

# Honoring and Continuing Our Tradition of Leadership



Margaret Farrell Daingerfield, EdD, RN, CNE, NJSNA President

**Mission:** The mission of the New Jersey State Nurses Association is to promote the profession of nursing, advance the practice of nursing, and advocate for nurses.

**Vision:** Creating the future through advocacy, leadership, and public policy.

As we begin a new year, I am pleased to share the remarks I delivered on January 3, 2026, at the NJSNA Installation of Officers.

## Introductory Remarks

Welcome to the New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA) Installation and welcome to 2026! This year is a remarkable one, marked by significant milestones for our profession and our organizations. We proudly celebrate the 130th Anniversary of the American Nurses Association and the 125th Anniversary of NJSNA. These anniversaries serve as reminders of our longstanding commitment and impact within the nursing community.

For many of you here today, 2026 represents the continuation of your invaluable volunteer work as leaders within the NJSNA. Your dedication and leadership have sustained and advanced our mission year after year, and your ongoing contributions ensure that our association remains a powerful force for positive change.

For others, this year marks the beginning of a wonderful journey. 2026 is an opportunity to connect with colleagues, educate members, and make a meaningful difference in our profession through advocacy. Whether you are just starting your leadership path or deepening your involvement, your efforts are vital to our collective success.

In addition to our ongoing initiatives, 2026 marks the beginning of a significant new chapter for our association. This year, we are excited to launch a two-year pilot program that extends membership to Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) within both NJSNA and the Forum for LPNs. By welcoming LPNs as members, we aim to foster greater inclusivity and collaboration across all sectors of the nursing profession.

To connect with and better understand the unique needs of our early career colleagues, the board will appoint a new-to-practice nurse liaison. Through the establishment of an early career forum, this individual will play a pivotal role in bridging the gap between emerging professionals and the association's leadership.

As we look ahead, we will undertake a thorough evaluation of our current strategic plan. Building on this assessment, we will develop a new strategic plan designed to guide NJSNA through 2030. We will plan a virtual professional conference in the fall and a 125th Anniversary Gala in November.

On a personal note, 2026 is my second year serving as your President and my 49th year as a nurse in New Jersey. I am honored to continue working alongside such talented and passionate individuals as we strive to elevate our profession.

Together, ANA and NJSNA will recognize 2026 as the Year of the Power of Nurses. This designation reflects our shared belief in the strength, influence, and dedication of nurses. As we move forward, let us harness that power to advocate for our profession and for those we serve.

In the original film, the Wizard of Oz, Glinda the good witch says to Dorothy: "You've always had the power, my dear. You've had it all along. You just had to learn it for yourself."

Nurses have always possessed a profound power within the healthcare profession—a power that has existed throughout our history. As leaders gathered here today, it is our responsibility to help every nurse in New Jersey recognize and harness that influence. With more than 150,000 nurses across New Jersey and over 5 million nationwide, we have an incredible opportunity to energize our community and make our voices heard.

Let us embrace 2026 as a transformative year—a year in which we drive forward a legislative agenda that champions safe staffing standards, safeguards the professional title of nurse, and empowers our Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs) to provide care with full practice authority. These goals are critical to advancing our profession and ensuring the best outcomes for those we serve.

Through our advocacy efforts and collaboration with Membership Assembly representatives, we are poised to address priority areas effectively. Together, we can influence the national conversation and move the agenda forward to support both nursing and healthcare across the United States. We saw this in response to the Department of Education's decision not to include nursing in the definition of professional degree programs under forthcoming federal loan eligibility rules. This is our moment to unite, speak out, and make a lasting impact for nurses and patients alike.

## Closing Remarks

As we turn the page to a new year at NJSNA, we do so with confidence in our strong leadership at both the state and regional levels. Our association is fortunate to have a dedicated and highly capable staff, complemented by committee heads who are ready to guide our organization's direction and ensure that our mission remains at the forefront of all we do.

Throughout this year, our collective efforts will focus on amplifying, advocat-

ing for, and advancing the nursing voice in New Jersey. With determination and unity, we will continue to elevate our profession and make meaningful progress on behalf of our members and the communities we serve.

Let me thank all those that made this lovely event possible- Judy Schmidt, Nina Raoji, Tyea Santiago, Lisa Golini, and Jennifer Chanti. I thank past presidents, current and past board members and other association leaders for their amazing dedication and service. My gratitude also

goes to the Chair of the Institute for Nursing, Kristin Sagedy, and the members of the foundation's Board of Trustees. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all those installed on this special occasion and eagerly anticipate working side by side with you. Together, we will celebrate 125 years of the NJSNA and build upon the legacy that has been established by generations of dedicated nurses. ■

AI Disclosure: The original work was enhanced by Microsoft Copilot's "structure and refine" functionality.

# NJSNA President-Elect and Chair, Institute for Nursing

Kristin Meloche Sagedy PhD, RN



IFN Mission is to preserve the heritage, principles, values, and practices of our healing profession through the support of scholarship, education, and research.

IFN Vision is to engender the spirit of giving to nurture the soul of nursing now and for future generations.

In December, I traveled with our President, Peggy, and CEO, Judy, to Arlington, VA to attend the ANA Leadership Summit. We participated in professional development sessions, listened to speakers, networked, and brainstormed some ideas to bring back to NJSNA.

In January, the ANA launched its year of celebrating 130 years with the slogan, *The Power of Nurses*. We, too, are celebrating an anniversary this year. NJSNA is 125 years strong! As I reflect on the many meanings of *The Power of Nurses*, I am struck by the way we nurses have the power to effect change. We do this in myriad locations, from bedside to boardroom. The changes we are empowered

to make may affect one person at a time and may affect a community.

The Institute for Nursing leverages your power with every donation you make. Whether you participate in a fundraiser or make a direct donation, you are affecting change for a nurse as well as enabling the IFN to fulfill our mission and advance our goals. The funds we raise are distributed to nurses to pursue education, fund research, and recognize excellence in our profession. I am deeply grateful for your commitment to nursing and to using your *Power* to affect changes. The nurses who benefit from your generosity are equally grateful.

Together, you and the Institute for

Nursing are using your *Power* to effect change for the nurses of NJ. Bravo!

### Thank you, Donors!

Without the generosity and involvement of our members, the essential work of the Institute for Nursing cannot continue.

Your contribution directly fuels programs that strengthen nursing practice and prepare the next generation of nurse leaders.

Together, we can ensure that nursing in New Jersey continues to thrive. Support the Institute for Nursing today — because when we invest in nurses, we invest in the future of healthcare.

Donor	Gift	Recognition
Teri Wurmser	\$2,000.00	
Alison Skoff	\$50.00	Maryellen McHale
Nicky & Nick Notaroberto	\$25.00	On behalf of Theodore Connors First Birthday (from the daughter of a wonderful RN)
Alyssa Tacopino	\$25.00	On behalf of Theo Connors and in honor of Judy Surko
Total Donations June 1, 2025 to December 25, 2025	\$3,450.00	