

and uncertainty. Please take the time to read and reflect on all the thoughts and opinions they have brought together.

I think about leadership so often lately. Who will lead us while we grapple with access to research and information? Who will lead us as we help our patients remain focused on their health now, not just what might happen to their jobs, their medical care, or their lives next? Who will lead as we try to reimagine changes to our practices, education, and opportunities.

In February, Chris Otto, DNA Executive Director, and Stephanie McClellan, DNA Past-President, attended the American Nurses Enterprise's 2025 Equity in Nursing: A Summit for Change. There they discussed issues, challenges, and priorities for creating change in nursing from the perspectives of diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility. Chris and Stephanie have been influential to the thoughtful planning and execution of

this conference.

The Delaware Nurses Association recently made history by electing a Licensed Practical Nurse to our Board of Directors as a full, voting member. Congratulations and welcome, Kimberly Fisher! The move is long overdue and helps move us toward a more inclusive board. In January 2025, Chris Otto and I were privileged to attend the swearing in of Governor Bethany Hall-Long, PhD, RN, FAAN, Delaware's 75th Governor and U.S.A.'s first Nurse Governor. This was a historic occasion and while short, Dr. Hall-Long's tenure as Governor was a great achievement in nursing.

The DNA has released statements on policy changes that we believe will impact our ability to care for patients and communities, such as our statement against budget cuts and staff terminations at the Veteran's Administration, reform for 340B Drug Pricing policies, and in support of sci-

ence-based, equity-focused research and education, and our continued ability to practice evidence-based care. Members of the DNA attended the "302 Day Celebration" sponsored by Governor Matt Meyer, bringing together community and those who support community members. We awarded a DAISY Foundation Award to a Nurse Practitioner who works at the Winder Laird Porter State Service Center.

The answer to my questions was right in front of me. At the Delaware Nurses Association, we lead every day. Sometimes quietly, sometimes in celebration, sometimes by example, and sometimes with force and many voices. You lead every day. Protect and defend your patients, communities, and profession so that we can continue to do amazing work.

You can lead from wherever you are. ■

## "What's in a... Brand? The Power of Nurses™"

Christopher E. Otto, MSN, RN, CCRN



To kick off Nurse's Week 2025, the Delaware Nurses Association made several announcements about the future of our organization. Joined by U.S. Senator Lisa Blunt Rochester, Delaware Lieutenant

Governor Kyle Evans Gay, Speaker of the Delaware House of Representatives Melissa "Mimi" Minor-Brown, and many other leaders and nurses, we announced:

- The launch of the Delaware

Nurses Foundation

- The launch of the Delaware Nurses Workforce Institute
- Refreshed, modern, aligned branding for all three organizations



What anchors and ties together these three organizations? It's the flame, in the shape of an "N" for nurses, that aligns the Delaware Nurses Association, Foundation, and Workforce Institute. Together, we will work to advance, strengthen, build, celebrate, and grow Delaware's nursing workforce.

Furthermore, the modern brand aligns Delaware with the American Nurses Enterprise – American Nurses Association, American Nurses Foundation, American Nurses Credentialing Center. One thing

rings true among all state and national organizations, The Power of Nurses™ prevails. We do everything that we do because we believe in The Power of Nurses™. Consider yourself invited to harness, develop, and use your power for the betterment of our profession and communities.

Over the summer, you will continue to see announcements and opportunities to engage with DNA and our new partners, Delaware Nurses Foundation & Delaware Nurses Workforce Institute.

We hope you will welcome and support both new organizations in the State of Delaware. In a coordinated effort, we are all working to support the state's 25,000+ nurses and those we care for, Delawareans. In the meantime, please check out this exciting video highlighting The Power of Nurse<sup>TM</sup> and our special Delaware announcement. [https://youtu.be/WpETjSax3YY?si=nRV1ocnj\\_Oe1XIYB](https://youtu.be/WpETjSax3YY?si=nRV1ocnj_Oe1XIYB)

## Guest Editor

Lisa Drews EdD, MSN, CNE, CNEcl, CNML and Taryn Pariag RN, MSN

### Hello Nurses!

The focus of this edition of the DNA Reporter is Nurse Leadership in the First State. I am honored to share this guest editor opportunity with Taryn Pariag, a former MSN Leadership student and Nurse Educator. This issue highlights the leader within each of us, emphasizing nurses' significant role in innovating, leading change, and ensuring data-driven improvements in professional practice while remaining adaptable to the dynamic healthcare environment.

Within this issue, we have curated five articles offering unique perspectives and critical topics for nurse leaders. Dr. Susan Weaver opens with an insightful article addressing the evolving roles of nurses and the invaluable attributes they bring to diverse practice settings. Following this, Dr. Angela Herman introduces Systems Theory or Thinking (ST) as a framework

to foster healthcare collaboration and enhance patient care, quality, and safety. Dr. Mary Gant, a Nurse Practitioner, and colleagues share the importance of nurse-driven initiatives focusing on home-based primary care access and immunization programs for adults with autism and/or intellectual disabilities. Dr. Gant reflects on her continued leadership journey and commitment to disseminating the findings of her doctoral project. Taryn and I explore nursing leadership challenges and the importance of lifelong learning in Delaware. We review key topics that have shaped our state's nursing practice over the past year and outline the next steps for advancing professional practice. Finally, Dr. Keith Fishlock concludes with actionable guidance on succession planning, drawing from his personal leadership experiences to inspire the next generation of nurse leaders.

In closing, this edition celebrates the

dedication, resilience, and innovative spirit of nurse leaders. We hope these articles spark new ideas, deepen your understanding of leadership in nursing, and inspire you to take actionable steps in your professional journey. Together, we can continue to elevate nursing practice and positively impact the communities we serve. Thank you for joining us in exploring the transformative power of nurse leadership. ■

**Wishing you an inspiring read!**