

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 Ambrose 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-



ing year. The new leadership team is:

- President: Ynden Lizardo
- First Vice President: Dylan Albert
- Second Vice President: Devin Nowakowski
- Secretary/Treasurer: Adisa Somalia
- Region 1 Director: Ifeadi Ofokansi
- Region 2 Director: Lily Garza
- Region 3 Director: Lena Limmer
- Region 4 Director: Colton Denby
- Region 5 Director: Judelyn Placide
- Region 6 Director: Ivis Mendoza
- Region 7 Director: Kenny Bholanauth
- Hotline Editor: Lady Rose Arsenio

These newly elected leaders will represent students across Florida, oversee committees, support statewide initiatives, strengthen chapter engagement, and advance the mission of the Florida Nursing Students Association throughout the 2025–2026 year. They will also help to prepare the next board for a change in

structure initiated by bylaws changes that changed regional lines and reorganized the board roles and structure.

The convention concluded on Friday morning with the Post-Conference Board Meeting and Breakfast, where newly elected officers transitioned into their roles. Delegates and attendees departed with new knowledge, strengthened leadership skills, and a renewed sense of purpose as future registered nurses.

The 2025 FNSA Convention celebrated not only the accomplishments of individual students and chapters but also the collective strength of Florida's nursing student community. United by dedication, guided by service, and committed to excellence, these future nurses continue to shape the profession's future—one convention, one resolution, and one leadership moment at a time. ■

## Thank You 2025 FNSA Convention Sponsors

### PLATINUM



### BRONZE



## Florida Nurses Association Opens Membership to Licensed Practical Nurses

The Florida Nurses Association is proud to announce a landmark decision made at the 2025 FNA Membership Assembly: Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) are now eligible for membership in the association. This historic step reflects FNA's ongoing commitment to fostering unity, strengthening the nursing profession, and supporting every nurse who contributes to the health and well-being of Floridians.

By welcoming LPNs into the association, FNA is embracing a more collaborative and inclusive future—one that

recognizes the essential role LPNs play in patient care across diverse settings. This decision enhances opportunities for professional connection, shared advocacy, and collective impact, ensuring that all nurses in Florida have a strong and unified voice.

At the national level, the **American Nurses Association (ANA)** is currently exploring a similar membership expansion. While ANA membership for LPNs is not yet available, FNA's change positions LPNs to seamlessly advance their profes-

sional engagement. If ANA approves LPN membership, FNA members who are LPNs will be able to upgrade their membership to include ANA as well, gaining access to national resources, advocacy efforts, and professional support.

FNA looks forward to welcoming LPNs into its community and working together to elevate the profession. This milestone marks a shared commitment to collaboration, respect, and unity among all who provide nursing care in Florida. ■

