

"Our work gives us, as students and as African Americans, the opportunity to alleviate some of these health disparities."

Joseph Camphor, Third-year Nursing Student

"Hospitals can't function without nurses. Patients need a certain level of care. Nurses manage care holistically with compassion, efficiency and knowledge."

Tania Thorne, May 2002 Graduate

DOROTHY L. POWELL

EdD, RN, FAAN

& HOWARD UNIVERSITY SCHOLARS

The Young Leaders

Dorothy Powell, associate dean at Howard University's Division of Nursing, has three dreams — to encourage more minority students to consider a career in nursing; to demonstrate the value of the science of nursing; and to show students how they can personally ease health care disparities among minorities. Her dreams are being realized through the comprehensive student research program created at the university.

Four years ago, the Yale-Howard Scholars Program was established, giving Howard University students the chance to serve as summer researchers under the guidance of Yale University professors. "We wanted to develop a program to ignite within our minority students an interest in the science of nursing," said Dr. Powell, who conceptualized and designed the program with Yale's Dean of Nursing Catherine Lynch Gilliss. "We are providing leaders for America and the global community."

Howard University provides several other research opportunities, including internships at the National Institutes of Health, the Jackson Heart TRAIN Project at the University of Mississippi, and the Minority International Research Training Project, which offers culturally rich experiences in Africa, Chile and Thailand.

The Howard nursing students selected to participate in these research projects — many of whom were previously undecided about their future — now know exactly what they want to do. Continuing their education is central to achieving their goals. "Graduate school is not an option. It's a requirement," said junior nursing student Joseph Camphor, who spent the summer researching the effects of alcohol on cardiovascular disease among African Americans.

"The research program took me to the next level. I feel like I can do anything now," added senior Charmaine Hutchinson, who aspires to earn a graduate degree from Johns Hopkins University. Senior Ambrosia Fisher from California is eager to use her recent experience and knowledge to care for children. She has a job waiting for her at the Children's Hospital in Washington, D.C.

For senior Dianne Johnson-Thomas, nursing is a welcome career change after studying political science. "Everything I've learned through my experiences at Howard and Yale I can now apply to my career in nursing. I feel that I'm prepared," she said, adding that her plan is to work at the National Institutes of Health practicing oncology.

Tania Thorne's experience as a military medical specialist inspired her to choose nursing. "The nurses inspired me. They were diligent, proficient and devoted to the profession," said the May 2002 graduate. She is now working as a travel and contract nurse for several metro D.C. hospitals and is writing a research manuscript on "Carbohydrate Intake in High-Risk Youth for Type-2 Diabetes." Next fall, she plans to study acute care at Yale University graduate school, and she hopes to eventually earn a PhD in research.



Ambrosia Fisher

Tania Thorne

Charmaine Hutchinson

Joseph Camphor

Dianne Johnson-Thomas

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