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Bertschi '05 Continues Cardiovascular Research through Nurse Educator Fellowship

Aug. 15, 2019

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — Assistant Professor of [Nursing](#) Lydia Bertschi '05 is continuing to research cardiovascular disease in Haiti as the recipient of a 2019 Nurse Educator Fellowship from the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and the Illinois Nursing Workforce Center.

Bertschi's commitment to nursing education was deemed meritorious of the Illinois Nurse Educator Fellowship because of her distinct passion for the education of traditional pre-licensure students within a liberal arts environment.

"Dr. Bertschi is the epitome of a servant leader," said Victoria Noltkamper Folse '86, Director and Professor of Nursing and the Caroline F. Rupert Endowed Chair of Nursing. "Her commitment to rural Haiti models global citizenship for our students and raises awareness of the role of nursing with vulnerable populations as well as reinforces the need for evidence-based practice."

As part of her fellowship, Bertschi plans to repeat a study of cardiovascular disease risk among a resource-poor, rural Haitian population. Bertschi has served as an active humanitarian for Haiti since 1998 and completed a pilot study of cardiovascular disease risk factors at Hospital Lumiere in Bonne Fin, Haiti in August of 2018. Bertschi said her pilot study utilized a convenience sample that was likely biased based on the participants' employment and socioeconomic status; therefore, she anticipates that repetition of the study with recruitment of participants from the general regional population would likely yield more representative prevalence data and inform a future interventional study with a longitudinal design. Bertschi added that she would like to explore including undergraduate students in future research endeavors in Haiti.

The Nurse Educator Fellowship seeks to help promote excellence in nursing education and awarded each of this year's 19 selected fellows a grant of \$10,000 each. "The list of projects, research, and plans for additional degrees and certifications that this group is pursuing is beyond impressive," said Interim Executive Director of the IBHE Nyle Robinson.

Bertschi earned a bachelor of science in nursing from Illinois Wesleyan in 2005 and a doctor of nursing practice with acute care nurse practitioner specialization from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2012. She joined the Illinois Wesleyan nursing faculty in 2015 and maintains part time clinical practice as an advanced practice registered nurse in a critical care setting. In 2017, Bertschi was selected as a recipient of the [40 Under 40 Emerging Nurse Leaders Award](#) from the Illinois Nurses Foundation.



Lydia Bertschi '05

By Samira Kassem '21