

## DRIVEN TO DELIVER COMPASSIONATE CARE

**Patricia Garrity**  
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**Cynthia Arcieri**, Classes of '96, '04G  
B.S. in Nursing, M.S. in Nursing Education

Dedicated nursing professional challenges herself and her profession

*"The human connection is so key to healing."*



Photo by Jodie Andruskevich

A drive to serve those in need and awareness of Rivier's excellent reputation brought this Nashua native to nursing and to Rivier. **Cynthia Arcieri** initially enrolled in the A.S. in Nursing program and continued to earn her bachelor's and master's degrees as well as a graduate certificate in Family Nursing. "I was drawn to the rich history and mission of Rivier and always felt continuing my education at Riv was a natural fit," says Arcieri.

During her years at the University, she benefited from many faculty members who were also her mentors including **Dr. Paula Williams**, Dean of the Division of Nursing and Health Professions, and professors **Denise Baxter** and **Judi O'Hara**. "They were able to teach me the value of blending knowledge and compassion in caring for our vulnerable populations," says Arcieri. "The holistic approach is a key facet

to nursing excellence, and my mentors at Rivier were excellent role models.” Giving back to the community, she has gratefully served as an alumni mentor to two of Rivier’s student nurses pursuing their bachelor’s degrees.

Arcieri’s career at St. Joseph Hospital in Nashua has spanned more than 20 years, rising to leadership in her current position serving as the Vice President of Patient Care Services and Chief Nurse Executive. She has taken her career in many directions including principal roles in healthcare, educating nurses, and providing clinical care as a nurse practitioner to oncology patients. “The programs at Rivier have well prepared me to practice in all these areas and truly tap into all the aspects of nursing that I am so passionate about,” she says.

Rivier’s mission of transforming hearts and minds to serve the world has greatly impacted Arcieri. “The mission to serve the world makes you realize how important our roles are after degree attainment in going forth and doing good in the world,” says Arcieri. “I believe the human connection is so key to healing, for ourselves, our families, and our patients. Education and compassionate care go hand-in-hand in nursing, and we can do that by connecting with those around us and building relationships.”

During Alumni Reunion Weekend 2016, the University presented Arcieri with the Outstanding Nurse and Healthcare Leader Award. This award recognizes a Rivier graduate working as a nurse or other healthcare professional that demonstrates a commitment to excellence and service to patients, as well as significant achievement in the healthcare profession.

“I was so honored and humbled to receive an alumni achievement award,” says Arcieri. “A lot of the reason why I have been successful in my nursing career is my educational experiences and having a supportive group of nurse mentors. Many of my Rivier nursing classmates are transforming care at the bedside on a daily basis. This passion from my colleagues really sparks me to keep challenging not only myself but my profession.”

Certified in Oncology Nursing and Hospice and Palliative Care, she is a national trainer of the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) Chemotherapy and Biotherapy Provider Course as well as a member of the local and national ONS. In addition, she provides clinical care as a nurse practitioner in the St. Joseph Hospital Cancer Center, serves as a Rivier adjunct faculty member, and volunteers at several local non-profit organizations. She has served with the American Cancer Society Relay for Life-Nashua, Southern New Hampshire Oncology Nurses Society, and the New Hampshire Comprehensive Cancer Collaboration.

“Being in healthcare is not always the easiest, but it certainly is beyond rewarding. “When things get difficult I find the greatest strength in making those connections with our staff, patients and especially my family.” says Arcieri. “I’m so fortunate for the support of my family. My husband and two boys are a constant reminder of the daily joys in life. They keep me grounded and their humor helps me during long days and stressful moments. I think humor is one key to resiliency and I try to incorporate it into my life to give me strength.”

Arcieri is not sure what the future will bring but is “certain my education and experiences will guide me on the right path,” she says. ■