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# The Central *line*

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS NURSING STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

## A New Year for New Opportunities



**Join Us!** 2010 TNSA  
62nd Annual Convention

February 11, 2010  
Thru  
Saturday, February 13, 2010

Omni San Antonio Hotel  
9821 Colonnade Boulevard  
San Antonio, Texas 78230



I hope everyone has had a great semester! This is the start of a new year, if you're not happy with the way something is in your life now it's the time to change it! For seniors graduating in May now is the time to start applying to jobs, internships, or graduate schools. For others let me encourage and express the importance of gaining experience in your field as a student nurse. Volunteer at a hospital, apply to an extern program, or participate in medical mission trips during the summer. Look online for summer extern programs with the Mayo Clinic, and other well-known hospitals throughout the United States. There are several websites available for nursing extern programs and summer work. The key is to start looking now! If you can't get a job at the hospital of your choice, try to volunteer on the unit that you are interested in working. Start getting your resume together and gathering information about potential job opportunities. One great way to meet hospital recruiters is by attending the TNSA State Convention in February. Don't forget to bring your resume! The State Convention also has planned several focus sessions that deal with resume building, interview techniques, and choosing the right job for your future nursing career.

Also, remember that elections are coming up in February for the 2010-2011 TNSA Board of Directors. You must get approval from your nursing school advisor or committee member in order to run. If you have any questions about the position you are interested in please email the Nominating Committee Director, Noelle Appel. Yes, I know you are in nursing school but let me encourage you to run for an office. Don't be scared of running for

a position because it is actually a lot of fun and a great way to meet many people! Don't forget about this year's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Brain Bowl. This year's brain bowl will be sponsored and facilitated by Hurst Review. This is not only a fun and great way to get more practice with a wide range of NCLEX questions from an actual review company, but will also raise money towards the TNSA philanthropy project. Five reasons why you should get a team together for this year's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Brain Bowl:

1. Some friendly competition among other schools
2. Cheap review session and extra practice for the NCLEX (this is actually a fun way to learn!)
3. Raises money for the TNSA Philanthropy Project
4. Each team winner gets an individual trophy
5. ICE CREAM Social afterwards!!

In closing, I just want to express that it has been an honor and a pleasure serving you as your 2009-2010 TNSA President! TNSA has had an exceptional board this year and I am so happy to have been able to be a part of it! Hope everyone has a safe Happy New Year! See you at the February State Convention in San Antonio and the NSNA Convention in Orlando. **Hollie Williams**

### Board of Directors

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## Beyond the Classroom

After starting nursing school, I soon discovered that my nursing education should not be restricted to a classroom. I heard stories from professors, RNs, and other students about their nursing involvement in the local community and around the world. I quickly realized that I wanted to have a story of my own.

At first, I went searching for opportunities to use my nursing skills hands on. I soon found out that just because I was allowed to perform a skill under professor supervision did not mean I was allowed to do it in the community! At first I was discouraged that I could not use these amazing new skills I had just learned to help whoever I saw fit. Then, one day I had the opportunity to attend a volunteer event at Austin State Hospital, the large state psychiatric hospital. I was not going with other nursing students, but pre-med and pre-pharmacy students that did not have the same patient interaction experience that I had gained in nursing school. Many of them were nervous and scared about interacting with the psychiatric patients. However, I felt confident that my nursing classes had taught me how to therapeutically interact with a variety of people.

The volunteer event did not consist of physical assessments or medical procedures, but simply spending time with the patients through games and conversation. While I was able to relax and enjoy the interactions, many of the other students remained nervous throughout the event because they did not feel they knew how to interact with the patients.

I realized after that day that nursing school is not just teaching us how to listen to breath sounds, start IVs, or prepare medications; it is teaching us how to compassionately interact with all people, sick or healthy, poor or rich, depressed or euphoric. It is this ability that makes nurses invaluable locally and across the globe. So, I encourage all of you to take your education out of the classroom. We do not have to be in a hospital, clinic, or even around sick people. We are needed to just spend time and love people in the way that nursing school has taught us. Although our hands on skills help save lives, never forget that it is our compassion and understanding that truly makes us nurses. ♥ **Julie Matthews**

 The Board of Directors has decided to dedicate the funds we raise this year to Windridge Therapeutic Equestrian Center ([www.windridgetexas.org](http://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. Windridge is located near Longview, TX and we encourage everyone to visit to see what its all about!*

## Take a Challenge

Welcome to 2010 all future nurses. I hope this finds you excited about a new year and reflecting on great memories and learning experiences in 2009. It is amazing to me how time seems to be flying while I am in nursing school. I have only 2 semesters left and it seems like it was just yesterday that I started this journey.

2009 was a very challenging year for me, but from each challenge I faced I found myself not only a stronger, smarter person, but a more competent future nurse! Due to a family emergency I was unable to attend the 2009 Council of Schools, but I hope that each of you that were able to attend took away new ideas. Our hopes were for all that attended to be able to give and get new ideas from each other, as well as make plans to improve on your current success.

As for me, I have continued to stay active with the Covenant Student Nurses Association. This last semester we worked with Safe Riders out of Austin and hosted a Car Seat Check. I also volunteered with the Texas Dental Association's Smiles Foundation. They hosted a free dental clinic to people who would otherwise be unable to receive dental care. It was my job to help with blood sugar, medication and vital checks to all persons receiving care. Boy what an amazing eye-opening experience that was! I have also just begun working as a nurse technician at Covenant Health Systems and I am so excited about the truly hands-on learning I will be getting. As we go into 2010, I would like to challenge each of you future nurses to find new things to challenge yourself to, whether it is volunteering in the

community, being a more active member of your local chapter or taking on part-time work at a hospital. We are the future of medical care and there are many areas where we can make an impact. My prayer is that each of you will have an incredible year in school whether you are just beginning or are almost done. Remember, each of the board members of TNSA are here to support you and if you ever need any one of us all you need to do is send an email and we will be happy to help. I look forward to seeing you at the state convention; it is just around the corner and is going to be AWESOME!!

♥ **Melissa Duffy**

## 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.





# Why the Outrage?

## What's at Stake in the Winkler County Nurses Case?

The criminal trial date is set for February 8, 2010, in what's come to be known as the "Winkler County nurses" case even though a change of venue has moved the actual trial out of Winkler County. There's a lot riding on the outcome of the trial, both for the two registered nurses facing third-degree felony charges following their formal complaint about a physician – and for the nursing profession.

What could turn out to be a milestone case for patient advocacy has now been unfolding – quite publicly – in West Texas since early spring of 2009. That April, when Anne Mitchell and Vicki Galle were working at the small, rural Winkler County Memorial Hospital in Kermit, Texas, they reported concerns to the Texas Medical Board about a hospital physician's standard of practice. Shortly thereafter, the nurses were fired from their hospital positions and criminally indicted by the Winkler County Attorney's Office on charges of misusing official

information in their report. A firestorm of action /reaction followed and suffice it to say that what happened in Winkler County certainly didn't stay in Winkler County. Outcry over this case – particularly the criminal indictments and firing of nurses who dutifully advocated for safe patient care – has been loud and national in scope. While some online forum chatters have noted that the chain of moves / countermeasures surrounding the "Winkler County nurses" case is pure small-town, West Texas politics, nurses know otherwise. What's at stake reaches far beyond Winkler County and into the practice settings and professional responsibilities of nurses everywhere.

"The Nursing Practice Act, a Texas statute (law), gives registered nurses the right to report a licensed health care practitioner, agency or facility if they have reasonable belief (cause) that their patient may be exposed to harm," explained Clair Jordan,

MSN, RN, executive director of Texas Nurses Association.

"Over the years, TNA has been involved in the passage of Nursing Practice Act provisions and Texas Department of State Health Services rules in order to make sure," she explained, "that nurses are able to advocate for their patients without fear of retaliation."

What's at stake for nursing with the outcome of this trial is the chilling effect the county's actions could have on future nurses who advocate for patients. If there is fear that by advocating for the health and safety of patients, a nurse could be fired or retaliated against, then the strong voice for patients could be silenced and the nursing profession could take a major step backwards.

To follow the outcome of the "Winkler County case," Texas Nurses Association maintains updates on its web site, <http://texasnurses.org>.

**Contributed by Texas Nurses Association**

### TNSA Pins!

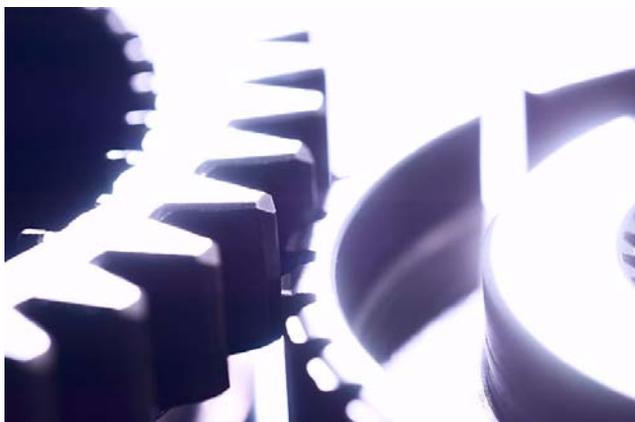


To order your official TNSA pin, please send a check or money order for \$12 per pin to:

TNSA, Inc.  
P.O. Box 35509  
Dallas, TX 75235  
Attention: Pat Pollock

Please include your name, address, telephone number, and the number of pins with your order.

## Gearing Up!



It's a new semester and as your Vice President I have hit the ground running! Annual Convention is just around the corner and the Board of Directors is excited to see everyone again. This year we are offering an NCLEX review, focus sessions covering time management to what to expect as a new graduate nurse, raffles, a huge career walk, and much more. So mark your calendars for February 11, – February 13, and we will see you there!

As the end of my term nears, I would like to say thank you for all the support I have received. It has been my honor to serve as your Vice President and this experience has taught me a great deal. I truly believe we as nurses can make a difference in our patients' lives and fellow nurses' lives, and I want to encourage everyone to start that journey right away. There are many opportunities such as patient care technicians or student internship programs that are designed for nursing students. Don't wait until after you graduate to put your knowledge to work. The career walk and the Annual Convention is just one avenue for finding information about what a hospital can do for you, but you don't have to wait until February. I strongly urge you to use the resources that TNSA has to offer. If you want contact information for a specific hospital please email the President, your Regional Director, or myself and we can get that information to you. This is your future; take control of it.

**Cindy Trask**

# Clinical Trials Research

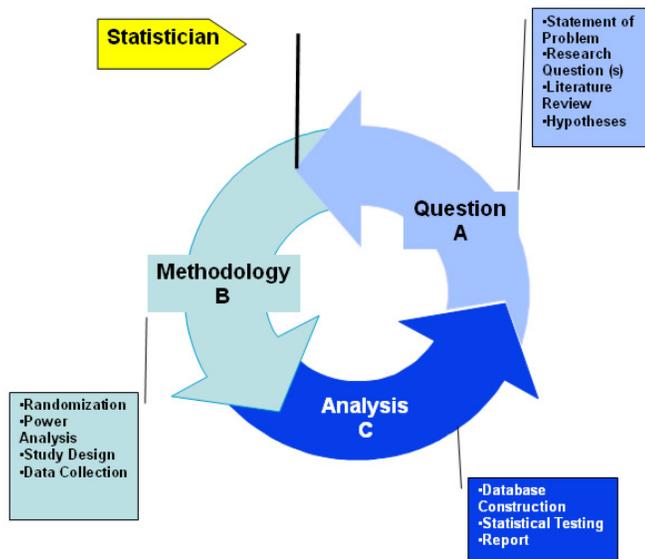
## An interview with Lonnie C. Roy, PhD Planning Director Children's Medical Center Dallas

The biostatisticians in the Clinical Research Office provide technical assistance and research consulting to clinicians and hospital administration in the areas of study design, study implementation, data analysis, and biostatistics. We also train hospital personnel and departmental staff in data collection & management, research design, and the application of statistical findings. Assistance with scientific paper writing and research editing is also provided.

Types of research include:

- ◆ Cohort Study: What are effects of exposure?  
Prospective, retrospective, cross-sectional comparative analyses—compare exposed to unexposed see if condition develops.
- ◆ Intervention Study: What is effect of intervention?  
Controlled Clinical Trial—prospective  
Manipulate exposure and see if benefit is observed in the condition
- ◆ Case-control Study: What were causes of this condition?  
Retrospective, cross-sectional—compare those with condition to those without to determine what caused the condition

### The Research Cycle



- ◆ Survey: What is frequency of condition, how common, any associations?  
Cross sectional, retrospective  
Can be combined with case-control study to perform subgroup analyses

- ◆ Focus Groups: What are perceptions of the condition?  
Cross sectional--small group discussions to provide rich information about experience of condition

The function of research and statistics is descriptive, to summarize information for interpretation; inferential, generalizing about a population on the basis of your sample/study findings; and it formulates general laws based on repeated observations. Research and statistics **are not** a method to prove what you desire, just a collection of facts, and **does not** prevent careless or dishonest conclusions.

In addition to your degree, biostatisticians in the Clinical Research Office need as much practical research as possible, such as research assistantships, OJT, and fellowships. You need to have evidence that you have done research projects from start to finish. You must be able to write reports and disseminate findings through a variety of media, to a variety of audiences, and have actionable conclusions to tell. Lastly, you should be able to conduct a variety of research methodologies and types of statistical analyses.

♥ Cindy Trask

## Election Information

The 2010-2011 elections are just around the corner! Check out [www.tnsa.org](http://www.tnsa.org) to download your election packet and to read all the rules for elections and campaigning. Also, get familiar with the duties of the officer positions so that you can be sure that you are able to fulfill all the responsibilities of that position if elected. At convention, you are allowed to be nominated by a delegate from the floor during the delegate sessions but you must have your paperwork completed and advisor approvals filled out upon submission. We have a lot of exciting activities planned, so come prepared with your paperwork, speech, and campaign materials so you can participate in all the events and enjoy networking with your fellow nursing peers at the 2010 TNSA Convention!

Offices for re-elections at each annual convention are:

President  
Vice President  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Editor  
Four Regional Directors  
Nominations Committee (3 positions)

If you have questions concerning the applications or the application process please do not hesitate to contact Noelle Appel at [nom.chair@tnsa.org](mailto:nom.chair@tnsa.org) or Pat Pollock at [tnsa@flash.net](mailto:tnsa@flash.net) or call 972-435-2216. We look forward to meeting all the candidates running in this year's election.

Send applications to:

TNSA NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE  
ATTENTION: NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR  
NOELLE APPEL  
P. O. Box 35509  
Dallas, Texas 75235

♥ Noelle Appel

# From the Regional Directors

Another semester down, and hopefully everyone is doing well. I'd like to take the opportunity to let you know of a few upcoming events and other items of interest. The annual convention will be held in San Antonio in early February, and I hope that many of you will be able to attend. It is an excellent opportunity to get new members more involved. In addition, if you want to flex your mental muscles a bit, the Brain Bowl will be a fun way to compete against other schools to show off what you've been learning. Then again, you can also bring two teams and compete amongst yourselves for bragging rights at your own school!

I would also like to encourage everyone to help our sponsored charity,

## North

the Windridge Therapeutic Equestrian Center. The proceeds of the Brain Bowl will go to Windridge, but there are other ways to help as well. We are still holding the Penny Wars between the four regions, and I hope that everyone will donate as much loose change as possible through your school. Also, Windridge has a wish list of equipment that they could use if you would like to purchase a piece as a chapter, or if any horse lovers out there would like to donate equipment it would be greatly appreciated. I am personally bringing a huge pile of change for the Penny Wars, so y'all had better keep up if you want to win!

❖ Charles Collins

I hope everyone had a great fall semester and a relaxing Christmas holiday. It's about time to get geared up for our spring semester!

The 2010 TNSA 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention is February 11-13 in San Antonio. It should be a fun and valuable learning experience for everyone. Elections will be held for next year's TNSA officers, so I encourage your consideration for these positions.

Being in nursing school has provided me with numerous opportunities even outside the classroom. I have enjoyed being a Senator in Texas Tech HSC's Student Government Association as a representative of the School of Nursing. This has been a valuable learning experience because of the ability to collaborate and meet with students from other health fields. Also, I have been able to get more involved with community service in the organization. As a senate, we have opportunities to

join together to serve the community in a variety of ways. Just this past semester, we were able to put together a Christmas Angel Tree program at the school, volunteer at the local food bank and animal shelter, along with other activities. Being a nurse is a great way to gain experience and help others in a variety of fields, even outside the health care domain.

I wish everyone luck in the upcoming academic semester, and I hope to see you all at the TNSA Convention in February! Please let me know if there is anything else I can do to serve you as the Western Regional Director. Keep up the hard work and I will see you soon!

❖ April Gregory

As your TNA Governmental Affairs Committee chair, I am pleased to announce that at a conference call earlier this month, we discussed a recommendation to be made to the TNA Board of Directors for the creation of a Nurse Advocate Program. The role of a Nurse Advocate Program would "provide a facility level 'expert' on protections available to nurses when engaging in patient advocacy activities, including how to invoke those protections to maximize their effect, and the nurse's remedies if retaliated against." The Nurse Advocate would use the Nursing Practice Act, Safe Harbor, Code of Ethics and other laws and legislation to guide and represent nurses. In order to validate the program and maintain quality, the program would include a two-day workshop and consultation, with an exam to follow. This role would theoretically begin as a certificate program that would evolve into a certification. I will keep you updated on further developments. As always, please share with me your thoughts to pass on to the GAC.

This Fall I had a Public Health Nursing class and clinical. I learned that public health takes a community-based approach to promoting health and preventing disease. Our clinical project was to assess the health needs of a family violence shelter in a historically underserved part of Austin and plan

## South

This last year I volunteered for Camp Can Do which is held by the MS society at Camp For All in Burton, TX. The MS society sponsors three camps a year for families, children, and adults with multiple sclerosis. The campers are invited to attend free of charge. This opportunity allows campers to participate in activities that they otherwise would not be able to experience on their own. A few of the activities include horseback riding, canoeing, zip-line, swimming, fishing, massage, yoga, and crafts.

Campers are at different levels of acuity. Volunteers provide whatever level of care is needed. Most campers have two volunteers that provide care, companionship, and assistance with activities.

Each camp has a theme and activities based on the theme. The camp I attended in May was '50s themed. All the cabins were decorated 1950s and there was a sock-hop/ice-cream social where we were able to dress up in our '50s attire. We had so much fun dancing as Elvis and The Beatles wowed us with their singing! I really enjoyed volunteering with Camp Can Do and I look forward to this year's camp. Camp is being held May 14-16 2010 and it is going to be '70s themed. You can volunteer as a company or an individual and you do not need a medical background to volunteer. If you are interested in volunteering with Camp Can Do or contributing to the MS society, log on to [www.nationalmssociety.org](http://www.nationalmssociety.org).

❖ Amanda Hess

an intervention to improve the health of the community. Our plan culminated into a Health Fair and Breakfast with stations covering hygiene using products donated from local hotels; nutritious, cheap, and culturally appropriate food choices using WIC-approved items; the importance of adherence to immunization schedules with referrals to free and community clinics; and an interactive cold and flu prevention demonstration. Our evaluation was brief, but appeared to show moderate success. For posterity, we left our visual aids with the shelter to be posted and gave a few minor recommendations for the efficacy of promoting health and preventing disease. We also provided each classroom with an easy-to-use binder addressing illness detection, infection control and proper medication administration.

I am proud to announce that I graduated with a BSN from the University of Texas at Austin. It was a fast-paced, fun and challenging experience, but I am thrilled that it is over (I'm sure you all know what I mean!). The next mountain is NCLEX. However, if I can make any recommendation, take a review course. It has really helped bring back all the content I thought was long forgotten, and gave awesome test-taking strategies (always think AIRWAY!). I will be working at Dell Children's Medical Center as a heme-onc nurse and will be taking a break from school for a while.

❖ Harvey Bowers

## West

## East