Donor support honors excellence in teaching

Kirk Bronander ’01M.D., who says teaching at the University of Nevada School of Medicine keeps him sharp because students are always asking interesting and challenging questions, was honored for those teaching skills when he received the prestigious 2014 E.W. Richardson Excellence in Teaching award in May.

As the clerkship director and the director of a mandatory third-year class, Clinical Reasoning in Medicine, at the School of Medicine, he is responsible for the curriculum and assessment of the medical students rotating through the department. He also has an interest in using various simulations including patient actors and high fidelity mannequins to instruct medical students and residents.

“"We are extraordinarily fortunate to have teachers of the quality and excellence of Dr. Bronander, and donors who are prepared to support that teaching excellence through their generous support," said Thomas L. Schwenk, M.D., dean of the School of Medicine. “Dr. Bronander and prior E. W. Richardson Award recipients are honored by the support of Mr. E.W. Richardson, a proud father of an outstanding alumna, Dr. Patrice Richardson (’81M.D.).”

Bronander, an internist, hospitalist and associate professor, joined the School of Medicine’s Department of Internal Medicine after completing his residency here in 2001. Originally from Arizona, Bronander, who has been teaching at the medical school since 2004, stressed that students are fun to teach. “I enjoy seeing the ‘a-ha!’ moments with them. They have that great mix of intelligence, motivation and eagerness to learn. Teaching with full-bodied robots is also fantastic and the students are crazy about them. They can make mistakes without harming the patient,” he said.

According to third-year medical students Travis Anderson and Jacob Stever, Bronander is a positive influence on both of them. “He is without a doubt, the core of our clinical reasoning development,” Anderson said. “Not only is he a profoundly knowledgeable physician, he is a gifted teacher. Whether in the hospital on rounds or in the simulation lab, he provides valuable learning opportunities in a welcoming fashion.”

A father’s gratitude helps medical students at Nevada

The late E.W. “Rich” Richardson was an outstanding American who led an extraordinary life. As a bomber pilot and squadron commander with the 15th Air Force in Italy during World War II, Capt. Richardson was shot down over Vienna on March 22, 1945 during his 44th mission, one mission short of his promotion to major. He was taken prisoner and sent to a Prisoner of War camp near Munich, Germany. Later in the year, the camp was liberated by Gen. George Patton’s Third Army. After his military service, he returned home and built a network of successful car dealerships in the Southwest.

He gave back to his community by supporting a number of health and educational organizations.

Because of his gratitude for the education of his daughter, Patrice Richardson, ’81M.D., he established the E.W. Richardson Excellence in Teaching award to honor exemplary educators. Patrice Richardson has generously continued support of the fund in memory of her father, who passed away in 2003.
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Alumna Sandra Talley ’68 (nursing) has been on a long and successful professional journey that began in her hometown of Lovelock and recently brought her back to Reno with her appointment as the Arthur Emerton Orvis Endowed Professor at the Orvis School of Nursing.

“I’m so excited, as it’s a wonderful opportunity to create or add something to the school of nursing that is needed. This is a very prestigious position and an honor to be able to do so,” she said. “My goals are to develop the nurse practitioner track and do some teaching this fall, including a course on knowledge and theory development for nursing.”

Talley has dedicated her career to practice, education and research in psychiatric mental health nursing. Following her undergraduate degree at the University, she completed her master’s degree at Oregon Health and Science University. A Robert Wood Johnson Fellowship in primary care and completion of her doctorate from the University of Utah were foundational for studying health problems in psychiatric clients and delivery of psychiatric care in primary care settings.

She has been recognized for her work on the integration of psychiatric and primary care nursing, policy and practice guidelines for advanced practice and prescriptive authority for advanced practice nurses. She has served as president of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association, participated in the development of scope of practice and clinical competencies for the Doctor of Nursing Practice and the psychiatric nurse practitioner roles, and was part of an interdisciplinary, Health Resources and Services Administration-funded grant on rural mental health care.

Talley also served as chair and director for Yale University School of Nursing’s graduate psychiatric nursing program and consulted on advanced practice nursing in Taiwan, England and China. She is a member of Sigma Theta Tau and Phi Kappa Phi, and a fellow in the American Academy of Nursing.

Deb Arnow, assistant professor at Orvis, calls Talley “a real star with what she has accomplished. She has brought her tremendous knowledge and experience in psychiatric nursing to us, and we’re so fortunate to have her.”

Mae and Arthur Orvis’ generosity helped establish the Orvis School of Nursing in 1957. Mae Zenke Orvis, a skilled opera singer, established the Arthur Emerton Orvis Professorship Fund in memory of her husband in 1981. Available investment earnings from the endowed fund allow support to hire a visiting professor with significant teaching and clinical experience in the field of nursing.

“Dr. Talley’s exceptional background in nursing, national and international recognition, and excellent teaching experience perfectly meet the criteria that Mae Orvis originally designated in establishing the endowed professorship,” said Patsy Ruchala, director of the Orvis School. “We are so proud one of our own very successful alumni has come back to the University to serve in this role.”