

2026 Academic Symposium Presentations

Rhoda Aborah

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Best Practices to Promote Client Safety in the Hospital Setting

This poster will display how promoting safety in hospitals improves patient outcomes, reduces healthcare costs, and enhances care quality. It will show both qualitative and quantitative research to identify best practices. Key strategies include Tailored Interventions for Patient Safety (TIPS) to lower fall rates in older adults, nurse-led advocacy in dialysis units, maintaining proper staff-to-patient ratios, using clinical technology to prevent adverse events, and encouraging interprofessional collaboration. Quantitative data show reductions in falls and hospital-acquired infections, while qualitative findings highlight nurses' experiences with safety practices and teamwork. The research emphasizes the importance of education, appropriate tools, and effective hospital management in ensuring patient safety and guiding future healthcare professionals.

Francisca Adjei

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Optimal Nurse-Patient Ratio

Patient safety in hospital settings is closely linked to the adequacy of nurse staffing and the ability of nurses to provide safe, effective, and timely care. Inadequate nurse-to-patient ratios have been associated with increased medication errors, missed nursing care, nurse burnout, and poorer patient outcomes. This evidence-based practice (EBP) presentation explores the importance of optimal nurse-to-patient ratios as a key strategy for reducing medication errors and adverse events in the healthcare setting. Drawing from recent peer-reviewed studies published, this presentation examines how different nurse staffing methodologies, nursing workload, and structured staffing models influence patient safety and nursing outcomes. The reviewed evidence demonstrates that staffing approaches such as mandated nurse-to-patient ratios and systematic staffing frameworks can improve nurse satisfaction, reduce workload strain, and support safer care delivery. Additionally, the findings highlight the complexity of nursing work and suggest that staffing decisions should account for patient acuity and task demands rather than relying solely on nursing time. In summary, the evidence supports the development and implementation of evidence-based staffing policies aimed at improving working conditions for nurses and enhancing patient safety and health outcomes.

Brigitte Apenteng

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Optimal Nurse to Patient Ratios to Reduce Errors in the Healthcare Setting

Nurses face physical and psychological pressure which results in an increase in the risk of burnout which could potentially compromise the safety of patients due to the high-pressure environment in healthcare settings. This research paper will delve into the important role of nurse to patient ratios in healthcare settings, and how it affects patient safety and nurses' wellbeing. Inadequate staffing is one of the major sources of work-related stress for nurses which later leads to nurse burnout. To avoid such outcomes, adequate nurse to patient ratios and reasonable workloads are essential. Optimal nurse to patient ratios cannot be easily defined and include factors beyond simple numerical targets, including patient acuity, nursing skills and experience, availability of support staff, and work environment. This research emphasizes evidence-based staffing models that prioritize patient safety and support nurses' ability to deliver high quality care.

Lesiah Bryon

Quinn Bennett

Gysenia Ortiz

Emelia Caravalo

Early Childhood Education

Poster Presentation

Integrated Teaching Through the Arts

This research displays a lesson that connects art with math, science, reading, and social studies using the book Snowflake Bentley. This project will show how creative activities can help students understand school subjects better and stay interested in learning. During the lessons, students learn how snowflakes are formed, practice math skills like symmetry and patterns, work on reading skills such as sequencing and vocabulary, and talk about what life was like during the time period of the story.

Teaching strategies will include reading the book aloud, completing hands-on activities, creating art projects, working in groups, and writing short reflections. These activities give students different ways to learn and demonstrate what they already know. Student work will show that students were engaged, participated in lessons, and made connections between different subjects.

This poster highlights the lesson ideas, teaching strategies, and what students learned. Overall, the project shows that using art in lessons can make learning more interesting and help students better understand different subjects.

The objective is that students think creatively, and are able to connect the ideas from Snow Flake Bentley to many different academic areas. Through this presentation, participants will be able to explain how art can help support learning across content areas. Participants will understand how one book can be used to teach multiple subjects. It also shows students how educators can plan simple, connected lessons that bring ideas together in a meaningful way.

Sean Christiansen

Psychology

Poster Presentation

Do Student-Athletes Develop Time Management Skills that are Beneficial in Post-Academic Employment?

For many student-athletes in Division III, the same question arises when they look back on their decision of where to go to school. Did they make the right decision to follow their love and passion for a sport that they have played for as long as they could remember? Should they have decided to enroll in a state university, but accept that they were no longer an athlete? According to a study completed by the University of Arizona, student athletes are given the answer to the puzzle of a health work schedule from the first day they step on campus. The daily time crunch that every athlete feels when they are running from a team meeting to class to practice is once that is incredibly valuable in the long run. With this study, I hope to ease the minds of all Division III student-athletes and their anxiety of the future. Do the ups and downs of intense competition help sharpen the time management skills that so many businesses and corporations search for in a possible candidate? I hope to prove that it most definitely does! However, this is not exclusive to just athletes. It can impact any individual looking to get a step up on the entire pool of applicants and will be the reason that corporations will be nothing short of impressed by your focus and determination.

Madisyn Dechant

Hannah Baxter

Emergency Management

Oral Presentation

Investigating the Impact of Burnout and Mental Health Struggles within Public Service Fields

Mental health in public service occupations is often an overlooked topic. First responders are exposed to traumatic events very frequently in their line of work. These events can lead to major mental health problems that are often overlooked because of the culture surrounding the departments. This study will explore data gathered about mental health struggles in the public service field, while also exploring programs in place to help those struggling with mental health. Through an extensive review of literature, research, and surveys conducted, it was determined that mental health struggles and burnout are recurring problems within emergency services. It investigates the culture and stigma surrounding mental health in emergency response departments. This research seeks to capture the main ideas of the mental health struggles experienced by first responders and what programs are in place to help those struggling with mental health. This presentation will share survey data on mental health struggles and analyze programs in place to support mental health. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of how mental health is a significant problem within public service fields and will learn about the effectiveness of the programs in place to address these struggles.

Andrew Decoteau

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Nursing Care During Disasters

Nurses play a critical role in saving lives during disasters, but many are not properly trained or prepared to handle these emergencies. When disasters strike, nurses are expected to act quickly and provide care under stressful and dangerous conditions. This research examines the problem of nurses not being fully ready to respond during disasters. It explains why this is an important issue in nursing, what is currently being done to improve preparedness, and what research says about the best ways to fix the problem. This research also discusses how these efforts can help improve patient outcomes. In addition, this research will hopefully have an impact on properly training the nurses on how to respond in a disaster situation. Hopefully, reducing the number of deaths that could occur during a disaster.

Brandon della Paolera

Psychology/Fire Science

Oral Presentation

Impact of Regular Consultation with a Sports Psychologist on Elite Athletes' Performance

This project will focus on the role that psychological interventions and mental skills training can play in creating positive athletic outcomes. As mental coaching becomes increasingly prevalent in elite sport environments, understanding its measurable effects on performance is becoming more important on altering positive athletic outcomes.

The research focuses on competitive, high-level athletes instead of recreational athletes, as this is more relevant to elite performance. To measure performance, I will use objective or standardized indicators such as performance metrics, coach evaluations, competition results, or validated performance scales.

Isabella DeLordo

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Kangaroo Care in the NICU

Kangaroo care (KC) is an evidence-based nursing practice that significantly benefits preterm and low-birth-weight infants in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). Research indicates that KC improves thermoregulation, stabilizes vital signs, enhances breastfeeding success, and fosters neurodevelopmental outcomes. Additionally, KC reduces stress responses in both infants and parents, promoting emotional bonding and parental confidence in caregiving. Studies suggest structured KC protocols can reduce neonatal morbidity, improve weight gain, and decrease hospital stays. Despite its

proven benefits, barriers such as staff training, parental hesitancy, and NICU policies may hinder widespread adoption. Nursing interventions should focus on education, policy development, and individualized support to optimize KC practices. These abstract highlights the importance of evidence-based nursing strategies in integrating KC into standard NICU care, ensuring the best possible outcomes for preterm infants and their families.

Annetta Delprado

Nursing

Poster Presentation

How to Reduce Central Line Associated Bloodstream Infections

The purpose of this evidence-based practice research is to identify nursing interventions that have been clinically proven with best current evidence to reduce incidence of central line-associated bloodstream infections (CLABSIs) in hospitalized patients. Central lines, or catheters, occupy major veins and terminate at the entrance to the heart; due to this design, central lines provide direct access for pathogens to enter into the bloodstream and rapidly disseminate throughout the body if not cared for with proper aseptic technique. The implications of this highly fatal healthcare-acquired infection (HAI) are immense, as use of central lines in healthcare is unavoidable in many cases, including administration of certain medications, blood products, and total parenteral nutrition. Additionally, CLABSIs are entirely preventable, meaning that evidence-based standards of nursing practice and seamless collaboration of the multidisciplinary healthcare team are crucial for providing care in patients with a central line in place. Although central catheter bundles have been developed and adopted by institutions to standardize insertion and maintenance of central lines, this intervention alone has not been sufficient in prevention of CLABSIs; the research discussed in this paper provides evidence that meticulous central catheter rounds, comprehensive educational programs, and specific management practices should be used in conjunction with the central catheter bundle as the standard of nursing practice for care of all central lines.

Olivier Fanfan

Psychology

Poster Presentation

How Prevalent are Substance Use Disorders Among College Students?

Substance use disorders are a major concern among college students. Past research indicates that about one in five meet the criteria for an alcohol or drug use disorder within a given year. This prevalence is due to many factors including easy access to drugs and alcohol, academic and financial stress, and increased autonomy. To understand the prevalence and effects of SUDs among college students, the present study conducts a literature review on this topic using peer-reviewed articles and mainstream media. Doing this will bring together existing research to better understand how common substance use disorders among college students and why estimates differ across sources. Early signs of substance misuse are often dismissed rather than recognized as symptoms of a developing disorder. This is

worsened when the college culture normalizes high risk behaviors like binge drinking and recreational drug use. Both environmental and psychosocial factors contribute to the development and maintenance of these disorders. Research suggest that early adulthood is the peak period for substance related disorders because this developmental stage involves identity exploration, heightened social influence and a greater exposure to substance use opportunities. This research aims to increase awareness and reduce stigma surrounding substance use disorders as it isn't moral failure, but rather a public health concern.

Alicia Garofoli

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Evidence-Based Practice to Reduce the Risk of Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia

Ventilator-associated pneumonia (VAP) is a healthcare-associated infection that develops in mechanically ventilated patients who have been intubated for more than 48 hours. This infection is associated with an increase in morbidity and mortality, and elevated healthcare costs due to extended intensive care unit (ICU) stays and complications. The primary objective of this research is to identify the evidence-based best practices to reduce the risk of VAP in mechanically ventilated patients. This was achieved through a comprehensive review of current literature, clinical guidelines, and randomized controlled trials. Key interventions that were evaluated include VAP prevention bundles, head-of-bed elevation, daily sedation interruption, and oral care with chlorhexidine. Most of these interventions were found to decrease the incidence of VAP, but some require more research to evaluate safety and efficacy.

Nyia Gonzalez

Geidyann Soto, and Anthony Lemus

forensic criminology

Poster Presentation

Truth & Reconciliation in South Africa

This poster will help viewers to understand the policy of racial segregation (apartheid) in South Africa from the 1940's to the 1990's and will examine the approach taken in post-apartheid South Africa to heal the divisions and the violence. This approach was called Truth & Reconciliation. The poster will give background, identify key players, examine the process, and comment on the results. Viewers will be challenged to think about how the process of Truth & Reconciliation could be applied to other issues in our own day.

Chelsea Hagan

Nursing

Best Practice to Reduce Healthcare Associated Surgical Site Infections (SSIs)

Surgical site infections are a significant concern in healthcare because they prolong hospital stays, increase healthcare costs, and negatively affect patient outcomes. Minimizing these infections remains a priority in acute care settings. This evidence-based research paper examines current peer reviewed research and national guidelines to identify strategies nurses can implement before, during, and after surgery to reduce the incidence of surgical site infections. Preoperative techniques involve identifying patients at risk for infection, especially those with obesity, diabetes, advanced age, or other comorbidities. The timely identification facilitates targeted therapies, including skin antisepsis, antibiotic prophylaxis, and glucose regulation. Maintaining normothermia during surgery is crucial, as anesthesia and cool operating room conditions can result in unintentional hypothermia, which compromises immune function and affects wound healing. The use of warming measures like forced air warming systems and warmed intravenous fluids, supports temperature regulation and decreases infection risk. Infection prevention during the perioperative period requires strict adherence to sterile technique and a strong sense of surgical ethics. Postoperative and environmental interventions additionally facilitate the reduction of infections through effective wound management, regular hand sanitation, and maintaining a clean environment to reduce bacteria transmission. Evidence indicates that personal devices like cell phones utilized by operating room personnel may serve as potential sources of contamination, emphasizing the need for handwashing practices. A comprehensive approach that integrates patient risk assessment, temperature management, aseptic practice, and environmental hygiene is essential for reducing surgical site infections. The consistent implementation of these evidence-based strategies strengthen patient safety, decreases infection rates, and improves overall surgical outcomes.

Elizabeth Hannon

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Benefits of Skin to Skin Contact Postpartum

Skin-to-skin contact, is the act of placing a newborn on a parent's bare chest immediately after birth and in the early days of life. This practice and intervention has been widely used and studied for its physiological and psychological benefits, of the mother and infant. Evidence shows that skin-to-skin contact improves infant and early-preterm neonatal health by stabilizing their vital signs such as body temperature, oxygen levels, and heart rate, as well as supporting weight gain early on, and reducing sickness percentages. This practice also improves breastfeeding outcomes by enhancing an early initiation and breastfeeding length and duration. For parents, skin-to-skin contact promotes maternal-infant bonding, enhances emotional wellbeing, and decreases the risk of postpartum depression and anxiety. Likewise, skin-to-skin contact helps develop and strengthen the parent-child attachment, such as the father as well. This act of skin-to-skin has long-term developmental benefits for the infant, as they grow into a child. Besides these researched benefits, there can be challenges in clinical settings with a lack of awareness of this practice. This paper studies and overall reviews the current and past evidence

that supports skin-to-skin contact explores the fundamental research of the benefits and discusses challenges within the practice itself. The research findings focus on the importance of implementing skin-to-skin contact care, into infant and mother practice to enhance outcomes for both infants and parents.

Sarah Happy

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Best Practice to Reduce Healthcare Associated Catheter-Associated Urinary Tract Infections

Catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTIs) are a significant healthcare concern that contribute to increased patient morbidity, prolonged hospital stays, and higher healthcare costs. This paper uses a literature review to explore best practices for reducing CAUTIs through effective prevention strategies and early intervention. The review examined the pathophysiology and risk factors associated with CAUTIs, including improper catheter insertion and maintenance practices as well as patient related factors. The literature showed that key prevention strategies include the use of aseptic technique during catheter insertion, consistent catheter maintenance, timely catheter removal, and the use of alternatives such as external catheters. Evidence also supported the role of prophylactic antibiotic administration and ongoing staff education in reducing infection rates (Nazarko, 2024). Additionally, studies emphasized the importance of health monitoring systems to track infection rates and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions (Ashburn, 2025). Case studies from critical care and long-term care settings further demonstrated improved patient outcomes when these practices were implemented. Despite challenges such as limited resources and patient noncompliance, the findings suggest that applying these evidence-based strategies can significantly reduce CAUTI incidence and healthcare costs. Future research should focus on strengthening prevention protocols and improving implementation strategies across healthcare settings.

Shearita Kennedy

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Best Practices to Reduce Pressure Ulcers

Pressure ulcers, also termed bedsores or pressure injuries, are among the leading persistent healthcare issues, majorly affecting immobile and critically ill patients. These injuries compromise patient safety and quality of life and place a considerable ethical, clinical, and financial burden on healthcare systems. This write-up assesses the critical significance of pressure ulcer prevention within nursing, demonstrating the nurse's fundamental role in identifying at-risk individuals, conducting thorough risk assessments, and integrating timely and evidence-based interventions. The effective approaches discussed include using pressure-relieving devices, regular patient repositioning, and standardized tools such as the Braden Scale to evaluate pressure injury risks. The paper emphasizes the value of continuous education and training for nursing staff, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the integration of structured

Pressure Injury Prevention Protocols (PIPPs) to foster consistent and proactive care. As frontline caregivers, nurses are well-positioned to influence patient experiences and clinical outcomes through vigilant and compassionate care. A strong body of evidence supports bundled care approaches (comprehensive, multi-component strategies) as the most effective means of reducing pressure ulcer incidence. According to studies, these bundles integrate best practices across disciplines to ensure optimal patient outcomes. Besides, this paper denotes the necessity for future research to investigate the outcomes of prevention efforts, address disparities in care and outcomes via an equity-focused lens, and assess the potential of emerging technologies in fostering prevention approaches. By promoting a culture of innovation, accountability, and vigilance, the nursing field can experience substantial progress toward eliminating avoidable pressure injuries and improving overall patient care quality.

Huldah Koiwu

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Use of Complimentary and Alternative Medicine During Pregnancy

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), including acupuncture, prenatal yoga, massage therapy, herbal medicine, and mindfulness-based interventions, is increasingly integrated into prenatal care as pregnant women seek non-pharmacological strategies to manage pregnancy-related discomforts. This research critically examines the efficacy, safety, and clinical applicability of CAM modalities by synthesizing contemporary evidence on maternal outcomes. Current literature demonstrates that CAM significantly alleviates common pregnancy symptoms, including nausea, musculoskeletal pain, stress, anxiety, and antenatal depression. Meta-analytic evidence indicates that yoga, massage, and music therapy reduce depressive symptoms during pregnancy (Zhu, 2021), while acupuncture effectively mitigates nausea and back pain (Smith, 2020). Furthermore, prenatal yoga and mindfulness-based stress reduction enhance maternal psychological well-being and overall pregnancy experiences (Green, 2021; Lee, 2022). Collectively, these findings underscore CAM's potential to enhance maternal well-being while supporting holistic, patient-centered prenatal care. For nursing practice, integrating evidence-based CAM modalities strengthens patient education, promotes shared decision-making, and aligns with the profession's commitment to holistic health promotion. Despite promising outcomes, clinical implementation requires cautious evaluation, particularly regarding standardization of protocols and the safety profile of herbal therapies during pregnancy. Continued rigorous research is necessary to examine long-term maternal and fetal outcomes and to establish evidence-informed guidelines for safe integration into prenatal healthcare practice.

Fritzinie Lavoile

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Early Identification and Intervention in Infant Abuse

Infant maltreatment is a primary cause of morbidity and mortality in preverbal children, necessitating urgent early identification and intervention. This research explores various forms of maltreatment and identifies risk factors that may lead to abuse. The findings emphasize that recognizing sentinel injuries specifically inconsistent explanations for bruising or intra-oral trauma in pre-mobile infants are a critical clinical priority. Findings support the implementation of standardized age-based protocols for routine abuse evaluations for high-risk fracture patterns significantly reduce harm. Evidence-based interventions such as home visitation programs lower the risk of maltreatment recurrence. Preventative interventions like the Period of PURPLE Crying, a caregiver education program, result in a 30% reduction in physical abuse hospitalizations. Ultimately, a multidisciplinary approach integrating the expertise of healthcare workers, social workers, and policymakers is essential to effectively protect vulnerable infants from further abuse.

Keith Lazon

Alum

Poster Presentation

From Roadways to Hallways: Practical Lessons from Policing Inside Schools

This presentation examines leadership, trust, and organizational legitimacy through practitioner insight drawn from a published law enforcement memoir, *From Roadways to Hallways: One Officer's Mission to Reach Young Hearts*. The work explores the transition of a police officer from traditional patrol environments into educational settings, highlighting how leadership presence and institutional symbolism influence public perception and trust. Using reflective practitioner experience as qualitative data, the presentation analyzes how authority is interpreted differently across organizational contexts and how legitimacy is constructed through daily interactions rather than formal policy alone. Particular attention is given to leadership visibility, relational trust-building, and the role of informal influence in environments where coercive authority is neither appropriate nor effective.

Grounded in organizational leadership and public-sector theory, this analysis connects practitioner experience to concepts of transformational leadership, adaptive leadership, and institutional legitimacy. The presentation argues that trust in public institutions is shaped less by written policy and more by leadership behaviors, consistency, and symbolic actions that signal approachability and accountability. Experiences from school-based policing illustrate how leaders must recalibrate identity, communication style, and decision-making to align with stakeholder expectations while maintaining organizational integrity. These insights challenge traditional hierarchical leadership assumptions and emphasize the importance of context-sensitive leadership in complex public organizations.

The presentation contributes to leadership and public administration scholarship by demonstrating how practitioner narratives can serve as a valuable lens for examining organizational dynamics. By bridging lived experience with academic theory, the discussion highlights the relevance of scholar-practitioner perspectives in understanding trust erosion, legitimacy building, and leadership effectiveness. The findings offer implications for leadership development, organizational training, and policy implementation across public-sector institutions. Ultimately, the presentation reinforces the value of integrating applied experience into academic discourse to understand better how leadership operates in real-world, high-accountability environments.

Keywords: Public-Sector Leadership, Organizational Legitimacy, Trust-Building, Transformational Leadership, Scholar-Practitioner Insight, School-Based Policing

Christopher MacLagan

BSN

Poster Presentation

Medication Error Prevention

Medication administration errors remain a critical concern in nursing practice, significantly affecting patient safety, health outcomes, and public confidence in the healthcare system. Many of these errors are preventable and often result from factors such as high workloads, workplace distractions, communication breakdowns, and a lack of standardized medication administration procedures. Addressing medication errors is essential to delivering high-quality, safe, and patient-centered care. This presentation examines recent evidence-based strategies aimed at reducing medication administration errors, drawing on current peer-reviewed nursing research. Interventions such as mindfulness training, enhanced nurse-patient communication, and active patient engagement have demonstrated effectiveness in minimizing errors. For example, mindfulness techniques can help nurses maintain focus, improve situational awareness, and reduce mental fatigue during medication administration. Strengthening communication and involving patients in their care serve as additional safeguards in preventing medication errors.

These strategies align with the Anna Maria College BSN Program's focus on patient safety and evidence-based practice. Sustaining improvements in medication safety requires continuous professional development and strict adherence to proven protocols. Future research should evaluate the long-term effectiveness of these interventions while exploring innovative technology and team-based care. By implementing these best practices, nurses can significantly enhance medication safety and patient outcomes across all healthcare settings.

Mya Markarian

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Gestational Diabetes

Gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) poses significant health risks for pregnant women and their offspring, impacting both physiological and psychological well-being. This integrative review draws upon five recent studies examining the prevalence, risk factors, psychological outcomes, and behavioral influences associated with GDM. A study in Turkey reported a GDM prevalence of 17.5%, highlighting major risk factors including obesity, low educational attainment, high parity, family history of diabetes, and adverse obstetric histories. Women with GDM consistently showed elevated levels of prenatal distress, with specific concerns regarding maternal health complications, infant health, and labor. Psychological assessments revealed a strong relationship between GDM and poor sleep quality, increased depression, and anxiety, particularly during the postpartum period. Behavioral studies

emphasized the critical role of glycemic control, where intention, self-efficacy, and support systems—based on the Theory of Planned Behavior—significantly predicted adherence to healthy lifestyle behaviors. Collectively, these findings underscore the multifaceted nature of GDM, necessitating comprehensive prenatal care that integrates psychological support, risk screening, and behavioral interventions to improve maternal and fetal outcomes.

Esi Mensah

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Diabetes

Diabetes is a known risk factor for complications during pregnancy and childbirth. Diabetes occurs as either gestational (during pregnancy) or pre-gestational (existing before pregnancy). This presentation highlights the significant risks that pre-gestational diabetes poses for mothers and unborn babies and how to best address them. Pre-gestational diabetes causes complications like preterm birth, neonatal morbidity, and preeclampsia. Managing the condition needs well-thought-out approaches like patient education, glycemic control, and prenatal care. This presentation focuses on solutions or interventions identified by the most current and relevant research evidence and future implications on nursing research and practice. This presentation sheds light on nurses' vital role in managing pre-gestational diabetes via patient-centered, multidisciplinary approaches. Integrating evidence-based methods like individualized training, digital health tools, and mental health support improves health outcomes for mothers and infants. Nurses are in a unique position of offering continuous education, monitoring patients' progress, and coordinating care with other professionals. Maternal health has rapidly become one of the key focus in clinical practice, and the research shows that nurses need to be well-equipped with the right skills required to handle pregnancy and childbirth complications. Recent research emphasizes early preventive care and utilization of technology to alleviate neonatal and maternal risks. Current research reveals the value of continuous education, nursing research, and technological innovations in promoting effective care for patients battling pre-gestational diabetes.

Marcelly Miranda

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Best Practice for Kangaroo Care in the NICU

This presentation explores the research on physiological and psychological effects of kangaroo care (KC) on patients and their parents in a neonatal intensive care environment (NICU) in different hospitals. The KC technique involves short term skin-to-skin contact between the parent's chest and the neonate. This method has been shown to decrease infant pain and cortisol levels while improving weight gain, decreasing mother postpartum depression, and creating enhanced parental bonding. This presentation highlights the research findings that aid in improving physiological, neurological, and psychological parameters for parents and infants due to the application of the technique, helping them improve infant

health and reducing hospitalization time for preterm infants. KC is explained and supervised by NICU nurses. Research has shown that collaboration between hospitals, healthcare professionals, and parents is essential for the successful implementation of this evidence-based method. Research has also identified obstacles to adoption of KC, including parents who are afraid of holding their babies and the increased risk for nosocomial infection.

Madi Mulligan

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Best Practice to Reduce the Incident of Abusive Head Trauma (AHT) in Infants

Abusive head trauma (AHT) occurs when an infant or young child is violently shaken and leads to serious brain injuries, physical disabilities, or even death. Nurses play a critical role in the prevention, early detection, and management of AHT. This presentation explores best practices in nursing for addressing AHT, emphasizing the critical role that education, early identification, and intervention strategies play. Nurses are pivotal in providing parents and caregivers with crucial information on infant care, the dangers of shaking, and the importance of non-violent methods of soothing. Additionally, early recognition of signs of AHT, such as unexplained bruising, lethargy, or respiratory distress, is essential for prompt medical intervention. Research has identified best practices for infants suffering from AHT that focus on effective communication with multidisciplinary teams to ensure proper care and support for affected children and their families. Research has shown that nurses can enhance awareness and prevention of AHT which contributes to the protection and well-being of vulnerable infants.

Christina Palau

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Best Practice Care for Clients with End-Stage Heart Failure

End-stage heart failure in the nursing home setting presents significant challenges in both medical and emotional care. This case study-based presentation highlights the interdisciplinary approach to managing an elderly patient who is experiencing functional decline, depression, and worsening heart failure symptoms. The nursing role is centered around monitoring fluid balance, optimizing cardiac function, managing pain, and encouraging activity participation. Collaboration between nurses and other healthcare professionals, including physicians, pharmacists, therapists, and social workers, ensures a person-centered approach that prioritizes symptom relief, medication optimization, and emotional well-being. The integration of holistic care strategies, which includes physical therapy, counseling, and meaningful activities, aims to improve the patient's quality of life and adaptation to the nursing home environment. Evidence indicates that the application of these strategies will reduce the number of patients who need to be readmitted to the hospital within 30 days.

Mariana Perdomo

Poster Presentation

Science Behind the Scenes: Trace, Arson, and Explosives Analysis in Criminal Investigations.

The Massachusetts State Police Trace, Arson, and Explosives (TRAE) Unit plays a critical role in forensic investigations involving fire debris analysis, explosive materials, and trace evidence recovery. While interning at the TRAE unit for a semester, I got the opportunity to have a closer look at the laboratory methods that tie science to our justice system. This poster provides an overview of the unit's specialized divisions and highlights the scientific methods used to support criminal and public safety investigations. Key areas include fire debris analysis, where analysts identify ignitable liquid residues using techniques such as gas chromatography–mass spectrometry (GC-MS) to determine the presence of accelerants in suspected arson cases. The explosives analysis section focuses on identifying explosive residues, device components, and post-blast materials to reconstruct events and determine explosive compositions. Additionally, the trace evidence section examines microscopic materials like hairs, fibers, glass, and paint to establish associations between suspects, victims, and crime scenes. The poster will also address the interdisciplinary nature of the unit, emphasizing collaboration with investigators, bomb squads, and other forensic laboratories. By showcasing casework applications and laboratory methodologies, this presentation aims to illustrate how scientific analysis contributes to evidence-based conclusions in arson and explosives investigations, ultimately supporting the criminal justice system.

Kaitlin Prochnow

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Nurse to Patient Ratios

Evidence-based practice (EBP) is used to ensure patients are getting the best quality care. This presentation examines the critical role that EBP determined nursing-to-patient ratios play in meeting that goal. EBP involves using three key components: the best available research, clinical expertise, and patient preferences. This allows for informed decision making on both the clinical side and the patients side, creating an atmosphere that will improve patient outcomes. When referring to nursing ratios, many studies have concluded that appropriate nurse staffing levels impact patient outcomes in a positive way, including lowering mortality rates, fewer complications, and shorter hospital stays. Research shows that when nurse-to-patient ratios are too high, nurses have increased workloads, this leads to burnout, fatigue, and decreased quality of care. This can cause problems of medical errors, delayed treatments, and poor patient satisfaction. On the other hand, when staffing is sufficient, nurses can provide timely interventions and respond to patient efficiently. Using evidence-based staffing policies in a legal manner is essential for improving patient care but also for supporting the well-being of nurses. By promoting evidence-based staffing strategies, healthcare facilities can create safer environments for both patients and healthcare workers, leading to better clinical outcomes and reduced healthcare costs.

Becky Ramirez

Addiction Studies

Poster Presentation

Trauma-Informed Care in Residential Treatment

This research focuses on the importance of trauma-informed care (TIC) in residential substance use treatment programs. This topic is particularly significant given the high prevalence of trauma among individuals who are entering residential treatment for substance use disorder, often stemming from childhood. Trauma and substance use are interconnected, with each frequently reinforcing the other. Individuals typically use substances to cope with their unresolved trauma, emotional dysregulation, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms. Instead of looking at TIC as a single therapeutic technique, this research explores it as a broader organizational and clinical framework. TIC highlights safety, trust, empowerment, and collaboration across all areas of residential treatment, including how staff approach and work with clients, staff training, program structure, and the overall environment. The methods used for this research include peer-reviewed literature, best practice guidelines, and observational insights from a residential setting to explore how trauma-informed principles are applied in practice. In residential treatment settings, where clients reside on-site full-time, increasing the risk of re-traumatization, the adoption of TIC is especially essential for clients that have a history of trauma and co-occurring mental health disorders. It supports emotional safety, treatment engagement, and long-term recovery outcomes. Additionally, TIC has also been shown to reduce substance use, depression, anxiety, and PTSD symptoms, arguing that trauma should be treated as an essential element of the recovery process, not an afterthought.

Madison Romano**Morningstar Danford**

Psychology

Poster Presentation

Social Media and Identity in College Student-Athletes

This literature review study investigated how social media shapes athletic identity and motivation among Division III college student-athletes. We looked at peer-reviewed articles and credible news sources to investigate our research question. The pressure of being an athlete in today's world is intense. Some of the pressures that athletes face includes playing under stress, mental health struggles, collaborating and working out issues with team members, not letting down their supporters, while maintaining a strong academic performance to continue to be eligible to play. While this is happening offline, their online presence might also contribute to their identity and motivation. Social media has evolved beyond simple communication and has become a personal branding tool for student-athletes. With NIL (Name, Image, Likeness) policies in place, college athletes have the opportunity and chance to fame through NIL; athletes are motivated to create professional and carefully crafted online images to gain sponsorships and build their fan base. Coaches and recruiters now review athletes' social media presence in addition to their performance statistics, paying attention to their character, responsibility,

and overall marketability (Coombs, 2022). As a result, our study will help explain how athletes feel constant pressure to show a version of themselves that seems real but is carefully managed and highlights their successes while avoiding anything that might bring negative attention. This topic is important to explore because we are talking about the identity of who you are, not just as an athlete, but the person you are outside of that, and how social media affects it.

Sehila Ryerson

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Gestational Diabetes Mellitus - Early Detection and Nursing Strategies

Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) is a significant public health concern associated with both short- and long-term risks for the pregnant mother and the newborn. GDM is characterized by glucose intolerance during pregnancy, usually in the second or third trimester, and is associated with complications such as macrosomia, neonatal hypoglycemia, preterm birth, and later metabolic disorders, including Type 2 diabetes. Early screening and intervention are vital in light of the rising GDM prevalence in the U.S., which has increased by 30% from 2016 to 2020. This paper utilizes a comprehensive review of current literature, clinical guidelines, and national data to examine the effectiveness of early detection and structured nursing interventions for women with or at risk of GDM. Nursing approaches such as tracking glucose levels, promoting lifestyle changes, providing patient education, and working collaboratively across disciplines are assessed in this research paper. The role of digital health tools in improving glycemic control, patient adherence, and access to care is explored, along with structured postpartum follow-up to improve screening rates and reduce long-term metabolic risk. Anticipated outcomes include improved maternal glycemic control, reduced neonatal complications, and enhanced long-term health outcomes after care models, which will impact future generations of women with GDM.

Danielle Schiloski

Nursing

Poster Presentation

Best Methods to Prevent Pressure Ulcers

Preventing pressure injuries is a significant challenge in the healthcare field, impacting patient outcomes in various ways. Numerous studies have aimed to boost healthcare professionals' knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding pressure injury prevention. Alshahrani et al. (2023) conducted a pre- and post-intervention study that examined the knowledge and attitudes of critical care nurses toward pressure injury prevention, demonstrating that focused educational programs can enhance nursing practices effectively. Similarly, Sim et al. (2024) investigated pressure injury prevention measures within an acute-care hospital with the Pressure Injury Prevalence and Practice Improvements (PIPPI) study, highlighting the necessity for systematic evaluations and continuous refinements of care practices. Tian and Bian

(2025) explored the use of advanced biomaterials in preventing and managing pressure ulcers, stressing the importance of incorporating innovative technologies into clinical settings to improve patient outcomes. Urk et al. (2024) carried out a comprehensive review on multifaceted strategies for preventing pressure injuries and found that combining education, environmental modifications, and specific product usage significantly lowers the incidence of these injuries. Additionally, Wu et al. (2022) performed a systematic review and meta-analysis using the Pressure Ulcer Knowledge Assessment Tool, which highlighted the need for thorough educational programs for nurses to enhance their knowledge and effectiveness in pressure ulcer prevention. Together, these studies emphasize the crucial role of evidence-based interventions, education, and technological advancements in minimizing the occurrence of pressure injuries and enhancing patient care across various clinical environments.

Bella Sernavasky

Human Services

Poster Presentation

The Influence of Early Childhood Experiences on Adult Relationship Dynamics

My poster will explore the “Impact of Early Childhood Experiences on Adult Relationships Dynamics”, emphasizing how early emotional, social, and attachment patterns shape later interpersonal behaviors. Childhood experiences greatly shape a person's future independence. Children from supportive families who learn discipline and responsibility tend to become more confident adults, capable of managing their own lives. On the other hand, those who experience neglect or instability may find it more difficult to become independent. It will also show how, in early relationships, the development of good habits, and stable environments help children grow into self-sufficient adults. It shows that early support is key to future success. I plan to use this topic for the symposium to emphasize how vital it is to give children a healthy and stable start in life, to prepare them for their adult relationships, whether it's with friends, family, or a significant other. I will utilize qualitative and quantitative data, including surveys and interviews, to examine individual differences and patterns as well. At the symposium, I will also talk about ways to support healthy childhood growth and share ideas on how stable settings can help children grow into independent, responsible adults.

Tchaddeus Simon

Psychology

Oral Presentation

Role of Consumption of Short Videos on Attention Span of Young Adults

Short form videos (for example, Youtube Shorts, Instagram Reels, Snapchat Spotlight) are engaging videos that are used for entertainment, tutorials, and challenges. These can last for up to 15 seconds to a minute and a half. These videos are available on social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. Young adults (18-25 years) are one of the highest consumers of such videos. Around 68% of young adults watch short form videos daily. They use their phones, computers, and tablets to do so. While these types of videos are growing in popularity, concerns are growing regarding their potential

cognitive effects on user attention and concentration. My study adopts a literature review approach of analyzing past research on the use of short form videos and its effect on young adults' attention span. Frequent engagement with short form videos could have increased difficulty staying focused during academic activities. Research has also shown that short videos can improve multitasking skills. Thus, these videos could be reshaping, rather than weakening cognitive attention. The outcomes of this study include adding to the current discussion about how frequent digital media use among young adults may be affecting their mental abilities. The effects of short form videos can vary depending on how and who is consuming short-form videos. By examining these topics, my aim is to demonstrate that the relationship could be a complex one rather than a purely negative effect.

Andraya Stevens

BSN Nursing

Poster Presentation

Reducing ICU Delirium in Pediatric Patients: Evidence-Based Nursing Interventions

Pediatric intensive care unit (PICU) delirium is a serious but often missed complication that affects both short and long term outcomes in critically ill children. This evidence-based practice paper breaks down nursing interventions that can help decrease the incidence and severity of ICU delirium in pediatric patients. By researching and using quantitative and qualitative studies, key non pharmacologic interventions like family centered care, sleep hygiene, early mobility, and routine delirium screenings are highlighted. This research paper aligns with Anna Maria College's BSN program's goal of promoting evidence based, quality nursing care. This paper emphasizes how nurses play a huge role in recognizing, preventing, and managing delirium in the pediatric ICU, and when nurses implement non-pharmacological interventions like protecting the circadian rhythm, encouraging family involvement during care, and using screening tools the incidence and severity of delirium in this patient population is dramatically decreased.

Joshua Surette

Psychology

Poster Presentation

Violent Video Games and Aggression in Adult Males

Ever since the Columbine school shooting that occurred in the late 1990's, people have pointed to violent video games as the explanation as to why people are driven to extreme bouts of violence against others. Research shows that men are more prone to aggression than women. The purpose of this research project is to conduct a literature review on the role of violent video gaming behaviors on aggression levels in men. While a person technically becomes an adult at the age of 18, psychological research has proven that the male brain continues developing well into the 20's. The literature review search will focus on peer-reviewed articles on this topic in the age group of 18 and 35. This age range will hopefully determine the difference exhibited in those just reaching adulthood, all the way up to those who have surpassed the final developmental milestone. Hopefully, this research will help to

determine if violent video games increase aggression in adult males or if there is some other underlying cause. This project could benefit both psychology and video gamers by giving them an in-depth understanding of what is or is not happening psychologically while they are “unwinding” at home.

Marino Vedova

Exercise Science

Oral Presentation

Anterior Cruciate Ligament Injuries in Female Athletes: Risk Factors and Prevention Strategies

Anterior Cruciate Ligament injuries are among the most devastating injuries in sports. However, it has been found that female athletes are much more likely to suffer from an ACL injury compared to male athletes. Therefore, this study investigated the potential risk factors and possible prevention strategies through a literature review. The goal of this thesis is to raise awareness, educate, and help develop effective strategies to prevent such injuries and address this disparity. Anatomical factors like a smaller ACL, a narrower intercondylar notch, a steeper tibial plateau slope, and a wider- Q-Angle, were found to contribute to increased stress on the ligament. Furthermore, biomechanical and neuromuscular deficiencies, including quadriceps dominance, lower hamstring activity and strength, longer Electromechanical delay, and a tendency towards a bigger dynamic valgus, added to this stress. Lastly, the effect of hormonal factors, such as the influence of relaxin, which was shown to increase the risk of injury by leading to the breakdown of collagen and gelatin in the ligament. The review found that neuromuscular training is highly effective in helping prevent ACL injuries by correcting biomechanical and neuromuscular weaknesses. Therefore, it is essential to implement NMT to reduce the incidence of ACL injuries in female athletes.

Cindy Callahan, Assistant Professor of Practice of Nursing

Poster Presentation

Perseverance in Protection and Promotion for Early Detection (P³ED) of Pancreatic Cancer

Background

Pancreatic cancer is one of the most lethal malignancies, causing a disproportionate number of cancer deaths despite its lower incidence. Individuals with a strong family history face significantly elevated lifetime risk. Although structured surveillance enables earlier detection, sustaining long-term participation remains challenging, and existing health behavior models primarily explain initiation rather than continued adherence.

Framework

The Health Promotion Model (HPM) emphasizes perceived benefits and self-efficacy, while Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) highlights threat and coping appraisals. Together, they explain surveillance initiation but not long-term adherence. The P³ED model integrates these theories and adds perseverance, resilience, and habit formation to explain sustained engagement.

Methods

A theory synthesis approach integrated constructs from HPM and PMT, identified complementary elements, and extended both models by positioning perseverance as the mechanism driving long-term adherence.

Conclusion

The P³ED model explains both initiation and maintenance of surveillance by combining HPM and PMT constructs with the novel addition of perseverance, resilience, and habit formation, transforming intention into sustained protective action.

Dr. Jennifer Carlson, Assistant Professor Emergency Management

Oral Presentation

From Substack to Song: Creativity as a Dimension of Professional Practice

Academic and professional work—particularly in applied, high-stakes fields—often prioritizes rigor, outcomes, and technical expertise. Increasingly, however, professionals are engaging in public-facing, reflective, and creative forms of communication that support individual well[1]being, deepen professional identity, and strengthen connections within their fields. These practices enhance sense-making, sustain motivation, and broaden how professional knowledge is shared and understood. This presentation explores creativity not as a departure from professional practice, but as a continuum spanning reflective writing, digital engagement, and artistic expression. The session begins by examining professional presence and creative thought in digital spaces, drawing on experiences launching a Substack publication and engaging regularly on LinkedIn.

These platforms function as sites of informal scholarship and professional storytelling—spaces where ideas are tested, dialogue is fostered, and complex professional experiences are translated into accessible narratives. Though often undervalued, this form of reflective writing lays a meaningful role in professional connection and intellectual exchange.

Building from this foundation, the presentation turns to more formal creative outputs, including a published poetry collection and an original music album. Selected excerpts from a poem and a song dedicated to professionals in the field will be shared to illustrate how creative work can give voice to the emotional labor, ethical commitments, and lived realities of professional practice.

The presentation concludes by reflecting on how integrating creativity—across digital writing, poetry, and music—can enhance reflection, communication, and long-term professional satisfaction without compromising academic rigor.

Dr. Jennifer Carlson, Assistant Professor Emergency Management

Hannah Baxter
Madisyn Dechant
Oral Presentation

The Professionalization Climate of Emergency Management: A Five-Year Longitudinal Study

Emergency management continues its progression from an applied coordination function toward a fully institutionalized profession. While scholarship has examined structural dimensions of professionalization—credentialing, education pathways, and organizational design—there remains limited longitudinal evidence documenting how professional identity, emotional intelligence in practice, leadership climate, and workforce sustainability evolve over time.

This study represents the first phase of a five-year hybrid longitudinal research program examining the professionalization climate of emergency management. Combining a panel cohort design with repeated cross-sectional sampling, the study tracks both individual-level change and broader field-wide trends. Four interrelated domains anchor the analysis: professional identity formation, emotional intelligence in practice, organizational capacity and leadership climate, and workforce retention and pipeline development.

Emergency management professionals across public, nonprofit, healthcare, higher education, and private sector contexts will participate, with initial focus on New England and planned national expansion. Data will be collected through an annual electronic survey with optional qualitative follow-up interviews.

By generating sustained longitudinal evidence, this research advances ongoing conversations about credentialing, leadership development, workforce stability, and the continued maturation of emergency management as a profession. In doing so, it seeks not only to document change but to clarify the conditions under which professionalization meaningfully takes root.

Terri Gerhardt, Assistant Professor of Practice of Science Education

Oral Presentation

Laughing for Your Health: The Science Behind the Laughter

Laughter Yoga was started in India by Dr. Madan Kataria in 1995 to improve the mood and overall health of his patients. It was based on the premise that our brains don't know the difference between real laughter and fake laughter. Either way the body releases all the "feel good" hormones. As a certified Laughter Yoga instructor, I have seen firsthand the transformation that laughter brings to the body, mind, and spirit. This presentation will examine the science behind the benefits of laughter as well as provide an opportunity for people to experience it themselves.

Dr. Mark Griffon, Assistant Professor of Health Science

Oral Presentation

Risk Factors for Thyroid Abnormalities Identified on Low-Dose Chest CT Scans in Department of Energy Retired Workers

Introduction:

Although only about 5% of thyroid nodules are cancerous, the rising prevalence of both thyroid nodules and cancers is largely attributed to increased use of improved diagnostic and screening modalities. Evidence suggests that early detection of small thyroid cancers through screening only partly explains the increased incidence of thyroid nodules and cancers. Some of this increased incidence is possibly driven by environmental, occupational, or dietary exposures, which remain largely unknown to date. We aimed to identify potential risk factors of thyroid abnormalities in a uniquely exposed population of U.S. nuclear weapons' industry (Department of Energy, DOE), enrolled in a low-dose CT (LDCT) lung cancer screening program.

Methods:

We conducted a matched case-control study and identified participants with incidentally found non-cancer thyroid abnormalities (cases) and controls without any thyroid abnormality on LDCT.

Results:

We identified 638 cases and 1927 controls from the lung cancer screening program database between January 1, 2006, and June 30, 2023. In the adjusted analysis, radiation exposure (medium exposure OR: 1.6 (1.1, 2.3) and high exposure OR: 1.5 (1.0, 2.3), versus low exposure), female sex (OR: 2.7 (2.0, 3.5), African-American race (OR: 2.5 (1.8, 3.4), versus White), obesity (BMI 30-39.9 OR: 1.5 (1.1, 2.1), BMI >40 OR: 2.4 (1.5, 3.8) versus BMI <25) and engineering (OR: 1.5 (1.0, 2.3) and operations (OR: 1.5 (1.0, 2.2), versus administrative) job categories were significantly associated with any thyroid abnormality.

Discussion:

Our study corroborates earlier data that female sex, and higher BMI are predictors of incidental non-cancerous thyroid abnormalities in a large national occupationally exposed cohort.

Karima Hadj-Zoubir, Adjunct Faculty

Oral Presentation

Religion and Peace

Coexistence through knowledge is a call for peace among people of different faiths and cultures, so they can learn from one another, share knowledge, and communicate it to those willing to learn, because the treasure is knowledge.

The Final Revelation and the People of the Book is a revised and updated edition of Islam and the People of the Book, published in 2017. As the three monotheistic religions have been hijacked and eclipsed by an ideology of hate to serve political purposes, new knowledge appears to prove that the battle for the truth is far from being over, and the word of the shared God prevails.

Reclaiming Muslim Women's Rights from Fundamentalists: Patriarchy and Misogyny among Male Interpreters.

Women's rights are deliberately forgotten in Muslim countries, and oftentimes, women claim their rights; they face men's resistance in the name of religion. Many of the laws and moral injunctions that are imposed upon Muslim women derive not from an accurate interpretation of the Quran and Hadith but from the misogynistic tendencies held by the Muslim men who enjoin them.

Travis Maruska, Associate Professor of Humanities

Oral Presentation

Writing the Second Novel

This presentation will discuss the challenges of writing the second book in a fictional series. Topics covered will include revisiting characters, themes, and setting, maintaining tone and voice, continuing an ongoing narrative while finding an independent story arc, and planting information for the next installment.

Will your second book be as the good as your first one? How can you avoid repetition and keep the reader engaged? Join Professor Maruska as he discusses his process of writing and the new installment of his series Order of the Assassin.

Dr. Robert Pijewski, Assistant Professor of Biology and Mathematics

Oral Presentation

Unexpected Brain Effects of Senolytic Anti-Aging Therapy

Aging is a major risk factor for disease progression in multiple sclerosis (MS), prompting interest in therapeutic strategies that target molecular features of aging, such as cellular senescence. Senolytic drugs, which selectively eliminate senescent cells, have shown promise in age-related conditions, but their effects on the central nervous system remain poorly understood. In this study, we investigated the impact of the senolytic combination dasatinib and quercetin (D+Q) on myelination and oligodendrocyte function using both in vivo and in vitro models. Young (3–4 months) and aged (22 months) C57BL6/J mice treated with D+Q exhibited significant demyelination compared to vehicle-treated controls, without evidence of overt brain cell death. Consistent with these findings, oligodendrocyte progenitor cells exposed to D+Q during differentiation showed reduced myelin basic protein expression and decreased morphological complexity, also in the absence of cell death. Transcriptomic analysis of D+Q-treated oligodendrocytes revealed altered expression of genes associated with endoplasmic reticulum stress and activation of the unfolded protein response. Together, these results indicate that D+Q disrupts oligodendrocyte function and impairs myelination through stress-related cellular pathways. Notably, the observed oligodendrocyte dysfunction parallels features seen in MS lesions, suggesting that

senolytic treatment may serve as a model for studying mechanisms relevant to MS disease progression. Understanding how senolytics affect oligodendrocytes may provide insight into aging-related contributions to neurodegenerative pathology in MS.

Dr. John Pratico, Associate Professor of Psychology

Judith LeDoux

Poster Presentation

Mental Health First Aid for Public Safety Professionals Across Massachusetts: Outcomes from a Statewide Initiative

This poster showcases outcomes from a statewide Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) program for public safety professionals in Massachusetts. Covering 113 instructors and 3,000 trainees across 140 courses in 150 municipalities, the project represents one of the largest known datasets on MHFA outcomes for first responders. Pre- and post-evaluation results highlight measurable improvements in knowledge and crisis response skills, along with lessons for statewide implementation and next steps for sustaining impact.

Dr. Marc Tumeinski, Associate Professor of Theology

Oral Presentation

Human Intelligence, College Education, and ChatGPT

ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, and other large language software models have been dominating conversations around the nature of higher education. How can we, in light of the College value placed on faith and reason, step back and appraise these conversations? This paper will focus on the gift and responsibility of human intelligence, particularly in relation to higher education, as a way of offering a larger context for such conversations. The paper will draw on a) the nature of Catholic higher education in general and more specifically on b) the vision of the Sisters of Saint Anne. The Catholic intellectual tradition emphasizes that education must respect the nature of the human person: body, soul, intellect, reason, will, emotion, memory. The Sisters described education as a beautiful way of sharing God's glory, of remembering the goodness of God and creation, through providing an education that enlightened the intellect, strengthened the will, and elevated the heart. These anthropological perspectives provide a better starting point for conversations around education and so-called 'AI.' The 2025 'Note on the Relationship Between Artificial Intelligence and Human Intelligence' from the Vatican Dicastery for Culture and Education will serve as my primary source. This document draws on both philosophy and theology to offer a framework for studying the nature of human intelligence. With this framework in place, we will be in a better position to discuss recent technological advances under the rubric of 'AI,' as well as ethical considerations in connection with topics such as education, work, solidarity, relationship, the environment, etc.