

Partnering to Provide Public Health Nursing Experiences at the “Top of the World”

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Acknowledgements

Sigma Theta Tau International
IOTA CHAPTER – VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY



North Slope Borough

Objective

- Describe the development, implementation, and analysis of an innovative partnership with a nursing school and a public health agency located in a geographically and culturally distinct area

Gustavus Adolphus College

- St. Peter, Minnesota
- Founded in 1862
- Private, Liberal Arts College
- Approx. 2500 students



Gustavus Adolphus College

–Nursing Program

- Bachelor of Arts in Nursing
- Admit 30 students per year
- Clinical experiences in rural, suburban, and urban communities

College Mission:

The purpose of a Gustavus education is to help its students attain their full potential as persons, to develop in them a capacity and passion for lifelong learning, and to prepare them for fulfilling lives of leadership and service in working toward a just and peaceful world.



GUSTAVUS

Gustavus Nursing



Images from Google Maps

Barrow, Alaska (part of the North Slope Borough)



Population: 9,686

Race/Ethnicity: Alaska Native/American Indian (52.5%), White (34.1%), Asian (5.1%), Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (1.6%)
High School Graduates or Greater: 85.4%
Median Household Income: \$76,679



Source: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/02/02185.html>

Protective Health Factors- North Slope Borough (NSB)

- Commitment to subsistence way of life
- Availability of educational programs
- Improvements in water/sanitation
- Access to health care and social services
- High health insurance coverage
- Restrictive alcohol laws
- Tobacco control policies
- Below average unemployment and poverty rates
- Rates of STDs (e.g., chlamydia) declining



Health Disparities- North Slope Borough (NSB)

- Measures of Maternal Child Health (e.g. infant and child mortality, childhood obesity, etc.)
- Lung and colon cancer (NSB men)
- Chronic lower respiratory disease death rates 2x state rates
- Rates of injury (e.g. accidents, suicide, domestic violence, and sexual assault) higher than state and national rates
- High rates of tooth decay/tooth loss

Development of Partnership

- Department of Education
 - Spring semester teaching rotations
- Department of Nursing (starting 2011)
 - North Slope Borough (Fall 2011, 2012)
 - Fairbanks Memorial Hospital and North Slope Borough (Fall 2013, 2014)



Clinical Requirements

- Community-Focused Nursing Assessment Project
- Health Teaching Project
- Inter-professional Map
- Peer Review
- Clinical Log Sheet (screening)
- Clinical Performance
- Clinical Goals
- Clinical Discussions (via weekly phone call)



Experience Details:

- Work alongside PHNs
 - Immunization Clinics
 - Home Visits
 - EPSDT Visits
 - Health Promotion
 - Village Trips
 - Radio Shows
 - Health Fairs
 - And MORE!



Health Promotion Projects

- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Bullying
- Flu Prevention
- Handwashing
- Health Careers



Living in Barrow



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- "We are learning all about how subsistence works and how the community members support one another, providing food to Elders and those in need."¹



¹Arctic Sounder, 2013, Retrieved from http://www.thearcticsounder.com/article/1346nursing_students_visit_barrow

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- "I have been loving it ever since we landed"¹
- "I truly believe that being immersed into a new community far from home is giving the three of us a new outlook on public health and nursing."¹



¹Arctic Sounder, 2013, Retrieved from http://www.thearcticsounder.com/article/1346nursing_students_visit_barrow

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“Today there was not a minute that I didn’t love. First of all, flying in the bush plane was awesome. I have really crappy internet, no phone service, and yet, I am more content than I have ever felt before.”



Curricular and Financial Logistics

Nursing Courses:

- OB and Public Health
- Alaska Natives/Native Well-Being
- Independent Studies

Course Delivery:

- PowerPoint and Recorded Lectures
- Exams on Moodle
- Skype and Phone Calls

Finances:

- 2 courses = part time tuition
- 3 courses = full tuition
- Administration pays travel, food, and lodging



The ideal student for this experience:

- Is eager to step outside comfort zone.
- Can live simply.
- Is more focused on others than on self
- Is flexible in the face of an ever changing schedule
- Is even-tempered, and emotionally and physically healthy.
- Will be open to embracing the Inupiaq culture.
- Is able to live and work with alone time.
- Goes into this experience knowing that it will be difficult at times.
- Is gracious, polite, respectful and mature, no matter what the situation.
- Has a positive attitude.

Evaluation

- The Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire (CASQ) was used to measure the students' growth in civic attitudes and skills.
- Narrative data from reflective journals, shed light on the meaning of the experience from the students' perspective.



“We have been able to come to a school where many already knew us and have been to our home community. Coming to Minnesota for myself personally was very hard. Being so far away from home for the first time is tough. I would say that I have stepped way out of my comfort zone, 2,759 miles to be exact..... I came to Gustavus to help complete the connection in hopes that others from my home community will follow.”



“I am beyond grateful for this unique experience. I learned vast amounts about public health, OB nursing, the cultures and beliefs found in Alaska. I even learned a few things about myself: how to break out of my comfort zone: how to learn from those around me.”