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# The *pulsebeat*

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## We are Diamonds!



I hope that you had a chance to attend the convention last month in Atlantic City. We celebrated “The Brilliance of Nursing” recognizing that nursing emits a glow that is seen in all lands, yet can also shine in the darkness. This was first evident when Florence Nightingale guided her nurses so many decades ago with her solitary candle.

We all can hear our professors reminding us to be flexible and adaptable to situations. As nurses and students, we must have enough knowledge to monitor pulmonary wedge pressures, yet be sensitive enough to put a febrile baby to sleep. We must elude confidence when a patient codes, yet shed a tear with a woman who just lost her soul mate of 50 years.

An article in the most recent *American Nurse* cites that nursing continues to be a profession trusted by the general population. We are a multifaceted valuable gem ... A DIAMOND ... that glitters in the world of our patients. Our meaning is universal.



Nursing is a hard-core carbon structure that has survived all pressures over the centuries. Each facet of that diamond represents the characteristics that define nursing ... healing, caring, leadership, problem solver, advocate, educator, management, creativity ... and the list goes on. The diamond is clear, transparent, and sparkles ... distinctive of our caring, strength, pride, and commitment over time. Each diamond has

a unique shape, representing the endless roles that a nurse can assume; yet all shapes and carat size possess the common properties of a diamond.

On occasion the diamond may be less sparkly, due to “hands on” patient care, stressors of the time, or tiredness. The resiliency of a diamond’s quality and sparkle is well respected and taken for granted at times. Clean it and the sparkle returns, and it may even be brighter than before.

The warmth of Florence Nightingale’s candle gives warmth to those around us, direction for the journey that waits, calmness to our soul, universality. We are united in a common cause. Membership in the National Student Nurses Association (NSNA) and the professional nursing associations reveals this.



As students, you may be taking in the warmth and security of a seasoned nurse’s candle; you may admire the sparkle and size of their diamond and what they have accomplished. Your involvement in your local nursing associations, state and national organizations will strengthen the glow of your candle for those you will serve and mentor. Membership can only cause your diamond to increase in its facets, carats, and sparkle.

Don’t look at that diamond as an extravagant, showy item. Always remember the symbolism to nursing and the value of that diamond as “I will always love you.”



Eleanor M. Lazar, RN  
President

## UMBRELLA

Umbrellas are useful devices on rainy days. They shield its user from wet droplets of precipitation that come down at different speeds and forms such as rain, sleet, hail, and snow. However, their function expands beyond that of mere protection. They provide dryness and spare its users from the uncomfortable feeling of wet clothes and a windy cold. Furthermore, the plethora of colorful patterned umbrella designs seen on a rainy day breaks through the mundane gray of the sky and brings about day-brightening smiles.



Similarly, National Students Nurses Association (NSNA) acts as an umbrella to New Jersey Nursing Students, Inc (NJNS), a constituency of NSNA. Therefore, NJNS function as a branch under NSNA. Similar to umbrellas, NSNA provides shielding from droplets of water that may come our way, which may be symbolic of whatever issues arise. It provides us with the resources and the structure needed to prepares nursing students for the workplace as well as their future involvement in professional organizations. The board members of the New Jersey Nursing Students executive board function to serve you, students of nursing.

School chapters are often called, but are not limited to being called “[Insert name of school] Student Nurses Association (SNA)”, which follows after the acronym of NSNA. However, the students’ state board is not called “NJ SNA” because “NJSNA” stands for New Jersey State Nurses Association. We are thereby called New Jersey Nursing Students. The convention that was held this past February was hosted by NJNS. However, we were provided with two great consultants; one from the New Jersey League for Nursing, and the other from NJSNA who guided us through the entire planning process and helped us reach the collective product of the convention, and we are truly grateful.



It is easy to get all of these acronyms confused. However, one small switch in the letters could have a completely different meaning. Knowing the differences between professional nursing organizations is crucial to the professional development of nurses. Each has their own scope of resources. Taking the time to get to know what resources they provide and how to get involved is a great place to start.

Therefore, on behalf of the New Jersey Nursing Students, the executive board and directors would like to thank all those who attended our convention in February. NSNA will be having their 60<sup>th</sup> National Convention in Pittsburgh this upcoming April 11-15, 2012. Registration for Nationals is currently going on! If you plan to attend, register quickly. We look forward to seeing you there!



**Stephanie Huang**  
Resolutions Director

## COMMUNITY HEALTH PROJECT

Thank you for attending our 60<sup>th</sup> annual convention! As I am sure you have heard by now, the convention was an overwhelming success. From a community health standpoint, DKMS Americas and the New Jersey Sharing Network were both on hand all day Thursday to sign up donors. Each delivered two 50-minute breakout sessions to interested nursing students.

The response for our projects was unbelievable! We swabbed 103 students’ cheeks to be added to the DKMS Americas bone marrow registry and over 15 nursing programs throughout the state signed up to host donors drives at their respective schools. The New Jersey Sharing Network signed up an additional 25 new organ donors and enlisted the names of over 300 students interested in participating in their 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Share NJ 5K fundraising race to raise money and awareness for organ donation. There are still many ways to be involved with these projects. As I finish up my term as community health director, I hope to see the partnerships with these organizations and NJNS continue. Please email me at Carolyn.bogdon@gmail.com for more information and ways you can help today!



**Carolyn Isabelle Bogdon**  
Community Health Director

## NJNS OPEN BOARD POSITIONS

Have you ever considered taking a leadership role? If so, now is a great time to run for one of the open board positions that NJNS has available for the 2012-2013 fiscal year. Joining our board provides wonderful opportunities such as leadership and networking. There are two positions that are currently open, which are the Legislation Education Director and the Breakthrough to Nursing Director.

The **Breakthrough to Nursing Director** will promote and support the development of the Breakthrough to Nursing (BTN) Committee in school chapters and establish a statewide BTN project to present at our annual convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey!

The **Legislation Education Director** will support the development of a Legislation Education Committee in school chapters and establish a statewide legislative project for presentation at convention.

Please complete the application, which is available on the NJNS website or attend our next board meeting on May 12, 2012 to run for a position!



**Nicole Dillon**  
Treasurer

## MAY GRADUATES!



Finally, the years of exams, clinical days, care plans, and lab skills are coming to a close. Happily, those graduating in May 2012 are counting down those final days until our graduation. But what happens after we pass our NCLEX? Hopefully, we will all be able to find jobs immediately after we pass our boards, but that is not the time to start the job search. The time to start applying for jobs is now, not in June. Carry your resumes with you wherever you go, and no, I am not kidding! If you had the opportunity to attend our convention this year you were able to meet with many employers who gladly answered questions on how to apply for a position and accepted a copy of your resume. The more conventions you are able to attend, the more chances you have at networking with nurse managers, health care systems, professional organizations and businesses, which have the potential of being your future employer. Apply for jobs now, organize your resume and send it to any and every job you find interesting. A great way to do this without being overwhelmed during the summer is to search online for “New Graduate RN Positions” for example, and apply to one job per day until graduation. This way, by the time you graduate you are now ahead of the game and can focus on studying for your boards and enjoy a much-needed vacation, and won’t be panicking about how to format your resume appropriately. Who knows, you may even get hired before your graduation date! Best of luck and congratulations to those graduating in May! We finally made it!



**Avery Gardener**  
**Breakthrough to Nursing**

## THE NETWORKING JITTERS



Last month I witnessed nursing students from all over New Jersey travel down to Atlantic City for the New Jersey Nursing Students’ 60th annual convention. When walking through the lobby I could basically separate all the students into two clusters just by the looks on their faces ...

**Cluster one:** The “I bought myself a new pair of shoes on sale, I feel good, and I’m ready to network my lil’ butt of tomorrow!” student.

**Cluster two:** The “There are so many other qualified students here. Where do I start? What do I say and to whom?” student.

To all those Cluster two students: Push those negative thoughts aside! Networking, my friend, is not the easiest task to accomplish. You already took the first step in the right direction by packing up your things and driving/flying/boating down to a professional convention. So pat yourself on the back, and let’s move forward.

Here are some tips on how to network. Keep them in mind the next time you go to a convention and become a deer in headlights:

### Know before you go:

What is your goal? Are you looking to get a job? To be accepted into an MSN program? Join a professional organization? Win a raffle basket? It doesn’t matter *what* you are there to do, just have a goal in mind.



### Stalk away

Find out who the exhibitors are and do research on them. Explore the background, mission, and achievements of companies which appeal to you. Make a list. Name this list the “VIP” list. Don’t be shy. Send an e-mail acknowledging they will be present at the convention and inquire about a contact person you may connect with at the convention. It is never too early to create a rapport with the company.

### Time management

Know the times your “VIP” list has speakers presenting and sit front and center. Ask questions and participate in discussion if possible. The presenter usually sticks around a few minutes after they are done with their speech. Take advantage of this time to introduce yourself and your interest in their field.



Also, know how many exhibiting booths you want to visit and plan to visit these around your “VIP’s” presentations. Put on your smile. Speak clearly and be ready to get to the point quickly.

### Last but not least ... **BE CONFIDENT**

You know your goal and are there to advance towards it. You have tons to offer. Knowledge, personality, drive, and new generation technologies. You are the future of the world and all you need is the opportunity to prove it. So, men ... put on those dress pants, and women ... put on those pencil skirts and blazers.

### Good Luck!



**Christina Nalbene**  
**Fundraising Director**

## CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



This year's theme of the NJNS Convention at Bally's Atlantic City February 16-17, 2012 was the "Brilliance of Nursing." Commemorating the 60th anniversary with diamonds fit perfectly.

Professionalism captured the feeling in the ballrooms at Bally's. Students were eager to learn from the various speakers and had resumes in-hand to network with exhibitors. Keynote speaker Rose Gonzalez, PhD, RN, Director of Government Affairs, American Nurses Association, motivated students during the Opening Ceremonies to get involved in the political arena. She demonstrated that united nurses have the power to enact positive changes.

The Deans and the Director's Luncheon recognized the exemplary faculty who polish their diamond students throughout NJ schools. During the luncheon Kathleen M. Gialanella, LLM, JD, RN, BSN, presented the "Relationship of Healthcare Issues & Politics." Topics for speakers during the day included pharmacology, stroke assessment, pulmonary embolism, perinatal complications, and disaster preparedness, just to name a few. NJ nursing students did not take a day off from saving lives because they could participate in the American Red Cross Blood Drive and sign up for DKMS Americas (Bone Marrow Donation) and the Sharing Network (Organ Donation).



The House of Delegates voted to approve their Resolution drafted by Stephanie Huang, Resolution Director of NJNS, to send to the NSNA Convention. This resolution detailed the risks behind water-pipe smoking. The delegates' eyes widened after learning that "hookah" has health consequences actually exceeding that of cigarette smoking. Enacting the resolution could teach students nation-wide about the harm of water-pipe smoking, giving them the knowledge to educate their patients.

Elections for the 2012-2013 NJNS Board were held on Friday before the NCLEX review. The elections proved the leadership qualities amongst the future nurses. Each candidate prepared a two-minute speech and then entertained various questions to demonstrate their qualifications for a position on the new board.

Diamonds are known as the toughest substance in existence and for their outstanding brilliance. It takes a trained eye to pick out a diamond in the rough. One must realize that hidden deeply in rock, after a little polishing, can emerge a one-of-a-kind diamond. This year's theme for convention mirrored the potential of nursing students.



Alison Lazzaro  
*PulseBeat* Editor/Public Relations Director

## FINDING YOUR DREAM JOB

As a soon to be grad it can be intimidating to think about going out into the real world to find a job. There are so many applicants and a lot of competition out there. I am currently going down this road and I have heard of tips from many nurses, so as a fellow newbie I want to share some of these with you.

So how do you market yourself? The first thing that you really have to do (besides passing your state boards) is write a good resume. Once you have written a resume see if an instructor will read it for you and give you some feedback. Also there are often places in schools that will look at resumes for you and can help you improve the way that you market yourself in them. Once your resume is complete, you should buy resume paper that looks as high quality as the care that you are promising. Bring these printed resumes with you to open houses and job fairs. Next you should think about joining a professional organization. Are you part of any professional organizations? Is a question that I have seen on almost every job application, it shows that you take your profession seriously. Another thing you want to prepare yourself for is the time that you will need to put into applying. I have heard many classmates joke that applying for jobs can be just as demanding as a full time job! Now that everything requires applying online, you will find yourself navigating through difficult websites, and filling out several pages of information. Take time to fill these out somewhere quiet and with few distractions.



Finally visit as many open house events and job fairs as possible. Being a new nurse is hard, but putting a face behind the resume can really help. Also showing your shining personality (and impeccable hygiene) can really make a difference. Dress to impress and be proud of what you have accomplished, and most importantly keep the faith. It may seem like no one is hiring but sooner or later you will find your first job.



Raquel Mora  
*Secretary*

## SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The NJNS Scholarship Committee is delighted to announce the 2012 scholarship winners! After much consideration, six students throughout New Jersey were awarded varying scholarship amounts to aid in their nursing education. **Jessica De Jesus** from Middlesex County College, **Nicole McKeone** from Our Lady of Lourdes School of Nursing, **Alison Lazzaro** from The College of New Jersey, **Lisa Delaney** from Middlesex County College, Karen Haber from Ocean County College, and **Ashley Centanni** from Middlesex County College, were deemed most eligible for the awards. Congratulations to you all!

Eligibility requirements for our scholarships include current NSNA membership and attendance of the award ceremony at the NJNS Annual Convention. Professional involvement, GPA, financial needs, merit essay, and letters of



recommendation were also considered in the selection process. Award amounts were determined once the application period ended and all applications were received by the Scholarship Committee.

On behalf of the NJNS Scholarship Committee, I would like to thank The New Jersey League for Nursing, Christ Hospital, and Helen Fuld School of Nursing for their generous donations, which helped fund these scholarships.

We encourage all nursing students to apply for our scholarships for the 2013-2014 school year. The application will be made available in the fall, on our website at <http://www.njnsinc.org>.



**Candace White, RN**  
**Second-Vice President**

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT-ELECT

I would like to express my excitement, enthusiasm, and thank you for the honor to serve as your NJNS President-elect for the 2012-2013 year. Working in tandem with the members of the NJNS Board, I would like to take this opportunity to empower and educate all nursing students as to the role NJNS can play during your education, create opportunities for your professional growth, and obtain National recognition for your school and New Jersey nursing students, as leaders in the nursing profession.



A PowerPoint presentation is being developed, which will be available on the website to explain the mission of NJNS in detail and how each member can participate. This includes expanding school

involvement in our state NJNS Convention, so that each nursing school in New Jersey has the opportunity to participate at the state level and be represented with maximum number of delegates. I also plan to work on your behalf with legislative and political powers in NJ to advance the nursing profession and to provide nursing students with internship opportunities in the health-care policy and political arena. A professional succession plan will also be developed and implemented to keep NJNS a strong and viable professional organization to serve you. I look forward to a very exciting year and hope to inspire the spark and passion of professional participation in our student nursing organization and profession in you this year.



**Susan Moraca**  
**President-Elect**

## THE FUTURE OF NURSING

What does the future hold for the nursing students and new graduate nurses of New Jersey? These questions seem to be swirling around every campus and among most of the future nurses of NJ. There are many factors which contribute to the uncertainty of the direction we are headed, but some facts are irrefutable. As the economic struggles began, many retired nurses returned to the workforce to help supplement their family's income. This has led to difficulty for new graduates in finding nursing positions. In addition, nurses are being required to provide more specialized care, which creates a situation in which certification and experience are essential for so many of the job openings. The end result is that, while there are a multitude of open nursing positions, there are very few for the graduate nurse.



So what does this mean for us, the nursing students and soon to be graduate nurses? It means that many of us will need to seek employment in places other than the facility setting. With the movement toward healthcare reform, nurses will provide much more care in the community setting. Some of the job opportunities outside the hospital setting for nurses are rehabilitation centers, clinics, doctor's offices, hospice, home care, schools, oral surgeon's offices, dialysis centers, long term care facilities, travel nursing, and correctional nursing. Nursing is an ever changing profession full of growth and possibilities. This is just one more chapter in the journey which nursing has taken since the days of Florence Nightingale.



**Caryn Weeks**  
**Legislation/Education**