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Around the Columns

High hopes for nursing

Judith Miller, MU's new dean of nursing as of Aug. 1, has high hopes for the School of Nursing's future. "The school is nationally prominent now," she says. "We're on the cusp of greatness, and that's why I came." Part of this prominence comes from the school's strong research program, where many researchers study vulnerable populations, such as those with chronic diseases.

Miller comes to MU from Marquette University, where she joined the faculty in 1971. Since then, she has been a faculty member, associate dean for academic affairs, interim dean, and associate dean for graduate programs and research. In addition to her administrative work, she returned to the classroom to teach a doctoral capstone course called Vulnerable Populations.

The new dean has long studied vulnerable patients. She has looked at how hope helps people deal with their illnesses.




"Hope is central to life and quality of life," Miller says. "Generalized hope is based on an existential view that life has meaning, and meaning can be created even if a patient is terminally ill. Meaning may come from being able to feel the warmth of a sunbeam from a window or anticipate a grandchild's visit."

Miller says hope is also essential to helping people accomplish tasks, such as conducting research and educating student nurses.



Judith Miller is MU's new dean of nursing.

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