As we approach the holiday season, we're pleased to share a small gift with you — the fall issue of News Brief. Once again, we're proud of and inspired by the achievements of alumni, students and faculty in the AU Faculty of Health Disciplines family, and hope you will be as well.

It's a joy to read about what's happening in your life, and by sharing your news, you help keep our extended community strong and vibrant. So we want to hear from you! Send a note to fhdnews@athabascau.ca.

Enjoy the holidays — and this issue of News Brief. We'll be in touch again in the spring. Best wishes for 2016!

Bill Diehl-Jones and Jananee Rasiah, co-editors



MC: School Counselling specialization launches

If you aspire to support the well-being of students and school communities, Athabasca University has a new program for you.
Applications for the new online Master of Counselling: School Counselling specialization will be accepted until Feb. 1, 2016, for classes starting in July 2016.

Read more



Celebrating an award-winning duo

The Faculty of Health Disciplines proudly congratulates Kathleen Kelava (Master of Counselling: Counselling Psychology student) and Sarah Stevens (Master of Nursing: Nurse Practitioner 2015) — outstanding recipients of two of Athabasca University's four alumni awards this fall!

Read more



Enlisted for unreserved adventure

Do IV lines freeze at -50C? How many people in Nicaragua can you help in a day? The average Nurse Practitioner might never ask these questions, but Dr. Kimberley Lamarche — a.k.a. Captain Lamarche — is anything but average. The AU associate professor and member of Canada's Reserve Force proves what NPs can do in the field, and shares her experiences with students.

Read more



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Read more



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If you knew your life was going to shortened, how would you spend your days? Young adults with life-limiting conditions want to do the same things as everyone else their age. Research led by AU Faculty of Health Disciplines assistant professor Dr. Karen Cook is helping them do it.

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Read more



Your news and updates

Thanks for sharing your news with us! Here are some of the contributions you're making to patients, communities and health care across Canada and beyond. To have your information included in the next issue, send an e-mail to **fhdnews@athabascau.ca.**

Read more

Share your news! Submit a story! Let us know what you want to read about! Drop us a line and help grow and strengthen the Faculty of Health Disciplines community. Together, we'll have the conversations that matter to you.

Invest in the future of health care by donating to student awards, research and scholarly activities, and learning resources. Find out more by visiting the Caring for the Future website — and donate online.



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Be the educational leader who helps schools better support students' academic, vocational, social and emotional development. Help students plan for their future while you optimize yours!

Enrol in the Master of Counselling: School Counselling program and learn online, any time. Graduate with a recognized degree and join a national network of knowledgeable, skilled professionals ready to make a difference in students' lives.

Applications will be accepted until Feb. 1, 2016, for classes starting in July 2016.

Learn more:

Visit the Faculty of Health Disciplines website Email fhdcontact@athabascau.ca Call toll-free 1.800.788.9041 ext. 8381

← RETURN TO FRONT PAGE

GO TO NEXT STORY →



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Future Alumni Award Kathleen Kelava Master of Counselling: Counselling Psychology

For Kathleen, a mother of three boys ages 10 and under, Athabasca University stands for opportunity.

"AU provides the opportunity for those who are driven to better themselves in some capacity, whether it's education or personal development," she says, "without having to irreparably sacrifice the other areas of our lives. You can still have a career, you can still have a family, and you can still volunteer or get involved in your community or personal commitments."

Kathleen competed in the 3MT (Three-Minute Thesis) Western Regional Competition earlier this year (earning the right to go by winning AU's local competition) and was chosen from among 350 applicants to receive one of only five Sarah Gaulin Scholarships. She's proud of her achievements and grateful for the awards.

"It is so encouraging and validating, not only for successes I've already had at AU, but in terms of the possibilities that are still out there," she says.

Accepting the Future Alumni Award, Kathleen offers students and alumni a few words straight from the heart: "Never forget how lucky you were. It comes back to gratitude. I can't tell you how many times I've reflected on the fact I've been able to accomplish everything I did because of what AU is and stands for."

Read the full interview with Kathleen on the AU website.





Volunteer Service Award Sarah Stevens Master of Nursing: Nurse Practitioner 2015

Sarah pours her heart and soul into her many volunteer projects and causes.

"I was brought up to believe that you need to give back. You're only going to reap what you give," she says. "'Sharing is Caring' is one of my family's mottos."

Her entire family volunteers for the Belcourt Brousseau Métis Awards each year, and cancer research and cancer walks and runs are a big part of her life. Because of an accident — she shattered her

tail bone in a race only a year before she was scheduled to graduate from AU — she's now a race volunteer.

"I hand out medals at the end," she says with a laugh. "I'll be the person at the corner telling you to turn right regardless of whether it's snowing, raining or 30 degrees outside."

Receiving the Volunteer Service Award, she says, took her by surprise, and she's grateful that after her accident, Athabasca University's flexibility enabled her to keep studying, volunteering and playing the game of life — on her terms.

"Without AU there would have been no way for me to finish my master's degree. I am so grateful."

Read the full interview with Sarah on the AU website.

— continued —



A family celebration!

Faculty of Health Disciplines instructors and alumni in Calgary gathered to honour our Alumni Award recipients at the banquet in October.



(Back row, L–R): Dawn Mercer-Riselli (Program Director, Bachelor of Nursing Clinical Affairs); Gina Ko (Master of Counselling alumna); Dr. Margaret Edwards (Dean, Faculty of Health Disciplines); Dr. Annette Lane (Associate Professor); Rose Schroeder (Academic Coordinator); Dr. Sharon Moore (Professor); Kathleen Kelava (Future Alumni Award recipient)

(Front row, L–R): Lynn Corcoran (Program Director, Bachelor of Nursing Curriculum and Regulatory Affairs); Marlyss Valiant (Tutor); Emily Doyle (Academic Coordinator); Donna Clare (Academic Coordinator); Dr. Sherri Melrose (Associate Professor); Sarah Stevens (Volunteer Service Award recipient) and her husband, Chris

← RETURN TO FRONT PAGE

GO TO NEXT STORY →



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Starting the year with a blast of wintry reality

It was a frigid February 2015 when Athabasca University Faculty of Health Disciplines alumna and associate professor Dr. Kimberley Lamarche, medical platoon commander of 35 Field Ambulance with Canada's Reserve Force, took part in Exercise Stalwart Goose 15 at 5 Wing Goose Bay, Labrador. Here, she joined soldiers from 37 Canadian Brigade Group to work with the Atlantic area's Immediate Reaction Unit, the Arctic Response Company Group, 5 Canadian Ranger Patrol Group, Royal Canadian Air Force and RCMP to conduct winter survival and combat skills training.

This was no fun-and-games simulation. "Our unit went 'no duff' medical coverage," Lamarche says of her week-long mission, explaining that while she provided medical coverage at HQ, her group of 15 medics, including medical assistants, technicians and a physician, headed out onto the sea ice on snowmobiles to offer assistance to the approximately 600 reserve and regular force personnel involved in the exercise.



"This was a great way to showcase the skills of our team and offer real medical help, while also honing our skills should we ever be called upon for arctic operations," Lamarche says. Helping colleagues who experienced serious accidents or illnesses (she went on two medevacs) as well as those with problems like frostbite, twisted ankles, snow blindness or dehydration was made all the more challenging in the hostile arctic environment.

"How do we keep IV bags from freezing? What do you do when your SAT phone doesn't work? What happens when your stove breaks down and you're out on the ice? With 'no duff' training, these are real concerns we had to worry about — and sometimes the only way to get people out was by snowmobile, and that was weather and injury dependent."

The exercise proved the medical team's value, added to Lamarche's knowledge, skills and patient-contact hours, and provided her with real-experience insights and perspectives to share with her students.



Three months later and 60 degrees warmer ...

In May, the physical environment couldn't have been more different, but the mission was much the same: help people, prove the value of NPs and augment knowledge and skills that can help Nurse Practitioner students widen their perspective.

Lamarche had the experience of a lifetime as one of six
Canadians serving on US Naval Hospital Ship Comfort as part of
Continuing Promise 15, a massive humanitarian effort bringing
health care to people in Jamaica, Nicaragua and Panama.
"Massive" is also a good word to describe the ship itself, which is
the second largest hospital in the U.S. With 1,000 patient beds,
80 ICU beds, 12 ORs, its own oxygen-producing plant and a crew
of more than 1,000, the ship literally changes lives as it travels
from country to country to provide access to care.

As a primary health care clinician, Lamarche left USNS Comfort to work at medical sites or mobile medical clinics. The entire clinic would see 700–1,000 patients per day, and Lamarche would attend to about 40–50.

"The pace and scope was different than anything I expected," she says. "It was like nothing I've seen and the need was like nothing I've seen. People lined up by the thousands. In some places, it's unlikely anyone had ever seen a doctor before."

The clinics offered everything from family and pediatric medicine, to specialty care for cardiac, internal, respiratory or optometry issues, to diagnostic imaging and pharmacy. Construction engineers helped repair local hospital and schools. Operation Smile was on board to do cleft lip and palate surgeries. Veterinarians offered animal care. Subject-

USINS COMFORT

CONTINUING PROMISE

'This was the best example of what a military NP can do — and the difference any NP can make.'

matter experts visited local hospitals, or invited local caregivers onto the ship, to build local capacity, and access to those experts was also valuable professional development for Lamarche. "I had more access to continuing education in these 3-1/2 weeks than in the past two years," she says with a laugh.

Without doubt, the experience was profoundly moving and rewarding. "Sometimes, we were able to change lives — but other times we had to give families some very difficult news," Lamarche says.

"What I learned was unbelievable, and I can now share this experience with my medics and my students here."

Read more about Capt. Lamarche's experience on the USNS Comfort in the upcoming issue of AU's Open magazine.



Walking along the healing path together

Randy White (Master of Counselling: Counselling Psychology 2015) has a gift for encouraging people to open up and share information. He uses it to help First Nations people and communities overcome trauma and challenges — and to enable people to see that life is full of possibilities.

Years ago, while working as a case manager for a suicide prevention program, Randy White met a First Nations psychologist — and instantly knew that's what he wanted to do.

"Having that role model guided my compass," says White, Anishinaabe Language and Culture Specialist at Bimose Tribal Council in Kenora, Ont., who now relies on his AU Master of Counselling degree to walk side-by-side with and guide others.

"Part of my whole personal perspective of counselling is that I don't believe people are powerless. I believe they just need someone to support and believe in them when they're making changes, to be on the same path with them to some level of healing or some direction where they can continue on," he says. "And that's part of what I bring to the process."

He is also a powerful inspiration for young people, working with students through the First Nations Student Success Program to help teachers identify and use cultural resources in their classes. Fluent in Anishinaabe and cultural practices — and a long-time powwow singer — he helps with cultural activities like powwows and supporting place-based learning like ice fishing.



photo courtesy Randy Wh

"I worked with a lot of First Nations elders while I was completing my AU degree," he says, explaining that he worked full-time throughout his studies. "So I was both teacher and student, and able to bring western and First Nations perspectives together to give them an understanding of counselling."

The knowledge of theories, strategies and behaviour modification tools gained through his master's degree enables White to support clients' needs — including those he sees one day a week as a Cultural Liaison at a local FASD clinic — which often means blending contemporary theory with First Nations traditions.

While White hesitates to consider himself a role model, he admits that his interactions with school children can help guide their lives. "If kids can look at you and see how you're trying to do the best for your family and community, and that school is rewarding, then they'll learn by example.

"I always saw myself as a helper, and with my degree I'm able to help."



It's the most wonderful time of the year!

Nothing generates more smiles, hugs and tears than Convocation, and this year was no exception. Faculty of Health Disciplines grads were joined by parents, spouses, children, siblings, friends and instructors over two joy-filled days.

On Thursday, June 11, 2015, the Faculty of Health Disciplines hosted the annual Convocation Banquet at the Matrix Hotel in Edmonton. The following day, the AU campus was awash in a sea of grad gowns and parchments — the culmination of years of hard work and the promise of great things to come.

Congratulations, grads, on your achievement! You have every reason to be proud, and AU is equally proud of you.

We're pleased to share a few photos from the banquet.



Master of Nursing: Advanced Nursing Practice grad Carol Puchailo (centre) celebrates with her father, Sydney Puchailo, sister Stephanie Giesbrecht, and children Kristofer and Sonja Asmundsson.



Long-time Faculty of Health Disciplines sessional instructor Dr. Joyce Springate.





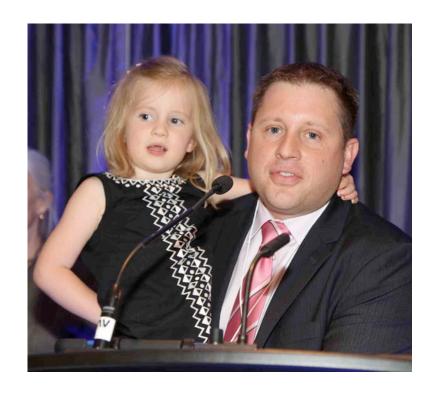
Graduate Colleen Toye (L) and Dr. Kimberley Lamarche, Associate Professor, mug for the camera in front of Colleen's poster presentation.

Graduate Grace Debassige.





Master of Health Studies graduate Gregg Toffner and his daughter. Gregg gave the address to graduates at the banquet.





Smiles all around! Dr. Gwen Rempel (centre), Associate Professor, shares a laugh with banquet guests.





Graduate Lorna Callaway celebrates a special time with her family.

At the Faculty of
Health Disciplines
meeting before
the banquet,
sessional instructors
Drs. Joyce Springate,
Brian Larson and
John Hudec engage
in lively
conversation.





Ensuring young lives are well lived

If you knew your life was going to shortened, how would you spend your days? Young adults with lifelimiting conditions want to do the same things as everyone else their age. Research led by AU Faculty of Health Disciplines Assistant Professor Dr. Karen Cook is helping them do it.

It was only a short time ago that babies or children diagnosed with serious health issues frequently didn't live long enough to reach their teens, let alone become young adults. Now, thanks to wonderful advances in health care, more of them do. This often means people live with multiple degenerative disabilities that will worsen over time. Most require 24-hour attendant care, and they may only be able to move their index finger on a joystick to control power wheelchairs, computers and phones.



Knowing they may not live beyond age 30 or 35 and that they have a very narrow window in which to achieve goals familiar to most people their age, these young people display an extraordinary amount of resilience, courage, stamina and humour to do it.

They also captured Dr. Karen Cook's heart and are the inspiration for the AU assistant professor's research into ways to bridge the gap between support services available to children with life-limiting conditions and the support they will receive as adults.

She has received a CIHR SPOR (Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research) grant to conduct a three-phase concept mapping study to help inform improved funding and support that has the potential to help young adults overcome the many obstacles they face every day.

"This is the first generation of people to live into adulthood and 'graduate' from the pediatric palliative approach to care," Cook says. "And there is no palliative approach to care — which encompasses well-being, social and community supports, and access to educational and vocational opportunities — that responds to the specific needs of young adults."

At the age of 18, youth no longer have access to comprehensive pediatric programs offering health, social, educational, spiritual and family services, and there are gaps until funding for limited adult services is available at age 19. Compounding this, young adults also lose connections with peers because they no longer attend high school, camps or take part in other structured activities.



A palliative approach to care aims to develop collaborative partnerships across community and professional agencies to ensure that timely and seamless resources are available. For young adults with life-threatening conditions, these resources will support their health, social, vocational and educational goals, in their quest to maximize their experiences in an abbreviated time frame.

"These young people are like all other young people and see their life development trajectory moving upward" Cook says. "However, some may never achieve their young-adult goals, and those they do achieve will be within an abbreviated life."

By finding ways to reduce barriers and blockages — focusing on life and community in addition to advances in disease management, and on streamlining access to services — Cook hopes to help young people achieve as many goals as possible.

Cook's "Bridging the Gap in Palliative Care for Young Adults" concept mapping study has three phases:



Dr. Karen Cook

- 1. Phase 1, currently underway, invites young adults and parents, and pediatric and adult health and community service providers to submit ideas online.
- 2. Phase 2 builds on the information gathered and asks people to assign priorities to the various options, creating an importance and feasibility "map."
- 3. Phase 3 brings participants from Phase 1 together face-to-face to create a strategic plan for a palliative approach to care.

"We are a new voice on the front line of changing approaches to palliative care," Cook says, "and the peer-to-peer connectivity is really exciting. Young people want to talk to each other, learn from each other, be with each other and support each other."

Working with Pathways for Young Adults in Vancouver, she's developing community building young adult events and creative opportunities to meet and talk online.

"These are people who have already achieved so much, and cheated death so many times, that they know the reality of their conditions better than some of the medical practitioners. We have a lot to learn together as we develop a palliative, holistic approach to offering the care they need.

"At the end of the day, this is about ensuring people can be who they are as individuals for as long as they can. It's about respecting human dignity."



ACTIVE LIVING CORNER

Lighten up! Laugh a little! Or a lot!

Laughter Yoga brightens your life (and your teeth). Carol Puchailo (Master of Nursing: Advanced Nursing Practice 2015) is kidding about that last part, but she has experienced the health benefits of a good belly laugh. She shares a few words to inspire you to get off your seat and rolling in the aisles.

Taking part in Laughter Yoga, I've experienced the joy of being goofy and lighthearted on a regular basis.

A group of us would meet early in the morning before work and would act like children, driving and honking our invisible cars, pretending to get into traffic jams or just stuck in a puddle. These were Laughter Yoga activities designed to cause unstoppable and gut-busting roars of laughter — and they did.

The spontaneous howl of a deep and hearty laugh moves you in such a profound way, you find it hard to imagine strangers laughing in a room together for the first time. But when you're part of it, it's contagious ... and chuckles morph into side-splitting guffaws very quickly.



What is it about laughing that is so powerful, so astonishing and just so much fun?

The founder of Laughter Yoga, Dr. Madan Kataria, developed this method of purposeful and intentional yoga in India and to help people boost their immune systems, lower their blood pressure and heart rate, improve their mood and have better overall health just all by laughing.

The mental and physical health benefits of yoga are well established, and Laughter Yoga is one more "channel" on the yoga dial. And probably the most fun.

So do you remember the last time you laughed so hard you fell over? If you can't or if you haven't recently fallen off your chair from laughing, why not check out a Laughter Yoga class near you?

See how much better you feel, change your day — and you may just find out that life and work is more fun and less stressful.

To get you started, here's a quick chuckle: Why did the chicken cross the road, roll in the mud and cross the road again? Waaaait for it because it was a dirty double-crosser!

To learn more about laughter yoga, go to laughteryoga.org/english.



Your news and updates

Thanks for sharing your news with us! Here are some of the contributions you're making to patients, communities and health care across Canada and beyond. To have your information included in the next issue, send an e-mail to **fhdnews@athabascau.ca**.

HAVE YOU CHECKED OUT THE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE TO AU STUDENTS?

Who wouldn't like a little extra money to help with the school bills? You may qualify for one of the many Student Awards offered by AU. Check out what's available to Faculty of Health Disciplines students on the AU Student Awards website.

Dr. Kim Bergeron	had an article published in the October issue of Preventing Chronic
Alumna and Instructor	Disease, focusing on her study of potential solutions for addressing the gaps
	in self-management support initiatives for under-served populations living
	with chronic conditions in British Columbia.
Dr. Jeff Chang	has been named editor of <i>Canadian School Counselling Review</i> (formerly
Associate Professor	Alberta Counsellor). CSCR is Canada's only peer-reviewed journal focused on
	the needs of school counsellors and other professionals involved in
	counselling services in schools.
Dr. Karen Cook	has been honoured with two awards recognizing her focus on developing a
Assistant Professor	compassionate community approach to palliative care. She received the Dr.
	Michael Downing Award for Excellence in Palliative Care Research and the
	Sovereign Order of St. John Award to further her research, Bridging the Gap:
	A Palliative Approach to Care for Young Adults, from the B.C. Hospice and
	Palliative Care Association. Read more about Karen's research and the

this issue of News Brief.

Lynn Corcoran *Academic Coordinator*

... and her family received the Calgary Speed Skating Association's Family Challenge Award for their volunteer commitment to the club. Over the past several years, the family has been actively involved in a range of volunteer activities, including attending board meetings, fund raising and officiating at competitions. In the last issue of *News Brief*, Lynn's research looking for insights to help young people recognize the warning signs of potential partner violence, and to give them tools to help them avoid danger, was featured.

difference it is making in the lives of young adults with life-limiting illnesses in



Dr. Catherine Corrigan	co-authored "Utilizing Service-Learning to Promote a Value Based
Adjunct Instructor	Professional Nursing Curriculum," published in Creative Education, and also
	"Social Support, Postpartum Depression, and Professional Assistance: A
	Survey of Mothers in the Midwestern United States," published in winter
	2015 issue of <i>The Journal of Perinatal Education</i> .
Stephanie Fedak	is working as an Early Childhood Psychologist with Child and Youth Mental
MC alumna	Health Services, Sun Country Health Region, in Weyburn, Sask.
Rosina Hayes	wrote an essay for one of her courses upon which "Collaboration in Caring:
Student, Post-LPN	A New Approach to Health Care," an article published in the summer issue of
Bachelor of Nursing	Alberta RN magazine, was based.
Dr. Paul Jerry	was nominated by students and received the 2015 Psychologists'
Program Director	Association of Alberta Excellence in Teaching Psychology Award. Read more about the award online.
Kathleen Kelava	had a banner year. She took first place in AU's 3MT (3-Minute Thesis)
MC student	competition (which earned her the right to compete at the Western
	Regionals), was chosen from among 350 applicants to receive one of only five
	Sarah Gaulin Scholarships, and also received one of AU's top honours: the
	Future Alumni Award, which was presented at a ceremony in October. Read
	more about Kathleen in this issue of <i>News Brief</i> .
Dr. Jennifer	received funding from the Alzheimer's Society for her study "Improving
Knopp-Sihota	Assessment of Pain in Nursing Home Residents with Moderate to Severe
Assistant Professor	Alzheimer's Disease and related Dementias."
Carrie Maplethorpe	was nominated by colleagues and received the ANEA (Alberta Nursing
Alumna	Educators Association) Leadership in Nursing Education Award, RN Preceptor
	2015. Carrie is an RN with Alberta Health Services and preceptor for the Post-
	LPN Bachelor of Nursing program.
Dr. Sherri Melrose	teamed up to co-author a peer-reviewed e-text, which was released in
Associate Professor	October 2015. Creative Clinical Teaching in the Health Professions can be
Dr. Caroline Park	read online and downloaded as a free e-publication. It is described as a must-
Chair, Nursing and	read for nurses and other health professionals who strive to teach with
Health Studies graduate	creativity and excellence in clinical settings.
programs Dr. Both Borry	
Dr. Beth Perry Professor	
1.10/0301	— continued —



... gave the opening address at the Canadian Gerontological Nursing **Dr. Sharon Moore** Professor Association conference in P.E.I. in June. Carol Puchailo ... is employed part-time as a primary care NP in a rural Alumna, MN: Advanced Manitoba community. She is launching a private business **Nursing Practice** in wellness coaching (she recently completed an 18-week program through Wellcoaches School of Coaching and will complete her certification in 2016). Incorporating wellness into her life has given Carol the motivation and determination to be an agent of positive change. To find out more about how wellness coaching works, contact carol.puchailo@gmail.com or LinkedIn: Carol Puchailo. Patricia Ripley ... graduated this year and shared her story on the AU website. She overcame Alumna, Bachelor more than her share of obstacles — including the flood in High River, which of Nursing destroyed her family home, and several personal tragedies — to earn a degree that has been decades in the making. **Bonnie Tateham** ... with an upcoming publication in Worldwide Leaders in Healthcare, Bonnie Alumna, Master has joined the International Nurses Association. She has 20 years of of Nursing experience in geriatrics, addictions nursing and mental health nursing, and is the Seniors Nurse Consultant at Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria, B.C. Caterina Valentino ... unleashed her creative side to win the Ryerson University Creative Writing Sessional instructor Club's first creative writing contest. Read her short story, Death on the

Subway, and an interview on the Ryerson website.

... spoke about her role as lead of the Patient Engagement (PE) platform of the

Alberta SPOR (Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research) SUPPORT Unit in an

interview that aired on CKUA Radio. You can hear the full interview on the **Innovation Anthology** website (search for interviews 726 and 727).

Dr. Virginia

Vandall-Walker

Associate Professor