

The Central Line

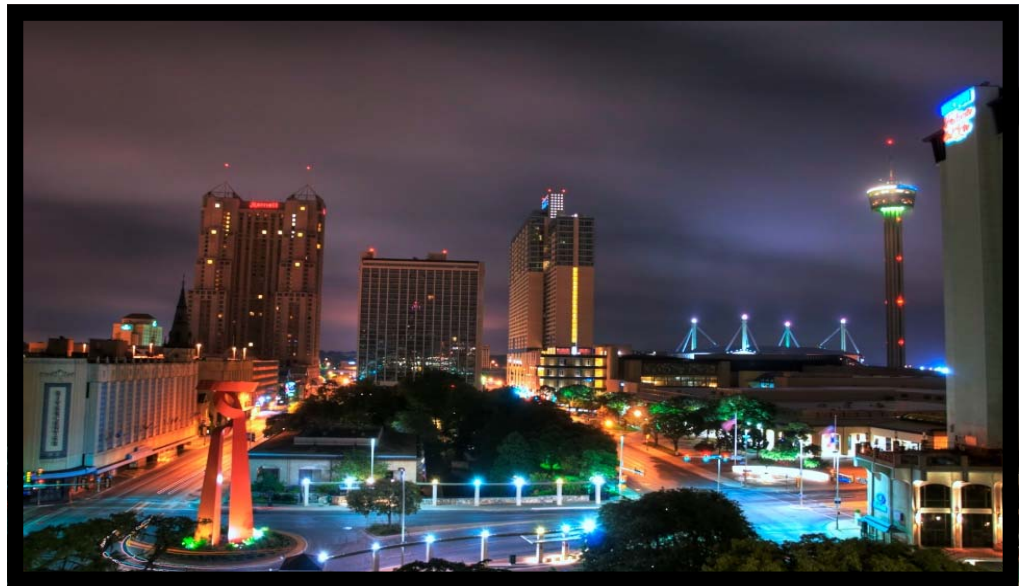
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS NURSING STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

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January 2014

San Antonio, TX February 13—15



YOU are the future of nursing leadership in Texas!



A Message From Representative Donna Howard



See page 2 for a message to Texas nursing students, from Donna Howard, member of the Texas House of Representatives representing the 48th district.

Rep. Howard has been a Texas lawmaker since 2006, and a nurse since 1974.



Donna Howard
State Representative

Leadership and Engagement in Nursing and Beyond From State Rep. Donna Howard

Since being elected to the Texas House in 2006, I have had the honor and opportunity to take part in the legislative process, helping craft new laws and providing oversight to our state government. Working with 149 other State Representatives, 31 State Senators, and numerous agency officials is, without a doubt, a collaborative effort. Adding further complexity to the process, one must also take into account the input of lobbyists, special interest groups, and private citizens. In my time at the Capitol, I have come to greatly appreciate the importance of leadership skills, advocacy efforts, and voter participation, all of which are essential to the successful passage of legislation and the effective management of our state.

With so many moving parts and interested parties at the Capitol, building trust is central to achieving effectiveness as a legislator. I have been fortunate to build good working relationships with many of my colleagues, and I attribute much of that success to leadership skills acquired in a number of different environments over the years, beginning with the foundational collaborative process and assessment skills I learned while in nursing school. Networking and communications as a Nurse Educator helped to steer me into a role as President of District 5 of the Texas Nurses Association. Board membership in organizations such as the Texas Freedom Network and Austin Area Interreligious Ministries provided the additional skills and confidence that led to my candidacy as a Trustee of the Eanes Independent School District. Later, as an Eanes School Board Member, I took advantage of programs such as Leadership TASB to hone my skills. In each of these settings, I was pushed to work with others, to engage in dialogue and come to mutual agreement with a diverse assortment of individuals. I cannot stress enough the importance of volunteering on the board of an organization, working within your professional association, and/or becoming active with your local neighborhood association and local nonprofits. The relationships you build and the tools you gather will be critical to any future endeavors.

As a lawmaker, I have also been witness to the importance of advocacy in the legislative process. To use nursing as an example, my efforts to tackle the statewide nursing shortage and increase the whistleblowing protections available to nurses have consistently benefited from the focused advocacy work of a variety of organizations, such as the Texas Nurses Association and the Coalition of Nurses in Advanced Practice. In the recent 83rd Legislature, these groups were vital to the success of one of my bills, House Bill 705, which dealt with the problem of workplace violence against nurses in the emergency room. My history as a Critical Care Nurse included one very serious incident where I was harmed by a disoriented patient, so I was familiar with the dangers that nurses face on a regular basis. My office coordinated with these organizations throughout the session to contact key legislators about the topic, work with stakeholders on language, and arrange for testimony. The hearing on the bill showcased the personal stories of nurses from all across the state who came to the Capitol to testify in support of the legislation. Their shared anecdotes were very effective at detailing the need for additional measures, and were a primary reason that HB 705 eventually passed with unanimous support in both chambers of the Texas Legislature.

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While advocacy efforts can often involve a great deal of engagement and coordination, voting is the most basic and fundamental action that one can take to participate in our democracy. Unfortunately, too much of our nation's population is choosing to remain disengaged from the electoral process, and Texas actually ranks as the worst in the nation — 51st, falling behind all states and the District of Columbia — in terms of voter turnout. According to the Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life at the University of Texas, only 36.4% of eligible Texans reported that they voted in the 2010 mid-term election. The issue of low voter turnout is particularly pronounced in primary and local elections. Data from the Texas Secretary of State shows that only 11.16% of the Texas Voting Age Population cast a ballot in either the 2012 Democratic or Republican primaries. And in Austin, only 10.70% of the city's registered voters participated in its 2012 City Council Elections. This is a serious issue, often resulting in elected officials campaigning and making decisions geared only toward a small but active and vocal group of individuals whose views are typically much more extreme than the average citizen, but who are most assuredly going to turn out on Election Day. The reasons for low participation rates are numerous, and the State of Texas is making matters worse with onerous and unnecessary voter ID legislation. But I can tell you from personal experience that every vote counts — my 2010 reelection was decided with a margin of 4 votes out of over 51,000 cast.

Our society relies on the civic engagement of its citizens, and I would encourage you to get involved in any way that you can. Casting a ballot, contacting your legislator, or joining a Board are all important steps in helping to shape your community. My roles as a nurse, an educator, and a parent led me to move from the sidelines and onto the field, and I now find myself with a seat in the Texas House of Representatives. But the nature of civic life is that leadership is ever-changing, and new people are needed to bring in fresh ideas. Whether your interests revolve around the nursing profession, the condition of your highways, or the work of your local opera, take part and take a stand. Your voice is a critical part of the process—make sure it's heard.

2014 TNSA 66th Annual State Convention
Thursday, February 13, 2014 thru Saturday, February 15, 2014
Omni Hotel at The Colonnade - San Antonio, TX

9821 Colonnade Boulevard
San Antonio, Texas 78230

Reservations: 210-691-8888

\$120.00 Single \$130.00 Double \$130.00 Triple/Quad



2014 TNSA State Convention—San Antonio, TX

This is your chance...

**Take your Nursing Education experience to
the next level at State Convention**

February 13-15, 2014



Kathryn Mendez
President


President - Kathryn Mendez

In 2013, TNSA passed a resolution advocating for the support of incorporating interdisciplinary education into nursing curriculum. This same resolution was passed at the national convention by their house of delegates. Many people may not understand the importance of incorporating such objectives into a nursing program, however nursing and treatments of patients are changing. In reality, a patient is not taken care of by just the nurse but by a number of healthcare professionals. There's the nurses, doctors, physical therapists, occupational therapists, pharmacists, and many other health care professionals that all collaborate in order to provide the best, safest care for

each individual patient. If we start teaching proper ways to work and communicate with other health care professionals while in nursing school we will be more prepared as we transition from students to the staff nurse.

The school I attend, University of the Incarnate Word, already incorporates a training regimen that helps students learn different ways to communicate with other healthcare professionals. This has already helped students with voicing concerns and questions regarding patient care. I personally found this to be extremely helpful. Opening the lines of communication will decrease medical errors, improve team

performance, and overall provide holistic care to each and every patient. Overall students have found this experience to be helpful and enlightening.



Get Published!

- As a member of TNSA, you are shaping the future of nursing in Texas
- Let us know what is happening where you are, and what issues are important to YOU?
- Submit articles now for Fall issue!

E-mail Chris Rougeux -editor@tnsa.org



Tuyet Hoang
Secretary-
Treasurer

Secretary-Treasurer - Tuyet Hoang

When the word “leader” is spoken, what comes to many peoples’ minds are public speaker, class president, or confidence. The definition of leader is “one who leads or commands a group, organization, or country”. I do not believe that is the only true definition of leader. Leaders do more than delegate, they are not the nurses that run by and ask you to do things, but rather the ones by your side in the patient’s room helping you. Leaders are not only nurses, doctors, or someone with a higher education. A leader can be anyone who advocates for somebody that cannot stand up for themselves. As a nurse we advocate for our patients, on a daily basis and because of

this should be considered leaders in our community. Just because you are not an officer at your local SNA chapter does not mean you cannot be a leader. There are opportunities to be leaders in your community. One of my most valuable leadership opportunities was when I volunteered to spend lunch twice a week with an elementary school student who did not have a good home life or role model to look up to. Spending lunch with this student only took up roughly an hour of my week but it was the most important thing to this girl. She would look forward to me coming, and we would sit at a table on the side of the cafeteria and she should tell me how she would

do in school and how things were at home. And during this time I did not think I was making a difference, I thought I was just hanging out with a fourth grader. But when I spoke with her school counselor, he told me her grades were improving, she was doing her assignments, and not getting in trouble. AI knew then I was shaping a mind of the future. In doing this, I was a leader in my community because I was able to influence and shape someone who was going down the wrong path by advocating for this student. So I ask you, even if you only have a couple hours week, be a leader and advocate for those who cannot do so for themselves.

TNSA 4th Annual NCLEX

BRAIN BOWL

STUDENTS AND TEAMS WILL BE TESTED ON THEIR NURSING KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS ARE BASED ON NCLEX, NURSING SKILLS AND FUNDAMENTALS

Teams of 4-6 students, Cost of \$15.00 a team (\$3.00 for students who need to be assigned a team)

This is a great chance to test your knowledge against other schools!
We will have three rounds with a bonus round at the end.
The Event will last about 2.5 hours, after that join us for an Ice Cream Social!

All earnings go to support Windridge
Visit www.windridgetexas.org to find out more about your TNSA philanthropy

Thursday, February 13, 2014

Let's get ready to RUMBLE!!!!

This February 13th in San Antonio, TX...

The Omni Hotel...

OK Student nurses of Texas, this is it!

The ultimate duel...a battle royale that will be spoken of throughout the ages.

Plus ICE CREAM!!!!

**It's the 4th Annual
NCLEX BRAIN BOWL!!!!**

BRING IT.



Chris Rougeux
Editor

Editor - Chris Rougeux

Leadership: Often spoken of, occasionally understood.

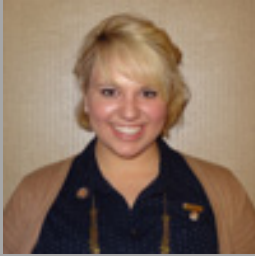
It can be difficult at times to understand abstract concepts such as leadership. How can this be though, that something so emphasized in nursing education and society in general be so loosely defined, and sporadically understood? I believe that leadership is a dynamic, ever-changing, and evolving, intangible idea. Leadership can mean different things to different leaders at different times. Accepting this idea may in fact lead (pun intended) more students to an embracement of their own leadership abilities. When we think of leadership as this rigid box with well-defined parameters and a prescribed set of motions, actions, and processes, it begins to seem rather unrealistic. This obstacle will cause many to never seek to venture down the leadership path at all. If you can accept though that leadership may be as unique as your own personality, it starts to become much more attainable. We know there are numerous leadership styles and you may not see yourself reflected in any of the texts that describe these styles. But inside of you, who you already are today, there are certain qualities that speak to other people...that in fact

lead them to an action, a thought, or a feeling.

I've learned that the most important part of being a leader is not waking up in the morning with a list of "leader activities and tasks" to go out and impose upon the world. It is actually the ability to reflect and look back and recognize where my actions or words had an effect of leadership. Eventually, I will be able to replicate those same actions again and again to actively seek to create leadership opportunities. What I'm getting at, is that you may have already been a leader today, or maybe last week. Make sure you listen to your fellow students and try to identify the positive ways in which you have impacted their experience as a student nurse – then go out and do it again. Sounds simple right? It is. Be yourself. Then learn from your own history how to shape your future as a leader. Good luck fellow leaders!

5 tips for student nurse leadership

1. Being a leader does not mean you cannot be led. Everyone has something to teach and everyone has something to learn. Recognize when to lead, and when to be led.
2. Help others achieve. The best leaders are not those that get others to do their bidding for them...they are the ones that help others accomplish their goals.
3. Being a leader does not require any authority. You may not be anyone of great power or influence, but we ALL have a voice. Use it to encourage others...and yourself!
4. Do NOT be afraid to say : "I don't know." Seek counsel from someone who does.
5. Accept that some days you will not feel like any kind of leader at all. Do not let this rob you of a future chance to lead. You may be the leader someone else needs to keep going!



Nominating Chairman - Stephanie York

“A Legacy of Leadership”

Arguably the most well-known nurse in history is Florence Nightingale; she is the “lady with the lamp,” and known for her innovation and progressive actions in not only nursing but healthcare as a whole, developing sanitation and incorporating environmental factors into patient care. Nightingale undoubtedly left behind a legacy of leadership by speaking for her values and changing current practices as well as mentoring and developing nursing education and reputation. She is not the only influential nurse, we know of many theorists and trail blazers that have come before us, but the names of individuals in a text book or article can be too distant to grasp as a role model for our daily practices.

Although we may not wake-up as nursing stu-

dents, while rushing off to clinical, be able to see in the mirror the influential leader we have the ability to become. I venture to encourage you to wake up each morning and tell yourself “I am a future nursing leader.” Alright Stephanie, that’s all fine and dandy, but how do I, mere nursing student, become a leader. Well, you are. Already someone, somewhere, is looking to you for guidance. The question is rather, are you practicing as a leader.

Reflect on your current practices. Nightingale utilized every resource she had to become a nurse, forsaking the ease of wealth during the Victorian era. Are you venturing beyond your comfort zone? Nightingale fostered a love and conviction to educate herself through the opportunities afforded her and beyond. Are you seeking opportunities outside of didactic and

clinical experiences to provide yourself a multidisciplinary education and remain informed above and beyond what is expected of you? Nightingale was not afraid to question standards of practice. Are you observing outcomes and seeking to better patient care?

Although leadership carries responsibility and burden, it is vital to the success and progression of our profession. If we had not benefited from those leaders, who have set pathways of excellence before us, imagine where nursing practice might be. Leaders are crucial to our ever changing profession. We as nursing students are the future leaders and in that right must prepare ourselves and alter our mind set so that we may begin practicing as the leaders we have the potential to be. You are writing your own legacy of leadership.

YOU ARE A STUDENT NURSE LEADER!

Want to join the Board of Directors? Run for office at the state convention next year! Start planning your campaign NOW! Contact Stephanie York for info on getting started! nom-chair@tnsa.org

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Please include your name, address, phone number, and the # of pins you wish to or-

Our Mission Statement

To provide the highest education for student nurses while aiding in the development of the whole person. To have direct input into the standards on nursing education and influence on the education process. To model a high level of integrity among students in their dealings with people as they strive for excellence in everything they do, as it is an expectation and not a goal.

Submit your photos

TNSA Members have the opportunity to promote the image of nursing to the public and to fellow students. Email your pics and we will feature them in The Central Line or TNSA website.

Email editor@tnsa.org

