA 71101
Call 318-677-3020 for additional information
Alumni Spotlight: Edwenia Brown-Sykes
Class of 2004

Edwenia has worked as a staff nuclear medicine technologist for the past 5 years at Overton Brooks VA Medical Center. She has excelled in her field by becoming certified in nuclear medicine and CT and has earned a new class of licensure from the LSRTBE as a Fusion Technologist. Edwenia is currently performing nuclear medicine studies, CT studies and PET studies as well. She is preparing to challenge the SNM PET registry next. Edwenia says that her education she received at Northwestern more than prepared her for the ever evolving world of radiology. Her leadership skills and her outstanding communication skills learned at NSU have enabled her to excel in her career. After graduation, Edwenia worked as a travel technologist performing mobile x-ray. Later, she became employed as a Pain Management technologist. In this position, she was responsible for all quality control testing and analysis, which she attributes her education at NSU for making those tasks easy for her. Edwenia attended nuclear medicine school at the University of Arkansas. Edwenia is always trying to improve her skills and expand her knowledge so she can be an asset to her profession and her employer. Way to go Edwenia, NSU is proud of you!

National Radiologic Technology Week Celebrated

The Shreveport students at NSU recently displayed their radiology pride during Radiologic Technology week. On Tuesday, November 4, the senior students transformed the 2nd floor atrium of the Shreveport campus into a radiology celebration. Both the senior and junior radiology classes joined in the fun, as well as several technologists from across the region. Even future radiology students from a radiology introduction class were invited to join in the celebration. The students did an outstanding job in both decorating and preparing food for everyone.

One of the highlights of the afternoon was a “guess the baby” contest, where students and faculty submitted some of their favorite pictures from when they were babies. The students voted on their “supertech”. The technologist they all felt helped them the most in their clinical education. The winner this year is Amanda Warren, technologist at the Overton Brooks VA Medical Center in Shreveport. Amanda is a 2012 graduate of NSU! Congratulations Amanda and thank you for helping the students.
The students’ division of the annual Louisiana Society of Radiologic Technologists includes competitions where all students can participate—and hopefully—place for a monetary award for their respective institution, such as the quiz bowl competition (participants: Kelsi Copeland, Ashley Young, Ariel Goelden, Laken Baggs, Karrah Collis, & Holly Lane) scientific essay, poster presentation, and T-shirt competitions. At the annual conference, students are afforded the opportunity to increase their knowledge and improve their skill sets during lectures that include: radiation protection practices, proper equipment operation, patient-care education and practices, and proper image evaluation. Among all the competitions at annual conference, NSU garnered 2nd place for the scientific exhibit award. This was a collaborative effort for Lydia Futrell and Megan Lindsey on the topic “Deep Brain Stimulation”. Also, relevant to student affairs, Ms. Kari Cook was elected chair of the Louisiana Educators in Radiologic Sciences council at the annual meeting. Dr. Tammy Curtis was elected president elect and Mr. Joel Hicks was elected first vice president. Congratulations to our NSU faculty for their accomplishments.
We are proud to share that Kellye Davidson, who graduated from NSU in 2007, currently holds the position of Data Management Coordinator for Radiology and Laboratory Supervisor at three separate Velocity Care Urgent Treatment Centers located in Shreveport and Bossier, LA. While Kellye has been at Velocity Care for the past 4 years, her title does not encompass the responsibilities of her everyday job. Kellye finds herself dealing with a lot of HR responsibilities which she absolutely loves. She assists with interviewing potential employees and is in charge of new employee orientations. Not only does Kellye oversee the quality of personnel, but she also ensures the clinics are compliant with OSHA, CLIA, COLA, and DEA guidelines. Kellye ensures the clinics and staff are in compliance with their laboratory accrediting agency and successfully passes all 6 inspections. Another new found love is writing policies and procedures. Other management duties include medical supply orders, medication ordering, x-ray over-reads, reference lab, and more. Looking back, Kellye can definitely say her senior class projects at NSU helped prepare her for the management components of her job. Prior to working for Velocity Care, Kelley was employed at Willis Knighton Health Systems for three years where she gained her initial skills working in the clinic and laboratory setting. While Kellye has already excelled in her radiology career, she continues to set higher goals for herself and recently applied to the Masters of Healthcare Administration program at LSU-S in an effort to further her education.

On a personal note, Kellye has a 12-year-old son named Austin. He keeps her busy with karate, basketball, guitar lessons, and middle school life. Kellye loves spending time with her family, traveling, refinishing furniture, and photography. Kellye’s personal philosophy is to do what you are passionate about. You are the best when you are excited about your work. She absolutely loves what she does. She loves waking up and going to work. “Where you start may not be where you end up.” She never thought 7 years ago she would be doing what she is doing now. Velocity Care is only 5 years old, which in business years, is considered very young. Kellye is contributing in a way that makes a difference for their current and future patients. Kellye is defining “What is Velocity.”
NSULA-Radiologic Sciences

We are on Facebook! NSULA-Radiologic Sciences is the name of our page. Please go and “like” us for current, up to date, program information as well as job postings and other news worthy information.