Christine Wynd first learned hard work, intense study, and solid leadership as a student at St. John College, which had started as Sisters’ College on East 9th and Superior Avenue.

“I was in the Navy Nurse Corps before I graduated because they helped me pay for two years of nursing school,” she says, “I gave them back three years of active duty in bedside nursing stationed in San Diego. But I became interested in teaching nursing.”

Wynd subsequently earned a master’s degree in nursing at Ohio State University, where she later taught, and a Ph.D. at Case Western Reserve University. “I also switched from the Navy to the Army reserves, so I was in the military for 30 years and retired as a full colonel,” she says.

Along the way, she served as director of nursing research at the Cleveland Clinic and director of the Ph.D. in nursing program at the University of Akron. But her current role — dean and Strawbridge Professor of Nursing at Ursuline College’s Breen School of Nursing — may be the most gratifying.

“I graduated from St. John College in 1974, but the diocese closed it around 1975 or 1976 due to finances,” she says. “Ursuline accepted the nursing program into its fold, so my school merged with Ursuline. Basically, I’m an alumna of Ursuline College as well.”

Now, she is educating a new generation in the art and science of nursing. Although the profession still requires compassion, patience, and hard work, today’s nurses are expected to master technology, science and pharmacology. And that may be causing a shift in demographics.

“It’s a great career for men,” Wynd says, estimating that 6 percent to 8 percent of Ursuline’s 600 nursing students are male. “The field is attracting men interested in the science, math, and technology that go with it.”

Ursuline offers several undergraduate and graduate nursing programs, including a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, an accelerated program for already-degreed individuals switching to nursing, and a registered-nurse-to-BSN program. Master of Science students may select from three tracks: adult nurse practitioner, family nurse practitioner or adult health clinical nurse specialist. Minors are offered in nursing education and palliative nursing career. Newly accredited is the doctor of nursing practice program.

“NURSING IS A GREAT CAREER FOR MEN.”

It is an exciting time for nurses, Wynd says, as portions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act take effect. “When all the uninsured and underinsured people start taking on insurance, they will start pursuing healthcare, hopefully be more proactive, and want to see their primary healthcare providers who can help them or refer them to specialists,” she says. “But there aren’t as many primary care physicians because many are going into specialty areas. This is a perfect role for a nurse practitioner, who is absolutely qualified to do that.”

Wynd says her graduates are finding employment, especially in Northeast Ohio. “In this area, they can start at $50,000-60,000 as a hospital staff nurse with a BSN,” she says. “A nurse practitioner gets about $80,000-90,000, and a nurse anesthetist makes six figures.”

A new BSN curriculum and cutting-edge simulation lab set Ursuline apart from other nursing schools, Wynd says. “We use actors as real patients. During debriefing, the actors share their observations of students. It’s a dynamic that’s contributed so much to our students’ learning,” she says.

As a small, Catholic institution, Wynd says Ursuline’s nursing school strives to educate future nurses in an “overall culture and environment that starts people thinking about another level of professionalism in terms of spirituality and social justice.”

For more information: ursuline.edu/Academics/Nursing