Deb has contributed greatly, not only to the University of Maryland School of Nursing, and the area of simulation, but to excellence in nursing education in general.

Tore Laerdal
Laerdal Medical AS

Debra L. Spunt
DNP, RN, FAAN

Dedicated to excellence in nursing, the National League for Nursing is the premier organization for nurse faculty and leaders in nursing education, offering faculty development, networking opportunities, testing services, nursing research grants, and public policy initiatives to its 37,000 individual and 1,200 institutional members.

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2013

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DNP, RN, FAAN

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Debra L. Spunt, DNP, RN, FAAN, an assistant professor and director of the clinical simulation laboratories at the University of Maryland School of Nursing, died of cancer on March 9, 2007. Born in St. Louis, MO in 1956, Debbie was a resident of Maryland for more than 30 years, graduating from Randallstown High School in 1975. She earned a bachelor of science in nursing (1979), a masters of science (1983), and a doctor of nursing practice (2007), all from the University of Maryland School of Nursing.

Debbie was nationally and internationally recognized for her knowledge, expertise, and leadership in clinical simulation, especially the use of computerized human patient simulators via clinical case scenarios to educate nurses and other health care providers. She was responsible for the design, administration, and management of the School of Nursing’s 28 clinical simulation laboratories, considered the preeminent nursing student learning labs in the world. In the role, she collaborated with faculty on the integration of simulation into the nursing curriculum, and in doing so, helped prepare thousands of nurses worldwide.

Debbie was a fellow in the American Academy of Nursing, and a member of the American Nurses Association, the Maryland Nurses Association, the National League for Nursing, the Maryland League for Nursing, and the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing. She cofounded the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning and served as its first president.

As a thoughtful participant in the plans for her legacy, Debbie created the Debra L. Spunt Clinical Simulation Practice and Research Endowment at the University of Maryland School of Nursing. This endowment supports the use of clinical simulation laboratory equipment. We ask you to join us in celebrating Debbie’s life and honoring her legacy by contributing to the Spunt Clinical Simulation Practice and Research Endowment.

It has been more than a decade since the publication of the Institute of Medicine’s report To Err is Human: Building a Safer Health System, but communication and leadership problems continue to be a leading cause of sentinel events. As educators, are we contributing to the status quo? This presentation will challenge faculty to re-envision teaching strategies and create simulated-based educational experiences that focus on the competencies put forth by Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) and the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC). From this we can prepare our students to be collaborative practice-ready and to make the patient safety connections that can improve patient outcomes.

Dr. Durham is a visionary leader in simulation and has made significant and sustained contributions, particularly in curricular integration of concepts and competencies from the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) project and the Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC). She has disseminated her work widely through online modules, award-winning publications, and national and international presentations. She is highly sought after consultant and has won many awards, including Nurse Educator of the Year from the North Carolina Nurses Association. She is the current president of the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation & Learning and a fellow in the NLN Academy of Nursing Education.

The NLN Foundation is pleased to have this opportunity to establish the Debra L. Spunt Lecture thanks to generous funding by Laerdal.