Linda Stones, Past Chair, NNA PAC

The new year, 2020, is an election year. Twenty five seats are open for election and six of those seats have incumbents that are term limited. This election cycle it is all the odd numbered Legislative Districts that will be involved in the election.

NNA has a successful history of influencing legislation when it is introduced in the capital, but success is influenced by who is in the capital. The PAC will be busy over the next year to educate you on who is up for re-election and where they stand on nursing issues. The NNA PAC will be sending a questionnaire to each candidate asking them to state a position on issues that concern nurses. So before you step into the voting booth, take a few minutes to read their responses on the NNA PAC website. [https://www.nebraskanursespac.org/](https://www.nebraskanursespac.org/)

NNA PAC members were very busy the end of 2019, meeting with Senators on important issues. We had very positive discussions with Senator Carol Blood (District 3), Senator Lynne Walz (District 15), Senator Dan Quick (District 35) and Senator Mike McDonnell (District 5). These Senators have supported nurses in 2019. We wanted to thank them for their support and to talk with them about issues we see coming forward in 2020. The sit down discussions with these Senators is a rich dialogue as we share the perspective of nursing with the Senators.

NNA PAC would like to thank these Senators for all they do to represent their Districts and to make decisions for the citizens of our State. If you live in any of these districts, please educate yourself on these individuals and reach out to support them as they work toward re-election.

Carole Lainouf, NNA PAC, Senator Carol Blood, District 3, (Bellevue/Papillion area) working at the Capital. No picture available when she met with Dr. Kari Wade, NNA PAC member.

Dr. Kari Wade, NNA PAC, Senator Lynne Walz District 15, (Fremont area) and Linda Stones, NNA PAC

Linda Stones, NNA PAC (l) with Senator Dan Quick, District 35 (Grand Island area)

Carole Lainouf, NNA PAC, Senator Carol Blood, District 3, (Bellevue/Papillion area) and Linda Stones, NNA PAC

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Promoting Resiliency: How Nursing Relationships Affect Our Careers

Brodi Willard, BSN, RN-BC

Resiliency is a hot button topic for nursing. Nurses are pushed to the limit everyday by the patients we care for, family dynamics, coworkers, management requesting overtime, and trying to complete all of the monthly mandatory education before it is due. Resilience is an individual ability and characteristic that includes the process of recovery and interaction after experiencing significant stress or hardship (Shin, Kim, & Ji, 2018). What happens to that nurse when this describes the everyday work life? An important aspect of a nurse’s life includes the relationships he or she has with her coworkers or other healthcare professionals. Nurses need to have a positive support network in order to process all of the emotions that stem from being a nurse. I’m not talking about having a complaining session with coworkers regarding another coworker. I’m talking about having a real conversation about the feelings that come with the job, and how sometimes none of us are really sure how to process them. The conversations that nurses have with others that truly understand the nursing perspective offer a positive coping mechanism when it comes to resilience because it allows both new and more experienced nurses to share their stories. These stories offer personal encouragement to new nurses and help build confidence because they know they can ask for help from the more experienced nurses. This also helps build resilience.

If a new nurse has a really rough shift and doesn’t have anyone to discuss it with, they become stressed. They become anxious whenever they think about work, and the stress continues to build. The stress and anxiety affects not only the nurse’s self-esteem, but it also affects his or her work attitude. The work attitude affects others around that nurse, including the patients. When a nurse is surrounded by supportive coworkers, that nurse is more likely to provide more compassionate patient care. Self-efficacy explains why there is a relationship between coworker support and nurse resilience. Perceiving higher levels of coworker support increase self-efficacy which increase resilience (Wang, Tao, Bowers, Zhang, & Brown, 2018). We have all had tough shifts, whether we work at the bedside or in the classroom or nurse leaders. We need to actively search for a support network that will lift us up when we need it most. If you are new to your work organization and don’t know where to turn, the ANA Community forums have a variety of different discussions to choose from and join. The important thing to remember is that as a nurse, we have all been through difficult situations, but what has gotten us through the really tough times is the strength and unquestionable faith from our coworkers.

References


The ANA Enterprise announced its intent to elevate and celebrate the essential, robust contributions of nurses as the world recognizes 2020 as the “Year of the Nurse.”

The ANA Enterprise is the family of organizations that is composed of the American Nurses Association (ANA), the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), and the American Nurses Foundation. ANA Enterprise will celebrate Year of the Nurse by engaging with nurses, thought leaders and consumers in a variety of ways that promote nursing excellence, infuse leadership and foster innovation.

“As the largest group of health care professionals in the U.S. and the most trusted profession, nurses are with patients 24/7 and from the beginning of life to the end. Nurses practice in all healthcare settings and are filling new roles to meet the ever-growing demand for health and health care services,” said ANA President Ernest J. Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN. “Despite the major role nurses play in health care delivery and community outreach, there are opportunities to increase understanding of the value of nursing in order to expand investment in education, practice and research, as well as increase the numbers of nurses who serve in leadership positions.”

“We look forward to working with partner organizations to communicate a contemporary and accurate view of nurses and the critical work they do, as well as challenge boards and other influencers to commit to nursing and nursing leaders in order to improve the nation’s health,” said Grant.

Given the wide range of nursing roles in the U.S., ANA Enterprise will promote inclusivity and wide engagement of all nurses throughout Year of the Nurse. As an example, during 2020, ANA Enterprise will expand National Nurses Week, traditionally celebrated from May 6 to May 12 each year to a month-long celebration in May to expand opportunities to elevate and celebrate nursing.

The World Health Assembly, the governing body of the World Health Organization, declared 2020 the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife, in honor of the 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale’s birth. The celebration offers a platform to recognize past and present nurse leaders globally, raise the visibility of the nursing profession in policy dialogue and invest in the development and increased capacity of the nursing workforce. This declaration is an extension of work initiated by the Nursing Now campaign to elevate the profession and ensure nurses are leading efforts to improve health and health care. ANA Enterprise is leading Nursing Now USA along with the Chief Nurse, U.S. Public Health Service; the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill; and the University of Washington, School of Nursing.

Nurses are encouraged to use #yearofthenurse and follow us on social media as we celebrate nurses in 2020.
Happy New Year, Nebraska Nurses! I hope everyone is enjoying the new year and that you are sticking to those resolutions. Speaking of resolutions, I would like to take a moment to speak to you about NNA’s 2020 resolutions. This year we are really focusing on NNA’s budget and doing everything we can to balance it. A finance director once told me that budgets are easy; you either increase income or decrease expenses. The NNA unfortunately falls under the second part of that statement, as we have had to do a lot of expense decreasing. Normally we budget for travel expenses (flight, hotel, meals) for when the NNA president travels for ANA meetings. However, due to our current budget needing such attention, I have taken it upon myself to cover my own travel to these events in hopes that it will positively affect NNA. Another option we are looking at, is reducing some of the travel that the State Director does. This is less than ideal, because she is needed throughout the state to try and grow our membership, and our voice. NNA is doing our part in reducing expenses wherever possible, what we are struggling with is increasing income. This is where you can help. Our membership numbers, while growing, are still a long way from our goal. Since I started my Presidency, we have increased our membership to 4% of the Registered Nurses whom reside in Nebraska. This means there are still about 28,000 Registered Nurses in the state of Nebraska who are not members of the Nebraska Nurses Association. I ask you to consider adding NNA to your 2020 resolutions and join, renew, or continue your membership. For only $15/ month, you help to ensure that NNA will continue to be the voice of all nurses across this state and at the Nebraska Unicameral. Please reach out to us with any questions you may have about membership at info@nebraskanurses.org.

I invite you to attend NNA’s Nurses Day at the Legislature on February 26th in Lincoln. Also save the dates of October 2nd and 3rd when our 2020 NNA convention will also be held in Lincoln. Please watch your email for NNA’s monthly newsletter containing association updates. Also, follow us on social media: Facebook (Nebraska Nurses Association), Instagram (#nenurses), LinkedIn (Nebraska Nurses Association), and on twitter (@NebraskaNurses).

I look forward to hearing your ideas for NNA, and the status of nursing and health care in the state of Nebraska. Happy 2020 – The year of the Nurse and Midwife!
Comings and Goings

Kim Houtwed, MBA, BSN, RN

As 2019 has gone and 2020 has come, it is a time to reflect on the past year and look forward to a new year. Congratulations to the newly elected officers and committee members: Echo Koehler, Brodi Willard, Ben Garcia, Rita Weber, Mary Nutzman, Lin Hughes, Alison Nelson, Wendy Nash, Stephanie Vodicka, Michelle Johnson, Jenna Hohenfeldt, Tonya Frank, Lisa Cantrell, Savannah Henn, and Andrea Faulkner. We are grateful to have you representing Nebraska nurses and are excited to hear your new ideas and insights that will contribute to the Nebraska Nurses Association.

A sincere and heartfelt thank-you to our outgoing officers and committee members: Linda Hardy, Anne Kraus, Kathy Davis, Hope Johnson, Kristine Wagner and Jackie Thielan. We appreciate your contributions and showing us great leadership during your term.

As an association, we look forward to continuing to develop the educational offerings, social gatherings and membership recruitment for the upcoming year. As we focus on these goals, the only direction we can look is ahead to the future. I encourage you to be part of that future with us!!

HONESTY

Do not lie. It may seem like common sense, but it happens surprisingly often. Embellishment easily shifts to falsehood. Familiarity with a language and fluency are two different things. If you were a Customer Service Representative, do not give yourself a new title of Vice President of Patient Experience because it sounds better. Recruiters will be performing reference checks and background checks and eventually you will have a conversation face-to-face where your skills may be put to the test.

STRONG REFERENCES

Ask people if they will act as a reference before you share their contact information and let them know the jobs you have applied for and why you are interested in the position. Be self-aware of your performance when you worked with that person; will they say the things that a new employer will want to hear?

OPPORTUNITIES TO NETWORK

Seek out opportunities for face-to-face engagement. This does not mean show up at Human Resources for career opportunities. Be self-aware of your performance when you worked with that person; will they say the things that a new employer will want to hear?

IF YOU GET AN INTERVIEW, SHOW UP OR HAVE THE COURTESY TO CALL

Interview “no shows” are on the rise; this is a huge strain on time, energy, and resources. The recruiter you snub will remember your name the next time you are looking for a move. Managers and supervisors all attend the same meetings and vacancies and candidates come up in conversation quite frequently. You do not want your reputation to include being inconsiderate or unreliable in a profession built on trust and compassion. If you get another offer or your plans for employment change, any reasonable recruiter will understand, pick up the phone and call!
Help Us Pay Tribute to Nebraska Nurses at Their Passing!

Almost every individual or family is faced with the loss of a loved one each year. Some of those loved ones have served patients and our profession, as nurses. One simple way to show our appreciation to these lost comrades is to conduct a Nightingale Tribute ceremony at the annual Nebraska Nurses Association Convention held each fall. Our hope is that we can pay tribute to all of our lost colleagues. But we need your help to make that happen.

Please notify us at director@nebraskanurses.org if you know of a nurse who has died between October 1, 2019 and October 1, 2020. We don’t need the details, and you don’t have to know the individual personally to send their information. All nurses deserve a moment of remembrance from fellow nurses at their passing. With your help, we can make this hope a reality.

If you lose a loved one who was a nurse, you are also invited to include the Nightingale Tribute as part of the visitation, funeral, memorial service, or celebration of life. You can find the details at our website. During 2020, the Nebraska Nurses Foundation will also be reaching out to provide all morticians in Nebraska with tribute materials so that they can support nursing tributes too!

https://www.nebraskanursesfoundation.org/nightingale-tribute/

NNF Grant Funds Go Unclaimed!

For the past three years, the Nebraska Nurses Foundation has invited NNA members to apply for project grant funding for practice, education, research, or quality improvement for nurses or the patients they serve. In 2018 we supported Chris Venovij, a Nebraska Methodist Health System Educator, to purchase two wound care simulation mannequins that have been used to train thousands of nurses on wound assessment and treatment. In 2019, Shelly Burke Rodriguez, certified aroma therapist, used her grant funds to initiate an aroma therapy program at Columbus Care and Rehabilitation to impact the care of residents and health of staff members. Both these recipients shared their successes as speakers at the NNA Convention.

Although there were a few inquiries, no project grant applications were submitted for the 2020 grant funds. We want to give away money! How often do you hear that? The grants are designed to provide funding for evidence-based practice, quality improvement or innovation projects conducted within clinical nursing settings. Ideal projects are those that have a direct impact on a broad scope of nurses, students, or patients/clients. Pilot programs, impacting small numbers, or which cannot be completed in a calendar year, are not the focus of these funds. The NNF is committed to use the funds as broadly as possible.

If you are an active member of NNA and work in a unit, clinic, campus, or other setting, consider the programs that would impact your target population. As we have learned from Chris and Shelly, $1000 can make a strong, ongoing impact on health and safety! Funds earmarked for the 2020 grants are being diverted to support the dissemination of Nightingale Tribute information to morticians across Nebraska, but applications for 2021 grants will be accepted anytime between October 1 and December 1, 2020.

Visit the NNF website for more information (www.nebraskanursesfoundation.org) or contact Teresa Anderson, NNF Secretary and Project Grant Committee Chair (teresa@tlandersonconsulting.com or 402-679-1551).
The Nebraska Nurses Foundation is excited to continue a practice/clinical grant program for NNA members. The grants are designed to provide funding for evidence-based practice, quality improvement or innovation projects conducted within clinical nursing settings. The following criteria apply to the program:

**Criteria**

1. Grant(s) will be offered once per year and are intended for projects that can be reasonably finished and disseminated within a 12-month calendar period (January – December).
2. Each grant will range from $500 - $1000 based on project needs and funds available through the Foundation. Only project proposals that include a detailed budget estimate within this range will be considered for approval, and additional funds will not be approved for the same project more than once.
3. Grant proposals will be accepted between October 1 and December 1 of the calendar for funding beginning the next calendar year (January – December).
4. A Nebraska Nurses Association (NNA) member in good standing must be the primary project lead or co-lead.
5. Fund disbursement will be split with half of the requested funds provided at the onset of the project and the remaining funds distributed with approved and completed dissemination, at the discretion of the NNF Board.
6. Approved applicants must agree to allow NNA/NNF to use their identifying information and project results in marketing materials, website, and official publications.

**Proposal Requirements**

1. The grant is designed to provide funding for new intervention projects that have not yet been initiated or implemented at the clinical or educational department level, that will directly or indirectly influence patient care or nurse/student competence:
   a. Implementation of evidence-based nursing practices (new or revised)
   b. Performance or Quality Improvement project
   c. Innovation project which may include pilot studies/projects
2. The project must go beyond assessment to the implementation phase with a measured outcome.
   a. A narrative description of a review of literature to support the premise or methods of the proposed work.
   b. Provide a minimum of four (4) and no more than 10 citations to support the narrative.
   c. Any attachments must reference the specific focus of the grant request, not just a general project plan or review of literature.
3. Background and Significance
   a. Describe the gap in current programs or practices that the project may alleviate or improve.
   b. Present the measurable outcome that the project will impact - quantitative analysis is preferred but strong qualitative evidence will also be considered.
4. Review of Literature
   a. A narrative description of a review of literature to support the premise or methods of the proposed work.
   b. Provide a minimum of four (4) and no more than 10 citations to support the narrative.
   c. Any attachments must reference the specific focus of the grant request, not just a general project plan or review of literature.
5. Setting and Target Population
   a. Describe the physical setting in which the project or program will be implemented, including address and other contact information.
   b. Describe the target population that will benefit from the project implementation, including the projected number of nurses and/or patients/students served if the grant is awarded.
6. Stakeholder Identification and Approval
   a. Provide a listing of key stakeholders for the project or setting (be as specific as possible).
   b. Include letter(s) support from key stakeholder(s) and/or employing institution
   c. If the project is a faculty or nursing student graduate level project, a letter of support is also needed from a Director/Faculty member in addition to the clinical agency or setting
7. Driving and Restraining Forces
   a. Describe the driving forces, opportunities or benefits of project implementation.
   b. Describe the restraining forces, barriers or threats to the successful implementation of the project and identify ways to reduce these concerns.
8. Business Plan
   a. Submit a detailed timeline of activities to be completed each month during the project calendar year.
   b. Submit a detailed budget outlining project design, development, delivery, management and cost (Sample Business Plan is below, but other formats are accepted, as long as details are provided).
9. Measure of Program Effectiveness
   a. Describe the anticipated direct outcome of the project to be funded, such as cost containment, improved patient outcome, enhanced patient or clinician satisfaction, or administrative efficiency.
   b. Identify measurement methods (survey, safety, patient outcome, or financial data; qualitative trends/themes; or other specific quantitative measurement. Attach copies of surveys, as applicable.
10. Plans for Sustainability
    a. Describe plans/opportunities to sustain the project or program beyond the grant period. Identify stakeholders within the facility or community available to support the work after the completion of the calendar year, if applicable.
11. Plans for Dissemination
    a. Final distribution of grant funds will be made when the following criteria have been met:
      i. Dissemination to the NNA membership is required through the Nebraska Nurse and/or NNA approved presentation within three months of project completion, or at the discretion of the NNF Board.
      ii. Dissemination to stakeholders, employing organization and faculty (if applicable) is required within three months of project completion.
      iii. Acknowledgment of the NNF as funding source in all references to the project.

For more information:
https://www.nebraskanursesfoundation.org/practice-clinical-grant-program/
Teresa Anderson, NNF Secretary at Teresa@tlandersonconsulting.com or 402-679-1551

### Project Costs

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Costs should be rounded to the nearest dollar and budgets totaling more than $1000 will not be considered for funding.
NNF Welcomes New Board Members

The Nebraska Nurses Foundation Board is happy to welcome three new members for the 2020 – 2021 membership cycle.

Justin Gripp joins the Foundation as a Community Member and will also assume the role of NNF Treasurer. Justin has a Doctor of Pharmacy and MBA from Creighton University and a BA in Philosophy, and minor in Chemistry from UNO. He is serving on the Foundation Board to help Nebraska’s nurses in furthering their education and professional development. Justin works as an informatics pharmacist for Bryan Health and part-time as a clinical pharmacist for Madonna Rehab in Lincoln. Both positions provide him ample opportunities to recognize the critical role of nurses in our hospital systems. Previously, Justin was the pharmacist at Crete Area Medical Center. Since 2013, Justin serves on the Nebraska Pharmacists Association Legislative Committee and is interested in the legislative process and its impact on the delivery of healthcare in our state. Justin is married to Susie, a pharmacist at Crete Area Medical Center. Since 2013, Justin has been part of our team providing help with the implementation of progressive administrative committees, collaborative participation in multi-professional committees, and in various other leadership roles over many years. We are thrilled to bring Anna’s leadership experience, strong communication skills and expert project management to the Board. Her “inside perspective” on MSD/ANA/MIG operations will be helpful as the Nebraska Nurses Foundation considers future partnerships and collaborative efforts.” Her employment involves the management of multi-million-dollar contracts with federal agencies including the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid and the Veterans Affairs. As a Project Management Professional, she handles tasks and projects – both ongoing and one-time occurrences – with consideration of time, resources, constraints, and scope. This perspective will be helpful as NNF pursues available grants to promote its mission, and to support NNA/NNF collaboration to create stable, relevant, and sustainable organizations. Anna has agreed to accept the Vice President role for the 2020 Board.

Anna Mackevicius is a familiar face to nursing in Nebraska, serving as NNA President from 2016 – 2018 and in various other leadership roles over many years. We are thrilled to bring Anna’s leadership experience, strong communication skills and expert project management to the Board. Her “inside perspective” on MSD/ANA/MIG operations will be helpful as the Nebraska Nurses Foundation considers future partnerships and collaborative efforts.” Her employment involves the management of multi-million-dollar contracts with federal agencies including the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid and the Veterans Affairs. As a Project Management Professional, she handles tasks and projects – both ongoing and one-time occurrences – with consideration of time, resources, constraints, and scope. This perspective will be helpful as NNF pursues available grants to promote its mission, and to support NNA/NNF collaboration to create stable, relevant, and sustainable organizations. Anna has agreed to accept the Vice President role for the 2020 Board.

Heather Jensen brings clinical nursing excellence and rural/regional experience to the NNF Board. Her practice in North Platte, Nebraska has included multi-professional collaborative participation in administrative committees, curriculum management, and implementation of progressive staff engagement models. She appreciates the “focus of staff feedback” and has resolved to “make education an experience of staff growth and engagement.” Heather received her BSN from Fort Hays State University and currently serves as a House Supervisor at Great Plains Health. Welcome Heather!

Thank you NNF Board Departing Members!

Launching a new non-profit corporation takes dedication, flexibility, and the ability to “accept the things you cannot change, the courage to change the things you can, and the wisdom to know the difference.” The NNF has steadily grown over the past four years and that development would not have been possible without volunteer Board members. We will miss Jackie Steckelberg, Alice Kindschuh, and Josh Hanshaw as they complete their terms of service.

Jackie Steckelberg has been a Board member for just a year, but her support by attending meetings and providing input has made a difference for us. Her generous Silent Auction items resulted in hundreds of dollars in contributions for the association. Good luck in your retirement Jackie!

Alice Kindschuh has been an active member of the NNA for many years, beginning with leadership roles in the old District 6, while living in West Point, Nebraska. When the NNA transitioned through governance changes, Alice remained a strong and active contributor, consistently volunteering for any need that arose. She did the same when the call went out for NNF Board members in 2015. Over four years, I think she has missed maybe two meetings and has helped to establish the structures and processes for the NNF Project Grants and continuing to support candidates who wish to apply for those funds. Her assistance with the Silent Auction, cash donations, and upbeat “can-do” attitude and quick wit has helped to keep everything we do in a healthy perspective. As a busy educator and administrator at Nebraska Methodist College, care partner for her parents, and “fun” grandmother, we know Alice will think of us, but likely not for long! Replacing Josh Hanshaw, Community Member, who has served for four years on the Board is a tall order! We have greatly appreciated Josh’s service as member and Treasurer; his education and experience in non-profit corporations has been a valuable gift as the NNF has grown from its inception to our current status. Despite the commitment of a growing family with twins, Josh kept his eye on our financial transactions, assured that our non-profit status was maintained with the NE Secretary of State and that our annual tax documents were filed appropriately. Serving for four years, he provided not just the expertise, but the continuity that we needed to formulate strong processes. We will miss him, but this “busy dad” will no doubt fill his days with valuable family time!

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Beatrice Community Hospital and Health Center

We have excellent opportunities for RN, LPN and CNA’s as well as Physicians. We have competitive pay, outstanding benefits, and a culture of compassion & professionalism. Check out a full listing of open positions on our website at:

www.beatricecommunityhospital.com

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Beatrice, NE 68310
402-223-7379, Fax 402-223-6538

EEO Employer/Vet/Disabled
Today I’m ready to make a difference in the world.

When deciding to advance my education, I chose the online RN to BSN program from the University of Nebraska Medical Center for its esteemed program recognitions and accreditation history. Each course gave me a different outlook on nursing practice. Courses looked at population-centered care, health promotion, evidence-based practice and the unique talents in leadership roles. Nursing provides endless opportunities to make a difference – this program has laid a strong foundation for me to continue successfully.

Natalia McCain
Bachelor of Science in Nursing
University of Nebraska Medical Center

Online RN to BSN

If you already have an Associates in Nursing degree or an RN nursing license, your bachelor’s degree in nursing may be closer than you think:

• Finish in as little as one year for less than $8,300 dollars*
• 100% online
• Only 6 courses
• Expand your skills with courses in evidence-based practice and research, population-centered care, leadership and healthcare systems and policies

online.nebraska.edu/bsn

*Costs calculated based on Nebraska resident tuition rates, fees and completion of program in one year but do not include books or other supplies. Prospective students are encouraged to speak with an advisor and calculate their individual expected total cost.
Now, at the halfway point of completing a Ph.D., I took me almost three years after I first thought about for me. My hope in writing this article is to share the can unequivocally say that I made the right decision made such a great choice. After reading, you may find that it is the right decision for you too.

What is a Ph.D. in nursing?

Ph.D. nurses differentiate themselves from other disciplines in the nursing profession through the creation of new knowledge and a sound understanding of the scientific method that drives change in behavior, clinical care, education, and policy decisions. Ph.D. programs typically take about four years to complete depending on previous degrees obtained (BSN or MSN) and full or part-time student status. The educational process is designed to build a research project on why people behave a certain way, or why a body system, drug, or procedure has a specific outcome. During the early stages of the program, a research topic is individually chosen. Classes are designed to explore different perspectives and ways of understanding a chosen topic, effective ways to measure the research problem, and how to test and report results. Following core-course completion, a research project is proposed and subsequently completed by the student. The Ph.D. program culminates with a dissertation and defense of the research project’s findings. In my case, I chose to study financial and non-financial reasons why people choose to use different healthcare services. I have looked at different theories, evidence-based practice studies, and interviews to help shape my dissertation research.

Recent changes in educational programs

Like many individuals who decide to pursue an advanced practice degree, I didn’t want to lose the clinical side of my job. Maintaining a clinical background was important. Luckily, many colleges and universities are taking notice. Part of my BSN to Ph.D. education plan was to pick a clinical specialty. The university I attend offers choices that range from clinical nurse specialist (CNS) programs to advanced practice programs. Once complete, I will have both a Ph.D. and an advanced practice license as a Family Nurse Practitioner. Other clinical Specialty options include acute care, gerontology, pediatrics, psychiatric mental health, and women’s health; to name a few.

Funding

It took me three years from when I first looked into going back to school to when I finally enrolled. I was mid-career, I had a family, and a mortgage payment. I was scared to death how I was going to be able to afford going back. Several factors went into my decision. But, ultimately, for me, going back full-time was the fastest path, and it was the most affordable. Enrolling full-time helped increase my opportunities for funding and scholarships. Many university systems have teaching, graduate, and research assistant programs available for full-time Ph.D. students. These programs provide a reasonable stipend and, best of all, pay for tuition.

Scholarships are also available and are often designed to help full-time Ph.D. students over part-time students and students in other degree programs (i.e., MSN or DNP). Fast forward two years and I have been able to replace about 85% of my income by working at the bedside about one shift per week, working as a research assistant (RA), and receiving a few scholarships. Plus, no additional student loans!

Opportunity

Having a Ph.D. helps differentiate yourself from others. Colleges, universities, and online schools are showing record enrollment in MSN education, executive tracks, and DNP programs. While, at the same time, enrollment in Ph.D. programs across the country have been trending lower. The higher turnout in other educational tracts and lower enrollment in Ph.D. programs have led to national projections for shortages in Ph.D. prepared nurses. Tremendous opportunity for career growth and potential exist for those nurses that choose a Ph.D. across education, research, and organizational leadership.

Job prospects

Getting your Ph.D. in nursing is the best way to prepare yourself for a rewarding career as a professor, or in research as a primary investigator. For those wanting to practice as well, many universities now offer employment options that allow for designated clinical practice time. Faculty from the university I attend work in clinical and hospital settings as APN’s and CNS’s while maintaining teaching, research, and managerial responsibilities. I believe that this type of trend will continue and will help bridge the desire for nurses who want to pursue a Ph.D. and remain active in clinical roles.

But academia is not the only professional option. Executive nursing leadership in health systems, colleges, and nursing policy organizations are overwhelmingly held by Ph.D. prepared nurses. A Ph.D. degree is well understood across other (non-nursing) professions too – an advantage not shared by DNP’s. Employment trends for Ph.D.s in the U.S. show that a nearly equal number of individuals are now finding work in the private sector as opposed to academic institutions.

Think differently

A significant reason that I chose a Ph.D. education over other options was a desire to learn how to “think differently.” While this may not be a primary motivator for some, it was for me. This reason hasn’t disappointed me. I no longer view the world as a black and white, right and wrong system. It is difficult to give this gift its appropriate praise. I can perhaps best explain it as the moment in the Wizard of Oz when Dorothy steps out of her gray house and into the colorful world of Oz. The feeling when this happened within my thinking was both scary and wonderful, but not a feel-good only asset. The critical thinking that has developed, as a result, has helped me in the classroom, at home, and at the bedside as a nurse.

It is your Choice

Choosing when and if to go back to school is a personal decision. No one degree is inherently right or wrong, and there are many pathways to achieve a rewarding career in nursing. But, before writing off any single path, take the time to assess what you want out of an advanced education and where you want to be professionally. You may find that a Ph.D. is the right fit for you.

Reflections and the NNA PAC Changes

Linda Stones, Past Chair of the NNA PAC

As 2019 comes to a close, so does my term as the NNA PAC Chair. It is hard to believe that this journey began almost six years ago with a small idea and a brief proposal. When I first moved back to Nebraska in 2006, Nurses Day at the Legislature was about 10-15 nurses meeting with Senators in a small room at the capital and eating a Danish and drinking juice or coffee. By 2016, the event was moved to the Cornhusker Hotel and had over 300 attendees. NNA had really grown their efforts to engage with Legislation, now it was time to take the next step and work on the election side, thus the need for the PAC. LARC is involved in testifying and influencing legislation that is introduced in the capital, but to really influence the activities in the capital, we quickly learned that you have to have elected officials who are willing to listen. Thus, the PAC whose focus is on elections.

Each year the American Nurses Association hosts the American Nurses Advocacy Institute (ANAI). I approached then NNA President Terri Anderson and asked her if NNA would support my attendance at ANAI. The proposal was that if NNA would support me attending ANAI, I would work on updating the NNA Political Action Committee Bylaws and reactivating the NNA PAC. Terri and the NNA Board supported my proposal and off to DC I flew to learn more about Advocacy and to network with some amazing leaders. ANA’s Janet Haebler and the Government relations team, spent two days talking to us about the political process and how to advocate on a Federal level. This was followed up by quarterly telephone trainings on how to identify stakeholders, doing an environmental scan and other great skills. Balancing this work, along with a full time job, five kids and chairing the NNA Legislative Advocacy and Representation (LARC) committee, was a feat in and of itself but I made a commitment.

So with a cardboard box of historical NNA PAC information, I uncovered previous by-laws, as well as some information about processes. I also researched nursing PACs from other states. With this information, I revised and made contemporary edits to the By-Laws and policies of the new PAC. I recruited individuals who were interested in Legislation and Advocacy and moved forward with re-activating the NNA PAC. The PAC has been active for the past four years. The three main goals of the NNA PAC is the (1) Educate Nurses on individuals running for office, (2) Develop relationships with those running for office to educate them on the issues and (3) to provide support (monetary, or otherwise) for candidates who align with nursing’s agenda.

We have done a good job of meeting these goals. I have been truly blessed to work with some incredible individuals on the NNA PAC Board who have been committed to the PAC’s success. I want to thank each of them for their work and commitment to advocating for their profession. Most importantly, I need to also thank Don Wesely, who has been “the feet on the ground” at the capital, supporting NNA for many years. He is truly a nurse advocate and has been instrumental in helping to guide the NNA PAC success.

Since I have reached term limits for serving as the President, it is time to hand the reigns over to a new group of passionate and committed individuals. Rita Weber will be the new PAC Chair, Carole Lainouf will serve as the Vice Chair, Jean Phelan Secretary and Melissa Florell as Treasurer. I ask you to continue to support them in their very important work. The New Year, 2020, is another election year and we have many important races to win and potential Senator’s to educate. The task is big but with many individuals, the work is light. Stay informed of the PAC activity and watch their website to learn about candidates. Read the other article in this publication on Senators running for re-election who have supported NNA’s work.

Please consider a donation to the PAC. No gift is too small. You can go to the PAC website to make a donation. The link is https://www.nebraskanursespac.org/.
AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS

The Nebraska School Nurse Association (NSNA) is the official affiliate of the National Association of School Nurses (NASN). Our board of directors includes a new treasurer, Anne Stevens, BSN, RN - school nurse - Sidney Public Schools.

NSNA in collaboration with the Central Nebraska School Nurses Association (CNSNA) is in the process of planning the Annual School Health Conference held in Kearney, Nebraska - June 7th - 9th, 2020. Topics are of particular interest to school nurses. More information regarding this will be available in the spring.

Wendy Rau, MSN, RN, BA
State Director for Nebraska School Nurses Association

This Nebraska Nurses Association Infographic will be shared at the National Association of School Nurses Board meetings in Washington DC at the end of January 2020 with School Nurse State Directors, Nebraska Senators, Nebraska Congress Members and other stakeholders to illustrate the important care, advocacy and leadership School Nurses provide in Nebraska to meet the growing needs of their students and families.

Immunization Program

YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD TO GET VACCINATED!

Getting vaccinated is a lifelong, life-protecting job for you and your patients.

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Can Mindful Meditation Alleviate Burnout?

Justin Fontenot, MSN, RN
Reprinted with permission from The Pelican News October 2019

The unforgettable call bell alarm, the insistent ringing of the phone, a faint bed alarm with the associated sinking feeling of a possible patient fall, the new admit, 214 needs her pain medication, 218 needs two units of packed cells, and in 230, a mother is lamenting over her son’s unexpected and irreversible illness; sound familiar? It’s no surprise that nurses frequently feel depleted, stressed out, and emotionally taxed, perpetuating a global peril to the health and wellbeing of nurses and threaten the collective enthusiasm of the nursing workforce. To contend with the unfavorable consequences of burnout and compassion fatigue, one must first understand the nuances of burnout and compassion fatigue and take prompt action to promote impactful vitality and overall wellbeing. Can mindful meditation enhance wellbeing and mitigate burnout?

Although commonly linked contemporaneously, burnout and compassion fatigue, diverge in various fashions (Gentry, 2018). Burnout is physical symptoms that arise among nurses who report their practice settings as demanding, stressful, and overwhelming (Gentry, 2018). Burnout does not occur instantly; instead, it is a zenith of expansive periods of susceptibility to stress (Gentry, 2018). Typical physical manifestations associated with burnout include physical exhaustion, adverse stances regarding one’s role in their setting, and sometimes a dearth of concern for the patients they interact with regularly (Gentry, 2018). Compassion fatigue begins with burnout and develops as a response to prolonged exposure to patient suffering, engendering a feeling of helplessness, and inducing an onslaught of challenges (Gentry, 2018). Compassion fatigue can lend itself to unfavorable health difficulties, including anxiety, substance abuse, insomnia, and lack of concentration (Gentry, 2018). Statistically speaking, nurses who encounter burnout related illness, which comprises four out of every five nurses, remain in clinical practice indicating an overarching and commonplace quandary, indicating that nurses are not great at self-care (Gentry, 2018).

Some nurses link self-care to grand gestures of self-indulgence, such as dream vacations or elaborate spa days, often associating self-care with frequent avoidance. In reality, self-care is the small daily gestures that afford a brief but much obliged time out, and in doing so, studies indicate that burnout and compassion fatigue slowly wains. Small periodic gestures demand less time and even cost-free possibilities, such as the Amazon Echo or Google Home. There are several cost-free possibilities, such as the multiplatform and free application Headspace and Calm. Take five minutes before your shift while sitting in your car or five minutes before you go to bed to practice mindful moments, to destress, detox, and watch your stress and compassion fatigue gently wither away. These small everyday practices can save your life, better your health, and even your employers will thank you.

References:
Call for Submissions

Nebraska Nurses,

Are you a registered nurse with a powerful message to empower your fellow nurses or a student looking to publish an article in a state-wide publication? The Nebraska Nurses Association (NNA) is now accepting submissions for publication into The Nebraska Nurse. Guidelines for submission are as follows:

- Any topic related to nursing will be considered for publication in the Nebraska Nurse.
- Although authors are not required to be members of the NNA, when space is limited, preference will be given to NNA members.
- Photos are welcome, digital is preferred. NNA assumes no responsibility for lost or damaged photos.
- APA formatting is required for any publications with citations.
- Please provide a brief author biography for research publications.
- Submitted material is due by the 2nd of the month in January, April, July, and October of each year.
- You may submit your material the following ways:
  - Prepare as a word document and attach it to an e-mail sent to director@nebraskanurses.org.

For any further questions please contact director@nebraskanurses.org.

JOIN NNA & ANA TODAY!

NNA/ANA Membership Activation Form

Essential Information
- First Name/MI/Last Name
- Mailing Address Line 1
- Mailing Address Line 2
- City/State/Zip
- County
- Professional Information
- Employer
- Type of Work Setting (eg: hospital)
- Practice Area (eg: pediatrics)

Ways to Pay
- Monthly Payment $15.00
  - Checking Account: Attached check for first month’s payment.
  - Credit Card: Authorization required.

Membership Dues (Price just reduced $15 monthly/ $174 annually)
- Dues: $35.00
- ANA PAC Contribution (optional): $10.00
- American Nurses Foundation Contribution (optional): $5.00
- Total Dues and Contributions: $50.00

Monthly Electronic Deduction: Payment Authorization Signature
- Credit Card: Authorization required.
- E-mail: director@nebraskanurses.org

Annual Payment $174.00
- Check
- Credit Card

SAVE the DATE!
Seventh Annual
ANNA Platte River Chapter #324
Distance Learning Education Day
September 15th, 2020

As a member you will receive Educational Resources, Career-building opportunities, Networking and Leadership Development.

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For more information, email pegg4018@aol.com

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For assistance with your membership activation form, contact ANNA’s Membership Billing Department at (800) 922-7709 or e-mail us at membership@anna.org

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DON’T WAIT FOR OPPORTUNITY. CREATE IT. ENROLL NOW.
Please join us for the Nebraska Nurses Association Nurses Day at the Legislature “Nurses: 20/20 Vision for Today and Tomorrow” on February 26th at the Lincoln Cornhusker Marriott in Lincoln, NE. Nurses and student nurses are invited to join their colleagues in a day of learning about nursing’s role in sex trafficking, energizing your involvement in policy setting, and legislative updates.

**REGISTRATION FEES**
- RNs $55.00 | APRNs $55.00
- Pre-Licensure Student with Lunch $35.00
- Pre-Licensure Student without Lunch $25.00


**ACCREDITATION**
Participants can receive a maximum of 2.75 contact hours for participating in this activity.

The Midwest Multistate Division is accredited as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation.

**QUESTIONS?**
Please contact Sara Fry at (573) 636-4623 x102 or sara@midwestnurses.org with any questions.

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**Perkins County Health Services**

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**Dues Tax Deduction**

The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 requires NNA to notify members that the percentage of NNA/ANA dues which is allocated to lobbying expenses is not deductible as an ordinary and necessary business expense for federal income tax purposes. NNA estimates that the nondeductible portion of the 2019 NNA/ANA dues which can be allocated to lobbying expense is 36.95%.
Nurse Surveyors play an integral role, through regular and unscheduled surveys at health care facilities throughout Nebraska, in assuring safety for Nebraskans who access health care services.

The State of Nebraska is looking for nurses to join our survey teams. For more information about job opportunities, duties, qualifications and how to apply for a Nursing Services Surveyor Consultant (RNs) or a Health Facilities Surveyor Consultant (RNs or LPNs) position, please visit DHHS.NE.GOV and click on “Nebraska DHHS jobs” to find current openings.

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Current Evidence-Based Nutrition Practice Guidelines for Adults with Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes

Tuesday, May 19th, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm CST

Mary Ann Hodorowicz, RD, LDN, MBA, CDE, CEC, will condense and simplify the voluminous content of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics’ Evidence Based Nutrition Practice Guidelines into a ready reference take home guide so that even new practitioners can feel comfortable using them in practice the very next day.

Join meeting in my Webex Personal Room:
Access Code 928 120 575

Join by phone: 1-240-454-0879
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