

Bjoring CENTER

2026 SPRING NEWSLETTER

SPRING HISTORY FORUMS

FEBRUARY 24

“125 Years of Army Nursing: Learning From the Past to Shape the Future”

Charissa Threat, PhD and a panel of Army Nurse Corps alumnae

MARCH 11

“Race and Reparations in the History of Psychiatry”

Kylie Smith, PhD

APRIL 14

“Striking for the Patients: Medical Civil Rights and Labor Equity at the South Carolina State Hospital (1964-1984)”

Bradford Pelletier, PhD



HOSTED BY THE BJORING CENTER, ALL FORUMS ARE HELD ON ZOOM. VISIT OUR [WEBSITE](#) FOR DETAILS.

JOIN THE CLUB

Last fall, the Bjoring Center launched a journal club to discuss scholarship—old and new—focused on the history of nursing, labor and collective activism, and critical perspectives on care work. Faculty, postdoctoral fellows, PhD students, and independent scholars continue to meet this semester on a biweekly schedule, in person and on Zoom.

If you are interested in joining the discussion, send an email to dtobbell@virginia.edu.

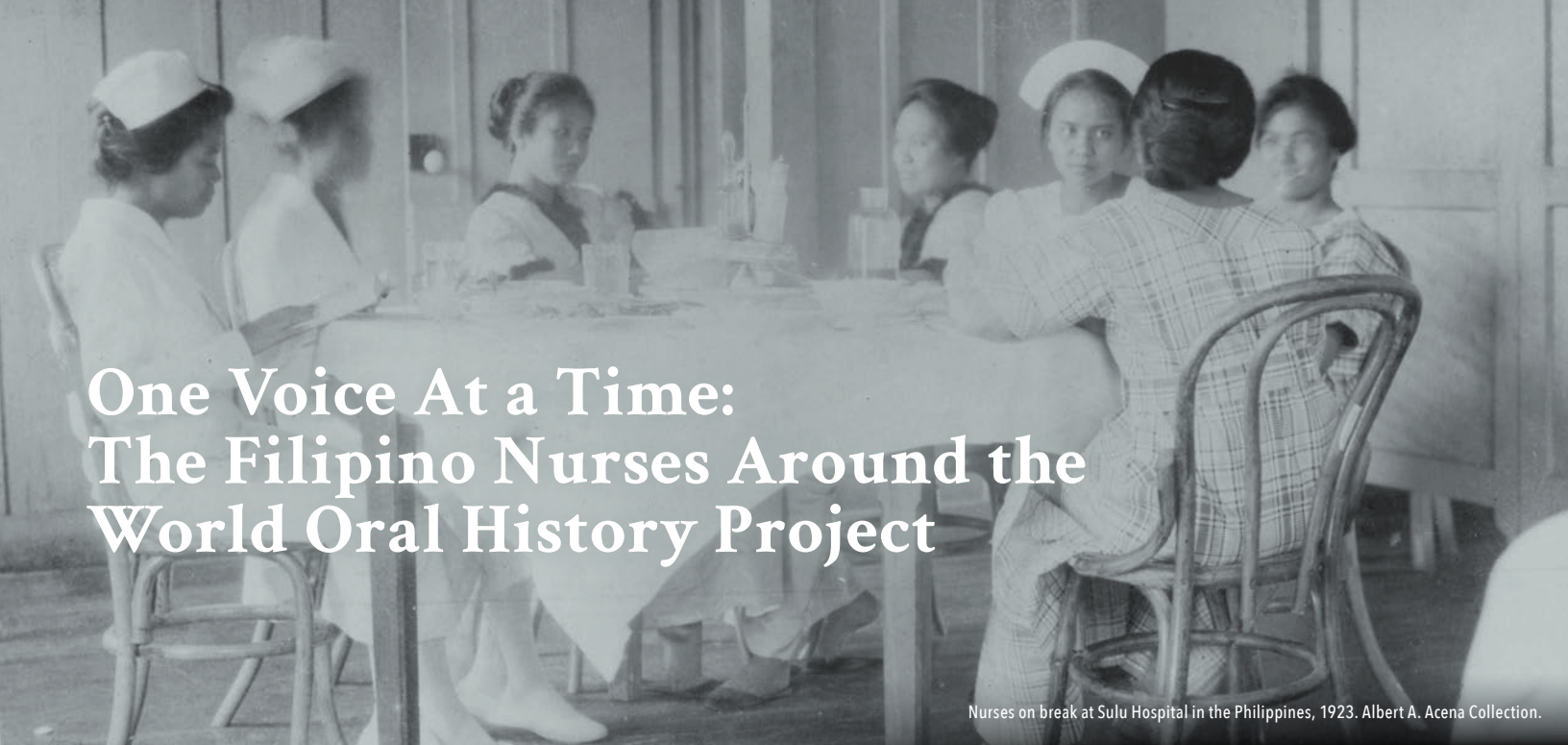
UVA Nursing at 125

This year marks the UVA School of Nursing’s 125th anniversary, a milestone that the Bjoring Center is celebrating with a new online archival endeavor. It brings together primary source materials, historical photographs, and contextual information to highlight the individuals, events, and social and political factors that have shaped the school’s identity. And it documents the school’s important contributions to the nursing profession and to the healthcare of Virginians.

Led by Dominique Tobbell, the [website](#) is a collaboration with UVA’s Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities, which designed and developed the website. The project includes contributions from center archivist, Hal Sharp, center manager, Maura Singleton, and doctoral student and research assistant, Tegan Flowers. The project draws upon the School of Nursing’s archival records, housed at the [Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry](#), and the archival records of UVA Hospital, preserved at [Historical Collections](#), Claude Moore Health Sciences Library. It is also informed by Barbara Brodie’s *Mr. Jefferson’s Nurses: The University of Virginia School of Nursing, 1901-2001*, and the [Race in Healthcare](#) website. We will continue to add to the website and share its content on the school’s social media platforms throughout the year. ●



The new website links to numerous primary sources held in the Bjoring Center and Claude Moore Health Sciences Library Historical Collections.



Nurses on break at Sulu Hospital in the Philippines, 1923. Albert A. Acena Collection.

One Voice At a Time: The Filipino Nurses Around the World Oral History Project

Filipino nurses have long stood at the heart of healthcare delivery. Worldwide, their labor has sustained health systems, their compassion has comforted patients far from home, and their resilience has enabled generations to thrive across borders. Despite this global presence, many of their stories remain undocumented and are at risk of being lost. The Filipino Nurses Around the World Oral History Project seeks to change that—one voice at a time.

Spearheaded by Dr. Jerome Babate of the Filipino Nursing Diaspora Network, with support from Bjoring Center Director Dominique Tobbell, PhD, the project is a landmark initiative dedicated to recording and preserving the experiences of Filipino nurses. Through structured oral history interviews, the study captures professional journeys, personal reflections, migration experiences, and cultural identities that, collectively, illuminate their contribution globally.

“This project is about visibility, dignity, and legacy,” Dr. Babate explained. “Through oral histories, we ensure that future generations can hear directly from those who lived these experiences—how they navigated migration, adapted to new systems, and carried Filipino values into global practice.”

The partnership with the Bjoring Center brings historical depth and methodological rigor to the project. “Oral histories allow us to capture perspectives that traditional records often miss—especially the experiences of migrant nurses,” Dr. Tobbell noted. “By documenting Filipino nurses’ stories, this project broadens the historical narrative of nursing and reflects the realities of a globally mobile healthcare workforce.”

Rudson Barcoma, MN, RN, a relief care manager and clinical nurse educator from Western Australia, was motivated to participate “to impart my experience to fellow nurses and to impart learnings and insights

“Through oral histories, we ensure that future generations can hear directly from those who lived these experiences.”

to new and upcoming nurses,” he said. He also wanted to address the integration of culture into care. “The blending of our cultural practices as Filipinos and how we incorporate them into our practice—that is something I felt was essential to share.”

A participant from Guam, Job Mascardo, MBA, MAN, RN, CMGT-BC, NE-BC, CPHQ, reflected on the evolution of his nursing journey, having chosen nursing as a pragmatic career pathway in the U.S. and discovering a deeper purpose through leadership and systems improvement. “I wanted to highlight not only the clinical aspects of my work,” he shared, “but also the lived experience of being a Filipino nurse in the U.S.—navigating migration, cultural adaptation, and professional growth across healthcare systems.”

Mascardo’s oral history speaks powerfully to the emotional dimensions of migration. He described loneliness, adaptation, and resilience, while honoring the sacrifices of overseas Filipino workers. “It is a profound source of pride for my father that, even as a caregiver with modest wages, he was able to sacrifice and support our education, allowing all four of his children to become registered nurses, debt-free,” he shared.

Throughout these interviews, deeply rooted Filipino values such as *bayanihan* (communal spirit and cooperation), compassion, adaptability, perseverance, and faith emerge as defining strengths. These values,

Mascardo emphasized, become “powerful tools for succeeding overseas,” enabling nurses to rebuild, contribute, and lead in unfamiliar environments. He also underscored the importance of remembering one’s roots, echoing writer José Rizal’s reminder that understanding where one comes from is essential to reaching one’s destination.

Beyond documentation, the project aims to guide, inspire, and normalize the complex emotional realities of working abroad. “I hope future Filipino nurses see that our careers can evolve—we can become leaders, educators, and advocates who shape healthcare systems, not just work within them,” said Mascardo.

As the project expands, the research team is **actively welcoming new research members**, particularly nurses, nurse scholars, and graduate students interested in qualitative research and oral history, who wish to be trained and involved in conducting interviews. This offers a unique opportunity to contribute to nursing history, gain research experience, and support a globally significant archive.

Email us at profjerome72@gmail.com (Dr. Jerome Babate) and copy dtobbell@virginia.edu (Dominique Tobbell).

The project continues to **invite Filipino nurses to participate** and share their stories. Nurses across all practice areas, career stages, and countries are encouraged to take part. [Register here](#).

For Dr. Babate, this invitation to researchers and participants alike reflects the project’s spirit of collective ownership. “This is not just a study,” he emphasized. “It is a shared endeavor, by the community, for the community.” Each story recorded strengthens a collective memory—one that honors the past, informs the present, and empowers future generations of Filipino nurses to see themselves not only as workers in global systems, but as authors of history itself. ●

A NEW LOOK

BjORiNG CENTER



The Bjoring Center recently gave itself a facelift. We worked with Apiary Design to create a new logo and what is known in marketing parlance as a “brand mark”—a visual stamp that identifies the center and makes it easily recognizable.

And what is the Bjoring Center's identity, exactly?

We gave a lot of thought to our core values, who we serve, and what we aspire to be, all of which guided this creative process. We value being inclusive, diverse, collaborative, and supportive. We want whoever interacts with the center to feel connected and engaged—students, alumni, scholars, and the general public alike.

We shortened our name to simplify things and opted for a clean, more modern approach to our design. There are some subtle design elements that we thought interesting to share. In the logo, for example, the letters ‘i’ and ‘n’ are connected to convey our collaborative spirit. The ‘j’ dips under the capital ‘B’ in a gesture akin to support, also a central value of the center. In the brand mark, the ‘B’ character at the crossbar is pointed backwards (like an arrow) but also forwards, to symbolize how the study of the past should provide critical perspective on contemporary issues.

Honoring Barbra Mann Wall



Director Emerita Barbra Mann Wall

We are thrilled to announce that the fundraising campaign for the Barbra Mann Wall Award in the History of Nursing has reached its goal. This new scholarship will support a UVA student who is expanding research in the history of nursing.

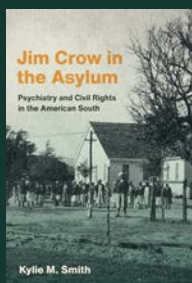
During her tenure as director of the Bjoring Center from 2015 to 2021, Dr. Wall worked assiduously on a variety of fronts to provide a more diverse and inclusive history of nurses. In particular, she spearheaded efforts to recognize and give voice to underrepresented nurses in the local community and beyond, and expanded the center’s holdings by scholars of color and oral history collections from nurses of color.

We thank the many generous donors who supported this newly endowed award to honor Dr. Wall’s outstanding leadership and service at the UVA School of Nursing.

The Bjoring Center at the AAHN

The Bjoring Center was well-represented at the annual meeting of the American Association for the History of Nursing (AAHN), held October 16-18, 2025 in Wilmington, N.C. Center associates **Sarah Craig, PhD, MSN, RN** (associate professor, UVA School of Nursing) and **Bridget Houlihan, PhD, RN** (associate professor, James Madison University School of Nursing) delivered podium presentations, as did the Bjoring Center’s associate director emerita, **Mary Gibson, PhD, RN**. Recent recipients of Bjoring Center research awards, **Ronen Segev, PhD, RN** (Tel Aviv University), who received the 2021 Barbara Brodie Nursing History Fellowship, and **Patricia Rissmiller, DNSc, RN** (Simmons University), who received the 2024 Nurse Practitioner History Preservation Award, presented on their center-funded research projects. Director Emerita **Arlene Keeling, PhD, RN**, and SON alumna **Michelle Hehman, PhD, RN, NPD-BC** (PhD ‘16) were awarded the 2025 Lavinia Dock Award for their book, *The Nurses of Ellis Island: Life and Work Inside the Golden Door* (Texas Christian University Press, 2024). Bjoring Center Director **Dominique Tobbell, PhD**, and Race, Place, and Equity Postdoctoral Research Associate, **Bradford Pelletier, PhD**, also attended.

2026 AGNES DILLON RANDOLPH AWARD



Historian Kylie M. Smith, PhD, is the recipient of the 2026 Agnes Dillon Randolph Award from the Bjoring Center for her outstanding scholarship on the history of psychiatry, nursing, and health equity. Her latest book is *Jim Crow in the Asylum: Psychiatry and Civil Rights in the American South* (University of North Carolina Press, 2026). She is also author of the award-winning *Talking Therapy:*

[Kylie M. Smith, PhD](#)

Knowledge and Power in American Psychiatric Nursing After WWII (Rutgers University Press, 2020). Dr. Smith is an adjunct associate professor at Emory University’s Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing and an adjunct research fellow with the University of Southern Queensland.

Tune in to Dr. Smith’s Randolph Award Lecture, “Race and Reparations in the History of Psychiatry,” on March 11, 2026 at 12 p.m., as part of UVA Health’s Medical Center Hour speaker series. For Zoom information, [click here](#).

The Bjoring Center’s Randolph Award, named in honor of one of Virginia’s eminent nurse leaders, has recognized the distinguished contributions of a scholar to the history of nursing and healthcare every year since 1994.



Kylie M. Smith, PhD



Anna Dahlgren (sixth from left) with nursing graduates at Iloilo Mission Hospital in Panay, the Philippines, ca. 1921.

History's Raw Materials

By Henry K. Sharp, PhD

The desire to bring healthcare services to underserved populations has been one of the goals of modern nursing for more than a century, really since the origins of the profession. Two collections at the Bjoring Center—separated by more than seventy years and thousands of miles—highlight just this kind of dedication. They also offer some insights into how the nursing profession has evolved over the years.

Donated to the Center just last year, the Anna Linnea Dahlgren Papers were saved by Ms. Dahlgren's great nephew, Professor Michael R. Fischbach, who recognized their interest to nursing historians. Anna Dahlgren joined the staff of the Iloilo Mission Hospital, in Panay, the Philippines, in 1920-1921, where she was involved in treating patients and teaching student nurses. Founded early in the period of American colonization of the Philippines (the territory had been awarded to the United States as a consequence of the Spanish-American War) the Mission Hospital still exists and played a significant role initiating nursing education in the Philippines at the beginning of the twentieth century. Dahlgren's experiences—outlined in her papers and richly illustrated by a large collection of period photographs—shed light on the career paths available to single women in the post World-War-One era and on the efforts of North American and Western European nations to bring modern, western health care and nursing education to countries perceived as needing cultural and economic improvement.

A related theme is reflected in the Rural Research Centers Papers, a collection that had been filed for decades in the UVA School of Nursing Administrative Papers, but clearly merited reprocessing as an independent, self-contained collection. Initiated in 1992, just over seventy years after Anna Dahlgren's sojourn, the Southeastern Rural Mental Health Research Center coordinated

academic analysis on the supply and improvement of mental health care to rural poor, minority, and elderly individuals in the southeastern United States. A successor organization seated at the UVA School of Nursing addressed rural healthcare issues nationwide. Both involved assessment of formal and informal service networks in this largely underserved region, centered specifically on how cultural and economic differences among various groups of rural individuals enabled or limited access to care.

In both cases the primary concerns of healthcare delivery and educational improvement are paramount, but within different contexts. In the early twentieth-century Philippines, private, charitable, religious institutions provided education and nursing care as a component of the larger colonial project. And by the end of the century, a public-funded academic institution directed attention inside the United States, and attempted an even more nuanced assessment of healthcare availability and the service improvements that public entities might apply.

Both of these collections are the raw materials of history, carefully safeguarded for a new generation of researchers in the Bjoring Center. ●



A nurse at Iloilo Mission Hospital, ca. 1921.



PUBLICATIONS

Anderson, K.M., Tobbell, D., Cessato, B.W., Graham-Perel, A., Yearwood, E. "Nursing Disciplinary Knowledge: Honoring the Past and Envisioning a Future of PhD Nursing Education to Advance Health Equity." *Nursing Outlook* (2025) 73(5): 102491. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.outlook.2025.102491>



PRESENTATIONS

Tobbell, D., "Tackling the Crisis in Rural Health: Nurse-Led Clinics, Community Activism, and the Politics of Rural Health in the 1970s." Department of the History and Sociology of Science and Bates Center for the Study of the History of Nursing, School of Nursing, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, November 10, 2025.

Tobbell, D., "Nursing in the Community: Nurse-Led Clinics and the Politics of Community Health in the 1960s and 1970s." Nursing Archives Associates Speaker Series and Boston University Libraries, Boston, October 7, 2025.

Tobbell, D., "Dr. Nurse: Science, Politics, and the Transformation of American Nursing and Health Care." Class of 1973 History of Nursing Lecture, School of Nursing and Department of the History of Medicine, Johns Hopkins University, September 25, 2025.



GRANTS

Tegan Flowers, Consortium for the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine Research Fellowship, <https://www.chstm.org/profile/2025/2026/79633/Tegan%20Flowers>



RECENT ACCOLADES

Ren Capucão, PhD, RN, Race, Place, and Equity Postdoctoral Research Associate and alum (PhD '25) was awarded the 2025 Outstanding Dissertation in Disability History Prize by the Disability History Association for his dissertation, "Pressed into Starched Whites: Nursing (Dis)ability in Filipino/American History." This annual prize recognizes exceptional work in disability history by early-career scholars. As part of the prize, Ren has received a book contract with the University of Illinois Press to publish his revised manuscript in its Disability Histories series. This is wonderful recognition of Ren's fantastic scholarship. Read more about Ren's achievement [here](#).

Bradford Pelletier, PhD, Race, Place, and Equity Postdoctoral Research Associate has won the 2025 Stanley Jackson Prize for the best article published in the last three years in the *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* for his article: Bradford Charles Pelletier, "[An Ill-bred Culture of Experimentation: Malaria Therapy and Race in the United States Public Health Service Laboratory at the South Carolina State Hospital, 1932-1952.](#)" *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* (2025) 80 (1): 67-91.

PhD candidate **Tegan Flowers, MSN, WHNP-BC,** was awarded a research fellowship from the [Consortium for the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine](#) to support her dissertation research on "The Care of Trans Families: 1960-2015." Tegan is also the recipient of the 2025 Barbara Brodie Scholars Endowment Award.

Bjoring Center Director Emerita **Arlene Keeling, PhD, RN, FAAN** received the Mary Ann Garrigan Award from the Howard Gotlib Archival Research Center Nursing Archives Associates for her outstanding professional achievements in nursing, including her leadership in the American Association for the History of Nursing and the Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry, and her contributions to nursing history scholarship. Arlene, along with co-author Michelle Hehman, also received the 2025 Lavinia Dock Award for their book, *The Nurses of Ellis Island: Life and Work Inside the Golden Door* (Texas Christian University Press, 2024).

Ken White, PhD, RN, LFAACHE, FADLN, FAAN, chair of the Bjoring Center Advisory Board and immediate past present of the American Academy of Nursing (AAN), received the inaugural Linda Burnes Bolton Polaris Award from the AAN in recognition of his dedication to fulfilling the AAN's mission through his leadership. During his presidency, the Academy "revitalized its stewardship, personal outreach, and relationship-building to strengthen the center of community within the fellowship," according to the announcement. Read more about Ken's accomplishment [here](#).

The Path to a Book

By Bradford Pelletier, PhD (Fellow, Aug '25-Aug '27)



Bradford Pelletier is a Mellon Race, Place, and Equity Postdoctoral Research Associate in the History of Nursing and Healthcare. His two-year fellowship began in fall 2025.

Let me first state that I am absolutely over the moon to be a part of the UVA School of Nursing. As an early-career historian interested in the struggle for medical civil rights during the twentieth century, particularly focused on the influence of Black activism upon the development of American psychiatric practice, I feel extremely lucky to be part of the Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry and to be mentored by Dr. Dominique Tobbell, one of the true thought-leaders in the history of medicine.

My first semester here went by in a flash as I drove toward my short-term goals. I have been hard at work on a paper titled "Striking for the Patients: Medical Civil Rights and Labor Equity at the South Carolina State Hospital (1964-1984)," which will be the topic of my April 14, 2026 Bjoring Center history forum and for which I recently submitted a presentation proposal to the American Association for the History of Medicine Conference in Buffalo, NY (June 2026). I hope this paper will lead to another publication in a peer-reviewed journal. I have also been invited to review Kylie Smith's new book, *Jim Crow in the Asylum*, for *Nursing History Review*, which I will submit in April. Additionally, I submitted a proposal to the Society for the Social History of Medicine Conference in Leeds, UK (July 2026) for a panel titled "Civil Rights and Disability Rights Inside/Outside State-Run Institutions in the United States." If accepted, the panel and presentation will take up

a good bit of my time during the second half of the spring semester. Finally, over winter break, I completed a research trip to the South Carolina Department of Archives and History in Columbia, SC, which greatly aided the abovementioned nursing paper and my forthcoming book proposal.

These are all major steps toward my central goal of using this fellowship to secure a book contract and complete a large portion of the writing for the book manuscript, tentatively titled *Combatting Corrupted Care: Medical Civil Rights and State-Run Psychiatry (1910-1985)*. I am happy to report that I will submit a proposal to the Race, Inequality, and Health series at Columbia University Press within the next few months. This summer, I am planning a trip to various archives in Washington, D.C., which should complete the balance of my research for the manuscript. In the longer term, I have been invited to co-edit a special edition of *History of Psychiatry*, a peer-reviewed journal. If accepted, this special edition—tentatively titled "Examining Race in the Psy-Disciplines"—will be a central focus during my second year.

Lastly, while I've amassed five years of teaching experience at the City University of New York, there is always more to learn and more tools to add to my pedagogical toolbox. I have the privilege this spring semester to observe two of Dr. Tobbell's courses, which will aid my long-term goal of refining my approach in the classroom. There is a lot to do and a lot to look forward to! ●

NEW ACQUISITIONS

Lance Bendann, papers of Linda Granniger Davis (UVA SON Class of 1944) whose nursing career included service in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps.

Bill Cessato, early 1960s yearbooks from the Harlem Hospital School of Nursing in New York.

Michael R. Fischbach, papers of Anna L. Dahlgren, a missionary nurse in the Philippines in the early 1920s, including correspondence, diary and memoranda books, photographs and a taped interview conducted in the 1980s.

Dianne Gagliano, books on nurses who served in the Vietnam War, commemorative calendars produced by the Military Women's Memorial, and a pair of wooden crutches, ca. early 20th century.

Gretchen LaGaza, material pertaining to the International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses and newsletters from 1990-1998.

National Student Nurses' Association Collection, material from the organization's beginnings in the early 1950s through the early 2000s, including records of its Board of Directors and affiliated committees, state chapters, publications, and more.

Linda Pearson, early editions of *The Nurse Practitioner Journal*.

Phoebe Pollitt, biographies of African American nurses who served during World War II, and other additions to the Underrepresented Nurses Collection.

Denise Geolot Sherer, material primarily relating the development of the nurse practitioner role and its influence on nursing education, including federal reports and legislation and longitudinal studies of early NP programs.

Kenneth R. White, additions to the Kenneth R. White Collection.



Thank you for supporting the Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry. You can give to the center in a variety of ways.

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If you prefer to make a contribution by check, please make it payable to the UVA School of Nursing and mail it to: University of Virginia, P.O. Box 37963, Boone, IA 50037. In the memo section, please state that it is for the Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry.

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To make a gift of stock, or for UVA tax ID information, please contact Elle Blevins in the UVA School of Nursing at (434) 924-0138.

For questions about donating papers and artifacts, contact us at nurs-hxc@virginia.edu.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY! ALL GIFTS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

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The Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry, established at the University of Virginia in 1991 to support historical scholarship in nursing, is dedicated to the preservation and study of nursing history. The goals of the center include the collection of materials, the promotion of scholarship, and the dissemination of historical research findings.

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A snowball fight erupts during duty at Winchester Memorial Hospital, ca. 1912. ECBCNHI Collections.



SCHOOL of NURSING

