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CU College of Nursing professor named ‘2021 Nurse Educator of the Year’

When the pandemic shut down others, Kim Paxton created a way for students to keep learning, graduate

AURORA, Colo. (April 19, 2021) – When COVID-19 swept across the world and wreaked havoc, students everywhere faced missing classes and graduation. But not in one program at the University of Colorado College of Nursing. Kim Paxton, DNP, APRN, developed a high-fidelity virtual simulation so nursing students could continue to learn reasoning skills, earn clinical hours, and attend their commencement ceremony. Then, she shared her patient simulations with other faculty so they could also use it to help students. Her creativity and generosity are why Dr. Paxton was named ‘2021 Nurse Educator of the Year.’

“Receiving this award is a great honor,” said Assistant Professor Paxton, AGPCNP Specialty Director at the University of Colorado College of Nursing. “Being nominated by a peer and the Nurse Educators Conference of the Rockies selection committee identifying that contribution as worthy of this award is very humbling.”

Paxton has taught higher education since 2003. She’s the specialty director for the Adult Geriatric Primary Care program and focuses on health promotion and prevention. She credits the College of Nursing for allowing unrestrained innovation in educational strategies and design.

“Collaborating with students, watching them transform into exceptional providers is one of the greatest gifts associated with being an educator,” said Paxton.

“She never waivers in sharing her innovations with others and always with a kind heart,” wrote Assistant Professor Lisa Diamond, DNP, FNP-C to the selection committee. “I have found her to be incredibly innovative with creating unique opportunities for students to learn and showcase competencies. She holds a steadfast work ethic, attentiveness to detail, pioneering spirit and an unwavering commitment to adult and geriatric NP students.”

Paxton also helped create Connecting Older Adults to Students through Interprofessional Telecare ([COAST-IT](#)). The program helps nursing students practice their bedside manners while breaking the cycle of isolation for older adults. Paxton designed a system to engage the isolated seniors in the program.

The award winner and Carmen Stephen, DNP, RN have been accepted into the [Teaching Scholars Program](#) this fall. The 18-month program will enhance their knowledge and skills in medical and healthcare education.

About the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus

The University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus is a world-class medical destination at the forefront of transformative science, medicine, education, and patient care. The campus encompasses the University of Colorado health professional schools, more than 60 centers and institutes, and two nationally ranked independent hospitals that treat more than two million adult and pediatric patients each year. Innovative, interconnected and highly collaborative, together we deliver life-changing treatments, patient care, professional training, and conduct world-renowned research. For more information, visit www.cuanschutz.edu.

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