

Outstanding FACULTY



Andra Opalinski, PhD, ARNP, CPNP-PC, NC-BC, Associate Professor and Assistant Dean of Graduate Programs, teaches in the College's Master of Science in Nursing – Nurse Practitioner (NP) track, focusing on pediatric content and conducting clinical supervision of NP students. Her call to care is centered on working with children and creating a world that is hopeful for the future.

Opalinski's philosophy on education is built around the concept of community and trust. "When preparing students to make decisions about people's lives, there is a need to take them to this deep level of learning that sometimes seems overwhelming to them, but mutual trust allows for the deep dive into this place," she said. She hopes her teaching results in developing highly compassionate and competent nurses who understand the complexities of people's lives and healthcare systems.

She is currently working on a project at Deerfield Beach High School through a FAU community engagement grant incorporating mindfulness strategies in the classroom for self regulation and stress reduction. The program focuses on high achieving students who experience stress as a result of being part of the very rigorous International Baccalaureate program. "After the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting, I found myself in a place of being a pediatric professional and feeling helpless. I have since focused my practice and research on helping children and adolescents learn skills for emotional wellbeing before the stressors are so great that it is difficult to deal with them," she said.



Faye Postell, MSN-Ed, RN, brings more than three decades of experience, including 25 years in acute care specializing in open-heart and ICU nursing, to her role educating the next generation of nurses as a Visiting Instructor and Assessment Technologies Institute Coordinator. She was called to the caring profession as a child following conversations with a neighbor, who was a nurse.

Postell believes the best way for students to learn is through experiences and realistic case studies that give students insight into the nursing profession. She asks students, "What do you see as this patient's priority? What do they need most? Sometimes it is just listening and asking, 'What matters most to you today?'" She hopes her work, which includes serving as a Practice Partner Liaison for the College's CAPE grant for the VA Medical Center, the FAU Community Health Center, Caridad Center, Community Health Center, Inc., and others, will inspire students to answer the call to care and see the need for their work in the community. "Nurses are needed to help improve the social determinants of health. FAU students are learning about health disparities of veterans and other vulnerable populations. We need to work together to promote better health outcomes for them." ■

