

South Florida Celebrates Excellence at the 15th Annual FNA South Region Symposium and Awards Ceremony

Guillermo Valdes DNP, MSN-HCS, PGC-NEd., ANCC Med-Surg-BC, South Region Director and

Alina Diaz-Cruz PhD, PGC-NEd., MAMC, RN, South Region Awards Committee Chair

The 15th Annual Florida Nurses Association South Region Symposium and Awards Ceremony, held on April 12th, 2025, at the Gulfstream Theater in Hallandale, Florida, was a resounding success. The event celebrated nurses for outstanding achievements, innovative practices, and exemplary use of technology.

Florida Nurses Association extends heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Alina Diaz Cruz, Awards Committee Chair and the Master of Ceremonies, the FNA South Region Leadership Council, Ms.

Kaitlin Jordan, Director of Member Programs, Technology Marketing, and Mr. Alfaz Habiban, Programs, Technology & Marketing Specialist, for their dedication and contributions to the event's success. Special recognition goes to Dr. Marie O. Etienne for her unwavering support as the esteemed President of the Florida Nurses Association.

Some of the program highlights included Dr. Roy L. Simpson from Emory University who delivered an outstanding keynote address on innovation and technology in healthcare, and Dr. John N. Bibawy from the Cleveland Clinic, Florida, whose medical expertise provided valuable interprofessional development.

Several esteemed nursing professionals were also honored for their significant contributions. Dr. David Zambrana, President and Chief Operating Officer at Jackson Health System, received the prestigious "Lifetime Achievement Award" for his exemplary contributions to nursing and healthcare services. Dr. Danay Rodriguez-Arritola was awarded the "Visionary Leader: Chief

Nursing Officer Award" for her exceptional leadership. Dr. Rosa Roche from Florida International University was recognized with the "Excellence in Graduate Nursing Education Award", while Dr. Beatriz Valdes from the University of Miami received the "Excellence in Undergraduate Nursing Education Award."

Dr. Constance Miller, President of the Miami Chapter Black Nurses Association, and Dr. Ana R. Espinosa were both honored with "Lifetime Achievement Awards" for their unwavering commitment to nursing.

Dr. Tommie Norris, Dean of the Benjamin Leon School of Nursing at Miami Dade College, was recognized with the "Distinguished Academic Nurse Leader Award" and the "2025 Nurse of the Year Award".

The FNA South Region congratulates all the nursing professionals recognized by their peers and extends special recognition to all award recipients and nominees. The event highlighted the invaluable contributions of dedicated nursing professionals who significantly enhance quality of

healthcare services and nursing education in South Florida.

The South Region extends a gracious thank you to our sponsors who helped make the event come together: Nurses Charitable Trust (Gold Sponsor), Trinity Global Institute (Bronze Sponsor), Nursing Consortium of Florida (Poster Sponsor), and the many organizations who joined us as vendors. ■



Lifetime Achievement Award:

Dr. David Zambrana

Lifetime Achievement Award:

Constance Miller, DNP, RN, CNE

Lifetime Achievement Award:

Ana R. Espinosa, DNP, MBA, RN

Unsung Hero Award:

Sharna Gooden

Unsung Hero Award:

Kaitlin Jordan

Distinguished Academic Nurse Leader Award:

Tommie Norris, DNS, RN

Excellence in Undergraduate Nursing Education Award:

Beatriz Valdes, PhD, MSN, APRN, RN, CHSE, PMHNP-BC

Excellence in Graduate Nursing Education Award:

Rosa Roche, PhD, PPCNP-BC

Innovative Technology Impact Award:

Juan Gonzalez, DNP, PhD, APRN, AGACNP-BC, ENP-C, FNP-BC, CEN,
CNE, FAANP

Rising Star: Nursing Student Excellence Award:

Manuela Guyot

Future Clinical Leader: Graduate Nursing Student Award:

Joyce Rivera, MSN, RN

Visionary Leader: Chief Nursing Officer Award:

Danay Rodriguez-Arritola, DNP, MBA, APRN, AG-APRN

Champions of the Unit: Nurse Leader Recognition Award:

Kimberly Richardson, BSN, RN, CMSRN

Heart of Healthcare:

Registered Nurse Award: Nancy Bastien, BSN, RN

Innovative Advanced Practice Nurse Award:

Charles Buscemi, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, CWCN, WOCNF

Nursing Technology Champion Award:


Maritza Cardena Alencar, DNP, MBA, APRN-BC, BMTCN, FAANP

Community Nurse Warrior Award:

Elisa Rodriguez, DNP, APRN-BC

Nurse of the Year:

Tommie Norris, DNS, RN



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