



**Alumni
Spotlight:**
Conor Early
(MSN, '20)

College News:
New Director of
Development
Upcoming
CON Events

FRONTLINE

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Spartans Abroad: Alumnus serves children in Liberia

Conor Early, MSN '20, assists Kalamazoo-based mission



Conor Early enjoys a day on the Liberian coast

Conor Early, MSN '20, completed his first mission trip in his nursing career to Liberia. Early and his team traveled to several hospitals across the country to assist on surgeries, exchange knowledge, and gain experience on medical conditions that aren't seen in the U.S.

An experience nurse anesthetist, Early served on a U.S. team based in Kalamazoo. It is led by Dr. Marc Downing, a pediatric surgeon from Bronson Hospital. Downing has taken teams to Liberia since 2008, including residents and instructors from Western Michigan University's School of Medicine (WMed). This was the first trip that Early was asked to assist with since he began teaching in WMed's Department of Anesthesiology.

Early had two priorities to work through on the trip. The first priority involved determining the feasibility of starting a partnership between WMed and the Liberian healthcare system.

"The hope is that surgical residents from WMed can travel to Liberia and experience surgery in a setting that would not be possible in the United States," said Early. "Liberian medical students and surgical residents would also have the opportunity to come to the U.S. to experience surgery and medicine rotations."

Early's personal priority was to assess the current state of anesthesia at Liberia's two largest hospitals. He assessed the needs of medical facilities they traveled to, bringing along anesthesia supplies to each facility.

The mission trip team assisted on several procedures on their visits to Liberian hospitals. On one such procedure, Early assisted on a pediatric case where a patient needed a feeding tube placed. The patient had suffered chemical burns in their throat, esophagus, and stomach after consuming a caustic substance.



Conor Early treating a minor patient with a local surgical team

"Because I care for a lot of children in my practice in Michigan, I had a pretty good understanding of what this child would require in terms of sedation for the surgeon to get the feeding tube inserted safely," said Early.

Early directed the local anesthetist how to better sedate the patient. Early felt that he made a positive impact on the child's care. "He might not remember me or know what I did that day, but I will never forget him and the small impact I may have had on his life that day," said Early.



This interaction with a young patient follows Early's decision to pursue nursing. His early desires to help others translated into a career that symbolizes true care for humans. "I wanted to find a career that would allow me to spend time helping others while also providing for me and my family," said Early. "Nursing was the easy choice."

(from left to right) Dr. Emmanuel Ekyinabah, Liberian Minister of Health Dr. Wilhemina S. Jallah, Dr. Robert Sawyer, Yohana Peters, Dr. Marc Downing, Dr. Peter Coleman, Conor Early met to discuss collaborations between Liberia, Western Michigan University, and Kalamazoo-based healthcare organizations

College Announcement:

Advancement Office welcomes new development director



Antonie Burke joins CON team, bringing affinity for healthcare fundraising

For Antonie Burke, the choice to join the Michigan State University College of Nursing as its new development director was an easy one.

With a wife who is a nurse anesthetist and two daughters who earned nursing degrees, he is familiar with the difficulties and successes associated

with nursing. He hopes that background will come in handy in his new role.

“I am thrilled to be joining the team at the College of Nursing,” Burke said. “I look forward to contributing to the team’s success, learning from all of my new colleagues and building great new relationships.”

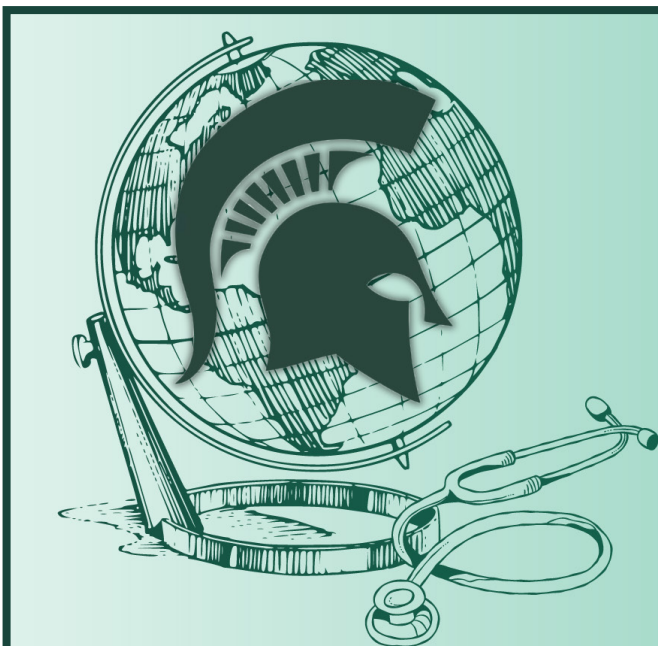
Burke comes from Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan where he was the director of philanthropy for the School of Engineering and Computer Science the past seven years. During his time, he averaged an annual increase of 18 percent overall giving and worked to cultivate

and steward relationships with major donors, resulting in \$3 million in endowment contributions and scholarships.

He has other healthcare-related experience as well, having previously served as executive director of the Crohn’s & Colitis Foundation’s Michigan chapter, where he oversaw its budget and was responsible for development of education, support and advocacy across Michigan and northwest Ohio. In addition, Burke once worked with the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

Dean Leigh Small said Burke is going to fit in well at the college.

“Antonie will bring warmth and a great personality to the role, which are vital in building relationships with our alumni and donor base,” Small said. “I look forward to working with him on strategically identifying ways to move the college forward through philanthropy and planned giving.”



SUPPORTING NURSES ADVANCING GLOBAL HEALTH

THANK YOU FOR CELEBRATING NURSES WEEK 2024!

We wish you and your team the best as you transform healthcare locally, statewide, nationally, and globally. Take care of yourself, and Go Green!

Upcoming CON Celebrations

Mark your calendars,
Spartan Nurses!



College of Nursing
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Michigan State University College of Nursing
Life Science Building,
1355 Bogue Street,
East Lansing, MI 48824.



October 18 - 19: Alumni Weekend

We invite all nursing alumni, students, supporters, and friends to celebrate MSU Homecoming festivities with their Spartan Nursing community. Activities over Homecoming Weekend include:

Reunion Celebration: October 18

The 11th annual Reunion Celebration honors the classes of 1974, 1984, 1994, 2004, 2014, and all classes prior to 1974.

Homecoming Parade Watch: Evening of October 18

Take in the Homecoming festivities with your fellow Spartan Nurses!

MSU Football Tailgate: October 19

The CON Alumni Tailgate returns in 2024 as the MSU football team takes on the Iowa Hawkeyes. Food and drink will be provided for all attendees. Game tickets will also be available for purchase for all who are interested.



College of Nursing 75th Anniversary

The College of Nursing is turning 75 years old in 2025. Since 1950, the college has been at the forefront in healthcare transformations in the local, state, national, and international community. It is thanks to our Spartan Nurses that we can continue to shape healthcare's landscape for generations to come.

The entirety of 2025 will be filled with anniversary celebrations, including transforming the annual Scholarships and Awards Banquet into a kickoff gala, creating a historical timeline with CON's archived material, and sharing the College of Nursing's accomplishments with the entire Spartan community!

We thank every member of the Spartan Nursing community for making this anniversary possible! We look forward to celebrating the past 75 years and the next 75 years to come with all of you!

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CON's email to stay
up to date on the
75th anniversary!

