Nursing students tour “The City You Never See”

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (Apr. 17, 2013) – In April students in the Community Centered Care class toured neighborhoods in Kansas City served by Operation Breakthrough, a non-profit organization.

This class introduces student community nursing invulnerable populations to help them better understand the struggles poor working parents face.

“This course is not only framed on serving vulnerable populations, but more important, it’s about giving something back, making a difference,” said Associate Professor Karen Lea M.N., R.N. “Students at each clinical site organize service projects to benefit the agency, such as a diaper drive for Operation Breakthrough where more than 4,500 diapers were donated.”

In addition to gaining a general awareness of the community’s needs and struggles, the students study theories of community assessment and the systems of health care that are available to vulnerable populations. The role of a professional nurse in population based nursing and how it relates to health promotion and primary prevention in the community is also a key course objective.

During this hour and a half bus tour, nursing students meet parents from neighborhoods where “Children stand in line for food, where parents desperate for shelter break into abandoned buildings, where Missouri babies born into poverty struggle to survive,” said Sister Berta Sailer.

Sister Corita Bussanmas and Sister Berta Sailer started Operation Breakthrough as a non-profit agency in 1971 when working-poor parents in the central city voiced their need for help with child care. The bus tours are organized in an effort to make more people aware of the needs in the community they serve and how hard parents often work to care for their family. The Operation Breakthrough center is located at the corner of 31st and Troost Streets.

The Kansas City Nursing News Editor, Linda Friedel joined the 76 students on their tour and interviewed them about what they learned.

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