

2024 FNA Membership Assembly: Safeguarding Nurses and Building Healthy Workspaces

The 2024 Florida Nurses Association (FNA) Membership Assembly, held November 20–22 at the Marriott Hutchinson Island Resort, brought together nurses and healthcare professionals from across Florida. Centered around the theme, *Safeguarding Nurses: Creating a Path to Healthy Workspaces*, the event gave attendees a chance to connect, learn, and share ideas about the future of nursing. Participants left feeling energized and motivated, with fresh insights and strategies to improve their workplaces.

Here are a few standout moments from the Assembly:

Keynote Address: Dr. Katie Boston-Leary from the American Nurses Association presented *The Nursing Profession - Circa 2034*, looking at how past lessons can shape a stronger and more resilient future for nurses.

Panel Discussion: *Sharing Best Practices to Improve Florida NCLEX Pass Rates*, featuring nursing education leaders Dr. Ruby Alvarez, Dr. Patricia Gagliano, Dr. Marsha Hartline, Dr. Melissa Radecki, and Dr. Jayne Willis, shared real solutions for addressing pass rates.

Interactive Session: *Creating a Healthy Workspace: A JEDI Dialogue*, led by Dr. Marcos Gayol and Dr. Deirdre Shoemake, sparked engaging discussions on workplace inclusivity and practical problem-solving.

Advocacy Breakfast: Dr. Valerie Morrison's engaging presentation, *BuR.N. - Navigating the Fires within Nursing*, encouraged attendees to step up as advocates for a healthier, more sustainable nursing profession.

Breakout Sessions: Multiple breakout sessions covered a wide range of topics, providing attendees with opportunities to engage in discussions on workplace well-being, stress management, transitioning into new roles, and more.

Foundation Luncheon: Hosted by the Florida Nurses Foundation, this event honored scholarship and grant recipients for their dedication to advancing nursing education, re-

search, and practice. Foundation trustees were also recognized for their leadership and efforts to support future generations of nurses.

During the **Business Meeting**, members approved three key policy proposals, which will be integrated into the association's ongoing initiatives and advocacy efforts to drive meaningful change within the nursing profession:

Advocating for Maternal Health (Deborah Hogan, MPH, BSN, RN)

Vaccine Confidence Saves Lives (Deborah Hogan, MPH, BSN, RN)

Supporting POLST Legislation for Goal-Concordant Care (Meredith Fischer, BSN, RN, CHPN)

Another highlight of the Assembly was the **2024 FNA Icon Awards Celebration**, honoring nurses who exemplify leadership, advocacy, and excellence in healthcare. These awards recognize the dedication and impact of Florida's nurses, celebrating their commitment to patient care, education, and advocacy.

2025 Award Recipients

- **Advanced Practice Nursing Icon:** Marilyn Chrisman, MS, APRN, GCNS-BC, FCNS
- **Nurse Educator Icon:** Bryce Catarelli, DNP, APRN, FNP-C
- **Community Action Icon:** Lakeshia Cousin, PhD, APRN, AGPCNP-BC
- **Nursing Research Icon:** Tamara G. R. Macieira, PhD, RN
- **Innovation & Creativity Awards:**
 - *Community:* Yolanda Lindo, BSN, RN-BC
 - *Education:* Orlando VA Nursing Education Department
 - *Psychiatric Nursing:* Francisco Brenes, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, PMHNP-BC
- **Research Academic Practices:** Ragnhildur Bjarnadottir, PhD, MPH, RN
- **Mary Cash Award:** Michele J. Upvall, PhD, RN, CNE, FAAN
- **Promoting Excellence in Nursing:** Orlando VA Acute Care Clinical Nurse Coordinators - Glenda A., BSN, RN, PCCN and Te-

nika McMillan, MSN, RN, CMSRN

- **Undine Sams Award:** Raymundo Corrales, MSN, APRN, FNP-C
- **Barbara Lumpkin Award:** Vicky Stone-Gale, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, FAANP, FNAP
- **Communications Media:** Florida Center for Nursing
- **Special Recognition:** Louisiana Louis, DNP, APRN, PMHNP-BC
- **Safe Spaces Award:** Renee Thompson, DNP, RN, FAAN
- **Honorary Lifetime Member:** Cynthia Mikos
- **Recognition of Service:** Joe Baker, Jr.
- **President's Award:** Meghan Moroney, BSN, RN; Maritess M. Quinto, DNP, RN, NPD-BC, CMSRN; Guillermo R. Valdes-Manganelli, DNP, PGC-NEd, MED-SURG-BC, RN
- **Legislator of the Year:** Rep. Marie Woodson

Despite hurricane-related scheduling challenges, the Assembly proved to be a powerful gathering of nurses dedicated to shaping the future of the profession. The event reinforced the importance of collaboration, advocacy, and continuous learning, ensuring that nurses remain at the forefront of healthcare advancements and workplace improvements.

The Assembly's success was made possible thanks to the support of our generous sponsors and exhibitors, whose contributions helped create an enriching and engaging experience for all attendees. A special thank you to our sponsors: **Platinum Sponsor** - Florida Center for Nursing, **Gold Sponsors** - Laurel Road, NSO, University of Florida College of Nursing, and **Silver Sponsor** - Florida Nurses Foundation.

The Florida Nurses Association is grateful to everyone who made the 2024 Membership Assembly a success! ■