

*Nu Chapter, UAB School of Nursing
The Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International
Celebrating 50 Years of Nursing Scholarship
1958-2008*

Nu Chapter would like to thank all those who contributed to making our 50th anniversary year a huge success!! Nu Chapter has had an outstanding history the results of this year will carry us into our next 50 years with an exceptional start!

Several notable activities highlighted the anniversary. First beginning in 2007 a committee was formed to plan the 50th anniversary celebrations to include outreach to members, updating of records and publicity, and establishing a permanent memorial scholarship fund. The website was updated and made user-friendly at www.NuChapterSTTI.org and a motto was chosen. A call for Community Nurse Leaders and call for Nurse Faculty (including dual or transfer) to Nu Chapter occurred in Fall 2007 with encouragement by the UAB Hospital Chief Nurse Officer several new members were added.

The memorial was chosen to honor the life and legacy of our first president, Dr. Margaret Millsap. In April 2007, we inaugurated the Margaret Millsap Living Legacy Campaign for a scholarship. We later partnered with a UAB School of Nursing Advanced Practice Scholarship allowing a larger accrual of funds. The life of Dr. Millsap was researched from archives and personal collection of her daughter. The initial narrative was written by Dr. Buckner who later worked extensively with Anita Smith, former medical news writer for the Birmingham News, who had chronicled Dr. Millsap's life and the transformation of nursing in Alabama which she led. Ms. Smith and others created a color brochure that was sent to all active members, donors, and attendees to the luncheon. Over 150 persons donated to the fund with donations over \$7500 with another \$3000 from advanced practice group with the final total over \$10,000. This fund will offer a continuing opportunity for donations to support scholarships.

The 50th Anniversary Luncheon was held on the exact anniversary date—June 21st 2008. A beautiful and joyous celebration took place at the Club in Birmingham, overlooking the city. In order to bring in as many Nu members, past and present, as possible, numerous strategies were employed. Invitations to the 50th Anniversary Luncheon were sent to **all** active members, all inactive members (yes-over 2000) and “transfer's out” of those inducted but later transferred. We also offered membership application from those graduates of the Birmingham-Southern College nursing program founded by Dr. Millsap but which closed before a STTI chapter could be established. Dr. Sarah Johnston, Dr. Kathy Mikan, and Dr. Jean Kelley from the Committee researched all the Charter members and Past-Presidents locating many who were not on our roll. Several Charter members and over 10 Past Presidents were present. Many others had sent greetings and congratulations, even though they were unable travel to the event. All those present were thrilled to meet these esteemed chapter leaders! One Past-President, Dr. Karen Morin, President-elect of STTI, gave a welcome from the international organization. Dr. Morin would later keynote the regional conference. Anita Smith gave a delightful talk on the founding of Nu Chapter and Dr. Millsap's role. Cindy Millsap Boykin, Dr. Millsap's daughter, and other family members attended and were touched by the event and creating of the scholarship in their mother's memory. A letter from Mrs. Boykin supports this application. Over 100 Nu Chapter members from Charter members to the most recent inductees were in attendance.

The third special activity which significantly increased our community building was the hosting of a Regional Conference. The Region 8 Conference hosted over 60 presentations—verbal, posters, panels,

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and chapter building activities. Over 100 persons attended from six states (AL, MS, TN, GA, FL, and OK). Chapter websites, pictures and/or newsletters for every chapter were displayed at the registration area. Abstracts were distributed to all attendees to promote scholarship in the region. The University of Southern Mississippi offered to continue with a conference in 2010. Topics included panels on establishing a new chapter, new educational programs, disaster preparedness, vulnerable populations, international collaborations, technology in education, and community/mental health innovations. Chapter building activities included sessions on strategic planning by Ann Kelley and Amu Spurlock, who had been to Leadership Academy. STTI President-elect Karen Morin spoke about creating a legacy of personal leadership and a panel focused on collegiality among nurses. Since the conference was held in October, a documentary “A Breast Cancer Survivors’ Climb of Mt. Kilimanjaro” was presented by its nurse-survivor-narrator, Dr. Penny Wright.

As part of the Region 8 Conference, Nu Chapter brought forward several new initiatives for the Region. These included organizing a Junior Board to consist of a new inductee appointed from each chapter. Seven members met by WIMBA chat prior to the conference and then met face-to-face at the meeting. Their goals were reported at the business meeting which approved the new initiative. A letter from Larry Slater, Junior Board Member (Nu Chapter), describing their formation and plans is part of this application. Another new initiative was discussion of a process for inviting nurses to join as Community Nurse Leaders if they had demonstrated Clinical Excellence. This initiative also received wholehearted support of those attending the business session.

From these activities we hope it is evident that we made deliberate efforts to bring diverse individuals together around the common focal point of the 50th anniversary of Nu Chapter. We endeavored to create community in innovative ways through the history, new initiatives for Junior and Senior members. The Chapter has been open and accountable to its stakeholders in the creation of a new scholarship program with the donations for the 50th anniversary. We responded to change in knowledge development (e.g. educational technology) and opportunity (e.g. nursing collegiality). We included international collaboration in our topics as well as how to establish a new chapter. The Junior Board and clinical excellence criteria both gain significant constituencies for our future growth. We encouraged an ongoing dialogue on breast cancer “Climb for the Cause.” We engaged in intentional outreach to connect with our charter members and past-presidents. We maintain both a broad, inclusive community across Alabama and the region (AL, MS, and TN) as well as flexible, specialized niche communities of Nu Chapter alumni and friends. At the time of this writing, the nomination of Dr. Margaret Millsap to the Alabama Nursing Hall of Fame is pending. Nu Chapter was heavily engaged with its membership and the larger community as part of our celebration. We are delighted to have this opportunity celebrate our 50th Anniversary!!

Respectfully submitted,



Ellen Buckner DSN, RN
President, Nu Chapter and Region 8 Coordinator