

# GAPP Update

Mary Satre, MSN, MBA, RN, Co-Chair of CNA GAPP Committee

GAPP is best described as the legislative advocacy arm of CNA. An official committee of the Colorado Nurses Association, it meets twice a month during the Colorado State Legislative Session (January to May) and monthly when the session is not convened. Those members who attend GAPP meetings will soon become familiar with its structure and dynamics. Voting members commit to familiarizing themselves with pending bills and issues before the Colorado State Legislature to facilitate meaningful and productive discussion at meetings. Members may be asked at times to provide more in-depth information regarding a particular topic or bill, especially if it falls within their specific area of expertise.

GAPP members hosted Senator Kyle Mullica at a January meeting prior to the introduction of his SB25-166 Workplace Violence bill on February 18th (see the Executive Director's column). Amy Diamond has taken on the role of recorder/minute taker as part of GAPP Leadership. We have been pleased to host a great number of students during this session and have welcomed several new voting members to the committee.

GAPP leadership encourages interested members to familiarize themselves with the "Bill Tracker" link found under the Advocacy tab on the CNA homepage ([www.coloradonurses.org](http://www.coloradonurses.org)). This list of priority bills cites the position taken by CNA ("Support, Oppose, or Monitor") and is

regularly updated to reflect the work completed by GAPP during this session. GAPP is kept informed by our team of contract lobbyists, Capitol Success.

Students and all CNA members are welcome at GAPP meetings and can access the registration details and more information about GAPP by going to: <https://www.coloradonurses.org/gapp/>. (Click the "Advocacy" tab on the CNA website and then click "GAPP.") Information about becoming a voting member is provided at the start of every meeting. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month from 6:15 until 8:00 PM, exclusively online. The 2025 legislative session will conclude the first week of May. ■

## Nurses Furthering Knowledge

Norma Tubman, MScN, RN

In February, Dr. Jean Schroeder, Board Member at Large, presented her personal and professional insights into living with Sjogren's Disease, a chronic autoimmune disorder. In her presentation, "Sjogren's Disease 2," Dr. Schroeder gave an overview of the pathophysiology of the disease, her physical and mental challenges with the disease, and the latest advancements in research.

Our March speaker was Ann Scarpita, MSN, MPH, BSN, RN with Colorado Public Health Association, Public Health Nurse Section whose presentation, "TB in the Modern Era: Updates on Diagnosis, Treatment, and the Nurses Impact on Patient Outcomes," reflected her 17 years' experience as a TB Nurse Consultant. Ann confirmed that TB continues to infect millions globally. The topic was timely as World Tuberculosis Day is celebrated annually

on March 24 by the World Health Organization.

Thank you to Annette Cannon for her monthly President's Message in our Newsblast which she also posts to MyCNA. Her January message was on New Beginnings, February's was on Love, and March's was Celebrating Each Other. Annette has been busy reaching out to the Colorado Council of Black Nurses, the National Association of Hispanic Nurses, and Philippine Nurses Association of America. Our Newsblast is now sent to the Presidents of these organizations in hope of increasing collaborative activities.

Annette attended CNA's Nurses Day at the Capitol where she was a speaker on the Nurse Advocacy Panel entitled "Empowering Nurse Advocates: Lessons in Leadership, Mentoring and Impact." The panel shared their nursing journeys,

lessons learned and the powerful impact of mentorship. On March 7, she co-presented for the Colorado District Attorney's Council on "Homicide and Suicide: Saving Lives Through Prosecution."

The Nurses Furthering Knowledge Board approved a scholarship in its name to be awarded through the Colorado Nurses Foundation in 2025. Criteria for the award is being developed. Money to help fund the scholarship was supported by 30 members, family, and friends attending the musical Fiddler on the Roof fundraiser on March 30 at the Lakewood Cultural Center and fundraising is ongoing. Two hundred and nine dollars were raised through ticket sales and donations. Nurses Furthering Knowledge was pleased to have its 2024 scholarship recipient, Maya Lindgren, attend our February meeting.

Our Constituent Association's, Nurses Furthering Knowledge, Bylaws were submitted by Board Member at Large, Kathy Crisler, to CNA in February and are awaiting approval by the CNA Board. Thank you to Kathy for taking the lead in revising our

former DNA 20 Bylaws to meet the new CA requirements.

In honor of Certified Nurses Day on March 19, names of Nurses Furthering Knowledge members and their certifications were published in the March

Newsblast. Thank you to Betsy Woolf for soliciting members to submit their names and certifications so we can recognize our members' areas of expertise. ■

## Education's Impact on Public Health

Margaret Bishop, MSN, RN



As Colorado Nurses Association (CNA) advances through the 2025 legislative session, it's increasingly clear that many factors impacting health are not labeled as such. Thus, CNA has engaged with initiatives that are never heard within the Colorado State Legislature's Health and Human Services committees such as gun violence prevention and education.

Though educational institutions provide many health-related services to young people, education is often overlooked as a determinant of lifelong wellbeing. Educational attainment influences health by shaping income and employment opportunities and is strongly associated with life expectancy, morbidity, and health behaviors (Lancet, 2020). In addition to academic instruction, schools play a crucial role in combatting food insecurity, providing safe spaces for development and ensuring physical and emotional safety.

### How do schools impact health?

#### Physical Safety:

Students in schools with more health resources and less violence are at

lower risk for poor mental and physical health, positively impacting their learning and future success (NASHP, 2020). School staff also monitor students for signs of abuse and neglect. Rates of maltreatment are likely to have increased, for example, while schools were closed due to COVID-19 though report rates decreased significantly due to lack of oversight (Baron et al., 2020).

#### Food Security:

Receiving free or reduced-price school lunches can reduce food insecurity by at least 3.8% (FRAC, 2025). Children facing hunger tend to have lower academic performance, increased behavioral issues, and more frequent absences compared to their peers (FRAC, 2025)

#### Belonging and Inclusion:

A sense of belonging and inclusion is fostered when students see themselves represented in school materials and content. This is particularly important for students of color, who are

often marginalized in school resources, media, and curricula. The "racial school climate gap" excludes students based on race or ethnicity, creating a harmful environment for learning (AMLE, 2023). Furthermore, students of color that have a teacher of color show better outcomes than those who have not. Not only does having a teacher of color break down negative stereotypes and help students confront racism, but research shows that Black teachers are more likely than their white counterparts to have high expectations of Black students and are "less likely to view Black students as disruptive, inattentive, or unable to do homework" (Edutopia, 2020).

#### Racial Trauma and Discipline:

Racial trauma, resulting from encounters with explicit and implicit racial bias and discrimination, can deeply affect students' mental health, self-esteem, and learning capacity (Rush, 2021). Certain school policies and practices, such as zero tolerance and curricula that is disconnected from students' experiences, may contribute to ongoing student racial trauma. Exclusionary discipline policies often fail to address the root causes of disruptive behaviors, which may stem from trauma or misunderstandings of cultural norms, as well as reinforce students' negative perceptions of themselves in relation to others (Rush, 2021).