

# Department of **NURSING** NEWSLETTER

CARSON-NEWMAN UNIVERSITY



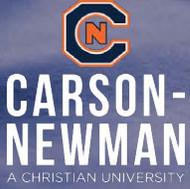
## **ONWARD AND UPWARD: DRAMA AND TED RUSSELL CENTER PROJECT TAKES SHAPE**

After months of anticipation, steel began reaching skyward at the Drama and Ted Russell Center construction site on Carson-Newman's campus. With the help of an onsite crane, crews began setting columns for the University's future health sciences building.

"There has been much work thus far at the ground level in preparing a strong foundation," University President Charles A. Fowler said, "but I cannot tell you how excited we are to see those beams go up. God is good. You can't help but see that great things are on the horizon for Carson-Newman."

Ondes Webster, C-N's director of Physical Plant and construction manager, says the erection begins on the south-front of the building and will work its way north to completion. "The building is a great design," Webster said. "Its strong and durable construction will ensure that it lasts for many years."

Along with the arrival of beams, Webster added that all metal decking is now on site, as are the metal studs for the exterior walls. The future hub for C-N's nursing program is becoming a reality.



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Located on North College Street and Branner Avenue, the Drama and Ted Russell Center will consist of three levels spanning 48,000 square feet. The state-of-the-art facility will include additional classroom space, simulation labs, health assessment labs and general skills labs. To enhance the student experience, the building will also feature a food service area, multiple student lounges, collaboration areas, as well as a covered outdoor terrace.

The project is scheduled for completion in 2023. The Drama and Ted Russell Center is the first project launched as part of the University's "Acorns to Oaks" 5-year strategic plan. The plan consists of new academic programs, expanded athletic offerings, new and renovated facilities, enrollment growth, and greater missional alignment.



## **FOCUS ON ROTC**

Carson-Newman University Army ROTC was established in 1971 and is located at 706 East College Street in the Baker Building. Army ROTC offers courses to develop leadership and management skills for both military and civilian careers. The Army Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) program provides qualified students opportunities to serve their country full or part time as officers in the US Army. Students enrolled in ROTC who meet specified qualifications can earn a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the US Army, Army National Guard or the US Army Reserve



The relationship between nursing and ROTC at Carson-Newman University has led to a number of unique developments to include the following:

- January 21, 1998, Carson-Newman University and the Department of Nursing joined in agreement with the United States Army Nurse Corps for the education of nurses entering the Army Nurse Corps in a special Partnership in Nursing Education (PNE). Carson-Newman University Department of Nursing was chosen



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as one of forty schools in the United States selected to prepare nurses for the Army Nurse Corps. These students will be participants in both the nursing and the ROTC programs at C-N with full scholarship for their nursing education and will be commissioned into the Army Nurse Corps upon graduation.

- The PNE/ROTC Nursing Program at Carson-Newman University enables students to obtain a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. The curriculum is designed to give each student a balance of general education and military science courses along with nursing courses. Students receive three semesters of foundational and military science courses and then, in the spring of their sophomore year, begin clinical nursing courses that will prepare them for the state licensure examination for Registered Nurses. At the completion of the program graduates are commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army.
- The C-N ROTC Nursing connections also let to a unique agreement with New Mexico Military Institute (NMMI). Pre-Nursing Programs Qualified New Mexico Military Institute (NMMI) cadets are enrolled in the Nursing Gateway Program and receive a four-year ROTC scholarships to include two years of study at NMMI leading to a pre-nursing Associate of Science degree followed by two years at Carson-Newman University culminating in the award of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree (BSN). Successful completion of the Associate Degree at NMMI guarantees entrance to Carson-Newman and continuation of the ROTC scholarship. Upon receipt of the BSN, the graduate will be eligible for appointment as an officer in the U.S. Army's Nurse Corps. Successful completion of the NMMI Pre-nursing curriculum will also result in any student being extremely competitive if they choose to apply for admission to a BSN program at any college or university with a ROTC component.

In addition, the Department of Nursing/ROTC unique relationship has led to the development of several specialty courses.

The Carson-Newman University Department of Nursing and ROTC programs are proud to highlight several alumni.

# Message from your ROTC Professor of Military Science and 2007 C-N Nursing Graduate

## Lieutenant Colonel Frances R. Young, MSN

Greetings Nursing Students, Faculty Team, and Friends, I am honored to be able to write this welcome letter to you. These past few months have been filled with such transformation for my family and I, and we couldn't be more grateful to have been selected to come back and serve here at Carson-Newman.

My nursing journey began nineteen years ago as I was awarded a four-year Army ROTC scholarship at Carson-Newman. This opportunity afforded me an invaluable leadership experience as I pursued a nursing degree. In those four years, navigating the complexities of leadership and the challenging nursing education shaped my life in a way that I can only describe as priceless.

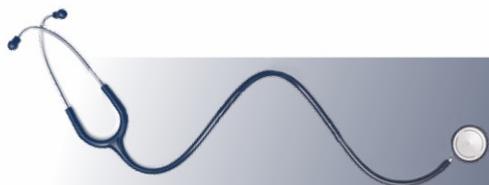
Whether a student or faculty, I believe you answered a higher calling to serve a purpose greater than yourselves. The faculty lead with compassion and genuine care as they have devoted themselves to guiding each nursing student to become the best versions of themselves.

As you begin your journey here this semester, I challenge you to **BE PRESENT**. Pursue your goals with confidence and build confidence in others. Be genuine with people. Inspire and motivate those around you to BE THEIR BEST every day. Lead with authenticity. Be humble while learning and serve with your heart. Life is such a gift...

### Be present wherever you are.

It can be so easy to become distracted and lose focus or begin to feel overwhelmed with schedules and clinicals. Classes are challenging, studying takes time, and the endless burden of time management can leave one feeling stressed. Be present for one another. If you only focus on the negative, you will often miss the opportunities and the incredible power that comes with being present in the moment and never losing sight of your goals. Take value in the strength, beauty, and goodness that comes from your surroundings. Be present this semester. You may look back upon your life and realize that the friendships you make, the relationships you develop, and the skills you learn will truly shape you for the larger purpose you were called to live. Being present will help you stay resilient and not lose your focus or your strength. Being present will help you live a life of gratitude despite the challenges which may, at times, seem insurmountable. Being present with those around you helps you appreciate the precious time you have been given, and who knows... Your life may be changed like mine was, by the team here at Carson-Newman. I am looking forward to sharing my story further with you soon. Be blessed and be present.

Honored to Serve....LTC Frances R. Young



# NURSING ADVISORY BOARD



## Megan Malone Apuzzo

Megan Malone Apuzzo, BSN, RN is currently working as a high school Health Science teacher in Crossville, TN and is President of Yellowkeet, Inc., an IT company that specializes in web design and IT helpdesk services for healthcare providers. After working in the field of healthcare for nearly a decade, Megan began working within the school system to allow more time for family, as well as have an opportunity to reach younger generations and lay a solid foundation for future healthcare professionals.

Megan has nursing experience in multiple different care settings including Emergency and Trauma, Long term care and Rehabilitation, Urgent Care, Family Practice and Pediatrics. She held a License as a Practical Nurse prior to completing her Bachelor's of Science in Nursing at Carson-Newman University. She received the Outstanding Graduate of the Year and the

Leadership Award for the class of 2015. She was involved in the Student Nurses Association, a mentor for international nursing students, as well as participated in Medical Missions with International Medical Alliance while at Carson-Newman University. She continues to be involved within her community and outreach programs.

Communication is a crucial part of healthcare and all interactions with one another. With the technologically advanced world we live in, it is even more important to connect with people and organizations that we believe in, so that we may be able to see these relationships thrive and grow. Assisting in the development of a strong and effective Nursing Advisory board and Nursing department at Carson-Newman University will benefit future generations of nurses and healthcare consumers. Being able to stay connected with the Carson-Newman University family and helping develop a stronger sense of community within the Nursing Department, both past and present, is an unbelievable honor.

It is truly a privilege to serve as the Nursing Advisory Board Chair. I want to challenge all Alumni to offer their support to continue to make the Carson-Newman Nursing program successful. Please continue to uphold the faculty, staff, and students in your thoughts and prayers during this challenging and historic time. We need alumni to join us on the advisory board to assist in making recommendations moving forward, providing mentorship to students, offering clinical resources and financial support.



# ALUMNI UPDATES



## **Jennie Bullard Class of 2007**

Since leaving Carson-Newman in 2007 with my Bachelors in Nursing, I had 12 years of amazing experience as an ICU nurse. Half of those years I spent traveling all over this country working in some of the top facilities. I gained so much knowledge during that time. In 2019, I completed my Masters of Science. I am board certified as a Family Nurse Practitioner. I currently reside in North Carolina where I will soon be part of a team working clinical trials related to Covid-19. C-N was a great experience and was lucky to have some wonderful classmates.



# ALUMNI UPDATES



## LT Hawn

When I think of Carson-Newman's nursing and ROTC programs, I think of three words: rigorous, exemplary, and fulfilling. C-N's Nursing program intertwined with ROTC was the most challenging four years. Both programs taught me self-confidence-- you can do more than what your mind is telling you! They also taught me self-discipline and time management-- trying to complete all of the assignments on top of studying for exams, then throw in monthly ROTC training labs and a Field Training Exercise each semester! I am still super proud of my peers, and myself, for being able to graduate and commission together! Those individuals are some of my best friends, who I still communicate with today.



I started my Army career in the center of the universe, Fort Bragg, North Carolina in 2018. I was MAP'd (assigned) to the 437th Medical Augmentation Detachment under the 16th Hospital Center with duties at Womack Army Medical Center. At WAMC, I worked on the post-surgical floor which converted to the COVID-19 floor in early 2020. In July 2020, I was sent on a COVID-19 response mission with the 16th HC as an 85-member Urban Augmentation Medical Task Force to assist a civilian hospital in McAllen, Texas. I am currently waiting to attend the 66E (perioperative nurse) course September 2021 in San Antonio, Texas enroute to my next duty station.

Throughout my very short time in the "Big Army," I have found a new appreciation for the nursing professors and military professors at C-N. I have experienced instances where my C-N background has helped me tremendously compared to my non-C-N peers. I am so grateful for every single one of my professors, especially my military professors, who challenged me think outside the box, be comfortable with being uncomfortable, and to MAKE A DECISION-- it is far worse to be indecisive. If given the chance, I would do it all over again and take advantage of all of the amazing opportunities I missed.



# ALUMNI UPDATES



## Tiffany Johnson

I graduated from C-N and was commissioned as a 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant in the Army Nurse Corps in 2002. I spent the next 6 years working as a MICU/SICU nurse in the Army. I was stationed at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Fort Riley, Kansas, and Fort Carson, Colorado. I had the privilege of caring for many of our wounded soldiers and their families. I was honored to also care for retirees who had previously served our country.

After leaving active duty, I earned my master's degree in nursing education from South University in Savannah, GA. For the next 3 years, I taught pediatrics and critical care to RN students at West Georgia Technical College just outside of Atlanta. My freelance writing and editing career began then with ATI and Pearson Education. Today, I provide substantive editing and write NCLEX-style questions for Elsevier.

In 2011, I accepted a position in professional development with the Organizational Learning department at Wellstar Health System in Atlanta. During my first 6 years at Wellstar, I was the program director and lead instructor for the critical care fellowship, a 6-month program for new graduates and experienced nurses new to ICU. I was also the instructor for all system-wide cardiology classes. At the time, Wellstar was a 5-hospital system, and I taught team members from each facility. I then spent the next 3 years as a unit-based educator for critical care at one of Wellstar's community hospitals in Douglasville, GA. One year ago, I accepted a position as the American Heart Association educator for the system. We are now an 11-hospital system with over 300 outpatient offices, 28 urgent cares, and 5 health parks. I am responsible for BLS, ACLS, and PALS education system-wide for approximately 34,000 team members. I am an instructor for the Trauma Nursing Core Course (TNCC), Emergency Nursing Pediatric Course (ENPC), and the AVADE workplace violence prevention and self-defense course. I have the privilege of working with all professions, not only nursing. May will be my 10-year anniversary with Wellstar.

I currently live in Dallas, Georgia with my two sons, Andy (13) and Matthew (15) and our German Shephardor, Cookie. I spend most of my time off outdoors hiking, cycling, and paddle boarding. I will be forever grateful for the nursing professors and ROTC cadre at Carson-Newman. I would not be where I am today without any of them!



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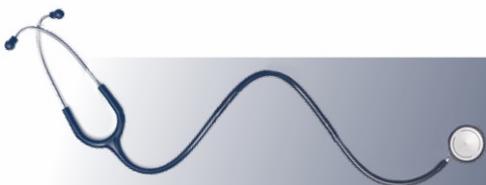
## Tammy Means Class of 1997

I have worked in Ortho, CCU Step down, Dialysis and and as a Nurse Case Manager for Chronic Care and Transitional Care Management. I managed a Family Practice for over a dozen years and was deployed with the Medical Reserve Corps in OH during 2020 for Covid. I have also spent the last year working as an investigator for the Coroner in Van Wert Co. Ohio and have recently moved to Goodland, KS, 16 miles from the CO border. I am currently working all over CO with the vaccination clinics there. I have a BSN, MBA and most recently completed a certificate as a Nurse Paralegal. I have recently submitted a patent along with three other health care entrepreneurs and await the final outcome.



I have 4 children, 2 boys, 2 girls, 1 grandson, 5 cats and 2 house bunnies. We lived in the Alaska bush and then back on the road system for nearly 15 years before returning to the lower 48. Most recently, my husband and I bought a 165 acre ranch and I am busy preparing the site for a vineyard, orchard and in my off-time I am building 20 garden boxes for summer vegetables.

Dr. Wood is an amazing teacher, nurse and friend to all students. I always felt encouraged as a student and found her enthusiasm for learning and her infectious laughter to be equally stimulating. Dr. Wood shared her joy in her calling with all of us and that gave us all an even greater gift. Joy is what sustains us in difficult times. There have been many in my work the past few years. I chose service to my community and found great joy in keeping others safe. Nursing is a calling and a blessing and Dr. Wood blessed me with her kindness and devotion to teaching and those who were lucky enough to train with her carry that love with them in their work.



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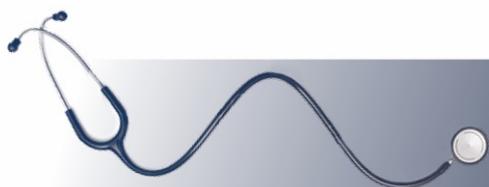


## Cassandra Mitchell Class of 2010

My name is Cassandra Mitchell, class of 2010 from Carson-Newman. I completed my BSN and moved back to my home town. I finished my first Master's in Nursing Education from Tennessee Technological University in 2014 then continued for my post master's degree from Tennessee Technological University as Family Nurse Practitioner in 2018. I have worked anything from step down, ER, ICU, management, hospice, and med-surg as a nurse. I have obtained different certifications while performing the different roles to be proficient in the field. As a nurse practitioner, I have worked in the clinic setting and urgent care setting.

I joined the US Public Health Services and became active duty August 2020. I am currently stationed in Augusta, GA working at the local VA in primary care clinic. I have applied to start my DNP program in Fall 2021 with Augusta University.

Carson-Newman paved the way for my diverse career in nursing that just keeps getting better!



# ALUMNI UPDATES



## 1LT Heidi Morgan

My name is 1LT Heidi Morgan and I currently serve as a Nurse Corps Officer in the United States Army. I am originally from Frederick, MD and did a lot of research before I chose Carson-Newman. I chose C-N because I was looking for a school with a stellar nursing program with Christian values and with an ROTC program on campus. I hit the jackpot when I found C-N. I joined the ROTC program without a scholarship and earned a 3-year scholarship within my first year of attending C-N. The additional training I received as a Cadet is compared to none other. During my time as a Cadet, I was able to perform land navigation, infantry tactics, and I even got to attend Airborne School, jumping out of a perfectly good planes, all while being in the nursing program. I graduated in 2018 with my BSN at Carson-Newman and commissioned as a 2LT into Army through the ROTC program. The combination of nursing skills and critical thinking developed by the nursing program as well as the leadership skills I have gained from the ROTC program has truly set me up for success after graduating. Being in the military, you are put in many leadership positions that a new nurse would not think of accomplishing



in the first couple years of being a new nurse. My first assignment has been Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, MD, which many refer to as the President's Hospital. I work on a medical-surgical unit and the original Wounded Warrior floor at this hospital. Within my first year of being on the floor, I became one of the primary charge nurses which I felt prepared for through my experiences through the nursing program and ROTC program. The education, training, travel opportunities are limitless in the military and I am constantly finding a way to improve my skills in the hospital or field environment. Serving in the national capital region, I have been able to care for and work with the heroes of our country along with their families, diplomats, and leaders of our nation. Doing ROTC and the Nursing program at C-N was no easy task, but the instructors of the nursing program and ROTC cadre were so devoted to my success that I would choose the same path again. Caring for our nation's heroes has been my biggest reward and honor in serving as an Army Nurse.



# ALUMNI UPDATES



## Lindsay Vezina

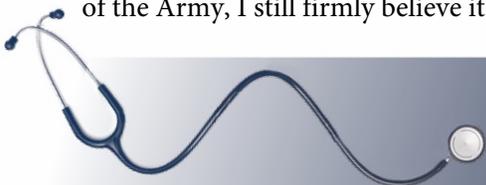
In May of 2005 I had just graduated high school and decided on attending Carson-Newman College (as it was known then) declaring myself as a nursing major. I received a call one day, out of the blue, from a Major Tom Amidon asking me if I had heard of Army ROTC and if I would like a scholarship to be in ROTC and then go on to serve the US Army for 4 years as a nurse. To say I was surprised is an understatement, I had NEVER thought of joining the military and honestly thought the idea mildly laughable, I wasn't quite "army material" or so I thought. At the time, the Army was offering your first year free, as in you commit and if you don't like it you can back out before starting your second year of college and the whole first year was paid for by Uncle Sam. My father was my voice of reason, basically saying that it was worth a shot due to the 8k/yr of uncovered college expenses I still hadn't figured out how to pay despite my scholarships. Logic won, I guess I'll give this army thing a shot.



It didn't take long into my first year that I was hooked, I got to learn to shoot a weapon, do repelling, obstacle courses, an automatic friend group, great cadre, and I felt I fit in. I learned quickly that hard work and dedication paid off and I got to do great things with ROTC. My sophomore summer I got to airborne school and jump out of planes at Fort Benning, GA. Junior summer I spent some time in Ft. Lewis, Washington and experienced the beauty of Mt. Ranier and then jet set to Hawaii for a month to go "work" at Tripler Army Hospital for a nurse summer training program. I worked hard thru nursing school and with my GPA, physical training score, and other rankings I ended up being in the top 10% of nurses in the nation based on the order of merit list, meaning I got to pick my first duty assignment. So off to Germany I went.

I worked 3 years at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Landstuhl, Germany taking care of wounded warriors, retirees, active-duty military and their families on a med surg unit and in same day surgery. My husband and I traveled Europe every chance we got, which was quite a lot because you rack up quite a bit of vacation time in the armed forces. After Germany, I decided to specialize in Emergency medicine and got to go to San Antonio, TX for 5 months to learn how to be an ER nurse, it was an amazing experience and taught me so much. I went to Fort Gordon, GA as my follow-on assignment after completing the course and worked with a great group of people for 4 years (minus one 9-month deployment to Kuwait) until I decided to get out of the Army to focus on starting our family.

I have been out since 2017. Since leaving I have had two kids, started going back for my Masters in FNP/ ENP, and my husband decided after he completed his BSN degree that he wanted to serve as well, so he joined the US Airforce in 2019. The army afforded me endless opportunities. Some of which being my undergraduate degree debt free, many great friendships, solid income with great benefits, my GI bill (I am currently using to go back for my FNP/ENP degree), the pride and dignity of serving my country, and leadership, interpersonal, and nursing skills that I have carried with me into my civilian life. I look back on my time I served with pride and even though I decided to get out of the Army, I still firmly believe it was the best decision I could have ever made in my life.



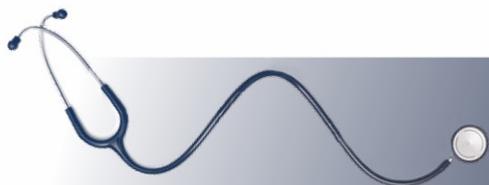
# ALUMNI UPDATES



## Weston A. Winn

I have been very fortunate in my career and I thank all the professors at Carson-Newman, especially Cynthia Lynn, for their devotion to the students who are currently in the Nursing program and for those who have graduated.

After graduating in 2008 I worked two years at the University of Tennessee Medical Center on the Neuro/Stroke unit. This was a very challenging yet rewarding job and was the catalyst to my career. At the end of 2009 I began gathering information on the United States Air Force and in 2010 commissioned in as a first lieutenant. During my six years, I deployed twice to Afghanistan working ED/Trauma, completed a one year critical care/trauma fellowship, obtained numerous nurse leadership certificates, and two Air Force Commendation Medals. I ultimately separated as a Captain in 2016. From there I moved to Los Angeles where I managed two large Emergency Departments. Currently I work for Becton Dickinson as a Clinical Manager in their Urology/Critical Care division. I start my MBA this summer at Ohio University.



# ALUMNI UPDATES



## Jessica M. Schneider

Things will never not be hard. Something I have grown to learn as I graduated high school and now work towards graduating from Carson-Newman University with my BSN and a Minor in Military Science. Even though I found that life never seems to slow down, what I've been told is to look towards God for guidance, and for peace. When I came to Carson-Newman University back in 2017 I had no idea how blessed I would be. I was given an opportunity to study nursing here with the hopes of also becoming and 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Army Nurse Corps. Many people helped me along in my journey here, and I would not have made it through all the hardships otherwise. Now I have become apart of something bigger than myself and plan to affect many lives all around the world just as the faculty, cadre, and friends I've made have affected mine. In 2017, I came here with simply a path from God, and today I graduate with true LT the greatest gift He could ever have given me.

