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C.A.R.E.

by Stephanie Huang



May is a month filled with bittersweet endings and new beginnings as many graduation celebrations take place and as barbeques mark the start of summer adventures. It has indeed been a bittersweet experience sending off many senior nursing students to their summer studies for NCLEX and their future endeavors as nurses. On behalf of the New Jersey Nursing Students, Inc. (NJNS), I would like to congratulate all the recent nursing student graduates, including many who served on the 2012-13 NJNS board of directors.

The month of May also marked the exciting beginning of my year-long term as president of NJNS. I am very excited to work with a very enthusiastic and proactive board for this year to serve our New Jersey nursing student constituency. We have already accomplished much NJNS business and have even begun planning for our two main events of the year: Council of School Participants (COSP) and the annual state convention.

I am proud to announce our theme for this year's convention: C.A.R.E. for Yourself, Your Peers, and Your Patients. C.A.R.E. stands for comradery, attitude, respect, and encouragement. It is a very loaded theme with endless possibilities, therefore, let me share what this theme means to us. These four attributes of caring are the fundamentals of a healthy self, which we believe will translate to a healthy environment with peers, and ultimately, best practices in the clinical setting.

Comradery is a very unique word that isn't usually the first to be associated with caring for someone. However, comradery is a topic that addresses the unfortunate issue of bullying in the nursing profession. Though the culture is slowly changing to one of mentoring, it is still undeniable that there is discord between nurses and it is an issue to be addressed. Changing this practice begins with comradery in nursing

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students who will one day become the future of nursing. As a nurse extern, I work at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center; I am truly gaining a deeper understanding of comradery. This word itself begs a militant tone, but spending time with the men and women who have served this country faithfully, I have seen that this military background has created a deep and inseparable bond of comradery. Everywhere I go this comradery has been made evident by the attitudes of positivity,

respect, and encouragement displayed by those in the facility. Therefore, our hope is that as nursing students learn to C.A.R.E., beginning with these fundamental characteristics, the culture of the nursing profession will continue to change for the better.

Enjoy reading the remainder of our Pulsebeat newsletter as our board members share their thoughts on this year and their various contributions to making this year at NJNS the best year ever!



PNANJ Spring Convention

by Aldreen Venzon



Greetings! My name is Aldreen Venzon, and I am the Pulsebeat Editor/Public Relations Director for the 2013-2014 New Jersey Nursing Students, Inc. (NJNS). On May 18, 2013, I attended the annual

Philippine Nurses Association of New Jersey (PNANJ) spring convention with its theme of High Accountability and High Reliability Care as a new imperative for nurses. My professor, Majuvy Sulse, who is president of the PNANJ 2012-2014 invited me. For the first time, the PNANJ Board invited ten students to attend the convention with registration paid for by the organization. I was privileged to be sponsored by Professor Sulse. The venue was spectacular, the food was incredible, the speakers were very talented and informational, and the sessions were highly educational.

The ten selected students at the convention were constantly spotlighted. We were recognized and referred to as the future of the profession. Nursing leaders, managers, and recruiters were enthusiastically handing us their business cards, offering us assistance in finding a job, and helping us begin our careers as new nurses. It was an unexpectedly phenomenal networking experience and opportunity to meet such wonderful

people. At the end of the convention I won a Kindle Fire as part of the sponsor giveaways. I was fortunate to be sponsored, given the opportunity to attend as a student, awarded a contact hour certificate, networked with amazing people, and won a prize! It goes without saying that the day is one of my most memorable.



Impacting the Nursing Community Through Resolutions

by Margarita Molodan



Greetings, nursing students of New Jersey. My name is Margarita Molodan, and I will be the resolutions director for the

New Jersey Nursing Students, Inc. (NJNS) for the 2013-2014 year. As the resolutions director, I will seek to empower and inform you, by composing an effective and impactful resolution. The resolution will be discussed and presented at the annual NJNS conference in Atlantic City, and, when passed, at the annual National Student Nurses Association (NSNA) convention. By presenting resolutions to such a wide audience of nursing students, NSNA hopes to educate and empower students regarding crucial and timely issues within the nursing community.

The annual NJNS resolution will be published on the NJNS and NSNA websites

and in respective publications allowing students to access this information easily. You are the future of healthcare and of nursing, and thus, it is vital that you be well informed and ready to educate your communities. The board of NJNS hopes that you will benefit from the resolution and deepen its impact by having your university student nurses associations

present the resolution and design educational events involving the resolution. It is extremely important that resolutions be taken to heart. Be on the lookout for the next issue of the Pulsebeat where you will be able to find out what the NJNS resolution of the year will be!



Listen to your Heart

by Heather Foley



A middle-aged female patient presents with complaints of nausea and abdominal pain that feels like indigestion. She is diaphoretic, tachycardic, and lightheaded. Though these symptoms may seem vague, this patient could be having a heart attack. Waiting for more overt symptoms to develop is simply not an option – the fact is, heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women.

Unfortunately, women are more likely to experience these “atypical” symptoms of myocardial infarction (MI), though some men do present this way as well. It would be wonderful if all patients with an MI experienced the classic Hollywood heart attack– crushing chest pain radiating down the left arm – but it is simply not that easy to tell in many cases. It is our responsibility as future nurses to be aware of the more subtle presentations of MI, and advocate for any of our patients whom we suspect may be experiencing this life-altering event.

Not only do women experience different, less recognized heart attack symptoms than men, but, according to the American Heart Association, heart disease actually kills more women than men each year.

What’s more shocking is that this has been the case every year since 1984. If you were under the assumption that heart disease was mostly a concern for men, you are not alone. Despite ongoing efforts to increase awareness about women and heart disease, research by the American Heart Association shows that only 56% of women are aware that heart disease is their number one killer.

Even though more women die from cardiovascular disease each year than men, women accounted for only about a third of patients undergoing percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), and only a quarter of patients experiencing coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG) in 2010. While the cause of these statistics has not been officially determined, the answer is likely multifactorial. Though there is a demonstrable lack of awareness about women and heart disease, and while female heart attack victims do not present in the same manner as do men, there is even more to the story. Women are more likely to have a form of ischemia called coronary microvascular disease (CMVD), which affects the small arteries and arterioles of the myocardium. This is different than coronary artery disease (CAD), which affects the major arteries of the heart. Myocardial ischemia due to CMVD can cause the classic symptoms of angina and shortness of breath (as well as the atypical “feminine” symptoms), but it can neither be detected with simple cardiac catheterization nor corrected with PCI or bypass surgery, because these procedures are intended to diagnose and treat problems of the major coronary arteries. As such, life-threatening myocardial ischemia may go undetected, with disastrous results. Research and awareness about CMVD are leading to better diagnostics, such as cardiac MRI and intravascular ultrasound, but unfortunately these procedures are not yet the standard of care.

But there is good news! Preventative strategies are the same for CMVD as they

are for CAD and many other kinds of cardiovascular disorders. Decades of research point to simple, effective solutions. These include increasing level of physical activity to at least 40 minutes a day on most days of the week; eating more fruits, vegetables, fiber-rich whole grains, and omega fatty acids while decreasing the intake of saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, and added sugars; and losing weight in order to attain a body mass index (BMI) less than 25. Along with stress management, these are the key components to leading a heart healthy life. It really is that simple – according to the American Heart Association, these lifestyle changes can decrease cardiovascular risk by as much as 80%.

In the fight to end heart disease, nurses are truly on the front lines. With a little patience and a lot of teaching, we have the ability to change the lives of our future patients for the better. But tending to the needs of others would be unattainable in the absence of self care – just as the heart pumps blood to itself before nourishing the rest of the body, don’t forget that nurses need love too. Ultimately, the greatest service we can give to ourselves and our patients in the fight against heart disease is to prevent it from occurring in the first place.



Three Cheers For Our Peers!

by Valine Bogue



During the Council of Student Participants (COSP) event, the New Jersey Nursing Students Inc. (NJNS) board plans to focus on caring for ourselves, our peers, and our patients. If there is one thing being on the

NJNS board has taught me, it is that great accomplishments would not be possible without teamwork and cooperation. As nursing students, we are constantly focusing on our studies and perfecting our clinical skills. But what I've realized over the past three years as a nursing student, it is that my success thus far in this pursued career would not have been possible without support and encouragement from my peers. My classmates and I have studied for microbiology together, given each other pointers when using sterile technique in the lab, and had each other's back when we didn't get the grade we had hoped for on that final exam. Through the ups and downs we've had in our student careers, there's always been a friend or classmate nearby sharing in that same experience. I believe that we get so busy with our studies, our jobs, and our family obligations that we forget that there are hundreds of other nursing students in New Jersey and thousands across the country going through the same thing. This year the NJNS board wants to remind you that

we need to look out for one another, whether in the classroom, the lab, or on the floor of a unit. We believe there is strength in numbers and that by looking out for one another, we can better ourselves, our peers, and our patients.



Council of School Participants 2013

by Mary Rhodes



Hello, fellow New Jersey nursing students! I am so excited to be serving as the chair of the New Jersey Nursing Students, Inc. (NJNS) Council of School Participants (COSP) this year. After many hours of brainstorming about how we may best

serve the nursing students of New Jersey during this event, the Board has decided that the theme of COSP will be Care: Nursing Your Career.

I invite you to attend this first event of the school year on October 12th, 2013 from 9:00 AM- 12:00PM at New Jersey State Nurses Association headquarters, 1479 Pennington Road in Trenton, NJ. This is a great opportunity to meet other nursing students from around the state and get involved with NJNS. There will be a complimentary lunch served, door prizes, and even a scholarship give away to one lucky National Student Nurse Association (NSNA) member!

This event has been planned specifically for nursing students just like you and me! The members of the Board have been planning COSP as a way to care for yourself before caring for others. As nursing students, we all know that we sacrifice so much of our lives in order to learn how to care for our patients. What about caring for ourselves? Too often during nursing school we lose ourselves in hours of studying, stressing over tedious patient care plans, exams, labs, clinical assignments, and studying for the NCLEX-RN examination.

I will never forget the first vacation I had after my first semester of nursing school. Suddenly I had hours of free time and I realized how much the stress of nursing school had affected my life. From that point on, I made it a goal to be a nurse to myself while learning about being a nurse to my patients. Overtime, I noticed that not only did my stress levels decrease, but my grades increased! My hope for you as nursing students is that you will walk away from COSP with new ideas about being your own nurse before being a nurse to others.

A panel of nurses will speak about ways to decrease stress, manage time for your maximum benefit, work with others as a team, and handle horizontal violence. There is no better time to incorporate these techniques into your lives than while you are building the foundation of your nursing career.

You can register for COSP online at njnsinc.org, by fax (609)-883-5343, or on-site the day of the event. If you have any questions, please contact me at Secretary@njnsinc.org. We at NJNS believe that healthy nurses will result in healthy patients! See you in October!

Scholarships and College Students

by Jo Vincent Emperio



One of the biggest hurdles college students face is the financial burden of student loans. According to American Student Assistance (asa.org), a non-profit

company dedicated to helping students with their financial concerns, there is roughly \$902 billion in total outstanding student loan debt in the United States. On average, a student attending a public institution can expect to acquire about \$24,000 of debt within a span of 4 years. The growing number of those who shy away from college altogether due to the possibility of being drowned in debt is hurting the overall financial stability of this country. (American Student Assistance, 2013)

Those of us who aspire to be nurses know first hand the rigor of our respected programs; financial concerns should not be an added burden to our already hectic lifestyle of studies and clinicals. Clearly, it is best to avoid taking out student loans if at all possible. Scholarships and grants designed to help nursing students in their pursuit of that coveted degree are available. One of the benefits of being a New Jersey Nursing Student, Inc. (NJNS) member is the opportunity to apply for one of our annual scholarships. Last year we awarded \$5000 in scholarships to deserving

NJNS students.

For more information about grants and scholarships available exclusively to nursing students, please visit the National Student Nurses Association (NSNA) www.nсна.org and click on Foundations and Scholarships. Watch our website www.njnsinc.org for the NJNS scholarship application.

References: American Student Assistance. (2013). Understanding Student Loans. Retrieved from American Student Assistance: www.asa.org



The Importance of Joining NJNS

by Franckel Gabriel



My name is Franckel Gabriel and I attend the Felician College School of Nursing. I am currently the membership/nominations director of the New Jersey Nursing Students, Inc. (NJNS). It is with great pleasure that I come to you to educate you about NJNS and to help increase the membership of the National Student Nurses Association (NSNA). NJNS is open

to all nursing students. As the membership/nominations director, I encourage all student nurses to join the organization to make a difference now. The future of the nursing profession is in our hands. As student nurses we must join student organizations such as NJNS to begin learning and building our leadership skills. By joining NJNS, students have the opportunity to become leaders of the organization and help other nursing students get involved. NJNS offers many events throughout the year including conferences and conventions that are open to the members. Becoming a member of NJNS not only teaches you the skills of leadership but also provides discounts for many purchases; from hotel rooms to malpractice insurance. NJNS provides many nursing scholarship and supports and encourages all students who are pursuing nursing as a career. It is the organization that gives student nurses a voice, prepares them to be leaders, and provides with the opportunity to make a difference in the profession and in the world. Join NJNS, get involved and start making that difference. We can take responsibility to increase, strengthen, and lead our profession and its future.

For more information on membership please visit NJNSINC.org or contact me via e-mail: membership@njnsinc.org.



Caring for Ourselves

by Casandra Bowman



As nursing students we are a distinct group of individuals. We spend countless hours in lecture, pour over notes, and then spend seemingly endless days in clinical while somehow still maintaining our sanity. With so much on our plate as we learn to care for others, it's easy to forget that we need to care for ourselves along the way.

Many nursing students are guilty of pulling more than a few all-nighters or grabbing a bag of chips and a soda to make it through a marathon study session. We may think that it's no big deal if it's just once, and that may be the case, but taking small steps to care for ourselves every day will be more beneficial in the long run for us, our peers and our patients. It's important to remember that in order to maintain our busy schedules and complete nursing school, we must do little things like eat healthy, get plenty of sleep, try to fit some exercise in and yes, we MUST take some time to clear our head every once in a while. Instead of grabbing a bag of chips and a soda, try packing some fruit or veggies and a bottle of water ahead of time. Dehydration can increase our feelings of fatigue and fatty or sugary snacks won't provide the nutrients our body needs to keep energy levels up. Lack of sleep may increase stress and anxiety levels, cloud our judgment, and decrease our ability to focus and concentrate. With everything going on in our lives, we don't need any additional stress or anxiety; therefore, lack of sleep may make us cranky! Exercise may seem like the last thing on our "to-do" list,

but it's important to remain active after all of the time we spend sitting at a desk or computer as we're in lecture or studying. Take a walk or try some yoga, which may also help with decompression. Remember, we need to take some time to clear our head every once in a while. Even if it's just an hour a week, setting that time aside will give us something to look forward to every week. Set aside some time to read, work on a favorite hobby, or just simply do nothing! On our journey through nursing school, keep in mind how hard we work and be sure to provide the care and attention deserved for a job well done.



A Little Bit of This, A Little Bit of That

by Alyssa Sebba



My name is Alyssa Sebba and I will be serving as the Breakthrough to Nursing Director for the 2013-2014 term. I began my first year at Holy Name Medical School of Nursing in September 2011. To be completely honest, I was unsure if I had

made the right decision. After a year off from school, getting back in to study mode took a lot of discipline. That winter I attended the convention in Atlantic City and it ablated any apprehensions I had. Nursing is where I belonged.

The following year I was approached by a faculty member who asked me to represent our school at the convention. I accepted and attended the open forum meeting as a delegate on the first night. To learn more about the New Jersey Nursing Students, Inc. (NJNS), I ran for the Breakthrough to Nursing position and was delighted to learn I was elected. As the Breakthrough to Nursing director I am charged with facilitating the development of peer support systems, which enhance recruitment and retention within the nursing profession. Each year the Breakthrough to Nursing director is to develop a project designed towards a specific underrepresented group within nursing. This year I have decided to focus on veterans. It is well known that many veterans are coming home and finding it difficult to find work. I believe the leadership skills developed through their

individual experiences would translate well within the nursing profession.

This role is important to me because I believe a key factor in retaining nursing students is supporting one another and making time to care for ourselves. While brainstorming the theme for this year's convention many ideas were suggested, all sharing the common thread of caring. We decided to break down C.A.R.E to represent individual aspects that we believe are important to succeeding throughout nursing school and in your nursing career. Our theme is C.A.R.E for Yourself, Peers, and Patients: Comraderie, Attitude, Respect, Encouragement.

On a personal note, I believe camaraderie helped me through nursing school. I graduated from a two year nursing program with a class of forty-four students. I will not lie and say we all got along all the time. We didn't. Between the stress of classes, personality differences, and just spending so much time together, things got sticky more than once. We were all working toward the same goal and when students were falling behind, I like to

believe they had at least a few people to catch them. At our pinning ceremony we realized how close we all had become. Celebrating our success with family and friends in a banquet style dance party was the icing on the cake!

I believe one of the reasons I succeeded throughout nursing school is that I was cared for in my academic community. Another, would be having a group of friends whom I was able to lean on for emotional and academic support. These

people hold a special place in my heart. My success is shared with my professors and clinical instructors, and the friends and family I neglected during my two years living in the nursing school library. In my year on the board I hope to embody each of these elements. I am confident this year's convention will be the best yet!

I am so honored to have been elected to the 2013-2014 board of directors and can't wait to see what this year brings!

