

▶ VOLUNTEERING DURING HURRICANE IKE..... 2



▶ CONNECTING WITH PATIENTS IS CRUCIAL 3



▶ TNSA TO RAISE FUNDS FOR WINDRIDGE THERAPEUTIC EQUESTRIAN CENTER 3

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SPECIAL ISSUE!

The Central *line*

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS NURSING STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

A LOOK AHEAD

I hope everyone's semester is going smooth! The 2009 Council of Schools in Austin, Texas was a huge success. I just want to thank all the students and the faculty for their participation and involvement!

For those of you who were unable to attend, here is a quick recap on the exciting events that took place:

TNSA's Council of Schools key note speaker was Clair Jordan. She has served as Executive Director for the Texas Nurses Association since 1980. She currently serves on the Nursing Workforce Advisory Committee for the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies. Ms. Jordan's message was to inform nursing students about the changes that are occurring in healthcare. She believes nurses will be playing a much more vital role in patient healthcare participation in the future and wants students to know that NOW is the time to get involved with the changes in healthcare. Focus sessions included tips on interviewing techniques and time management for nursing students, NCLEX changes for 2010, mini NCLEX review sessions, faculty workshops, and information on how to campaign for a State Office. The Board received an enormous amount of positive feedback from many of the students that attended the focus sessions. We invite TNSA members and faculty to share any

ideas you may have or any focus sessions you would like to see at the State Convention in February. Please email us if you have any suggestions! We have several more outstanding sessions lined up for February. We are also trying to organize a two day NCLEX review for a discounted price for students who will be taking the NCLEX in 2010. Be sure to check out the website for updated information in the next few months.

Also, don't forget to organize your team for the 1st Annual Brain Bowl Competition this year! This year's competition will be hosted by Hurst Review Specialist, Shawn Boyd. This will be an exciting and fun way to compete against other schools and to raise money for the TNSA philanthropy. Most importantly it will be a great way to get to know other fellow nursing students and just another way to review for the NCLEX! Winners receive a trophy and will be recognized!

Winter break is just around the corner and so is the next TNSA State Convention so please check the website for updates. We look forward to seeing everyone and as always if you have any questions, comments, or concerns please feel free to email me or one of the board members.

I hope everyone has a great Winter Break!

♥ **Hollie Williams**



SCRAPBOOK CONTEST!

Ok everyone, it is time to break out the creativity and make a scrapbook showing what your chapter has been doing over the past year. There is a scrapbook contest that will be held at State Convention in February. We are looking for originality, creativity and organization. Outstanding covers will be recognized, along with other prizes awarded. We suggest, if you do not already have one, creating an official position of HISTORIAN for your Chapter within your Bylaws, and elect a member for this position. Also create a "Scrapbook Committee" which will be in charge of your scrapbook's development. Have fun with this project and let it reflect the excitement of your local chapter! Scrapbooks will be judged by your Regional Directors and returned to your chapter at the end of State Convention. We look forward to seeing all that is going on state wide with nursing students!

♥ **Melissa Duffy**



VOLUNTEERING DURING HURRICANE IKE



My first clinical day was a monumental experience. Pulling up to the improvised medical needs shelter at 6:30 a.m., I was very nervous and excited for my first day as a UT Nursing Student. The JJ Pickle Research Center was where the Hurricane Ike Medical needs patients and evacuees were taken. I was assigned a sweet, sixty year old Caucasian female with many chronic conditions: hypertension, diabetes, chronic low back pain, cirrhosis, hyperlipidemia, and rheumatoid arthritis. We discussed her current condition, medications, and medical history as I tried to build rapport.

The shelter was systematically set up with cots around the perimeter of the gym and the nursing station in the center with necessary supplies, while added supplies were stored in the hallway. On that day, a group of nurses came to administer free pneumococcal and influenza vaccines. My patient was “high risk” due to her chronic medical conditions and so she met the criteria to have a free vaccine. As I was talking to my patient

while she was waiting in line for her vaccine, she looked paler than before, and she was rubbing her chest and grimacing. I asked her if she was in pain and she said, “Yes, I am definitely having chest pain.” I knew I had to act immediately because of her past medical history of heart attacks, angina,



and DVTs. I told her nurse her symptoms and then informed the doctor of her condition. He further evaluated her and thought it would be a good idea to transport her to a local Emergency Department to have an EKG done. The doctor turned to me, the brand new nursing student, to tell him

her history and medications, which surprisingly I did without a problem. I was given the okay to ride with EMS and the patient to the hospital where once again, I advocated for my patient by telling the paramedics her current condition, medications she was on, and past medical history.

In the Emergency department, I held my patient’s hand and explained to her what the nurses and doctors were doing and planned to do. Once they took her for X-Ray, I had to return to the shelter. I did inform her family members of her condition and realized how important it is to holistically care

for a patient, which includes taking care of the family. The following day, my instructor had received news that my patient had a clot that was found and dissolved. I helped save her life by acting quickly, thinking critically, and staying calm during the process. This will be an unforgettable memory that I will link to Hurricane Ike and the importance of nursing volunteers during a natural disaster. This event will always remain with me as a monumental day in my nursing career.

 **Christina Stylianou**

OUR MISSION:

To provide the highest education for student nurses while aiding in the development of the whole person.

To have direct input into the standards on nursing education and influence on the education process.

To model a high level of integrity among students in their dealings with people as they strive for excellence in everything they do, as it is an expectation and not a goal.

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Connecting With Patients is Crucial to Nursing



At Covenant School of Nursing (CSON) in Lubbock Texas, we have already completed six weeks of clinicals. Students have accomplished a great deal from starting IVs for the first time, to inserting NG tubes and Foleys, to assisting with wound care and dressing changes. But even more important than the skills we have learned, is the quality care and interaction we have with our patients each and every clinical day. Nursing is a profession that protects and enhances a very precious gift: the health and well-being of others. However, in order to fulfill this mission nurses must uphold the true essence of nursing which lies with the nurse-patient relationship. As student nurses, with one to two patients per week in clinicals, we are able to spend quality time with our patients and provide them with individualized, attentive care. Helping a patient brush their teeth and put on deodorant may seem like a simple task, but it is often help with these simple tasks that can truly

brighten our patients' day. It is heartwarming to see how our therapeutic interactions with our patients can make a real difference during these difficult times in the hospital. Covenant Health System, where CSON students complete their clinicals, has a mission to "turn every patient contact into a sacred encounter." On each hospital floor, patients can fill out a special Covenant Heroes card for someone who has been especially attentive to them. Angie Jackson, president of Covenant Student Nurses' Association, received one of these cards when she was on the gynecology unit at Covenant Women's and Children's Hospital. Angie's patient stated, "Angie was a fantastic nurse. I was in extreme pain and she dealt with me with such compassion. It really made me relax. She was also strong in her continuity of care and stayed with me as long as she could through these very difficult times." Another CSON student, Katie Plott, received a card from her patient stating, "[Katie] was

genuinely sincere, showing great concern and compassion – very comforting. A student, but already a great nurse. She has a great career ahead of her." CSON student Christina Ramirez also had a very touching experience with a patient. The patient and his family were so moved by Christina's care that they gave her a cashmere blanket to show their appreciation. These specific incidents demonstrate that nursing goes beyond skills and procedures. As nursing students and future RNs, we must remember to make every interaction with our patients a meaningful one and to look at our patients as more than just a diagnosis. This is critical no matter what area of nursing we work in, no matter how many patients we have, or how busy we may feel on the floor. I encourage every nursing student to make it their goal to treat each and every patient like a family member and to provide the kind of care they would want to receive.

 Rachel Mastroianni

SMARTER NURSING:
Making the Connection

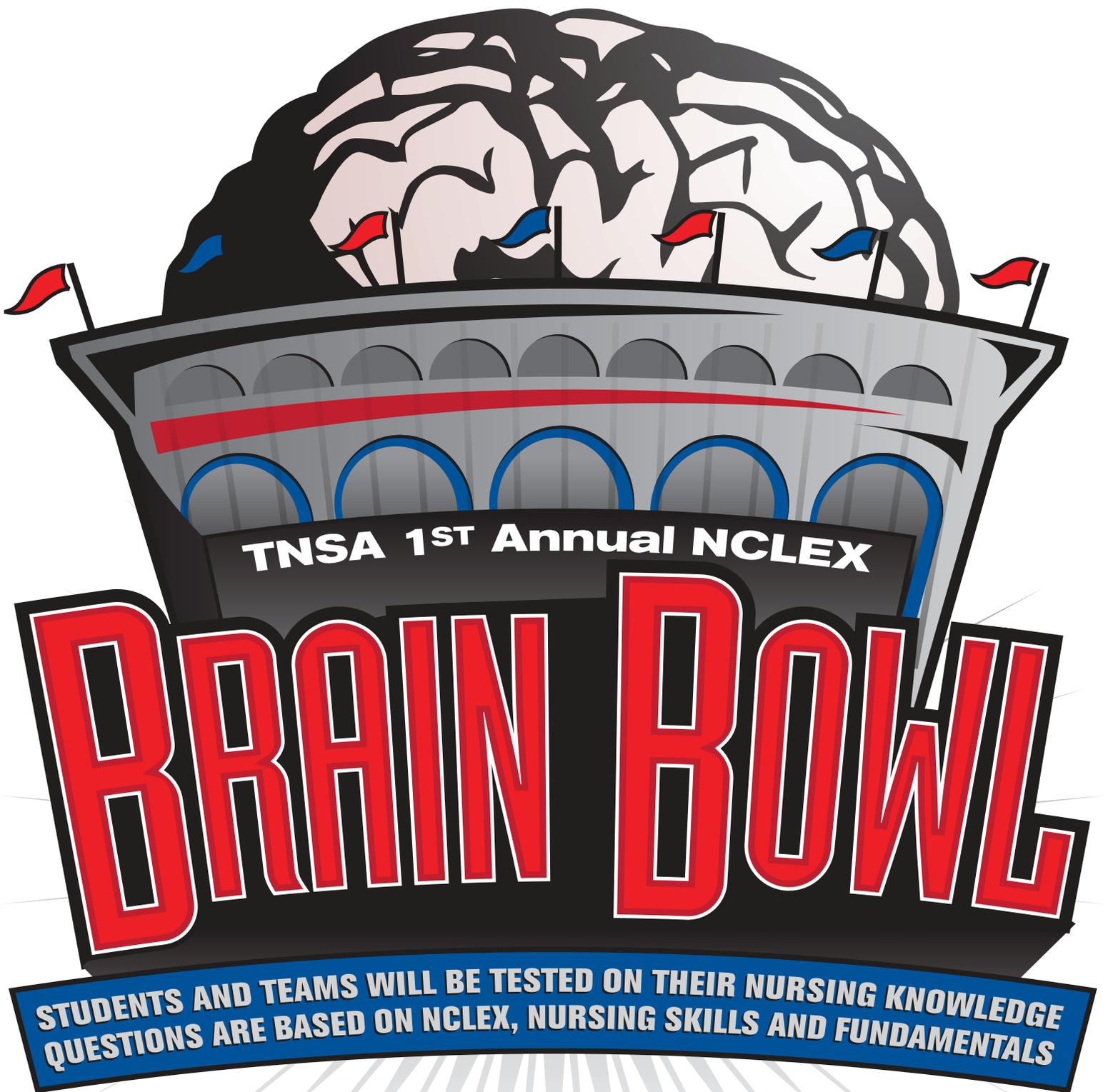


"Our job as nurses is to cushion the sorrow and celebrate the joy, everyday, while we are 'just doing our jobs.'"

- Christine Belle, RN, BSN



The Board of Directors has decided to dedicate the funds we raise this year to Windridge Therapeutic Equestrian Center (www.windridgetexas.org). Executive Director and Head Instructor, Margo Dewkett spoke about Windridge at one of the Council of Schools focus sessions, and brought many to tears (myself included!) with her beautiful stories. Hippotherapy has proven benefits for people of all ages with any impairment. We plan to visit Windridge (near Longview) over the holidays. Please let us know if you would like to come along!



**Teams of 4-6 students, Cost of \$15.00 a team
(\$3.00 for students who need to be assigned a team)**

This is a great chance to test your knowledge against other schools!

We will have three rounds with a bonus round at the end.

The Event will last about 2.5 hours, after that join us for an Ice Cream Social!

All earnings go to support Windridge

Visit www.windridgetexas.org to find out more about your TNSA philanthropy



AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

TNSA awards schools, students, and faculty for outstanding participation, projects, and programs during the school year. There are many contests and awards, and we encourage everyone to apply to every award for which they are qualified. Often, the awards inspire a school to develop a new project or position for their school. Please read over all the awards and also look online and in the chapter information guide for more details. Applications can be found online and in the chapter guide. Feel free to contact any of the Board of Directors for more information about a specific award or how to apply. Good luck and we look forward to hearing about the great things going on throughout Texas!

Student of the Year

Each year one TNSA member is named “Student of the Year”. This student represents the spirit of nursing through service, character, and academic excellence. Please nominate yourself or a fellow student who you think embodies these important values as a student nurse.

Faculty of the Year

Each year one faculty member is named “Faculty of the Year”. This faculty represents nursing through community service, dedication to their students and schools, and participation in local TNSA activities.

Best State-Wide Project in Breakthrough to Nursing

A Breakthrough to Nursing project should encourage recruitment and retention of nursing students, target nontraditional as well as traditional students, and promote diversity and transcultural awareness. For better ideas about what Breakthrough to Nursing is please consult the chapter guide or you can find information about the national Breakthrough to Nursing committee on the NSNA website.

Best State-Wide Project in Save Your Quarters

This award is based on the amount of money collected and the number of members that participate in the local level. All money that is raised from “Save Your Quarters” will be donated to the Windridge Therapeutic Equestrian Center of East Texas.

Best State-Wide Project in Membership Recruitment and Retention

Each year TNSA recognizes individual students or local chapters that have worked hard promoting membership throughout Texas. It is the goal of TNSA to retain the members that we currently have as well as actively recruit new member in order to remain strong at the national level. Recognition will be given at the state convention to those chapters who:

- Are a new chapter with the most members
- Are an existing chapter with the largest percentage increase over the last year
- Are an existing chapter with the largest actual increase in membership over the last year.

Recognition will also be given to the individual who recruits the most members to his/her chapter. If you’ve seen someone at your school that you feel has done a great job in raising membership, please help us recognize them.

Best Overall Community Health Project

The Community Health Project award is given to the school that presents the best school project that implements a community health project on the local, state, or national level. A Community Health Projects Calendar is available in the chapter guide on page 164. This calendar lists specific days and months dedicated to health, like November is National Diabetes month. This calendar can give your organization good ideas for community projects.

Image of Nursing Award

The goal of the Image of Nursing program is to dispel any misconceptions the public may have of nurses and the profession of nursing by re-educating them; educating nursing students on how to project a positive image of nursing; and help students understand the meaning of professionalism. The award is given to the school that has a program that best promotes a positive image of nursing and demonstrates a significant contribution to the public and/or community. Media coverage is also highly encouraged and taken into account.

Political Involvement Award

Legislative policy and governmental affairs plays an important part in the nursing profession. The purpose of the Political Involvement Award is to educate nurses and nursing students about the legislation that impacts the profession and to increase awareness of the local, state, and national levels.

Scholarships

Did you know TNSA awards an annual scholarship at the state convention?! The amount awarded is based on maximum of two qualified winners for a total of \$500 split between the recipients. If there is only one qualified applicant, he or she will receive the \$500 scholarship! More information and forms are available on the TNSA website.



GAC REPORT

I am pleased to represent TNSA on the TNA Governmental Affairs Committee. With health care reform having priority on the domestic agenda, this legislative session promises to be very busy and interesting. I encourage you all to provide me with feedback so as to accurately represent TNSA on the GAC. We have a meeting scheduled for December 4, but in the meantime we have had several conference calls. First, we have identified and planned course of action for Texas congressional bills carried-over from the last session. They include sovereign immunity, mandatory overtime prohibition in long-term care and home health settings,

and APRN (Advanced Practice Registered Nurse) prescriptive authority. As expected, TNA supports all of these bills. Contact me if you would like specifics regarding one or all of the bills. We are also in the process of officially endorsing a candidate for the Republican Primary gubernatorial candidate. Kay Bailey Hutchison, Larry Kilgore, and Debra Medina are challenging incumbent Governor Rick Perry. Please let me know if you would like more information on the health policies and/or policies affecting nurses that each candidate supports. Again, feedback allows me to accurately represent the stance of TNSA.

Lastly, GAC chair, Jim Willman, attended a pre-trial hearing of the Winkler County nurses, Vicki Galle and Anne Mitchell, who were fired from their jobs after reporting a physician to the Texas Medical Board. The Texas Department of State Health Services "conducted a survey of the hospital based on TNA's complaint about the hospital's policy against reporting to outside agencies." The survey found that the nurses acted in good faith and were fired as retaliation for their complaint. I will keep you all updated as the trial begins.

♥ Harvey Bowers



GREETINGS TO FACULTY ADVISORS

It is a great honor for me to have been selected to be the Texas Nursing Students' Association Special Consultant. As such, I would like to take this opportunity to encourage each faculty advisor to bring a contingency of students to the Annual TNSA Convention February 11-13, 2010 at the Omni Hotel San Antonio. I

would also encourage faculty to plan on attending the Advisors luncheon at the convention. We always have a great time of discussion and unfortunately never enough time to discuss everything that we have on our minds. But I do hope you will find the discus-

sion time beneficial. I would like to have each advisor send me their contact information so it can be disseminated out to help new faculty advisors develop additional contacts and resources as they assume their new position. Also, for convention we are always looking for speakers to give breakout sessions during the time when the ballots are being counted. If you or anyone that you work with would be interested

in presenting a breakout session, please contact Pat Pollock (tnsa@flash.net) or myself (judy.smith@lamar.edu). And please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or I can be of any help to you in regards to TNSA. ♥ Judy Kaye Smith

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TPAPN UPDATE

As the TPAPN Committee Chairperson, I attended the TPAPN Advisory Committee meeting in Austin, TX on September 4th. The Texas Peer Assistance Program for Nurses (TPAPN) offers nurses life-renewing opportunities for recovery from chemical dependency and mental illness, and integrates nurses back into the profession, thus protecting the public and promoting professional accountability. TPAPN was created as a non-punitive, confidential and voluntary alternative to reporting RNs and LVNs to the Texas Board of Nursing. The goals of TPAPN are to identify nurses experiencing mental health, alcohol/drug problems that have been or are likely to be job impairing; assist these nurses in obtaining appropriate treatment; monitor the nurse's return to the work force; and educate employers and nursing colleagues about the negative effects of addiction/mental illness in the work place and the potential for rehabilitation and return to produc-

tive work. TPAPN is available to nurses having one or more of these diagnoses: substance abuse, substance dependency, anxiety disorders, major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and schizoaffective disorder.

TPAPN holds regular committee meetings to discuss the new business for the organization. During the meeting the quarterly report was reviewed that addressed if the program was working, what outcome trends are evident, is the program compliant, is the program fiscally responsible, is the program well managed, and what requests TPAPN has of the Texas BON. The new Status and Strategic Plan Report was also covered, which contained goals and objectives of TPAPN for 2009-2010. Topics that were covered include an advance to a 3 year minimum program as a normal expectation for nurses participating in TPAPN and improving the program's support of participants. Many more topics were discussed, so please contact me if you would like more information! I encourage everyone to learn more about TPAPN on the TNA website at www.texasnurses.org. Please contact me with any questions about TPAPN or about how to get involved!

♥ Julie Matthews