

after graduation. A good fit between you and a program makes a real difference in your experience and your outcomes.

Return to School for the Right Reasons

When I went back to school, I was intellectually driven and really wanted to learn more, be a critical thinker, and grow. There are things we see in people applying to the college's master's programs, no matter how many years of experience they have. These attributes would contribute to your success as a student.

Feeling burnt out at work or wanting a better schedule aren't reasons to earn a master's degree. Or if you're feeling pressure from people saying 'You should be an

FNP' and your heart just isn't in it, don't feel obligated to go back to school.

Signs You May Need to Hit Pause

There are some signs you may not be ready to go back to school yet – and that's okay. If you're feeling overwhelmed by work or still lacking confidence in your decision-making, wait until you feel more comfortable. You also might realize you don't have the time to devote to studying. It's important that you can recognize these signs and wait to return to school.

And If You're Not Ready Yet – That's Okay

If you're still building confidence in your clinical decision-making, feeling stretched

thin at work, or unsure you have the bandwidth, it's okay to wait. Recognizing that now is actually a sign of the kind of self-awareness that will serve you well when you do go back.

There's no universal right time. There's just the right time for you. ■

About the author: Dr. Krista Estes serves as the Assistant Dean of Master's Programs and is an Associate Professor at the University of Colorado Anschutz College of Nursing. She actively practices as a Family Nurse Practitioner and previously held the role of Family Nurse Practitioner Specialty Director for eight years.

Legendary Leader: Louie Croft Boyd

Carol OMeara, CNF Secretary

As nurses in Colorado are preparing for the Sunset of the Nurse Practice Act in 2027, this quarter we honor Louie Croft Boyd, the first licensed nurse in Colorado. She dedicated her life to the nursing profession and to raising standards for nursing. As a teenager, she was a suffragette and newspaper journalist. She came to Colorado at age 21 and enrolled in the Colorado Training School for Nurses at City Hospital, later known as Denver General and now known as Denver Health. After graduating in 1899, she completed post graduate training and earned a teaching certificate in Chicago and returned to Denver to teach at Denver General. During her career she served as superintendent of nursing at Denver General, St. Luke's and Rio Grand Hospitals in Colorado and Wyoming General in Rock Springs, Wyoming, seeking roles where she could



affect working conditions and educational standards

In 1904, Louie helped found the Colorado State Trained Nurses Association, now Colorado Nurses Association, and was hired as the association's first Lobbyist. She wrote what was to become HB32 and SB9, introduced to the Colorado General Assembly to create legal licensure for nurses. Upon passage of the bill in 1905, creating the State Board of Nursing Examiners, Louie applied for and became the first licensed nurse in Colorado. She later served on the State Board of Nurse Examiners.

Louie Croft Boyd was posthumously inducted into the Colorado Nurses Association Hall of Fame, and the Colorado Women's Hall of Fame. A powerful advocate for nursing in Colorado, she is a true Legendary Leader. ■