

My Greatest Privilege

By Paul Gonzales

TNSA President



Hello, my name is Paul Gonzales, and I currently serve as President on TNSA's Board of Directors. I attend nursing school at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, and I could not be more in love with the profession. Serving in TNSA has been one of my greatest privileges since joining nursing school, and I can honestly say that it has been one of the greatest experiences of my life.

When I attended TNSA's annual convention in 2012, I became so captivated by the enthusiasm and genuineness I experienced from the members. I knew from the moment I entered the House of Delegates that TNSA was something that I wanted to be part of. Thanks to the encouragement and information from April Lee, the Nominations Chair from 2012, I decided to run for the role of Vice-President. After some campaigning and a speech, I was so fortunate to be elected to this role. Due to certain circumstances, however, I had to step up into the role of president and Whitney Milburn has so graciously taken my place as Vice President.

Changing roles and accepting many new responsibilities was very intimidating at first, and I immediately had to jump into planning Council of Schools. I had the challenge of finding a theme, assisting in the planning, figuring out how to run the convention, and preparing two focus sessions. One of which was supposed to be done by 2 people. Definitely a hard pill to swallow, but once I realized that I was working with 7 very committed board members and 3 wonderful faculty, I knew that I would have the support I needed to be successful. Surely enough, with hard work and dedication, the mid-year convention turned out to be a success. The regional directors worked very hard to make certain that the convention was well attended, and the rest of the board picked up the slack where I could not.

By the end of the convention, the I was so excited that many of the members that knew nothing of TNSA left with a new enthusiasm. It is this enthusiasm that was planted in me at last year's annual convention, and it is my hope that everyone will bring that energy into their careers. That alone is the most rewarding experience of being a leader.

Beyond Council of Schools, I got to attend NSNA's Mid-Year convention in San Diego, CA and take part in Council of State Presidents. There I had the pleasure of experiencing how other states operate and developed endless professional contacts. Looking forward, I am incredibly excited about

the 2013 TNSA 65th Annual Convention that our Board of Directors have worked very hard to develop. I will also attend NSNA's national convention and do an opening message to TNA's House of Delegates.

It is my hope that whoever is reading this considers running for President of TNSA. As President, you will do everything I have mentioned plus whatever else you deem necessary to make the organization successful. An advantage to the role is that I will be able to mentor whoever gets elected until the first board meeting in June. Also, you have the option to attend NSNA's annual convention with me as an observer to assist in your education as a future leader. If anyone has any questions about this, please contact me at President@tnsa.org!

A few words to close. I am so honored to have served this role, and I honestly can say that I am so blessed. One of the things I mentioned in my campaign speech was that fulfilling the role of the nurse is fulfilling the role of a great leader, so what I was elected to this role means to me is striving to bring out the best in people to make them better nurses. It is my hope that I will touch the lives of many leaders in order to shape the future of nursing. I want to thank all that have elected and supported me, and I promise I will continue to strive to fulfill my duties as the President of TNSA.

Doing My Part to Make a Difference

By Whitney Milburn

TNSA Vice President



I went into nursing school with the goal of taking advantage of every possible learning opportunity. As a result of following that goal, I have developed many new goals that I never imagined myself having. I want to make a difference in the world, not just go to work and care for people. After receiving an email advertising the vacant Vice President position, I honestly thought to myself "What a great opportunity to get involved! But, I'm just your average nursing student and surely I don't have the qualifications, let alone the time to commit to such a huge responsibility." So, I shrugged off the possibility and continued on with my daily student life. However, I felt like the open TNSA position was a definite way to contribute to the bigger picture, and that if I did not at least apply for the position, I would be wasting an opportunity. As the Council of Schools event approached, the notion of applying for the position continued to nag at me and thanks to some encouragement from a professor and mentor, I was reminded that such positions often come with guidance and support. To my surprise, the position was still vacant so I applied. I now

proudly serve as Vice President on the Board of Directors for TNSA.

As the Vice President I am responsible for providing a membership report for the annual convention. I am also currently working on a new membership mapping project that will geographically highlight nursing schools without chapters, non-constituent chapters (less than 10 members), and constituent chapters (more than 10 members). This compiled information will be beneficial in allowing the newly elected state board to easily identify and focus on specific areas of membership.

For me, serving on the Board of Directors means wanting to represent nursing students, a willingness to learn and develop as a professional, a sense of responsibility to contribute to nursing education and high quality healthcare, and participating as a member of a team of individuals working towards the same goals. While I have served only a short time on the Board of Directors, the experience in its entirety has been amazing. I am constantly supported in my role and many have gone out of their way to make me feel welcome. I believe that my time serving in this role has allowed me to strengthen leadership skills and further develop as a future nursing professional. I encourage you to get involved: run for an office, make a difference, change the world!

New Beginnings

By Britni Nichols

TNSA Secretary/Treasurer



Greetings fellow nursing students and Happy New Year! It is time again for a new year, a new semester, and many other new beginnings, including the TNSA 2013 Convention and election of the new TNSA Board of Directors. Serving as your TNSA Secretary-Treasurer for the 2012-2013 year has been an honor and an extremely rewarding experience. I have had the opportunity to meet and work with many amazing people throughout the year including my fellow Board members, TNSA members, consultants, faculty, as well as many others.

As Secretary-Treasurer my core duties include recording the proceedings at all TNSA meetings and distributing those minutes to the Board of Directors, TNSA consultants, and NSNA, serving as custodian of all TNSA funds and signing checks as authorized by the Board, and overseeing the annual budget and all records and accounts of TNSA. As Secretary-Treasurer I serve as chairperson of the Finance Committee, and additionally, I co-chair the Resolutions Committee.

Each Board member serves as chairperson to the committee that is associated with his/her position but may chair an additional committee as well. I chose the Resolutions Committee because I have a special interest in resolutions. Resolutions are a simple way to have your voice heard, to let others know your position on a matter, and a way to become more involved and make a difference. As co-writer of a resolution that passed at last year's convention and as co-chair of the Resolutions Committee this year, I am looking forward to hearing the resolutions at this year's convention.

I am very much looking forward to pinning the new Secretary-Treasurer for 2013-2014. It is a big decision to run but also a very rewarding experience. At this time last year I knew that I wanted to run for TNSA Secretary-Treasurer and was already in the process of completing my application. I had done my research on each position and spoken to several of the previous Board of Directors when I decided that Secretary-Treasurer was the best fit for me. I know that Secretary-Treasurer may not be the best fit for everyone, but there are several positions available. If you are interested in running for Board of Directors, I would first recommend looking at the duties of the officers in the TNSA Chapter Information Guide and find the position that speaks to you. Then, talk to your faculty about running and talk to the Board member currently holding that position as he/she can give you the best information with regard to

that position. After deciding which position you want to run for, send in your application and start preparing your campaign for convention. Early preparation is the key! On behalf of all the Board of Directors, we look forward to many candidates in this year's election. We are here for you and will help in any way we can. Best of luck!

The Time of My Life

By Amy Bond

TNSA Editor



I want to say that I am having the time of my life in nursing school. I worked so hard to get here and I am taking advantage of anything that enhances my learning experience. I knew very little about our local Student Nursing Association, Texas Student Nursing Association or even the National Student Nursing Association when I began my journey. I knew right away that I wanted to be a part of these organizations, so the first week of school I ran for class representative and won.

I attended my first TNSA Convention just weeks after beginning nursing school. I had no idea what to expect at Conference; I just knew I wanted to learn more about TNSA. I found a passion. When sitting as a

Delegate in the House of Delegates, hearing the resolutions read and using my voice to vote to either pass or reject these resolutions; I knew in a small way that being a part of SNA, TNSA, and NSNA would allow me to make a difference. I found so much passion that weekend that I decided to run for Editor of TNSA, and once again I won.

The more I learned about what SNA, TNSA, and NSNA stand for, the more involved I became. Ultimately I became CPR Co-Coordinator in my local SNA chapter, and this past November I ran for President of my local chapter and won.

I looked at all I had accomplished. I was a class representative, Editor at state, CPR Co-Coordinator and now President of my local chapter. I typically fly under the radar and do not usually hold positions, but I found something I believe in and could not help but participate. I will even be the first to admit I am not the best public speaker, but I find strength to get up and stand for what I believe in. I want to encourage every nursing student to become involved in SNA, TNSA and NSNA and contribute what you can. If anything being a member provides strength and encouragement to your fellow classmates. The entire time I have been involved with these student nursing associations from day 1 when elected as class representative until today, I have preached team work. There are only so many hats you can wear or even need to wear at once. I

stepped down as class representative and CPR-Co-Coordinator. My term of office with state as Editor has been fulfilled. My focus and where I need to be is right at home leading my local SNA chapter. You are only as strong as the people standing beside you when going to battle, and as nurses in organizations such as SNA, TNSA and NSNA we need as many voices as we can get. We are a team, and I strongly believe in providing leadership opportunities to as many students who want to serve.

I will not graduate until this December, so I still have a little bit of time with SNA, TNSA and NSNA before joining TNA and ANA. I want to take this opportunity to let everyone know how important having these organizations is to the nursing profession. These organizations are your voice. Nurses do not have unions, they have organizations. These organizations give back to the community, but they also protect us as nurses and are advocates for our patients. Without these organizations, we fall silent.

I have loved serving as Editor. I have been able to use my voice and help others use their voice through writing and editing the Central Line. I want to encourage anyone that is interested in running for Editor. Students may think it is too time consuming, but it is really not. I devote a weekend every quarter to publishing an issue of the Central Line. In addition, I attend Council of Schools in the Fall and

Convention in the Spring. I take about an hour to write my quarterly report for state and I spent about 10-15 hours preparing presentations for my chair positions, The Image of Nursing and Publications, for Council of Schools. Finally, I attended our summer planning session to which I devoted a day. That is it over the course of a year. I worked all of this into my schedule and it did not take away from my studies; it enhanced it. There are many ways to serve at the local, state and national levels. Some positions take more time than others. I want to encourage nursing students to find a position that sparks your interest, and find out how time consuming the position is and see if it works with your schedule. Everyone is different and what works for some may not work for others. Sometimes the pure passion of the position is enough to be able to fit it into your schedule as with passion the work load is actually less. I have made friends across the state, and truly enjoyed every minute I devoted to TNSA.

I want to thank all of my advisors, instructors, fellow classmates, our state consultants and our TNSA Director for standing behind me and letting me spread my wings. If it was not for all of you, I would have not accomplished all that I have. Thank you for being a part of my team. I cannot wait to see what is in store for me in the next chapter of my life. I look forward to seeing everyone at Convention in February. If you are interested in running for Editor, please

contact me at editor@tnsa.org or see me at Convention.

Sometimes You Need a Little Push

By Tony Stanley

TNSA Nominating Chair



I went to convention last year with the mindset of hanging out with some friends in nursing school and having fun in Fort Worth and learning some useful information I could use in our own school's SNA.

I was sitting in one of the parliament sessions when the discussion of elections came up. I had not thought about running and was not quite sure I wanted to but I told one of my nursing school friends to nominate me. I figured if anything it would look good on my resume.

After getting the position I was a little worried how this would affect my school work and my own SNA responsibilities because I thought the time commitment would be a lot to take on, which ended up not being the case at all. For the first half of the year I concentrated on my two focus sessions at Council of Schools, especially since we had a mini election to fill the open Vice-President position. As the

Nominating Chair most of my responsibilities will happen during this year's convention when I am overseeing the upcoming elections, as well as continuing to drum up interest in the elections.

Being a state officer has been a great experience and I have made a lot of connections and new friends in the process. I definitely wish I was eligible to run again this year. I encourage you to think about running for a state office and if you are on the fence then please do not hesitate to call me. I am here to answer any questions you may have. I look forward to seeing you in Houston!

What is an Eastern Regional Director?

By Releine Balandra

TNSA Eastern Regional Director



I am Releine Balandra, the current 2012-2013 Texas Nursing Students' Association's (TNSA) Eastern Regional Director.

What is the role of the Eastern Regional Director? The role of the Eastern Regional Director is to improve the communication amongst approximately twenty nursing school in the eastern region with each other and with TNSA. The eastern regional director sends out upcoming announcements, events to the local

nursing chapters in the eastern region of Texas. As a regional director, it is my obligation to allow an open flow of communication with the local chapters and TNSA, whether it is a complaint, comment, concern, or compliment. I am also in charge of maintaining and updating the contact information for all the nursing schools in the eastern region of Texas that have a local chapter and is affiliated with TNSA and NSNA.

A regional director is a board of director, but it is not part of the "executive board of directors." In other words, regional directors do not make executive decisions, but they still play an important role in the board of director meetings and decision making because the regional directors are the first to contact the local regions and give updates to the board of directors regarding local chapter news, events, comments, and/or concerns. Other responsibilities for a regional director include: organize a seminar for his or hers specific region once a year, assist with membership drives and fundraisers as needed, and serve as a chair of one committee.

I decided to run for this position because I believe that it would be a great opportunity to learn, network with many people, have a state position, and to create bonds and friendship with other people. I have learned how to delegate, communicate, and discuss about nursing topics and concerns. This officer position is a rewarding position as I continue to unite local chapters amongst each other via communicating news and upcoming events. In order to ensure that the copious amount of schools in the eastern region receive the information, I communicate to the local

chapters via online newsletters, e-mails, and phone calls.

Is this officer position time consuming? From personal experience, I have spent about eight to fifteen hours a month to update information, contacting schools, making newsletters, and e-mails. Thus far, I have attended two out of the four regular meetings that the Eastern Regional Director will be expected to attend to: post-convention, Council of Schools, pre-convention, and Summer. While holding this position, I am able to maintain my grades, reading assignments, and have a life outside of nursing school.

What have I accomplished during my term? I have continued to keep open lines of communications with the TNSA board of directors, the TNSA administrative team, and the eastern region schools. I have updated the most recent contact information for all twenty schools in the eastern region. I have submitted an article about the 2012-2013 NSNA Breakthrough to Nursing Director, Grace Young, in the TNSA online newsletter, The Central Line. I have promoted the 2012 TNSA Council of School with the eastern region via e-mail. I have upheld my position as the Chairperson for the TNSA 2012-2013 Programs and Projects Committee. I have promoted "The Penny Wars" fundraising to promote and support the 2013-2013 TNSA Project, The Windridge Therapeutic Equestrian Center of East Texas.

Interested in becoming a regional director? Refer to the 2012-2013 TNSA Chapter Information Guide Handbook for further information, by-laws, position information, election packet, and policies. All the regional directors (north,

south, east, and west) and the nominating chairperson would be happy to give more information regarding the duties and information about the regional director position.

Thank you TNSA members for allowing me to serve as your 2012-2013 TNSA Eastern Regional Director.

Speak From the Heart

By April Lee

TNSA Southern Regional Director



Hello to all Texas Nursing Student Association Members,

TNSA exists for you, the amazing nursing student! Take advantage of the opportunities TNSA offers to you. Attend state and local events, where you can network with key individuals in our profession and learn about important issues in nursing, it is those reasons that I decided to run for Southern Regional Director. I knew I wanted to get out there and get to know individuals in the great state of Texas. I wanted to be the link to share information from the state level down to the local chapters.

With being the Southern Regional Director I was able to dedicate about 5-8 hours a month to answer emails or phone calls. It is a position that I knew I could balance with all my studying, clinicals, and local chapter meetings. I would like to challenge you to not only

run for state office, but come with your heart...make a difference, make an impact!!! Also, contribute your thoughts, ideas, and wisdom to The Central Line, so other students can benefit from it as well.

Involvement in our profession is not just something to pass the time. It is crucial to the survival and advancement of nursing. Only by letting your voice be heard can you make a difference in your field of nursing.

TNSA