

# THE CROSS ROAD

Alumni Newsletter of American National University



## Alumni Communications

BY PRESIDENT FRANK LONGAKER

We are thrilled to introduce the latest additions to better serving our students: “The Cross Road” quarterly newsletter and a website just for alumni! We recognize the importance of keeping our valued alumni community informed, engaged, and connected. With the launch of this quarterly newsletter and dedicated website, we aim to foster a strong community among our graduates, provide a platform for sharing your remarkable stories, and keep you updated on the latest developments and events at American National University.

Our newsletter will serve as a window into the vibrant world of ANU, offering insightful articles, alumni spotlights, updates from our faculty and staff, and exciting news about fellow graduates' achievements. It will also serve as a hub for alumni to share their own successes, experiences, and insights, creating a rich tapestry of stories that reflect the diverse paths our alumni have taken since their time at ANU.

Simultaneously, our website will provide an interactive space where alumni can access the newsletter and stay informed.

[Alumni.AN.edu](http://Alumni.AN.edu)

We are excited to embark on this journey of connectivity and look forward to the continued growth and success of our alumni network through these valuable resources.

*Frank*

## Update from Academics

BY CAROLYN SCOTT, CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

Hello Alumni!

Whether you graduated yesterday or ‘back in the day’, congratulations on your achievement! Those of us who have put in the work to earn an educational credential or degree understand the sacrifices of time, effort, and emotional wherewithal it takes to finish what you started.

One of the main things we in the Academics department want you to know is that we are working hard to keep up with the times. We are always exploring ways to use technology to bring the university to you. Evidence of us using technology can be found in our nursing programs, which use virtual reality headsets to simulate patient experience. Our Health Information Management Associate, Medical Billing and Coding Diploma, and our Medical Assisting Associate and Certificate programs also use PC-based simulations to help our students gain competency and confidence. Look for updates in this section each quarter to keep you current with the ways in which we continue to increase our capacity to serve our students, both at our campuses and remotely.

Another thing we want you to be aware of is that we want to serve people like you, who have the tenacity and drive to graduate. Please consider us for your next degree or certificate program. We’d love to serve you again, as well as your friends and family.

*Carolyn*

# ANU's New Online BSN Degree

BY MARIE BERNARD LAZARE, DEAN OF NURSING

We are thrilled to announce a brand-new degree program that is set to revolutionize the field of nursing education. ANU's new bachelor's degree in nursing is designed to provide a flexible and immersive learning experience for aspiring nurses. We have developed this program to be entirely delivered online, allowing students to pursue their passion for nursing from the comfort of their homes while maintaining a rich and engaging learning experience.

So, what sets our Bachelor's Degree in Nursing apart?

**Online Learning with a Personal Touch:** The program's online delivery combines the convenience of remote education with the personal attention that our university is known for. Students will have access to a comprehensive curriculum that covers essential nursing topics, from anatomy and pharmacology to patient care and ethical considerations.

**Hands-On Learning at Home:** One of the unique aspects of our program is the innovative use of technology to bring hands-on learning to our students' doorsteps. We provide lab equipment and materials directly to our students' homes, allowing them to practice essential skills and gain real-world experience, even from a distance.

**Immersive Virtual Reality Simulations:** To enhance the learning experience further, we have integrated virtual reality (VR) technology into our curriculum. Through VR simulations, students can practice critical nursing procedures, engage in realistic patient scenarios, and develop their clinical judgment—all from the comfort of their homes. This immersive approach helps bridge the gap between theory and practice.

**Flexible Clinical Placement:** We understand the importance of clinical experience in nursing education. To ensure our students receive the hands-on training they need, we have partnered with a network of local healthcare facilities, allowing students to choose a clinical site that works best for them. This flexibility ensures that our students can gain real-world experience while accommodating their individual circumstances.

**Comprehensive Support Services:** Our commitment to our students extends beyond the virtual classroom. We provide dedicated support services, including academic advising, technical support, and career services to ensure that our students have all the resources they need to succeed in their nursing journey.



"It's really  
like you are  
in a patient  
room!"

KATIE, ANU NURSING  
STUDENT



## Turning Her Passion in Action

BY CHLOE DANIELS

Megan Robinson has known since high school that working in law was her dream, and that dream brought her to American National University's paralegal studies certificate program. She originally majored in human resource management and reaffirmed her passion for law in business law classes. She joined the workforce not long after the birth of her son, and after moving through positions, Megan knew it was time to pursue her passion. She began her new journey by researching legal education. Her research led her to ANU, and her experience has been beyond her expectations.

Megan began her education at ANU after searching extensively for the right school to start her new path in paralegal studies. Initially unsure of an online education, she knew she wanted to feel like she was in an in-person classroom even if she was at a distance. *"It's more than I even expected... The zoom meetings are just like being in the classroom."* Along with that, Megan feels supported by her professors. *"[The professors] really do work with you... they want to see you grow; you can feel it – even through zoom,"* she says. She even talks about how she's been able to message her professors whenever she needed help: *"They respond quickly, they're just on it all the time! I never see them slipping up."*

Through her studies, Megan has consistently been impressed with her paralegal studies at ANU because of the expertise her professors bring to the class. *"The professors go down to the nitty-gritty of the gray lines [of law], and they give us that personal advice that they already went through that will help us stay clear of what we shouldn't be doing as paralegals,"* she explains. In her classes, her professors will replicate cases students will face in law school and in the legal sphere to enhance learning and give them real world experiences. She details how her learning has been affected by being taught by practicing attorneys. Their real-world encounters have bettered her understanding of the field.

The class structures are what helps Megan immensely through her studies, for her *"[the classes] are all structured basically the same, but it just flows. It just breaks it down, so you know what you're doing each week."* Megan explains that the structure has allowed her to stay on top of her classes. Before starting at ANU, Megan was against eBooks, but that has since changed because of her classes. *"I love my eBooks – the highlighting and every feature of the eBook I just love. The books the professors picked flow very well and that brings organization to [my studies]."*

In her future, Megan dreams of being in a law firm in Chicago and working her passion within law.

**"[The professors] really do work with you... they want to see you grow; you can feel it – even through zoom"**

MEGAN ROBINSON



# Financial Aid Update

BY BETH OVERBEY, VP FINANCIAL SERVICES

By now you should have been in contact with your loan servicer concerning your federal student loan repayment. The payment pause ended and required payments and interest resumed on October 1, 2023.

- The monthly payment amount for your loan will be based on the repayment plan you choose in consultation with your loan servicer. If you don't make a selection, you will be placed on the Standard Plan by default. You can expect details about your monthly payment amount to be provided at least 30 days before the initial due date, and your first bill will be dispatched at least 21 days prior to the due date. It's crucial not to delay preparations until you receive your bill; proactive planning is recommended.

If you were already making payments on your federal student loans before the payment pause began, please be aware that your first payment after the pause was due in October.

- You should have received a bill from your loan servicer with your payment amount and due date, at least 21 days before your due date. If you did not, please reach out to them immediately to discuss arrangements.

We advise you to visit <https://studentaid.gov/> to update your contact information and locate details about your loan servicer. Furthermore, make use of the Loan Simulator offered by the Department of Education. This tool allows you to compare different repayment plans, helping you make an informed decision about the most suitable plan for your circumstances. Taking prompt action will ensure that you are well-prepared to effectively manage your student loan responsibilities.

The Income-Driven Repayment (IDR) plan may be a more affordable option because it adjusts your payment based on your income and family size. To get your payment adjusted before your first bill is due, apply for the IDR as soon as possible.

Is your federal student loan presently in default? If so, you may qualify for Fresh Start, a temporary program offered by the U.S. Department of Education. Fresh Start is a one-time initiative designed to provide specific advantages to individuals with defaulted federal student loans, with the goal of helping them address their default status and regain financial stability by resuming regular loan payments. To use Fresh Start to get out of default, you must contact your loan holder. If your loans are held by a guaranty agency, you will need to call that agency. If do not know who holds your loans, call 800-621-3115. If your loans are held by the Department of Education, you can contact them by using one of the below methods:

- Visit this website for more information. The process can take less than 10 minutes.
- Online—Go to [myeddebt.ed.gov](https://myeddebt.ed.gov) and log in to your account. This is the easiest option if you know your login.
- Phone—Call 1-800-621-3115 Tip: Before calling, look up your income on your most recent federal tax return (line 11 of IRS Form 1040). But if you can't find it or didn't file taxes, don't worry—you should still call. It will take about 10 minutes. A representative will ask for some information to find your record, then ask why you are calling (your answer: Fresh Start, to get out of default). You will also get an opportunity to sign up for an income-driven repayment plan, which likely will qualify you for a lower monthly payment than a standard plan.
- Mail—Write to P.O. Box 5609, Greenville, TX 75403. In your letter, include your name, social security number, date of birth, and the following: "I would like to use Fresh Start to bring my loans back into good standing."

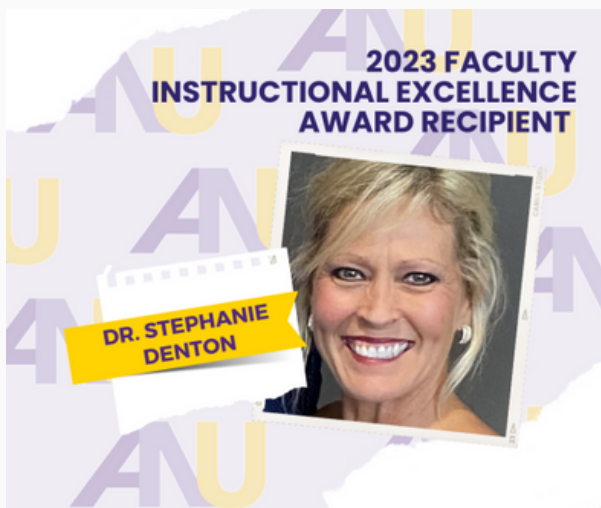
If you require assistance in finding details of your federal loan history or locating your loan servicer, you can access the Department of Education's website. Alternatively, you can contact us directly at 833-388-1100 and ask to speak with the Financial Services team. We are here to help and provide support with any questions or concerns you may have regarding your student loans.

## Faculty Feature

DR. STEPHANIE DENTON

Dr. Stephanie Denton earned a Faculty Excellence Award from ANU after being nominated by Health Sciences Program Chair, Laura Diggle, for her passion in teaching and learning. As Laura Diggle describes: *"in addition to delivering her lectures as scheduled, Dr. Denton uses a mix of timely course announcements, engaging in class activities, and consistent student outreach to ensure no student is left without the tools and support needed to be successful. She understands that her role is not limited to holding class and grading assignments. Instead, she consistently goes above and beyond by creating supplemental materials for Science Interactive, which enable her students to understand the assignments and successfully navigate even the most challenging simulations. Her dedication to ANU students and passion for teaching have an immense impact on the department as well as the departments who support us."*

Dr. Denton (aka "Dr. D") has been in the teaching profession since 2010, while being with ANU for the past five years. She is a Chiropractic Physician by trade, however, has used her extensive educational background to engage students in the study of Medical Terminology, Anatomy & Physiology, and Pathology. Her educational background consists of the following: Associate in Science Degree, Associate in Mortuary Science & Funeral Services, Bachelor of Life Science Degree, Master of Science Degree in Nutrition and Human Performance, and Doctor of Chiropractic Degree. Dr. Denton sold her practice when she started teaching and has not regretted the decision since! Being an educator is very rewarding and she's happy to be a part of it. The term Doctor means "to teach" so she has dedicated herself to her students in the hopes of creating a better future for all. Her hobbies include hitting the gym daily, playing golf on weekends, and spending as much time with her hubby and fur-babies as possible.



## Quick Hits

WE'VE MOVED!

Louisville, Kentucky location  
is now at:  
10509 Timberwood Circle,  
Suite 200, Louisville, KY  
40223

Pikeville, Kentucky location  
is now at:  
130 South Mayo Trail,  
Pikeville, KY 41501

Nashville, Tennessee  
location is now at:  
2451 Atrium Way, Nashville,  
TN 37214

### CLASS NOTES

Got married? Had a baby?  
Landed a new job? We want  
to hear about it! Submit a  
class note here:  
[https://alumni.an.edu/class-  
notes/](https://alumni.an.edu/class-notes/)

### UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Moved? changed your email  
or phone? Let us know  
where to send  
communication to here:  
[https://alumni.an.edu/update  
-my-information/](https://alumni.an.edu/update-my-information/)