

patient online. Though the post was cheerful and well-intentioned, it led to her being marked as unhirable—a costly mistake for someone just starting out in their career. But as AI and social media continue to grow in healthcare, we do not need to be afraid or threatened—we just need to remain informed and mindful of professional etiquette online. Ultimately, nurses must balance the benefits of digital innovation with the duty to protect patient information. Staying educated, thinking critically, and advocating for ethical practices are essential as we

navigate a rapidly evolving healthcare landscape ■.

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Running for Office

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Increasing nurse engagement in many environments is rough. Understanding that nurses are busy with managing careers, family, and education, this may leave minimal time to participate in volunteer work, specifically nursing and political organizations. Many of my nurse colleagues voice that they have no interest in politics, which correlates with the concept that nurses are the least likely health professionals to vote (Bevan, 2022). Recently, I made the decision to run for NJ General Assembly for Legislative District 4. After weeks campaigning across Atlantic, Camden, and Gloucester counties, I fell short on primary election day, but I received dozens of messages commending this venture and the disappointment that I fell short. Even though I didn't succeed, the lessons that were learned from this loss made me a winner.

The adventures of campaigning were many. Apologies were offered for waking sleeping babies, interrupting meals, making dogs bark, or adding distractions during a virtual work meeting! I also found keys on the outside of a locked door, caught a loose dog, brought in recycling cans, and most often educated

residents regarding legislative districts and elected positions. Redistricting occurred in 2022, and I found that the majority did not know their legislative district or that the legislative districts are different for state and federal government. The addresses were targeted, as I was provided with a list of registered voters and occupants' political parties. I encountered many veterans and listened to their stories. One included a gold star wife who lost her husband in the Korean war and left her a widow with 4 young daughters. These conversations were twofold: Veterans tend to vote at a higher rate than other populations; and personal because I currently serve and my father served in WWII.

During six decades of life, much has been learned through both formal education and life lessons, and similarly this experience afforded me the opportunity to gain bandwidth for policy and politics. I have had multiple interactions with Federal legislators in Washington DC, and State legislators in NJ and DE through military and nursing organizations. This prompted a review of the legislators' biographies and supported my decision to

enter the primary. For 23 years, Gallup's annual Most Honest and Ethical Professions Poll considers nurses to be the most trusted profession and having more nurses as legislators would be beneficial to our state and nation to make meaningful changes in government. Even though nurses number approximately 5 million, we are underrepresented in government. Just to name a few topics that impact nursing practice: safe staffing, limitation on scope of practice, medical cannabis, and insurance coverage. For a healthy society nurses must connect key ideas, such as patient advocacy and civic engagement as part of our practice and consistent with core nursing values. For those who are eligible, a commitment to regularly vote and be educated on the candidates in local, state, and federal elections is vital to our profession ■.

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