June 12, 2016

To all ECPI University, College of Nursing-Orlando students, staff, and faculty:

It is with a heavy heart that I send this memo to our ECPI University, College of Nursing-Orlando family. Whether you are a student, staff or faculty member, your well-being is of paramount importance to me.

In the early hours of this morning, the Pulse club in Orlando experienced a devastating act of violence that has resulted in at least 50 lives lost and more injured. I am hopeful that all ECPI students and Remington graduates are fine and not personally affected by this tragedy. However, I know that as a member of the Orlando community, we all are likely to be affected in some way.

As a nursing student, you are likely to encounter people affected by this tragedy in some way in the clinical setting. Whether you are working on completing your practicum hours, or engaged in clinicals for Med/Surg and/or Public Health, you may very well encounter individuals who are affected by this event. You are likely to witness how registered nurses, as well as other members of the healthcare team, come together to offer compassion and healing hands to the victims of this violence. Please remember to provide your support to these compassionate team members as you encounter them in the clinical setting.

Responding to a crisis, such as this shooting, often takes its toll on nurses who are there to provide help. Nurses often first respond by caring for the immediate needs of patients and families. Often, it is after their shift ends, or they travel home, that they experience sadness and frustration related to the incident. But we as nurses can be tremendous at supporting one another and working as a team. I encourage you to be part of that team when in the clinical setting over the next few weeks.

If you are looking for a way to help, consider donating blood. The outpouring of support with blood donations is remarkable. However, as the days progress, donations tend to diminish and blood is often still needed. Other outlets to help will certainly become more readily available as the days progress.

A priority, however, is to take care of yourself. If you are personally experiencing any difficulties coping with the events of today, please feel free to call the WellConnect hotline at 866-640-4777. Counselors are readily available to assist you in any way possible. I called them today to verify the number. The school code is Q383, but it is not needed to place a call or to speak with a counselor. You are also welcome to talk to a faculty member, myself, or President Fontaine.

Respectfully,

Dean Pennington