



UNIVERSITY OF
ARKANSAS

College of Education & Health Professions
Eleanor Mann School of Nursing

ANEW GRANT NEWSLETTER

Fall 2025-Spring 2026

Welcome Dr. Carrie McDermott

We are excited to welcome Dr. Carrie McDermott, PhD, RN, APRN, ACNS-BC, FAAN, as the new George M. and Boyce W. Billingsley Endowed Chair in Nursing, Executive Director of the Eleanor Mann School of Nursing. Dr. McDermott joins the school of nursing from Emory University, where she was most recently corporate director of academic practice integration and partnerships at the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing. In an article published in Arkansas Newswire (November, 2025) Dr. McDermott stated "I'm excited to begin my role as the executive director for EMSON, a nursing program that is known for excellence in nursing education, in a role that allows me to contribute to strengthening the nursing profession, building the nursing workforce by educating the nurses of the future,"



ANEW Grant Highlights

2025-2026	Fall, 2025	Fall, 2025 – Spring, 2026
\$455,000 was provided to the ANEW Grant Students	Six additional students were added to the grant, bringing the total to 20 students for 2025-26.	• 20 new clinical sites hosted students, • 23 new preceptors were recruited. • 29 clinical sites were designated as HRSA Health Professional Shortage Areas or Medically Underserved Areas. • 11 grant students participated in the Community Action Poverty Simulation.

Specialty Workshops

Each semester, the ANEW grant team looks forward to workshops in coordination with the FNP-DNP courses. The 2025-2026 academic year held three successful workshops.

Fall 2025 focused on complex problems clinical specialty course with 22 participants, including FNP-DNP students and providers from our academic practice partners, Arcare and Community Clinic. Guest speakers brought engaging and enlightening talks, including mental health, transitional care, and diabetes management. Our Community Preceptor Liaison, Dr. Martha Butler, led an interactive session on preceptor communication utilizing the SNAPPS model, and students and providers paired up for a time to review a case study, present the patient to a 'preceptor', and reflect on that process. Always a highlight was the portion where skills such as toenail removal and joint injections were introduced to the participants with time to practice and ask questions in a relaxed setting. Student reactions to the collaborative learning between students and providers were overwhelmingly positive, with responses including "I absolutely loved it!" "It was wonderful to build relationships with providers" and "It was amazing. Super informative, helpful and encouraging!"

A new fall workshop focusing on the DNP project was developed from student feedback. This workshop provided students the opportunity to learn more about the project's requirements, and to discuss ideas for creating their own project in conjunction with one of our clinical partners.

Spring 2026 began with two workshops, common problems and pediatrics. During the common problems workshop, our students engaged with speakers regarding contraception (Hope Ballentine, DNP, CNM), Lab Interpretation (Megan Taylor, DNP, FNP), Men's Health (Daniel Pevril, FNP), and Transition to the NP Role (Myrrh Hector, FNP). The pediatric workshop brought several topics of interest, including pediatric development (Amy Williams, DNP, PNP), infections diseases (Steven Dahl, MD), and lactation (Allison Scott, DNP, PNP, IBCLC). The afternoon was rounded out with the students interacting with special guests, children of faculty, to practice communication and developmental assessments. Additionally, they were instructed on ear foreign body removal and worked through and presented case studies to faculty.



As we continue to work to prepare students for clinical learning, these workshops continue to evolve because of feedback from academic practice partners, preceptors, students and faculty. The objective of our workshops is to increase confidence within the clinical setting, and we are encouraged that the majority self-report increased confidence and a desire for continued experiences within the workshop environment.

Thank you to our guest speakers, providers, and students for these engaging experiences!



Preceptor Highlight

We want to give a special “Thank YOU” to all the preceptors that have volunteered their time to precept our DNP-FNP students! One preceptor, who has served as preceptor for several students is Amy Sullivan. Amy began her career as a registered nurse at Arkansas Children’s in Little Rock in 2005. She went on to complete her MSN in 2013 and began her career as an FNP at ARcare in 2014. Amy continues to provide primary care services to her patients at ARcare Cabot (West), seeing patients across the lifespan.



Charice Eakes, DNP-FNP Student (Lt) and Amy Sullivan, FNP (Rt)

Outside of her amazing work as an FNP, she has been married for 25 years, with two grown children, and a precious granddaughter 16 months old, who is the light of her life. In addition, she is a member of Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church, and loves to garden, and spend time with family

When asked about her work as a preceptor, Amy states, *“I enjoy precepting APRN students, they come with such excitement and ready to advance their role in nursing. All of my U of A students have come well prepared and are great with patients and staff. I truly enjoy being a part of their clinical education.”*

When asked about the impact of Amy as a preceptor, ANEW grantee and DNP-FNP student, Charice Eakes quoted,

"Amy’s impact goes beyond being a wonderful provider and preceptor for nurse practitioner students. She not only has taught me the clinical side of being a provider but also the ability to build genuine, impactful, lasting relationships with patients, seeing them as people - first with a story, a family, and a place in the community - and not just their diagnosis. Her compassionate, relationship-centered approach exemplifies the heart of rural healthcare and serves as a powerful model for future providers. I am deeply grateful for her dedication,

mentorship, and unwavering commitment to addressing the barriers that so often prevent patients in rural communities from accessing quality care, whether that means navigating healthcare systems, advocating for resources, and overall being their provider when it matters the most."

*ARcare
Cabot Medical West Clinic*



Razorbug Diploma Tour

A 2025 DNP-FNP graduate and ANEW grantee, Devon Stubblefield, was highlighted in the University of Arkansas News as she received her diploma on the Razorbug Tour. According to the Arkansas News, September 18, 2025, edition, “The past four summers, U of A faculty and staff accompanied the little red Volkswagen Beetle – a converted 2019 model with curly tail, razor spine, hooves, snout and tusks – to celebrate graduates of degree programs offered online”. Marilou Shreve, associate professor of nursing and ANEW Grant Program Director, presented Stubblefield’s diploma to her the Arkansas River at Maumelle.

When discussing working in primary care and the opportunity to build relationships with patients, Stubblefield said. “I wanted to be able to help people in the best way I knew how, and that's being personable with them, learning about who they are,” she said. “Being in primary care, you have that ability to develop that connection. You see people come in once a month or every few months, you become part of their family, become a part of their care team. It’s teamwork between you and the patient.”

As a grantee of the ANEW grant, Devon commented on the connections formed with her peers through our required on-campus experiences, “Whenever we would have to come to campus once a month, we developed that relationship by seeing each other just that once,” she said. “We developed this group chat and that's how we decided, ‘Hey, let's help each other. This is a team effort. We're all going to make it.’”

Congratulations to Devon as she begins her career as a DNP-FNP!



Left to Right, Dr. Marilou Shreve and Dr. Devon Stubblefield

Congratulations to the Spring 2026 Graduates!



DNP Projects are highly anticipated every year. This year, DNP graduates from the Eleanor Mann School of Nursing were honored to present their culminating work at the Patton Nursing Science Day in Fayetteville, AR. The event is endowed by the generosity of Susan Patton, former EMSON executive director, and her husband Robert C. Patton. Their endowed gift allows the continued growth of this annual event that brings together leading voices in healthcare, promotes advancements in nursing education and research and shares influential scholarship. The theme of this year's nursing science day was mental health. Along with disseminating to pre-licensure nursing students, faculty, and FNP-DNP students, community partners had the opportunity to see the final projects and reflect on the successes within the program.

ANEW Grant Graduates (L to Rt): Ally Davis, Brittany Dillard, Catherine Miget

Brittany Dillard:

DNP Project Title: Improving Appointment Adherence in a FQHC by Addressing SDOH

Purpose: To evaluate whether a standardized social determinant of health (SDOH) screening and referral workflow improved patient appointment adherence in a federally qualified health center (FQHC) in Northwest Arkansas.

Catherine Miget:

DNP Project Title: Patients' Perceptions of Combining Pharmacotherapy and Lifestyle Modifications for Weight Management: Barriers, Facilitators, and Impacts on Adherence.

Purpose: To evaluate patients' readiness for lifestyle modifications while using pharmacotherapy for weight management, using the P-Weight and S-Weight questionnaires based on the Transtheoretical Model (TTM). Using results, we aimed to improve the understanding of patients' readiness to make lifestyle changes while taking prescription weight loss medication.

Ally Davis:

DNP Project Title: Exploration of Pediatric Autism Perception Held by Marshallese in Northwest Arkansas, a Clinical Inquiry Project.

Purpose: To explore Marshallese families' perceptions of child development and behavior among families living in northwest Arkansas whose children were referred to a university-based autism program for a diagnostic evaluation.

Reflections from the Graduates

Time on the ANEW grant offers an array of opportunities for the students as we work to increase providers within rural and underserved communities in Arkansas. From clinical experiences in rural and/or underserved clinical sites, on-campus workshops, experiential learning opportunities, ANEW grant courses, and student engagement, students continue to express value and personal meaning. We wanted to include some parting reflections for our 2026 graduates on what the ANEW grant has meant to them:

“The ANEW Grant has shaped my experience at the University of Arkansas in ways I did not expect when I first began the program. The grant has provided me with opportunities to not only grow as a student, but as a future FNP who is committed to caring for rural and underserved communities. Through the workshops for clinical courses, I built confidence in my clinical skills and deepened my understanding of patient-centered care. These experiences have made me feel more prepared as I transition into practice. The ANEW Grant created meaningful opportunities for professional networking and mentorship. Building connections with faculty, peers, and local healthcare professionals has been helpful in my professional development and the transition into the workforce. The doors the ANEW grant has opened for me in my job search have been invaluable. The ANEW Grant has been so much more than just financial support during graduate school, it has been a consistent source of encouragement, growth, and opportunity that helped shape the provider I am becoming.”

“For me, the most impactful part of the grant was the financial benefits. Eliminating the stress of student debt during an already stressful time while juggling many other obligations was truly pivotal in my success. I also feel like being on the grant provided me a more meaningful experience with unique learning opportunities and closer relationships that nurtured my growth as a provider. Overall, I can't imagine my educational experience without this grant and truly feel like it has been a positive and formative experience for me.”

“For me the best benefit of being a part of the grant was the support with finding clinicals, paying for school, and the workshops to help us be better providers. The grant gave me the tools to become the best provider and advocate for myself, patients, and other nurse practitioners!”



Thank You to Our Preceptors and Clinical Sites! 2025-2026

Evelene Bible, FNP - Community Clinic of NWA - Elkins School Based Health Center, AR
Sarah Castleman, FNP - Community Clinic of NWA - Jones Elementary, Springdale, AR
Ginger Holloway, FNP - Community Clinic of NWA - Fayetteville, AR
Clare Servy, MD - Community Clinic of NWA, Springdale, AR
Robyn McCune, FNP - Mercy, Primary Care and Obstetrics - Rogers, AR
Staci Gathright, FNP - Mercy, Primary Care and Obstetrics - Rogers, AR
Amy Sullivan, FNP - ARcare Cabot, AR
Jalesia Austin, FNP - Baptist Health Family Clinic - Maumelle, AR
Teyoni Tuck, FNP - Mercy Clinic Family Medicine Stone's Corner - Webb City, MO
Heather Proctor, FNP - Simmons Care Clinic - VanBuren, AR
Meghann Whatley, FNP - Community Clinic of NWA - Fayetteville High School Based Health Center
Haley Duff, FNP - River Valley Primary Care, School Based Clinic - Lamar, AR
Abbygail Bennett, FNP - Community Clinic of NWA - Siloam Springs, AR
Zoe Weeks, MD - ARcare, England, AR
Adam McCall, MD - Advanced Primary Care - Springdale, AR
Kylie Rhodes, MD - Fayetteville Family Clinic, Washington Regional - Fayetteville, AR
Tiffany Shanahan, FNP - Mercy Primary Care - Pea Ridge, AR
Myrrh Hector, FNP - Fayetteville Family Clinic, Washington Regional - Fayetteville, AR
Kelly Thompson-Davis, FNP - Northwest Medical Plaza - Rogers, AR
Gretchen Brannon, FNP - Pat Walker Health Center, U of A - Fayetteville, AR
Melissa Morton, FNP - Good Samaritan Clinic - Ft. Smith, AR
Mary Pat Hardman, MD - Her Health, Washington Regional - Fayetteville, AR
Allysson Gaines, FNP - Northwest Medical Center at Sugar Creek - Bentonville, AR
Cathy Baker Brown, FNP - Mercy Primary Care - Berryville, AR
Amber Woods, FNP - Mercy Clinic Primary Care - Centerton, AR
Sue Howerton, FNP - Pat Walker Health Center, U of A - Fayetteville, AR
Taylor Hornsby, FNP - Washington County Health Department - Fayetteville, AR
Toni Cochran, FNP - ARcare, Springdale Medical - Springdale, AR
Carol Hughes, FNP, ARcare - DesArc, AR
Kaylee Armendariz, FNP - Owl Creek School Based Health Clinic, Community Clinic - Fayetteville, AR
Bessie Smith, PNP - Best Start Pediatrics - Fayetteville, AR
Stephanie Stewart, PNP - Hometown Pediatrics - Joplin, MO
Mandy Clark, PNP, Community Clinic Medical - Fayetteville, AR
Megan, Kumpe, PNP - Ozark Pediatrics - Rogers, AR
John Simmons, MD, Northwest Arkansas Pediatric Clinic - Fayetteville, AR
Leslie Goolsby, FNP - Parson Hills School Based Health Clinic, Community Clinic - Springdale, AR
Rosanna Rubley, AGPCNP, FNP - Mercy Clinic Primary Care - I Street, Bentonville, AR



*Epley Center for Health Professions
Home of the Eleanor Mann School of Nursing*

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For more information about the ANEW grant, visit <https://nursing.uark.edu/dnp/aneu-grant.php>
HRSA AT94HP30899 (Advanced Nursing Education Workforce (ANEW) Grant)

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Martha Butler, PhD, RN, CNE -Community Preceptor Liaison, mrbutler@uark.edu