



WELS Nursing Today

Working together, sharing the gospel

The Lutheran Health Alliance

By Jason Paltzer, MPH

Many families and communities in our world mission fields live in extreme poverty and struggle daily with insufficient food, water, and shelter. Such conditions are not only physically challenging, but also mentally and spiritually difficult as families deal with chronic depression and anxiety. However, these same families and children also exhibit life-saving characteristics of resilience, creativity, and determination to survive and thrive. The Lutheran Health Alliance (LHA) is a new initiative of Kingdom Workers. It's looking to stand with such families building on their resilience and determination to address their physical and spiritual struggles. We hope to do this by assisting local congregations and national church groups in assessing, designing, and implementing community-driven health partnerships between local community and congregation members, local health professionals, and health volunteers affiliated with Kingdom Workers. The LHA also hopes to be a technical support and information resource for other WELS health organizations such as WELSNA, looking to develop strategic and innovative partnerships focused on improving health and sharing the gospel.

The LHA plans to develop cross-cultural collaborations among Christians in professions relevant to improving the health and well-being of children and families while sharing the gospel and maturing as disciples of Christ. In 2013, assessments have been conducted in

Mexico, Haiti, and Southeast Asia. Throughout the rest of this year, follow-up visits will focus on working with a local congregation and community leaders in Mahahual, Mexico, to further develop their health ministry project plans. In addition to capacity building, this will also involve strengthening local connections with other community groups, the local clinic, and community health workers in Mahahual. The LHA is also supporting the efforts of the Lutheran church in Haiti by complimenting food relief with nutrition and basic health education for several Haitian orphanages as well as guiding the directors in a long-term food security plan involving local agriculture and gardening.

The LHA uses a participatory approach to developing projects aimed at strengthening internal community assets and building local and cross-cultural relationships. The hope is that short-term and long-term volunteers will be able to work alongside local health professionals in a way that builds long-term professional and personal relationships while increasing the health and capacity of local families. WELSNA is a key partner in this work, and the LHA looks forward to serving nurses in the association with cross-cultural, Christ-centered opportunities to improve health and show people the love of Christ.

For more information, visit KingdomWorkers.com/LHA.

Commissioning of Megan Behl

By Linda Liesener, CAMM committee chairwoman

Megan Behl was commissioned as CAMM's next Nurse in Charge for the Central Africa Medical Mission Lutheran Mobile Clinic in Malawi, Africa. Pastor Kenneth Ewerdt, St. Paul's, Ixonia, Wis., presided as minister for the commissioning and Pastor Herbert Prah (St. Mark's, Eau Claire, Wis.) delivered the sermon. Prah's sermon was based on Megan's confirmation verse of Ephesians 2:8-10.



Megan Behl, commissioned as Nurse in Charge for Central the Central Africa Medical Mission Lutheran Mobile Clinic in Malawi, Africa.

Megan is the daughter of Dan and Chris Behl. She attended grade school at St. John's Lutheran School in Watertown, Wis., and high school at Lakeside Lutheran, Lake Mills, Wis. After graduating from Lakeside in 2006, she attended UW-Eau Claire and graduated in December of 2010 with a BSN. She began her career as a nurse at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., and worked for about two years in the Bone Marrow Transplant Unit. She has also served and volunteered for WELS and other organizational programs in North Carolina, New Orleans, Ghana, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic. Megan recently participated in the WELS Mission Abroad Program in Malawi as an intern and was able to observe different medical facilities including those associated with CAMM.

We have now heard that Megan has arrived safely! She flew into Lilongwe on April 11. She's excited to be

there and we're so happy to have her! She has already proven to be a pro at driving the roads of Malawi. Read more about Megan on the WELSNA website, www.welsnurses.net.

Cards and letters of encouragement may be sent to: Lutheran Mobile Clinic, PO Box 30339 Lilongwe 3 Malawi Africa.

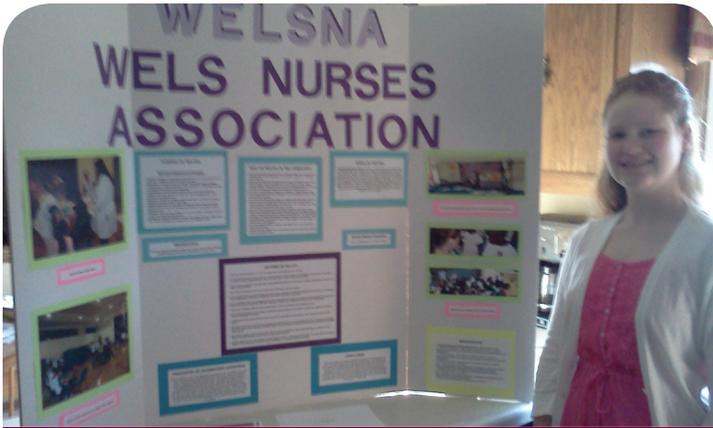
Why WELSNA is important

By Anna Spaude

Anna Spaude is an 8th grader in one of our WELS schools who interviewed us for her Social Studies Fair research project. She did a great job and we'll see if God has a plan for her in a nursing career!

So many people in so many places need medical assistance. Wouldn't it be great if we and other Christians could assist them medically and share the good news about Jesus with them through Christian nurses? Well, WELSNA does just that. WELSNA stands for the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod Nurses Association. They are helping out so many people, physically and spiritually. WELSNA has a very interesting history, they have a great Christ-centered purpose, many great ways to help people and spread God's Word, and many goals for the future of WELSNA.

WELSNA is still developing; it is a very new organization. But it still does have a history that began in 2010. Pastor Zeimer, the former Director of Special Ministries, and other WELS people thought that there should be a national organization of WELS nurses. A task force was formed and they met every month in the WELS synod offices. In a few short months, with a lot of thought and hard work and help from so many great volunteers, they started organizing themselves. They gathered a database of known WELS nurses and others who might be interested and they made a website as a modern way to spread the news. A newsletter is made and sent out four times a year and is also posted on their website. A nursing conference is held yearly. The WELS Parish Nurses voted and they decided to join WELSNA. They are now one group. They hold a Parish Nurse Gathering every year to give nurses education, Christian support, and networking



Anna Spaude, 8th grader at a WELS school, interviewed WELSNA for her Social Studies Fair research project.

for nurses who are interested in becoming Parish Nurses. Pastor James Behringer serves as their spiritual advisor. WELSNA might have had a short history but, God-willing, it will have a wonderful and long future. The WELS Nurses Association still has a lot to grow but it is well on its way to becoming a very well-known WELS association.

WELSNA keeps God as number one in their purpose. Their mission statement is "Nurses working together as servants of Christ." It provides spiritual support by giving the nurses chances to grow in their medical studies and in their faith. They get to strengthen their faith by sharing the love of God with others.

WELSNA already has a role in the community (local and congregational). Right now they give nurses, in a ton of places in the U.S., help and resources to help their own congregational community. They give churches ideas to provide health education as outreach to get people into the church to hear that and God's Word too! One of their ideas is how to conduct a "Blood Pressure Ministry." People come to make sure their blood pressure is good and then they can learn about Jesus. They can help their heart in two ways!

I think that WELSNA is a wonderful organization. With WELSNA, Christian nurses get support and encouragement and they get to prioritize their wonderful Christian faith. It is for sure something to be aware of and use as a resource. God has blessed

WELSNA with a wonderful and successful start and he will continue to be there and help them through all of their years. God will always work for WELSNA's good. "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

Humor

A nurse on the pediatric ward, before listening to the little ones' chests, would plug the stethoscope into their ears and let them listen to their own heart. Their eyes would always light up with awe, but she never got a response equal to four-year-old David's comment.

Gently she tucked the stethoscope into his ears and placed the disk over his heart. "Listen," she said... "What do you suppose that is?" He drew his eyebrows together in a puzzled line and looked up as if lost in the mystery of the strange tap - tap - tapping deep in his chest.

Then his face broke out in a wondrous grin and he asked, "Is that Jesus knocking?"

Keep WELSNA in your thoughts and prayers as we carefully consider how to match our ministry goals with the financial needs for that ministry. There are costs associated with our website maintenance, printing materials as well as the costs of our Spring Conference and fall Parish Nurse Gathering. We are considering a variety of income sources, one of which might be a donation, small or large, from you. Synod has provided an easy and safe donation feature on our website. Or send a check to **WELSNA c/o Special Ministries, 2929 N. Mayfair Road Milwaukee, Wis. 53222-4398**. We take comfort in knowing that the Lord has great plans for WELSNA!

• News and Notes •

Call for Abstracts! The 2014 WELSNA Spring Conference will be held on Saturday, March 29, 2014, at Wisconsin Lutheran College, in Milwaukee, Wis. The conference will provide an opportunity for WELS nurses to come together to learn, share, and grow personally, professionally, and spiritually. Members of WELSNA are invited to submit abstracts for podium and/or poster presentations at the conference. Since WELS nurses work in a variety of different settings, abstract themes may include a wide range of topics focused on professional nursing care. More information about the Call for Abstracts at www.welsnurses.net. Contact us if you would like to join the planning committee. We are meeting at the SAB on June 12 at 6 p.m. Many hands are needed! Questions? E-mail Sue at welsnurses@wels.net.

Wisconsin Lutheran College School of Nursing is actively recruiting WELS-affiliated nurses to serve as adjunct clinical instructors in medical-surgical areas for both fall and spring semesters. Responsibilities include teaching six-hour long clinical experiences weekly for the semester and attendance at monthly nursing faculty meetings. All clinical experiences are conducted within the metropolitan Milwaukee area. Qualifications: Two years of active clinical experience in a medical - surgical area within the past five years. BSN required, MSN preferred. Please contact Rebekah Carey at 414-443-8666, or send your resume to rebekah.carey@WLC.edu.

Our Annual Fall Parish Nurse Gathering is scheduled for October 19th, 2013, at Christ Lutheran Church in Pewaukee, Wis. We are excited to have Pastor Joe Radsek and his wife Dawn (RN) of WLIM to speak to us on "Supporting our People and Congregations during Life-changing Challenges." Rebekah Carey RN, director of Nursing at WLC and advisory committee member of WKW/Lutheran Health Alliance, will join us to introduce the exciting work at the LHA. Save the Date! Registration information coming midsummer.

WELS Kingdom Workers Nurses...are you interested in preparing for short-term overseas health service? Register for a "Global Health Education for the Health Professional Volunteer" workshop at Wisconsin Lutheran College on July 26 - 27. Admission is free.

WELSNA is on the move this summer with representation at the Western Wisconsin district convention, the LWMS Convention, the Women's Leadership Conference, Synod Convention and the OWLS's Convention in October. If you happen to be there, stop by the display and say hello. We would love to meet you!

"Give Me a Break!" The Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ministry (IDDM), part of the Commission on Special Ministries, will be hosting the "Give Me a Break!" retreat July 26-27 at the Country Springs Hotel, Waukesha, Wis. The retreat is intended for parents and caregivers of children with special needs. Mr. Jim Esmeier, IDDM coordinator, says, "We hope that parents are recharged and uplifted spiritually, physically, and mentally." The goals are to provide time to get together, provide time away from care giving, allow for spiritual growth and personal growth, provide faith-based networking, and develop ongoing support. Respite care will be provided for children. Rev. Tony Schultz will present the keynote address, titled "Give me a break!" Attendees will be able to choose four of eight additional topical sessions, with topics including "In the beginning—it all starts with God," "It's About Time!" (About time management), "Friend me," "Are you crazy?" and more. Esmeier says, "Our basic theory is that you have to be able to take care of yourself to adequately take care of others, so this is giving them a chance to recharge their batteries." The conference is open to WELS and non-WELS families. Learn more and register online at www.wels.net/iddm.

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