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Range of Motion

The Official Newsletter of the California Nursing Students' Association





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Convention

Megan Munz, Director San Diego State University



Plans for Convention in Universal City are coming along great! However, we still need your help to make it a great success. We still need help planning the "Friday Night Party", organizing a service project, and finding speakers. If you enjoy planning events, are creative, or have ANY ideas for the upcoming convention, I would love to hear from you. If you would like to be on the convention planning committee, please send me an email munz.cnsa@gmail.com. I cannot wait to see you all in October!

Two Thumbs Up for our San Jose Convention Sponsors

Kaiser Permanente Catholic Healthcare West
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center Providence Health & Services CA Region

Stanford University Medical Center Tenet CA
St Joseph Health System Nurse Week
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UC Davis Medical Center UCSF Medical Center

2008 CNSA Chatter Calendar

Feb. 23, 2008 CoCR South Meeting

Mar. 26-30, 2008 NSNA Convention, Grapevine, TX

April 20-21, 2008 RN Lobby Days

May 8, 2008 National Student Nurses Day

June 20, 2008 CoCR North Meeting

Oct. 10-12, 2008 CNSA Convention: Hilton Los Angeles, Universal City, CA

Nov. 13-16, 2008 Midyear NSNA Conference, Reno, NV



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- OR
- Adolescent Psych
- NICU Level II

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To learn more about any board member, visit cnsa.org.



EDITORIAL

Mary Gills Golden West College

Let's Talk-beyond the buzz

Do you remember the excitement you felt when you received your acceptance letter to nursing school? Then the excitement all of sudden takes a nose dive as you read on.... you have to pass another test—TEAS (Thank you AB 1559 Bill)—before you can actually start nursing school. This may be old news or an afterthought for those of us already in nursing school; but for our friends and family you can pass this information on, as I have. For those of you who might think this is unfair, think of this as the SAT test that the four-year college's and universities use to evaluate applicants with.

I am glad that I didn't have to take the TEAS test before I entered nursing school. But, let me "tease" you with a few questions: have you ever wondered how the voices of the 350,000 RNs in California (BRN-January 2008) get our Legislators to pay attention to issues facing patient care and the nursing profession? Do you find the politics and policy of healthcare fascinating? Did the AB-1559—TEAS test get you revved up about jumping through another hoop?

Like other politically minded groups, registered nurses have a lobby. I would like to encourage you to attend "RN Lobby Days" April 20-21, 2008. Each year in April one such group—the American Nurses Association\California (ANA\C)—sponsors a brief introduction to the lobbying process for interested nursing students. It is a fascinating look into the legislative process—as presented by the nurse lobbyists from ANA\C.

AB 1559 BILLANALYSIS

Here are some highlights of the Bill Signed by the Governor:

SUMMARY

<u>This bill</u> establishes a process and specific criteria that a community college district would be required to use should it opt to use multicriteria screening measures to evaluate applicants for its registered nursing programs.

ANALYSIS

<u>This bill</u> establishes a process, including specific criteria, a community college district would be required to use should it elect to use multicriteria screening measures to evaluate candidates for admission to registered

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nursing programs. Specifically, the bill provides that a CCC district that <u>uses multicriteria screening</u> <u>measures shall, at a minimum</u>, evaluate applicants using all of the following criteria:

- 1) Grade-point average in relevant coursework.
- 2) Degrees, diplomas, or certificates held by an applicant.
- 3) Relevant work or volunteer experience.
- 4) Proficiency or advanced level coursework in languages other than English identified by the CCC Chancellor as high-frequency languages based on census data.
- 5) Life experiences or special circumstances of applicants such as:
 - a) Disabilities.
 - b) Low family income.
 - c) First generation of family to attend college.
 - d) Need to work.
 - e) Disadvantaged social or educational environment.
 - f) Difficult personal and family situations or circumstances.
 - g) Refugee or veteran status.

<u>The bill</u> also provides that that a CCC district that uses multicriteria screening measures may, in addition to the criteria listed above, also use any or all of the following criteria to evaluate applicants:

- 1) Personal interview.
- 2) Personal statement.
- 3) Letters of recommendation.
- 4) Number of repetitions (if any) of prerequisite courses.
- 5) Other criteria as approved by the CCC Chancellor's Office.

<u>Last</u>, the bill requires that a district that uses multicriteria screening measures as established by this bill report in writing to the CCC Chancellor's Office what their admission policies are. Retrieved http://01-23-2008

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Breakthrough To Nursing

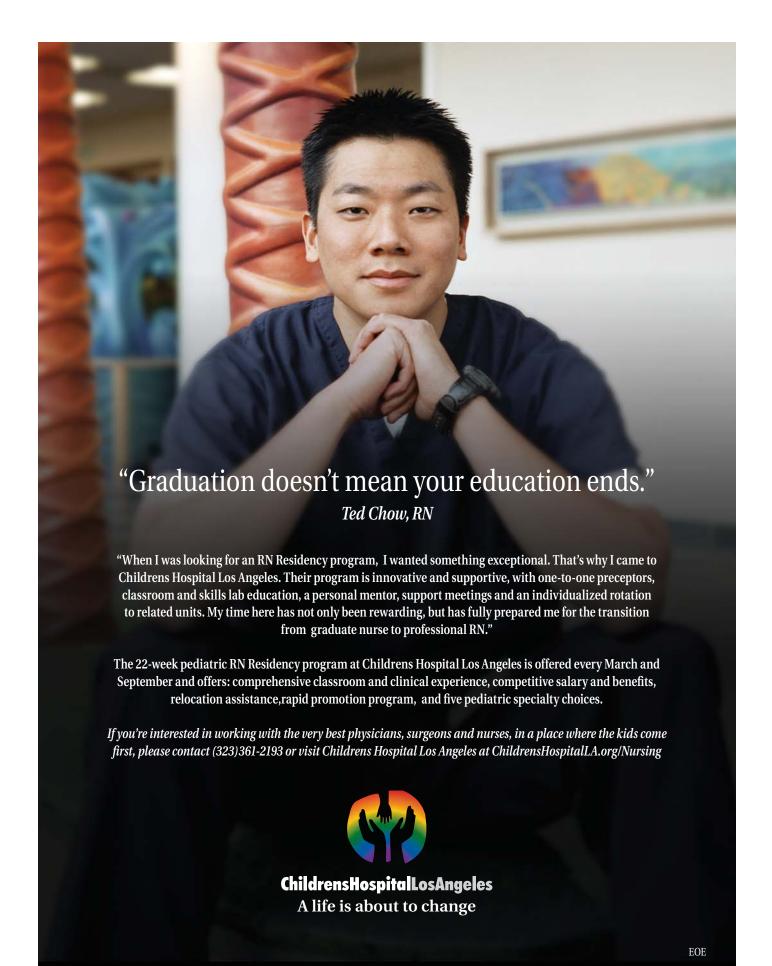
Trina Eagal, Director San Joaquin Delta College

Operation: Educate, Encourage and Recruit

As the new Break Through to Nursing Director, I am excited to embark on a promising year. As you can imagine, there are many things that can be done to educate, encourage and recruit potential nursing students. My decision to focus on high school age students came after speaking with a group of high school counselors. It was then that I realized how crucial the 4 years before college are in determining your career path.

After that meeting, I thought to myself, "If high school counselors have that many questions, can you imagine how many high school students must have?" This year, I would like to allow the students to become educated on how a career as a nurse is a viable option for all types of individuals, with a primary focus on non-traditional students. San Joaquin Delta College, where I attend nursing school, has opened its doors to high school students allowing them to enter the skills labs and discover nursing from a different perspective. Along with a more interactive approach, I have also gathered a group of non-traditional students that are currently in the nursing program to tell their stories of overcoming social barriers, stigmas and stereotypes. To round out our team, we also have a group of enthusiastic faculty members. I think it is important for those who are unsure of their career path to see how these current nursing students have changed their view on what nursing means to them and how what were once thought of as obstacles are now considered assets.

I encourage those of you interested in contributing to the cause of increasing diversity in the nursing population to join the Breakthrough to Nursing committee. To join, email btndirector@cnsa.org and be sure to visit the BTN blog at http://breakthroughtonursing.blogspot.com where you can share ideas about this topic as well as find links to informative resources.



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Secretary/Treasurer

April Simoni San Francisco State University

One Step Closer... Working as a Nurse Assistant

Becoming a nurse assistant was one of the best decisions I have made since starting nursing school.

At the brink of my 3rd semester in nursing school, I realized that I still didn't feel as comfortable with patients at the bedside as I would have liked by that point in my nursing education. At this same time, a few of my nursing classmates were applying for jobs as nurse assistants at various hospitals around the area. We had just completed our Med/Surg rotation the previous semester, which made us eligible to apply without having to go through the certification process that is required for those without any prior nursing background. As I was also in need of a job to cover living and nursing school expenses, I figured this was the perfect opportunity to grow as a student nurse by working alongside nurses and experiencing more hours of direct patient care while getting paid to do so.

With pediatrics being my first choice, I was lucky enough to be hired on the pediatric oncology floor at UCSF Medical Center. Although I have only been working in this capacity for a few months, I have noticed an improvement in my communication, teamwork, and time management skills, and most importantly in prioritization, which is one of the most crucial skills to have as a registered nurse.

Whether your title is "NA" – Nurse Assistant/Aide, "CNA" – Certified Nurse Assistant, or "PCA" – Patient Care Assistant, your position is the same. Hospitals and even floors within hospitals vary as to what you are allowed to do as a nurse assistant. Even so, don't discredit yourself by telling people "I am just a CNA." Being a nurse assistant can be extremely challenging, both physically and emotionally, especially when working with patients and families of patients with serious illnesses. You must learn to be especially sensitive and to always keep in mind that even the small things you do for them to make their situation more comfortable or just to be someone to talk to can improve their hospital experience drastically.

Working as a nurse assistant has brought me one step closer to understanding what being a nurse is really about. I have truly learned the meaning of patience and I am learning to be a better listener. I believe that these skills will stick with me when I become a registered nurse and I hope that when I have even more responsibilities in the hospital, I will not lose sight of the importance of my past responsibilities as a nurse assistant and the impact these subtle caring tasks have had on each patient.

If you are considering becoming a nurse assistant, I would suggest calling the healthcare facility where you plan to apply to learn about their specific hiring criteria. You can also visit nursingassistantcentral.homestead.com for more information on becoming a nurse assistant. Best of luck!

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CNSA Is About All Nursing Students Louise Timmer, Ed.D., President, ANA\C

Many nursing students do not belong to CNSA. How sad! They are missing a very important part of their nursing education known as the "how to" how to protect an optimal educational environment, how to advocate for financial assistance, how to obtain health care insurance, how to prepare for the state board exams, how to meet other nursing students, how to find a tutor or mentor, how to interview for a nursing position, how to participate in a professional nursing organization after graduation, how to remain competent throughout their nursing career, how to get an advanced degree in nursing? Most of all, the nursing students do not understand the importance of belonging to their professional associations.

Nursing Programs

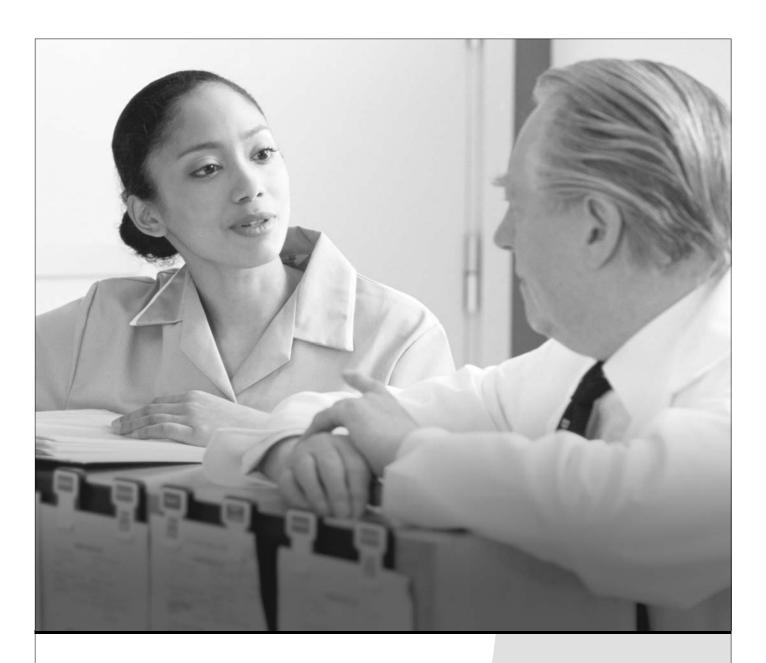
The nursing programs have increased in recent years to 121 entry level nursing programs approved by the Board of Registered Nursing. There are 14 Entry Level Masters (ELM), 29 baccalaureate (BSN), and 78 associate degree (ADN) programs in California. The CNSA website lists 88 CNSA chapters. That leaves 33 basic nursing programs without CNSA chapters. Moreover, several students do not belong to CNSA even though there is a chapter at their nursing school. Together, nursing students total more that 35,000 students in California.

Why Join?

What entices nursing students to join CNSA? Why did you join? Think about the reasons you stay active in CNSA. Has membership increased your understanding of the professional nurse? What activities are you involved in and how has participation given you a sense of responsibility to patients and the understanding that all persons must have access to health care? Has membership provided an understanding of the political role nurses play in developing health policy at the state and national level? Have you attended the ANA\C RN Lobby Days to learn about the current legislative bills that affect nursing education, practice and health care? Has CNSA helped you to understand California's scope of practice and your legal responsibility for patient safety and care?

If you have become more professional through participation in CNSA, then reach out to other classmates in your program who do not belong to CNSA. More often, it is the personal contact with students that inspire them to join CNSA. Let them know you that you feel a greater sense of unity with other students and a real feeling of belonging to the nursing profession that taking exams and learning new skills can't impart. Faculty and students come together as colleagues to work on common activities and events that are important to the nursing profession. Faculty serve as mentors to students and teach them the knowledge and skills of running a professional organization, how to protect the practice of nursing, and how to expand its scope to meet the future health needs of individuals and families. More importantly, faculty mentor students in the legislative process to develop resolutions that affect students' educational needs. Resolutions are crafted to protect the quality of classroom and clinical environments, alleviate students'

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CHW is a not-for-profit system of 40 hospitals and medical centers in Arizona, California and Nevada.

Learning doesn't stop when your career in nursing begins. But I didn't expect to find myself given so many chances to share my own voice. Even though I'm at the beginning of my career, I feel my opinion matters. And I can see exciting possibilities ahead.

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continued from page 12

financial burdens, and assist with retention of students during the nursing program. These resolutions are brought to legislators to be drafted into legislation. Students provide the testimony with personal stories describing the need for the bills at the committee hearings. In this way, students **can** make a difference during nursing school for themselves and others.

Mission of CNSA

The mission of CNSA is to foster nursing education, facilitate early unity among our future colleagues in nursing, and to optimize the nursing student's exposure to the numerous specialties and pathways in the ever-changing field of nursing.

Reach out to Classmates and Students in other Nursing Programs

Make a commitment to your classmates to bring them to a CNSA meeting at school. Have lunch with a classmate and explain the purpose of CNSA in the nursing program. Describe how the activities, attending state and national conventions, participating in ANA\C RN Lobby Days, and receiving information about the nursing profession from the CNSA newsletter has made a difference in your understanding of the professional nurse. Don't let your classmates finish school and regard nursing as a well paid job and nothing more. There is so much more that students can learn about the nursing profession that can assist in their professional and career development after graduation. CNSA is the stepping stone to ANA and membership in the state organization, ANA\C.

Make a commitment to nursing students in your region enrolled in programs without CNSA chapters. Form a small task force and meet with the chairperson, faculty and students in the nursing program. Explain to the faculty and students what membership in CNSA means to you. Offer to assist with hosting the first CNSA meeting; provide guidelines for applying for chapter membership in NSNA, and help with developing the Bylaws. It would be very helpful to have joint chapter activities, events, and to assist the students with writing resolutions for the state CNSA convention. Remember, the more united the nursing students are during the program, the more likely they will continue to work together as professional nurses throughout their nursing careers. The nursing profession is only as strong as the collective body of nurses in protecting the nursing profession, maintaining state-of the-art nursing care, and advancing nursing practice to meet the future health needs of California and the nation. Developing a clear understanding of the professional nurse role in the health care system begins in the nursing programs. If it doesn't begin there, nurses may never develop the professional role after graduation. The nursing profession and the health care system will suffer as a result of these nurses not understanding the commitment they made when they took the Nightingale pledge at graduation. The nursing profession needs every registered nurse to do his or her part through active membership in ANA and the specialty nursing organizations. Please help your classmates and other nursing students realize that their responsibility to nursing is to pursue lifelong education and advance the practice of nursing through membership in nursing associations.

In this way, **YOU** can make a very important difference in the lives of nursing students!

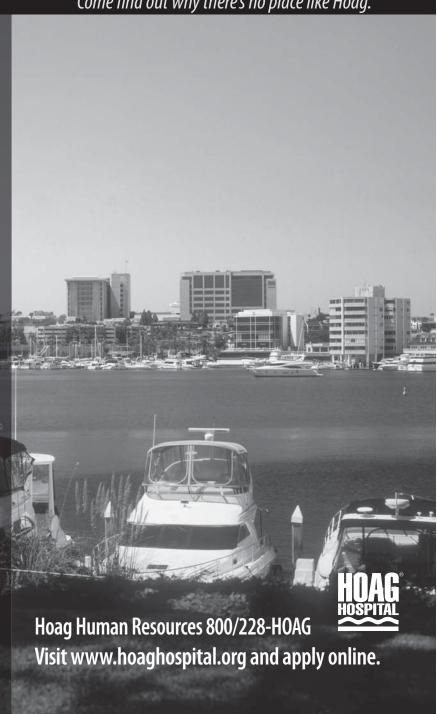


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 - Perioperative



STUDENT CONTRIBUTION by April Simoni SFSU



Jessica and April became friends while attending a Nursing program, abroad in Cyprus. Stay tuned to read about April's study abroad experience — and other CNSA international nursing ventures — in our next ROM.

Mary

Editor

Perspectives from Across the Country by Jessica Di Zio UVA

Friday Night Lights

My entire week leads up to an exhilarating Friday night. I realize that many college students might claim this is true for a number of reasons, but on my Friday night I get to go to work. Between 5:30 pm on Friday evening and 8:00 am on Saturday morning I rush to and from scenes of medical emergencies. Every time that the tones go off, the squad I run with responds to a 911 call for emergency assistance.

Since I have been at the University of Virginia, I have been volunteering with the Charlottesville Albemarle Rescue Squad, which claims to be the busiest all-volunteer rescue squad in the nation. I was an Emergency Medical Technician, or EMT-Basic, even before I decided I wanted to become a nursing student. The experience made me understand what it was to actually take care of a patient by myself, and helped me to think quickly under pressure. The experience has been truly rewarding and eye-opening. I was able to decide after I had been running on an ambulance that caring for patients is truly what I want to do.

Over the past 3 years on the squad, I have also been able to take classes in order to become more advanced in my provision of emergency care. This past semester I took a class to become what they call in Virginia an EMT- Enhanced. Now I am able to do more advanced procedures to help patients out in the back of the truck such as start IVs and give medications under standing order protocols.

I have been able to become a preceptor to many new providers on the squad, which has been very rewarding to me. I have learned to drive an ambulance (and memorize the streets) which at times has been nerve-wracking, but has been an eye-opening and growth-inspiring experience.

There are many other people on the squad who are health care providers in their everyday line of work but there are also teachers, lawyers, and chemists. The squad allows for many

different people to come together and meet each other in the spirit of voluntarism.

My experience living in Charlottesville has been enriched by running with the squad and I have been able to connect a lot more with the Charlottesville community outside of the university. In the past three years, I have truly grown due to what I have done and what I have seen on the squad.

If you are interested in joining the rescue squad, there are many volunteer organizations that are willing to pay for the fee of the class in order for you to become an EMT if you join the squad afterwards. Go to http:// www.emsa.ca.gov/ for the California EMS association. In many communities, there are also opportunities to observe EMTs and paramedics at work. In this case, I think it is great for health care providers, such as nursing students, to see patients being cared for in the pre-hospital setting. I know that observers are allowed to observe with us in Charlottesville. If you are interested, contact the local squad for more information. For more information about the Charlottesville Albemarle Rescue Squad go to www.carsrescue.org.

From the Editor—Let's talk I just love the fact that Jessica gives us another route for jump starting our nursing careers and contributing to our communities.

Learning at a Higher Level.

Why Huntington Hospital?

We are the finest community-based regional medical center in Southern California, and the only Level II Trauma Center and Regional NICU in the San Gabriel Valley. Huntington Hospital is a teaching affiliate of the University of Southern California School of Medicine as well as eight nursing schools and colleges. Ongoing technological advances (such as the West Tower patient care building project) confirm our reputation as a leading edge health care provider in our community.

Where is Huntington Hospital located?

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How do I apply?

To schedule an interview, please contact Employment Services at 1-866-446-HIRE. You may apply online at www.hhcareers.com or visit us at 100 W. California Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91105. Huntington Hospital values its workforce diversity.



Nursing at a Higher Level

Mentoring at Your School Chapter

By Valentina Zamora

Many people will tell you how much they love the idea of mentoring. They should; mentoring is a wonderful way to share your life experience with another person. After all, who hasn't thought about writing a book about their real life adventures in nursing school! Here are four tips to help you start a mentoring project at your school chapter:

- ✓ Have a faculty member develop a program for you about group development and working within a mentoring partnership. This can be a simple seminar that is given before/after a meeting. Be sure to have snacks on hand. A local hospital may even be interested in helping you out by sponsoring the event.
- ✓ Have a mentoring tea or other type of event (How can anyone turn down pan dulce and champurrado?). This can be a chance for people interested in mentoring to get together and start a dialogue. Have icebreaker activities that reveal students personalities (specialties of interest, work experience, family, etc.). Be sure to show the video, if you have it.
- ✓ Have each participant try to meet on a regular basis. At least once a month. You can foster these relationships by holding events each month. Raffle matching backpacks, stethoscopes, etc.
- ✓ Ask your faculty about incorporating clinical time into mentoring activities. And remember recognition of activities from Leadership U! I look forward to the posting of more wonderful ideas on the CNSA website. It is so important to have these kinds of relationships while in school, and even after. We can help each other to grow and thrive during what can be a very stressful time. It will be worth your time and energy when you see how exciting it is to touch another's life.



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Rafael Ramos, Co-Chair, North San Francisco State University

The Advantages of being a Nursing Assistant prior to landing your first RN Job

When I first entered the BSN program at San Francisco State University last Fall 2005, I found myself very inexperienced compared to my other classmates who were LVNs, EMTs, Paramedics, Tele Techs, CNAs, Unit Secretaries, etc. *You name it, our class had it!* The only experience I had is my previous retail job at GAP and American Eagle. Although I did volunteer as a transporter and medical librarian at our local regional hospital, I still think that my health care experience was inadequate. At this point, I felt the need to step it up a notch!

When I first heard the idea from the senior nursing students in my university that most hospitals in my area in San Francisco are taking nursing students who have finished their Med-Surg rotation as Nursing Assistants, I felt compelled and delighted that this might be a good opportunity to widen my health care experience. (Most hospitals in San Francisco take Nursing Students as CNAs even if they don't have a CNA license as long as they can show proof that they've finished their Med-Surg clinical rotation. It would be a good idea to check with the hospital's Human Resources before applying). And so immediately after finishing my Med-Surg clinical, I applied online to Stanford Hospital, University of California, San Francisco, California Pacific Medical Center and Kaiser Permanente. I have to admit that filling up their application can take some time to finish but don't be intimidated because once you fill up one application from one hospital, the other hospitals would ask you similar questions. TIP: Copy everything that you've answered to MS WORD so you can just paste it if a similar question comes up on a different application. Also, maintain a good relationship with your faculty for you need to put them as references. I was fortunate enough to have a faculty advisor, Dr. Jane deLeon who cares so much for the success of her students. Believe it or not, she personally called my employer at Stanford Hospital to provide me a very encouraging recommendation. And guess what? I got the job!

Currently, I work as a per diem Nursing Assistant (N.A.) at Stanford Hospital for the past 18 months and recently at UCSF, both at a step-down Cardiovascular ICU. I have to say that my experiences by far are both remarkable and rewarding. Some of the advantages I believe of working as a Nursing Assistant prior to graduating from nursing school include:

1. Being able to take *countless* Vital Signs, EKGs, Gluco-checks Recording I's & O's, bed making, bed baths, etc. - During my clinicals at school, I remember the few times that I had the opportunity of learning these things. In most cases, since clinicals were only held once a week and we were only limited to 1-2 clients per shift plus the never-ending care plans! I felt that I was not

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getting the most out of my clinical experience. Of the many things that a new RN going through a New Grad Training must learn i.e. hospital protocols and procedures, proper medicine administration, etc, these simple skills are often not given enough attention which can sometimes contribute to client dissatisfaction and poor nursing care. As an experienced N.A, I believe that I am proficient enough to perform these skills. Therefore by the time I graduate, I believe that I can focus more on complex tasks.

- 2. Performing Observations Besides the RN, NAs are the ones whom the client often interact and see. As a student nurse and a patient advocate, one is equipped with knowledge to see any positive manifestations, signs and symptoms of the disease that the client may have. As an NA, one can report this to the RN and apply appropriate interventions. I believe that the more bedside experience one has, the better nurse one will be. This is because, the more one can observe first hand the signs and symptoms of the different diseases out there, the better one will be able to identify and perhaps prevent that disease from progressing.
- 3. Be able to see *cool* procedures I am fortunate to be working on a teaching hospital with healthcare professionals who are all student-oriented. During the not so busy times at work, most of my co-workers invite me to observe/assist whenever they perform procedures to my clients. *Don't forget to ask the client's permission first before observing!* I have witnessed several procedures that I haven't or rarely have seen during my clincals at school i.e. PICC placement, Lumbar Puncture, Central Line dressing change, CODE BLUE, I.V. insertions, Foley Catheter placements, etc. I believe that these experiences are crucial because all of us will encounter this in one way or another. And just like my aforementioned statement, the more one encounter these experiences, the more proficient and confident one will be in performing these procedures.
- **4. Patient interaction** I believe that this is by far the most important and rewarding part of my job. Everyday at work, I encounter different clients and their family members. Some can be very warm and accepting to the care I provide while others can be demanding and rude. However these are normal facets of our job. It is truly important that one can practice effective therapeutic communication techniques to our clients and there is no better way of improving one's communication skills by talking to the clients. As one becomes more comfortable talking to clients (sometimes humor can help!) one can become effective communicators in the process.

I am very glad that I took the role as a Nursing Assistant for I know that this will benefit me a lot in the long run in my Nursing career. I was able to network with a lot of interesting healthcare professionals i.e. MDs, CNSs, NPs, RNs, etc, be able to go the different units in my hospital, see a variety of diseases and disorders, expose myself to the different equipments/materials in the hospital i.e. PYXIS, Hoyer lift, EKG, Respiratory machines etc.

I would highly encourage every student nurse to consider getting a Nursing Assistant position prior to graduating for the reasons mentioned above. Once you get hired as an N.A, REMEMBER: Let your co-workers know you're a student nurse, offer help to anyone on your unit and maintain good relationships to everyone especially to your Nurse Manager; next thing you'll know, you'll be having unforgettable experiences and also a job offer on hand!



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*Modern Healthcare/Verispan, February 2007; San Diego Society for Human Resource Management, 2004; Hospitals and Health Networks, 2005



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FACULTY PERSPECTIVES

My Lessons Learned: Twenty-five years in nursing ...

by Rebecca Long, MS, RN, CMSRN, CCRN San Diego State University

Senioritis. It seems like yesterday that I was impatiently awaiting my graduation from nursing school. I thought the day would never come and even threatened to quit when it all seemed insurmountable. Fast-forward twenty-five years: I'm in a profession, which I dearly love; writing to you on the brink of your unfolding career and life. What I most want to share with you are lessons that I have learned about life in nursing.

Nursing has been an incredible career. I have worked on a cardiac ambulance, in a variety of acute and critical care units, as a clinical nurse specialist, expert witness for nursing, and am now a faculty member for SDSU. I serve our veterans through employment at the San Diego VA Healthcare System. Through my participation in professional organizations, I have led a local chapter, worked as a lobbyist at American Nurses Association, in a senator's office on healthcare, and am currently chairman of the board for the American Association of Critical Care Nurses Certification Corporation.

Did I have any ONE of these as a goal upon graduation? Absolutely not. I just knew I wanted to be the best nurse I could be; wherever I landed. In contemplating what I wanted to share with you, I have listed ten items that I wish I would have known as a new nurse.

- 1. Continuous Learning Keep a textbook by your bedside for the first 1-2 years of practice in any new area. Keep a pocket index card and jot down those diseases/conditions with which you are unfamiliar that come up in the course of your work. Do a five-minute review at your bedtime. Cultivate curiosity. Never stop learning, whether you remain at your basic education preparation or continue with an advanced degree. Set aside an hour a week to peruse journals or other sources to keep up to date.
- 2. Skilled Communication Learn how to have conflict and not feel bad about it. Skilled communication is one of the standards of a Healthy Work Environment released by the American Association of Critical Care Nurses in 2005. Competence no longer includes clinical skills only, but also includes communication skills. Watch those around you who do it well. Learn how to confront another practitioner regarding their practice in a positive manner. I used to go home, replay the conflicts and strategize what I would have said/done differently. I would stand in the mirror and practice my words, tone of voice, and facial expressions. The next time that situation came up; I usually nailed it by staying calm and effectively getting my point across.
- **3. Professional Record Keeping/ Rejuvenation -** Keep a file with your resume, transcripts, training record, continuing education units (CEU's), short and long term goals, annual evaluations etc. These can be used for annual evaluation or to review your goals and accomplishments. Also, save the

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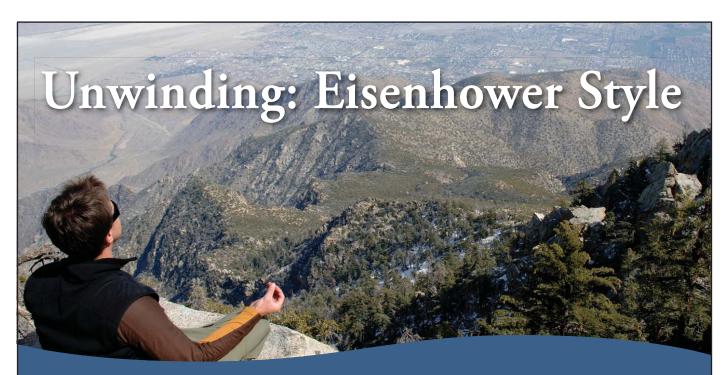
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letters/cards from families and staff received over the years. When you are physically and emotionally drained, they will be a reminder of just how much your compassion and expertise meant to those around you. You will rejoice in your profession and the spirit of mankind. My mother finally placed them in a scrapbook for me, and it is definitely one of the things I will grab if California fires ever threaten my home.

- 4. Certification Get certified in whatever field you choose. It demonstrates your commitment to patient care and to families. It is also something you do for yourself to validate your knowledge and skills in a specialty area. Certified nurses have demonstrated higher satisfaction and higher wages. Investigate what certifications are appropriate for your area, go to the website and view the eligibility so that you can plan ahead. Prepare with the resources provided and consider a review course. It's much more fun to share the preparation with a friend or a study group.
- 5. Legal Aspects Learn what "standard of care" means related to the care of the patients in your area of practice. In general, it means that under like conditions, that your care will be judged as being similar to a nurse's care with similar training and education. Go to the board of registered nursing in the state in which you are licensed. Look up "nurse practice act". View the resources that the board of nursing has to help you with safe care within bounds of your scope of practice. Learn what is truly important to document and do it.
- **6.** Value of a Mentor Look for mentors in each role. I've had many at different times throughout my career. It has never been formal. It has been someone that inspires me and is WISE. Looking around at the site of your first workplace for someone who you believe is a role model. Ask them. They will be more invested in you.
- 7. Balance Get balanced; enjoy your career, but don't forget to enjoy life as well. This includes attention to your dimensions of health, physical, mental, and spiritual. Yes, we take care of everyone else but ourselves. Foster self-care in yourself and others. Schedule breaks and vacations and take them! Remember, nursing is a marathon, not a sprint. Learn to pace yourself through your day and career. Aromatherapy and chocolate have wonderful restorative powers. A 20-minute spin on your exercise bike at home before your work begins done over time helps the neurons connect and keeps the pounds off. Find some activity you enjoy and do it most days of your life. Learn how to deal with death from a spiritual aspect.
- **8. Finances -** if you have debts or student loans; make it a priority to pay them off. There are several resources on how to form a written plan related to this. See a reputable financial planner. The dollars you invest at a young age will grow immensely. The key is to do it early. Optimize any tax shelter annuities early in your career.
- **9.** Ethics don't do anything personally or professionally that violates your conscience. I've seen a colleague pay dearly for one too many drinks at a party. What you do in your personal life can affect your ability to get or maintain your nursing license. You have worked too hard to put at risk something so valuable with a bad decision. Patient safety is critical and what you do in your personal life can affect your perceived ability to deliver safe care in your professional career.
- 10. Open to new Experiences Be open to possibilities you never considered. Goals are great. Just know they will probably change. Oh, I had many goals at graduation. Guess what? They evolved into different goals. Know that each experience will allow you to take something different from it. One more thing; please know that you will gain the confidence you need in time. Knowledge comes first and the ability to use that knowledge to advocate will follow. Then you will be able to stop a bulldozer on a dime if you need to. My challenge to each of you is to ponder how this list could impact your future career and to challenge yourself. In twenty-five years, you'll be writing your own article!



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FACULTY EXTRA

Success via Mentoring at San Diego State University

By Dr. Lorraine Fitzsimmons, DNSc, FNP, BC

I began mentoring at San Diego State University School of Nursing in the fall of 2004. The mentoring program is part of Recruitment and Retention grant that was initiated six years ago to increase the number of underrepresented students. The focus of the program is on assisting nursing students in the first three semesters of the nursing program—primarily students who were failing. My goal was to help them be more successful and to interrupt their repetition of courses. Students came via self-referral, referral from the teacher or a classmate. Sessions were either by appointment or walk-in. Initially, students came after their first exam failure.

This fall students were asked (especially the first semester students) to come prior to the first exam to avoid the first failure. Students were seen individually and in groups. We began by their identification of specific problem areas. In groups other students identified what worked for them. Identified problem areas were: time management, lack of self confidence, lack of assertiveness, ineffective study habits, and problems talking with the teacher and asking for help as well as family or work schedules. Once the particular problem was identified, strategies were suggested. For example, written schedule for the week and month, designated short study time to assist concentration and taking breaks, daily review of material with testing of knowledge and understanding, changing negative thoughts to written positive ones (and posting them), and slow deep breathing to decrease stress and anxiety. Students were asked to either call or return and give me feedback on how the strategies were helping them or to make any necessary adjustments. Both students and faculty have reported positive results from this resource. The adjustment to the nursing program can be difficult. Many students are not prepared for the amount of study required to be successful and the need to evaluate the effectiveness of previous study habits.



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Vice President

Brandy Azevedo CSU, Sacramento

CNSA: Opportunities Abound

The 2007 CNSA State Convention was a pivotal time in my career as a nursing student; the time that this ROM issue is being published, four months will have passed since the State Convention took place; even so, it still remains an especially defining moment for me. The theme, "Celebrate Nursing: A Profession of Infinite Possibilities," should not be just a memory of a successful convention, but it should be a starting point for our future as nursing students. We are all so close to becoming professional nurses that it is important to build a strong foundation now so that we can take advantage of all those opportunities the nursing profession will impart upon us.

I realize that while we are all still in the thick of our nursing courses, it is difficult to think beyond the challenges that our exams and clinicals bring us each semester. However, CNSA is an organization that will help us transition from surviving being nursing students to succeeding as nursing professionals. The first step to building a strong professional foundation is to integrate the CNSA core values into our interactions with our peers and especially within the clinical environment. These core values are leadership, education, advocacy/activism, professionalism and stewardship.

Participation within CNSA exposes us to these core values and gives us opportunities to strengthen them. We gain leadership through participation in our local schools and community activities and by setting examples of what nursing professional should be. We are getting optimal benefits of our education by striving to make as much out of our baccalaureate program as is possible; many of us are considering more education in order to further our scope of practice and, in turn, our influence on the nursing world. We are advocates for our patients and activists for our profession by staying knowledgeable on legislature and voting in our local and state elections; we also help create new policies and legislature that affects nursing students, nurses, and the healthcare system. We are aware that the future and longevity of nurses and the nursing profession relies upon our ability to encourage diversity and multiplicity.

Each of us is unique and we all are passionate about different things. And with the precious little free time that we have, how are we supposed get involved in all of these activities? Luckily, there are a plethora of opportunities to get involved within CNSA that appeal to a variety of interests. Community health volunteer activities allow us to provide assistance to the local chapter as well as state communities; Break through to Nursing reaches out to prospective nursing students and encourages men and women of all different backgrounds and experiences to enter the nursing profession for its benefits and to also make our profession stronger and more able to meet the needs of our diverse patients/clients. Legislation is always changing and we can take an active role in influencing its direction for nurses and healthcare.

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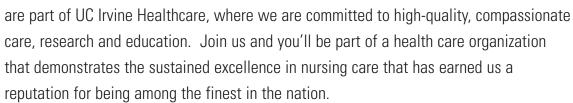
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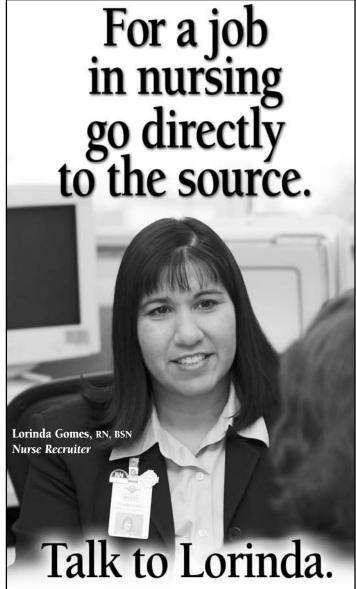


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We have so much power as nursing students and we can take that power with us into our careers to shape and guide the entire healthcare system. No matter your background, we are all nursing students, and we all advocates for the nursing profession. Our actions have widespread effects, far beyond our patient care and hospital involvement. We should all exercise our power to make our careers fulfilling and our actions rewarding. What part of nursing do you love? What are you passionate about? Discover what makes you excited to become a nurse, and get involved. Participate in your local chapter; visit www.cnsa.org and join a committee; our career is what we make of it, and we must start now as nursing students, to make it a remarkable one.



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Legislation

Ian St. Martin, Director California State University Sacramento

My name is Ian St. Martin and I am a second semester nursing student at California State University Sacramento. During my first semester, I immediately became involved with my local CNSA chapter by taking on the role of class representative and by joining a resolution committee. As the semester continued I became more involved with our local chapter. The highlights of my involvement were traveling to Anaheim for the NSNA convention and attending the RN lobby days hosted by ANA/C. After attending these two events, I decided that I wanted to take on the responsibility of Legislative Director at my local chapter. I was elected into the position towards the end of my first semester and then began working on the resolution, "In Support of Research for Residency Programs for Registered Nurses". Over the summer between my first and second semester, with the help of other authors, the resolution was completed and submitted to CNSA for the fall convention. It was during the resolution process that I decided to take on the role of Legislative Director for the CNSA state board. During the CNSA Fall 2007 Convention I was elected into office as the CNSA Legislative Director. I look forward to sitting on the CNSA state board for the upcoming year and I endeavor to complete my goal, increasing the number of resolutions from California local chapters. I plan to accomplish this goal by giving my personal support to all future resolution authors. With our combined efforts, we can look forward to a very productive year.

Resolutions Passed at the 2007 CNSA Convention

(http://www.cnsa.org/currentResolutions.htm)

Resolution A: (CNSA submission to NSNA convention in March, 2008)

In Support of Research for Residency Programs for Registered Nurses

SUBMITTED BY: California State University, Sacramento AUTHORS: Ian St. Martin, Nancy Chiang, and Carrie Doerning

Resolution B:

In Support of the Establishment of Official Policies and Protocols Providing for the Option of Family Presence During Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Emergency Invasive Procedures in the Hospital Setting

SUBMITTED BY: Maurine Church Coburn School of Nursing-Monterey Peninsula College AUTHORS: Kristine Birmingham, Cherie Bumanglag, Patrick Riel de Vera, and Lesley Flynn

Resolution C:

In Support of a Continuum of Medical Care for the Homeless in Order to Prevent Patient Dumping SUBMITTED BY: The Chapter of California Nursing Students' Association at Saddleback College AUTHORS: Anne Hoang and Trisha Danbara

For more information on writing and submitting resolutions or for clarifications and comments please contact me through my email Ian St. Martin, CNSAlegislative@gmail.com

You can also find the details of each Resolution by logging onto: http://www.cnsa.org/currentResolutions.htm



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AB 1559 Signed by the Governor

Admissions Criteria for Community College Nursing Programs By Louise Timmer

ANA\C President Louise Timmer worked closely with Assemblyman Thomas Berryhill, Diane Welch, ANA\C member and Chairperson of the Community College Nursing Advisory Board and Barbara Whitney, Administrator for the Community College Chancellor's Office to support AB 1559. The legislation proposed to amend Section 78261.5 of the Education Code relating to public postsecondary education. This bill requires a community college registered nursing program that elects to use a multicriteria screening process on or after January 1, 2008, to evaluate applicants for admission to nursing programs to include specified criteria relating to the academic performance of candidates seeking admission. In addition, the bill authorizes the community college registered nursing programs the use of an approved diagnostic assessment tool as part of the screening process.

The bill requires a community college registered nursing program that uses a multicriteria admission screening process to provide a report of its nursing program admissions policies to the Chancellor's Office. The admissions policies must include the weight given to any criteria used by the program, and include demographic information relating to both the students admitted to the program and the students in the cohort group who successfully completed that program. In addition, the bill encourages the Chancellor to develop and make available a model admissions process to community college registered nursing programs by July 1, 2008.

It is anticipated that AB 1559 will reduce the high attrition rates that several community college nursing programs currently have related to academic failure. Impacted nursing programs may now include the use of academic performance criteria and diagnostic assessment tools in the multicriteria screening process. The community college deans and directors were in support of this bill and provided several letters in support for it. The CSU faculty and nursing students sent numerous letters of support to the legislators and to Governor Schwarzenegger's office. This was a very good example of a united faculty and student voice acting together to effect a very powerful political advocacy role to meet the needs of the community college nursing programs.

The law remains in effect until January 1, 2016, unless a later enacted statute is enacted before January 1, 2016, that deletes or extends that date. The bill is referred to the Department of Education for specific regulations developed with the assistance of the community college Chancellor's Office personnel.



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WE ARE PROUD TO BE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Sample Questions Provided



- 1. A 54 year old female client who is 3 days post abdominal hysterectomy buzzes the nurse to complain of left sided chest and back pain on inspiration. The nurse notes hemoptysis, shortness of breath, and auscultates bilateral rales. Vital signs are BP 140/90, HR 122/min, Resp 28, T 100. O2 Sat is 89%. Based on this assessment the nurse's first action should be to
 - a. Obtain arterial blood gases stat.
 - b. Start a second IV of Normal Saline to keep open.
 - c. Administer morphine for the pain.
 - d. Notify the physician.

Answer: D

Rationale: The patient has likely developed a pulmonary embolus post abdominal hysterectomy. The classic symptoms are chest and back pain on inspiration, hemoptysis, and dyspnea. Obtaining ABGs and starting a second IV would be delaying treatment. Never pick an answer that delays treatment. You already know there is a problem and a great assessment has been done. Is there anything else you, as a nurse, can do to correct the problem? NO! Get the person there who can actually help the patient and possibly save their lives! The physician! Now is not the time for morphine because we do not know yet what is actually causing the pain. If the physician wants morphine to be given after they have made their decisions, then it's ok and appropriate.

- 2. The nurse is caring for a 32 year old female client admitted with Class III / IV Pulmonary Hypertension. The nurse explains to the client that Lanoxin is being administered to the client in order to:
 - a. Manage peripheral edema
 - b. Improve right ventricular function
 - c. Increase pulmonary pressure
 - d. Constrict the pulmonary vessels

Answer: B

Rationale: Pulmonary hypertension leads to right sided heart failure. Lanoxin slows the heart rate and increases myocardial contractility thus improving right ventricular function. Loop diuretics such as furosemide, or bumetanide would be the appropriate drugs to manage peripheral edema as well as other signs of right sided heart failure: engorged neck veins, enlarged liver. It would not be appropriate to administer drugs to constrict the pulmonary vessels as this would cause pulmonary pressures to go up (that's not nice!). Calcium channel blockers dilate pulmonary vessels to lower pulmonary artery pressure in a client such as this.

- 3. A homeless person has been admitted to the medical unit and placed on airborne precautions for suspected active TB infection. The nurse knows that it is important to assess for the following signs and symptoms (Select all that apply).
 - a. Weight gain
 - b. Fatigue
 - c. Bloody sputum
 - d. Diaphoresis during sleep
 - e. Blurred vision
 - f. Hepatomegaly

Answer: B, C, D

Rationale: Feeling tired all the time or fatigue, weight loss rather than weight gain, loss of appetite, fever, coughing up blood and night sweats are the most common signs and symptoms of active TB. Blurred vision and hepatomegaly are not even related at all (but they may have sounded good)!

- 4. A 46 year old male is transported via ambulance to the Emergency Department with severe, crushing chest pain radiating up the left jaw. The client is diaphoretic with a blood pressure of 136/88, HR 102, Resp 24, T 98.6. The physician orders Oxygen at 2 liters/nasal cannula, Morphine 2 mg IVP, Aspirin 81 mg, and Nitroglycerin 0.4 mg SL. When administering the aspirin the nurse will instruct the patient to:
 - a. Chew the aspirin prior to swallowing.
 - b. Place the aspirin under the tongue so that it can dissolve.
 - c. Swallow the aspirin tablet.
 - d. Insert the aspirin between the cheek and gum for greater absorption.

Answer: A

Rationale: Aspirin has been shown to decrease mortality and reinfarction rates after MI. Use clopidogrel (Plavix) in case of aspirin allergy. The fastest way to get the aspirin into the circulatory system is to have the patient chew the aspirin prior to swallowing. Nitroglycerin is administered SL or buccal.

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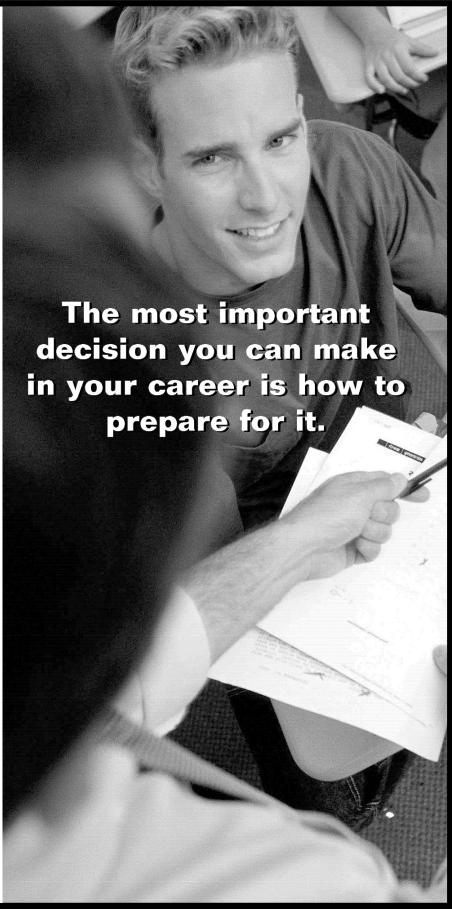


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Career Corner

Exclusive CNSA career resources

Whether you are looking for part-time work, an externship or full-time employment, the California Nursing Students' Association is here to help you. The CNSA now provides its student members with an online job board and career resource center, accessible through the CNSA website at http://www.cnsa.org/ and click on "Jobs".

The CNSA job board and career resource center is designed to meet the specific needs of job seeking nursing students throughout Virginia. Available on the job board are the following resources:

- New Grad Programs and Internships from across California and the nation
- Resume Writing Center (Including sample resumes, action verbs, etc.)
- Interview Center (Including sample questions, advice, tips, etc.)
- Salary Center (Salary Worksheet, glossary of key terms, negotiation tips, etc.)

Take Caution

Privacy concerns in the Information Age

Students should be very careful when registering with online services or sharing contact information with vendors at conferences. Many career related services will actively sell your contact information and resumes without your knowledge. We urge you to please be cautious when choosing online services and to be sure and read each website's privacy policy.

* If you register through the CNSA job board, your contact information and resume are 100% secure. AfterCollege, Inc. will never share or sell your information.

Resume Writing Tips

You've sent your resume to dozens of potential employers, yet you haven't heard back. You were certain that your detailed work history would attract some attention...what happened?

The most likely cause is a poorly constructed resume. Many Nurse Recruiters are turned off by resumes that do not highlight the applicant's skills, education and experience. On average, a Nurse Recruiter will spend 15-20 seconds scanning a resume. This is your chance to make a great first impression and to stand out from your peers. Below are some tips to remember when drafting your resume:

- 1. Create a career objective that is relevant to the position to which you are applying. You may have to create several versions of your resume if you're applying for a variety of openings.
- 2. Summarize your work experience. Make sure it includes any achievements and accomplishments you obtained. Ask yourself, "Is this relevant to the position for which I would like to be hired?" If you think it does not match, do not include it. If you are not sure, leave it in. You can always edit later.
- 3. Remember to include relevant coursework. Many job seekers overlook these details but they can add important background information to the Nurse Recruiters.
- 4. Include relevant professional, school and occupational activities. Include your volunteer experience if it is related to the positions you are seeking, particularly if you have held leadership positions. Include honors and awards if they are unique, fairly recent, and ideally relevant to your education and career goals.
- 5. Always use action words to describe your skills and work history. This will keep your resume interesting and compelling.
- 6. If possible, keep your resume to one page.
- 7. Do not include irrelevant information. Employers do not need to know your weight, height, age, or marital status. Besides, it's illegal for an employer to ask these questions.
- 8. Do not include salary information in your resume.
- 9. Proofread! Proofread! Do not send out your resume if there are any typographical errors. That alone could eliminate you from consideration.



TRANSITIONS: FROM STUDENT TO NOVICE NURSE

By Connie Robledo, RN, BSN

I graduated from nursing school with great joy and excitement, yet entered into my new nursing career with much doubt and trepidation. I kept all my textbooks to refer back to and I kept all my reference notes and cheat sheets that would help me in my endeavor to be a "great" nurse. I would soon learn that I did not have the intuition and the ability to anticipate situations and analytical concepts that only experience would give me. After visiting many hospitals and reviewing many new grad-nursing programs, I found one that best suited me. During the first week of orientation I felt overwhelmed by all the information that was given to me. Sitting there, knowing that in just a few days I would be on the floor putting to practice all that I had spent learning in the last four years of my life, and with the initials RN after my name, left a drowning feeling in my gut as I asked myself, "Am I really ready? Can I really do this? Could I ever be ready? What if this? What if that?"

On the first day of my preceptorship, I came on to the unit with these doubts on my mind. The unit was filled with commotion at change of shift. Doctors coming and going, looking for charts, looking for nurses, the nurses were dealing with families, administering the last minute meds, giving report to the oncoming nurses, the unit secretary answering call lights. There was a whirlwind of action and it threw me into a moment of panic, thinking, "Oh my goodness, what have I gotten myself into?"

That day I was able to care for a stable patient, and with the security of my preceptor near by, I did my assessment and applied the principles I had learned the last four years of my life. I observed my preceptor as she smoothly assessed the next five patients, as she organized her time and plan of care for each patient—all along putting out fires that came along the way. She answered calls from families and doctors, and was pulled from one direction to another. I was amazed as I watched her handle it all. She had the ability to understand a situation, perceive it's meaning, anticipate an outcome, and prepare for it. She has been a nurse for 17 years and she had acquired perception and understanding that had only come with experience. As I continued my preceptorship, I felt that what I needed to learn most from my preceptor were the skills that she developed from many years of experience. They included time management, critical thinking, and the ability to intuitively zero in on a problem and resolve it.

The fourth week into my preceptorship I was taking five out of six patients. It was the first day of my week, and within the first hour of my shift I was faced with fresh post-op patients, a patient that was desaturating, a patient who needed blood, a patient calling for pain medication, and a patient that needed a new IV. I immediately panicked, and then thought back to nursing school remembering my ABC's. However, at that moment everything seemed to be so very important and needed immediate attention. I stopped and took a deep breath as my preceptors reminded me that I needed to see the whole situation—understand the long-term goals and consequences. My preceptor helped me address each situation by making me see the overall situation as a whole, organize my plan and modify my routine in response to the events that needed my attention. I have been working on the floor now for a little over a year and I am not yet proficient in my decision-making and organization. However, the lessons I learned that night and thereafter—lessons about time management, critical thinking, organization and decision-making have enabled me to handle things with more confidence, making my job a lot less labored. I have also learned to use my resources including my nurse assistant, charge nurse, pharmacy, respiratory therapist, my colleagues, doctors and unit secretaries.

As I transition from novice to expert nurse it has been helpful for me to observe and learn and ask questions from experienced nurses who have developed the intuitive ability to perceive and anticipate situations and resolve problems using their analytical problem solving skills. I have also learned to not be afraid to ask questions—ever—and to not be afraid to ask for help.

Put the patient first. Do not doubt your ability and knowledge base that all those years of education provide you, enabling you to become an excellent, proficient RN.

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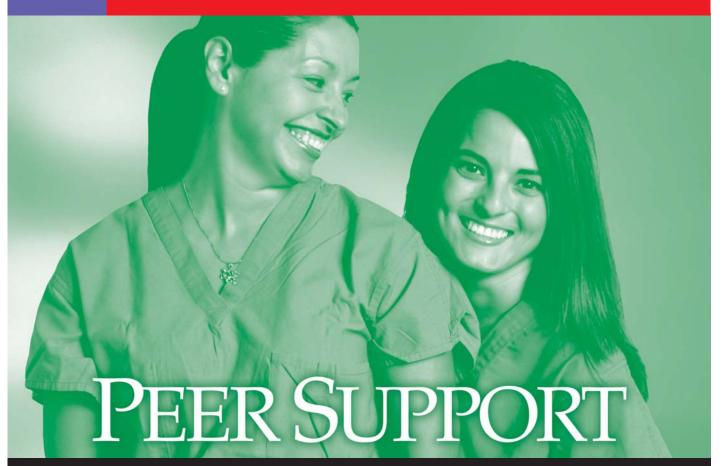
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