

DEAN'S Notes™

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A Sterling Idea — Its Golden Year

By Diane J. Mancino, EdD, RN, CAE
Executive Director



The most profound ideas are those that challenge the existing order. In 1952, when 1,000 nursing students came together in Atlantic City, New Jersey, during the conventions of the American Nurses Association (ANA) and the National League for Nursing (NLN), they rejected the option of becoming a student council within the ANA. Instead, they voted to form their

own independent association of nursing students. This idea, radical at the time, was embraced by the ANA and the NLN, whose leaders agreed to assist the students to develop the National Student Nurses' Association. A half-century later, this sterling idea celebrates its 50th Anniversary!

The Celebration

Four thousand nursing students, faculty, NSNA alumni, and invited guests took their seats in the Pennsylvania Convention Center, on April 4, 2002. The lights dimmed, the sun set behind the Philadelphia skyline—and then the stars came out. Past NSNA presidents proudly crossed the stage, beginning with Phyllis Halverson who shone as brightly as when she took office in 1954. This glowing processional concluded with the 2002 shining star, Michael Desjardins.

Images from the past were projected onto two large screens as video cameras captured the Opening Ceremony for the NSNA archives. Reminiscent of the 1970s, keynote speaker Sheila Burke challenged students to defy the existing order. "Be a thorn in the side of the established way of doing things" she stated urging students to press for reforms—not for power or money—but to show that we care deeply for patients. A short video documentary, including interviews with past NSNA leaders and staff, as well as historical highlights, captured NSNA's 50 years. Generous sponsors were applauded, nursing leaders were recognized, and the value of nursing students celebrated. Country Joe McDonald sang "Thank You Nurse" and "The Lady with the Lamp" as projected images of Florence Nightingale lit up the stage. For the next four days, attendees of NSNA's 50th Anniversary Celebration and Alumni Reunion would be happily immersed in NSNA's past, present, and future.

In the Convention Center's Great Hall, the crowd celebrated the biggest nursing birthday party to take place this century! A rhythmic sea of tie-die shirts, bell bottoms, and hip huggers rocked and rolled as the Fabulous Greaseband recreated the music of the 60s and 70s. Everyone joined in as Country Joe sang "Happy Birthday NSNA." Joyful students gathered around for photo ops as sponsors placed 50 candles on the giant birthday cake. Alumni hugged and kissed as they reunited and reminisced about their nursing school days and NSNA. There was a "Whole Lotta Shaking Goin' On" as everyone danced the night away, American Bandstand style.

"We've come a long way," commented Mary Ann Tuft, former NSNA Executive Director, as she opened the plenary session on Thursday morning. Seven past presidents recreated NSNA's history with stories and descriptions of their experiences. Phyllis Halverson arrived at a 1950s convention wearing a hat, white gloves, and high heels. Florence Huey described her theme as "Lead, follow, or get out of the way." "During the 60s," Huey stated, "nursing students united to protest the Vietnam War when funds were needed in health care." Huey also noted that the 60s were a "Breakthrough to Nursing" era, when NSNA members found a method to address the nursing shortage by recruiting minorities into the profession. Carolyn Beth Mazzella, president during the early 70s "Give a Damn and Do It" era, described interdisciplinary collaborative student projects in Appalachia that provided nursing, medical, and dental health services. Passage of NSNA's Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, Civil Rights, and the Women's Movement, dominated the 1970s during Pam Cipriano's term. Betsy (Motschenbacher) Vane, proudly wearing a US Army Nurse Corps uniform, reminisced about NSNA's campaign to improve the image of nursing. Sharon Brigner, who served in the mid-90s, described the now inconceivable "nursing surplus," when it took new graduates twelve months to find a job. The panel's final speaker, Aurora Hernandez, NSNA's first Latina president, brought the audience full circle, noting that the nursing shortage we are now experiencing is unlike those of the past. "We are the future" she reminded the audience, urging them to rise to the current challenges in nursing. At the close of the session, Mummies in their colorful costumes, led a parade of attendees to the exhibit hall where 350 nurse recruiters, publishers, and service providers, eagerly welcomed the crowd.

In the ensuing days, convention attendees heard from world-renowned speakers—Afaf Meleis, Diana Mason, and Ann L. O'Sullivan to name a few. At a special session, attendees sipped tea and enjoyed finger sandwiches as Eleanor Herrmann, dressed in a vintage nurse's uniform, recounted the days of Victorian tea and nursing. The House of Delegates passed numerous resolutions, debated issues, and elected the next Board of Directors and Nominating and Elections

Committee. In a special ceremony, attendees witnessed the unveiling of a mural honoring nursing and dedicated to NSNA—a permanent tribute to the nursing students and nurses of America. At the Awards Ceremony, they honored scholarship winners; praised this year's honorary member, Lynn Wieck, for her outstanding support of the NSNA; and cheered as school and state chapters reaped rewards for their involvement. They celebrated the winner of the Spirit of Nursing Award, Stacy Roberts, at the US Army Nurse Corps reception. All of this, and more, is highlighted in the September/October issue of *Imprint*.

NSNA's first fifty years are celebrated in a commemorative book entitled *50 Years of the National Student Nurses' Association*.^{*} The book celebrates a 50 year journey from a radical idea to a powerful association. All convention attendees received a keepsake copy of the book which is punctuated by personal anecdotes of challenge and success, historic achievements, and shared history. NSNA's story will be brought to life in a thirty-minute documentary that recounts how the vision of NSNA's founders transformed nursing education through the collective voice of nursing students. The documentary video will be premiered at the upcoming NSNA Midyear Conference in Kansas City, Missouri in November, and will be available for purchase in early December.

The next fifty years will undoubtedly bring new challenges to the nursing profession and nursing education. Today's nursing students are not very different from the students who gathered in Atlantic City in 1952. While white gloves and hats no longer grace the convention halls, the values and ideals of nursing students today are the shared values and ideals of their ancestors.

In May, NSNA moved from Manhattan to Brooklyn (see sidebar). From NSNA's new location, we can watch the summer sun as it sinks beneath the Brooklyn Bridge and sets where the World Trade Center Twin Towers once dominated the lower Manhattan skyline. The memories of the NSNA anniversary convention linger on, and we have faith that the sun will continue to shine on a golden future for nursing students and their chosen profession.

**NSNA: The First 50 Years*, by NSNA Executive Director, Dr. Diane J. Mancino, and published by NSNA, is available for purchase from NSNA.

Diane J. Mancino is Executive Director of the National Student Nurses' Association and the Foundation of the National Student Nurses' Association. Dr. Mancino wishes to acknowledge the support of Anthony J. Jannetti, Inc. publisher of Dean's Notes, for making this publication available to the leaders of nursing education.

NSNA Moves to DUMBO

Immediately following the convention, NSNA staff returned to the Manhattan headquarters office and feverishly prepared to relocate to the DUMBO section of Brooklyn. DUMBO, which stands for Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass, is an up and coming area with theaters, art studios, galleries, high-tech companies, residential buildings, and even a chocolate factory!

Construction at the new location was progressing rapidly, as workers transformed the architect's drawings into an efficient, esthetic work environment.

For 50 years NSNA was located in Manhattan, first as a subtenant of the American Nurses Association at Two Park Avenue; followed by several years at 10 Columbus Circle, where the offices were sublet from the National League for Nursing. When the NLN moved downtown in 1985, NSNA relocated to 555 West 57th Street as a subtenant of the American Journal of Nursing Company. Ten years ago, Dr. Robert V. Piemonte, Executive Director at the time, negotiated NSNA's first independent lease and became a direct tenant at the West 57th Street site. With neighbors like BMW, CBS, and the Greater New York Hospital Association, NSNA could hardly keep up with the Jones' when it came time to renew the lease. It meant renegotiating a lease that would double the rent, or looking for new offices with reasonable rent that could secure a bright economic position for NSNA future. D.U.M.B.O. fit the bill, and on June 11, the NSNA Board of directors cut the ribbon officially opening the new headquarters.

Our new contact information is:

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Phone: 718-210-0705 • Fax: 718-210-0710
Web site: NSNA.org

Hundreds of Schools Adopt NSNA's Leadership University

In just three years, hundreds of nursing programs have incorporated the NSNA Leadership University into their undergraduate nursing curricula. Started in 1999 with just three alpha sites, the program offers academic credit for student participation in NSNA's leadership activities. Several schools include NSNA participation as an optional activity to fulfill course requirements while others have created a special NSNA Leadership course with service-learning components. Students may also take independent study credits and some have reported earning as many as seven credits for state and national involvement.

The NSNA Leadership University web site www.nsnaleadershipU.org, hosted by Decision Critical, Inc., provides a leadership library complete with learning objectives and descriptions of leadership service-learning activities. Students and faculty who participate in the NSNA Leadership University receive a certificate acknowledging their participation. The certificates are presented at the Awards Ceremony which takes place during the NSNA Annual Convention. Students and faculty not attending the convention receive their certificates in the mail and several faculty have adopted the practice of presenting the certificates during the graduation pinning ceremony.

For more information, visit www.nsnaleadershipU.org and involve your students and faculty in this exciting new way to learn leadership!

NSNA's MidYear Conference and Career Planning Seminar Kansas City, Missouri

The 20th Annual MidYear Conference will open November 14, 2002 in Kansas City, Missouri. Nursing students will gather to experience the excitement of hearing nationally known speakers discuss the trends and issues relevant to nursing today. The conference offers nursing students and faculty, a broad selection of activities, including workshops, panels, exhibits, and an NCLEX® Review to help prepare students for their career as a professional nurse.

The MidYear Conference is at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center, centrally located in downtown Kansas City. The newly renovated hotel offers a business center, heated outdoor pool, health club, and fine dining. It is connected by an enclosed walkway to the Crown Center, a shopping complex with more than 80 shops and restaurants, theaters, and ice skating rink.

MidYear At A Glance

Thursday, November 14: Keynote speakers Cecelia Grindel, PhD, RN and Marlene Roman, MSN, RN, ARNP, will officially open the conference with an informative and enlightening presentation entitled "Mentorship Through Nurses Nurturing Nurses." The keynote presentation will focus on the lack of retention of new graduate nurses in their first professional position.

Dr. Grindel is the Associate Director of the Undergraduate Programs at Georgia State University and co-founder of the Academy of Medical Surgical Nurses. Marlene Roman is a medical surgical clinical nurse specialist at North Broward Medical Center in Pompano Beach, Florida and current president of the Academy of Medical Surgical Nurses.

Friday, November 15: A "New Directions in Nursing" panel will feature interactive dialogue with the audience about trends and issues in the nursing profession. The panel moderated by Dr. K. Lynn Wieck, CEO, Management Solutions for Healthcare, Houston, Texas, and President of the Texas Nurses Association includes representatives from the American Nurses Association, National League for Nursing, American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, and the American Organization of Nurse Executives. Friday's agenda also includes comprehensive workshops for student leaders on areas such as; membership, recruitment, newsletter production, running for national office, managing chapter finances, and developing community health projects.

Saturday, November 16: The day begins with a breakfast buffet and presentation on leadership sponsored by the US Army Recruiting Command, Army Nurse Corps. Two interactive panels entitled "Nursing Specialty Showcase" will open the door to opportunities in a broad range of specialty nursing areas. Saturday also offers a variety of workshops on

graduate school, marketing yourself, getting politically involved, writing a resolution and the opportunity to meet the 2002-2003 Board of Directors at the Roundtable Discussions.

Special Features

State Board Review Course presented by the NSNA. This course will concentrate on test taking skills, stress reduction, and topics frequently seen on the NCLEX® Exam.

Orientation — for first-time attendees.

Exhibit Hall — offering students the opportunity to visit exhibitors such as hospitals, schools of nursing, and publishing and apparel companies.

FNSNA Critical Thinking Challenge — Friday night, November 2, the Foundation of the National Student Nurses Association (FNSNA) sponsors the "Critical Thinking Challenge," a Jeopardy-style game, to raise funds for the FNSNA Endowed Scholarship Fund.

Faculty Schedule Workshops

- Mentoring Workshop (3 hours)
- Faculty for the Millennium: What the Emerging Workforce Values in their Educators
- Incorporating Technology in the Classroom
- Creating Better Online Teaching
- Current Issues in the Regulation of Nursing Professionals
- Computerized Information Resources

Networking Breakfast

Roundtable Session with NSNA Consultants

Continuing Education Credit

An advance registration fee of \$45 gives you three full days of activities and admission to all sessions. On-site registration is \$55. Daily registration is also available on-site.

Please visit the NSNA Web site for conference updates and to register online at www.nсна.org.

Cedars-Sinai Gift to Cal State L.A. School of Nursing

The School of Nursing at California State University, Los Angeles has received a pledge of \$178,500 from Cedars-Sinai Medical Center for the education of two "cohorts" of 10 nursing students (a total of twenty students) over three years in the Bachelor of Science Nursing program.

The support is the function of the Cedars-Sinai Institute for Professional Nurse Development, a newly-formed partnership program with Cal State L.A. is specifically designed to increase the number of graduates with Bachelor of Science degrees in Nursing. These nursing students will complete their clinical rotations at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

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please pass it along to share with a colleague or friend.*

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Additional FNSNA Scholarship Funding Available in 2003

The Foundation of the National Student Nurses Association (FNSNA) distributed over \$100,000 in scholarship awards in 2002. Scholarship applications are now available for 2003 and can be easily downloaded from www.nсна.org (click on the Foundation icon).

Additional 2003 scholarship awards are available for students attending undergraduate nursing programs in San Francisco, CA; Chicago, IL; Dallas/Fort Worth, TX, Miami, FL; Boston, MA, and Detroit, MI. Funding for these scholarships is supported by fund-raising events sponsored by Johnson & Johnson.

FNSNA is also pleased to announce the first endowed scholarship in the The Promise of Nursing Endowed Scholarship Campaign. The 3M[™] Company has contributed \$50,000 to establish the 3M[™] Littmann[®] Stethoscopes scholarship.

Other funds established this year include the Robert Wood Johnson Executive Nurse Fellows *Leadership Legacy Fund* which supports an annual Leadership Lecture at the NSNA annual convention. In the future, the *Leadership Legacy Fund* will develop a mentoring experience for NSNA student leaders to work with RWJ Nurse Executive Fellows. Another new FNSNA fund was established by Dr. Marilyn Bagwell, retired professor from Arizona State University in Phoenix, to support NSNA chapter and leadership development. The purpose of this fund, once endowed, is to acknowledge the outstanding achievements of a school chapter and to provide funds for NSNA members in that chapter to attend state association or NSNA meetings or conferences.

Since 1974, the FNSNA has awarded over two million dollars representing 1,534 scholarships to undergraduate nursing students. We are pleased that the fund is growing at a time when the need for scholarships is so great. For further information, contact Dr. Diane Mancino, FNSNA Executive Director at (718) 210-0705, ext. 103.

Join NSNA This Fall
...In The Heart Of America!

Kansas City
"A Flavor All Its Own"

20th Annual MidYear Conference
Hyatt Regency Crown Center
November 14-17, 2002

NSNA

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