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NURSES AS TEACHERS

Embracing the Heart of Our Profession

By Parker J. Brigance DNP, MBA, RN, CEN, CCRN, CNE, NE-BC, NI-BC, EMT-P



Whether at the bedside, in the classroom, or leading change across a healthcare system, one truth remains: nurses are teachers at heart. It may not be the first role listed in a job description, but education is embedded in every aspect of nursing. From the first time a nurse explains a new medication, to mentoring a novice colleague during their first shift, teaching is the backbone of our practice as nurses.

In a profession that blends science, compassion, and critical thinking, education is one of our most powerful tools. Nursing is not just about administering medications or monitoring vital signs, the art of our profession is found in guiding our patients and their families through complex health experiences and empowering them with knowledge. Additionally, nurses can often be found supporting

their colleagues through their own learning journeys. Everything we do is centered around education, making it essential for nursing students and new nurses alike to understand the teaching and learning process.

Teaching Our Patients

Patient education is one of the most vital parts of our daily work. It's the consistency found in education, however, that is truly valuable. A nurse might explain the side effects of a new prescription, walk a patient through wound care techniques, or provide guidance on managing chronic illnesses like diabetes or hypertension. Nurses holding leadership positions may teach novice team members how to navigate the change process, or advocate for their patients on a systems level. These

moments are not simply about instruction, they are about building trust, reducing anxiety, and enabling better health outcomes. After all, our patients have trusted us to meet their healthcare needs.

Effective patient education requires more than just delivering facts. It demands clear communication, cultural sensitivity, and an understanding of how adults learn. Nurses must assess each patient's readiness to learn, preferred learning style, and potential barriers such as language or health literacy. Teaching in nursing cannot be a "one-size-fits-all" approach. Each patient deserves a dynamic, personalized, and relevant approach to learning.

Teaching the Next Generation

Equally important is the role nurses play in teaching one another. Whether precepting a new graduate or informally guiding a peer, teaching in the clinical environment builds confidence and competence across the profession. Nursing is a team sport. Although we may not be compensated like professional athletes, our team dynamics are perhaps more important. As healthcare becomes more complex, the need for strong nurse mentors and clinical educators has never been greater.

Experienced nurses are in a unique position to share the lessons learned through years of practice. This transfer of knowledge not only strengthens the

workforce but preserves the art and culture of nursing itself. When we teach new nurses how to think critically, respond ethically, and care holistically, we ensure that the future of our profession will be rooted in excellence.

Embracing Our Identity as Teachers

As you advance through your career in nursing, I encourage you to embrace this identity. After all, we have all been nursing students at one point, shadowing the clinical experts on a hospital unit. You may

not carry the title of “educator” on your badge, but you are one. Every interaction is an opportunity to teach, to guide, and to inspire. When we see teaching as a central part of our professional identity, we elevate the care we provide, the teams we work with, and the patients we serve.

In nursing, knowledge isn’t meant to be hoarded, it’s meant to be shared. In fact, I would argue that withholding information in our profession suggests an ethical challenge. I encourage you to not only commit to lifelong learning, but also lifelong teaching. Embrace the spirit of

teaching and uphold the heart of what it means to represent the “most trusted” profession – nursing. ■

Parker Brigrance is a member of the Florida Nurses Association and serves as the Director of the Emergency Service Line at Baptist Health in Jacksonville, Florida. In his role at Baptist Health, he oversees the strategic growth of the ED service line. With over a decade of nursing experience, he is passionate about clinician development, improving healthcare quality, and enhancing the patient experience.

2025 FNSA ANNUAL CONVENTION

A Circle of Life: Celebrating All the Ways Nurses Care for Patients

The 2025 Florida Nursing Students Association (FNSA) Annual Convention brought together nursing students from across the state for three inspiring days of education, leadership development, advocacy, and celebration. Held October 28–31, the event offered a rich blend of professional sessions, House of Delegates proceedings, social events, and statewide recognition ceremonies that showcased the growth and strength of Florida’s future nurses.

The convention opened with excitement as students gathered for the Pajama Social, enjoying food, games, and networking. By Wednesday morning, the hallways were filled with energy as attendees registered, credentialed as delegates, and dispersed across multiple breakout rooms for educational sessions. Expert speakers presented on a range of topics, including end-of-life care, pediatric nursing, cardiac care, midwifery, public health, military nursing, and more. High-demand workshops—such as *Pharmacology Made Insanely Easy!* and *Rockin’ the Interview*—kept students engaged with practical, real-world knowledge designed to prepare them for successful nursing careers.

At the center of the convention was the **House of Delegates**, where student leaders carried out the official business of the association. Delegates reviewed convention rules, bylaws, parliamentary procedure, and statewide resolutions. These sessions reinforced the importance of student-led governance and the role of nursing students as emerging leaders in health care.

A powerful keynote address from Dr. Valerie Morrison, President-Elect of the Florida Nurses Association, emphasized advocacy, professional unity, and the importance of preparing the next generation of nurses to meet the challenges of a changing health care landscape.

On Thursday, students gathered for the **Awards Banquet and Celebration**, one of the most anticipated events of the convention. Scholarship recipients from across the state were recognized for academic excellence, service, and leadership.

FNSA Scholarship Award winners, scholarship winners were: Mona Renna, Nicasha Martin, Adara Pappas, Meredith Clifford, Georgea Serwe, Emily Klingenberg, Mya Ervin, Deaja Davis, Alexandra

Duran Angulo, Alya Fahr, Ciaera Ambroise and Alyson Crighton.

Chapter excellence was also highlighted through the **Diamond Chapter Awards**, presented to AdventHealth University–Orlando, the University of Central Florida–Orlando, and South Florida State College–Avon Park. Membership growth was celebrated as Palm Beach State College earned *Greatest Number of Members*, Florida State University earned *Greatest Percentage Increase*, and Keiser University Sarasota earned *Greatest Number Increase*. Additional honors included the **Dean/Director of the Year Award** presented to Dr. Nancy Gaspar of Seminole State College, the **Faculty Excellence Award** presented to Dr. Karen Schofield of the University of Florida, the **Star RN Award** presented to Soterios Djiovanis of the University of Central Florida, and the coveted **Outstanding Newsletter Award** presented to Seminole State College.

The highlight of the evening was the announcement of the **newly elected FNSA Executive Board for 2025–2026**, whose terms begin immediately and will guide the organization through the com-

