Deb has contributed greatly, not only to the University of Maryland School of Nursing, and the area of simulation, but to excellence in nursing education in general.

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Dedicated to excellence in nursing, the National League for Nursing is the premier organization for nurse faculty and leaders in nursing education, offering faculty development, networking opportunities, testing services, nursing research grants, and public policy initiatives to its 40,000 individual and 1,200 institutional members.

Funded by Laerdal Medical in Recognition of Dr. Spunt’s Leadership in the Use of Simulation in Nursing Education
Debra L. Spunt, DNP, RN, FAAN

Debra Spunt, an assistant professor and director of the clinical simulation laboratories at the University of Maryland School of Nursing, died of cancer on March 9, 2007. Born in St. Louis, MO in 1950, Debbie was a resident of Maryland for more than 30 years, graduating from Randallstown High School in 1969. She earned a bachelor of science in nursing (1979), a master’s of science (1983), and a doctor of nursing practice (2007), all from the University of Maryland School of Nursing.

Debbie was nationally and internationally recognized for her knowledge, expertise, and leadership in clinical simulation, especially the use of computerized human patient simulators via clinical case scenarios to educate nurses and other health care providers. She was responsible for the design, administration, and management of the School of Nursing’s 28 clinical simulation laboratories, considered the preeminent nursing student learning labs in the world. She collaborated with faculty on the integration of simulation into the nursing curriculum, and in doing so, helped prepare thousands of nurses worldwide.

Debbie was a fellow in the American Academy of Nursing, and a member of the American Nurses Association, the Maryland Nurses Association, the National League for Nursing, the Maryland League for Nursing, and the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing. She cofounded the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning and served as its first president.

As a thoughtful participant in the plans for her legacy, Debbie created the Debra L. Spunt Clinical Simulation Practice and Research Endowment at the University of Maryland School of Nursing. This endowment supports the use of clinical simulation laboratory equipment. Please join us in celebrating Debbie’s life and honoring her legacy by contributing to the Spunt Clinical Simulation Practice and Research Endowment.

Send contributions payable to “UMBF/Spunt Endowment” to:
School of Nursing
University of Maryland
655 West Lombard Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-1579

Dr. Janice Palaganas, a recipient of multiple honors, Dr. Palaganas most recently received the President’s Award from Loma Linda University, the university’s highest honor for scholastic achievement and community participation; and the Presidential Citation Award from the Society for Simulation in Healthcare. Just this year, she received another substantial grant from the Macy Foundation for “Creating an Interprofessional Community of Practice for Health Professions Educators.”

Meeting the complex needs of our patients goes beyond the boundary of nursing. It requires teamwork and collaboration with other professions and, as a precursor, requires interprofessional education (IPE). Simulation has become the preferred medium for IPE. Interprofessional education requires brave examination of professional boundaries; in that process, we skillfully blur boundaries and create new ones.

Due to the size and nature of our profession, nursing is in many ways the most powerful and most capable entity to create organizational change. Nurse educators are often the ones designated to create such simulation-enhanced IPE activities, challenged to facilitate the learning of individuals in a myriad of professions simultaneously. Such boundary-spanning responsibilities seem daunting.

This talk will: 1) discuss the importance of IPE and how simulation is a vehicle for achieving quality IPE; 2) highlight the role of nurse educators as IPE leaders contributing to a new field; and 3) provide tools to assist nurse educators to create learning beyond boundaries.

In appreciation for her leadership in the design, development, and implementation of simulation in nursing education, the NLN Foundation for Nursing Education and Laerdal Medical established the Debra L. Spunt Lecture to be held each year at the National League for Nursing Education Summit.