

Virginia Nurses Today

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We are pleased to provide every registered nurse in Virginia with a copy of Virginia Nurses Today. For more information on the benefits of membership in of the Virginia Nurses Association, please visit www.virginiannurses.com/



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Are you ready to transform nursing? Join us at our virtual Re-Engage conference, where we're bringing together the brightest minds and passionate leaders to explore the future of nursing practice and academia! Get ready for a transformative experience as we address workforce challenges, examine best practices, reignite your passion for nursing, and revolutionize practice. You can expect to...

- **Identify Solutions to Workforce Challenges:** Dive into dynamic discussions led by healthcare experts as we collectively identify and strategize solutions to pressing workforce challenges.
- **Discover Best Practices:** Immerse yourself in wisdom shared by experts and colleagues to guide you in navigating the challenges and embracing the opportunities ahead.
- **Reignite Your Passion:** Gain insights, inspiration, and a renewed sense of purpose for making a difference in the lives of patients and communities!
- **Revolutionize Your Nursing Practice:** Be part of a movement that empowers nurses to not only overcome challenges, but to thrive in their roles.
- **Create Inclusive Workplaces:** Address the critical need for inclusivity in the workplace. Explore ways to foster diversity and equity in nursing education and practice, ensuring a supportive environment for all nurses.

The Re-Engage Conference is your catalyst for personal and professional growth!

Re-Engage in nursing, Reignite your passion, Revolutionize practice.

Re-Engage will be held April 24-25, 2024 VIRTUALLY. This conference will be professionally produced and live streamed directly to your computer, tablet, or phone. When you register for Re-Engage, you will also receive access to the conference recordings on demand through July 31, 2024. This gives you the flexibility to view the program at your own convenience.

Take advantage of our amazing prices for individual registration! The cost to register is \$139 for members and \$199 for nonmembers. We are also offering special pricing for healthcare organizations to register ALL of their nurses and special pricing for Schools of Nursing that want to register ALL of their students and faculty. [Learn more and register for Re-Engage today!](#)

Spring Conference Call for Abstracts

The Virginia Nurses Association and Virginia Nurses Foundation want to hear about how your organization is working to Re-Engage and revolutionize nursing practice! We are looking for rapid fire presenters from every nursing practice environment, including public health, long term care, acute care, ambulatory care, schools of nursing, and anywhere a nurse practices! If you are working to address workforce challenges, such as recruitment, retention, staffing, occupational stress, workplace violence, incivility, and inequitable workplaces, we want to hear from you!

Share your best practices, your failures, and your ideas to revolutionize nursing! Rapid fire presenters will share a 15-minute presentation at our VIRTUAL April 24-25, 2024 Spring Conference, *Re-Engage*. Whether you are on the frontlines of care, teaching, or leading, we're eager to hear about what you are doing to transform the nursing work environment. [Submit a brief one-paragraph abstract about your best practice, fail forward, or idea to be considered to provide a 15-minute rapid fire session!](#) Proposals are being accepted now through March 1, 2024.

VNA & VNF Spring Conference 2024...continued on page 2



Black Americans: Music as a Platform for Social Justice and Healing

by Vivienne P. McDaniel, DNP, MSN, RN
Interim Executive Director, National Black Nurses Association
Inaugural Chair, VNA/VNF Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Council
Immediate Past President, Central Virginia Chapter National Black Nurses Association



"Those who have no record of what their forebears have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from the teaching of biography and history." ~ Carter G. Woodson

This year's Black History Month theme centers around African Americans and the arts. The contributions of African Americans in the fields of visual and performing arts, literature, fashion, folklore, language, film, music, architecture, culinary and other forms of cultural expressions is deeply rooted in their lived experiences (ASALH, 2023). Music is a universal language used by artists to desegregate racial barriers and the history of its birth in the United States has always been of great interest to me. In America, people of African descent living in bondage, and enduring incomprehensible suffering, gave birth to spirituals (Library of Congress, 2024). Negro spirituals, as they were called, were the nation's first contribution to music (Library of Congress, 2024). To many Black Americans, spiritual music was and is the quintessential comforter as we are faced with daily discrimination, and racism, and in extreme cases, ostracization.

My love of music spans many genres. I began singing in church at an early age; consequently, spirituals are a staple in my life. I can remember my grandparents, who were born in the late 1800s, singing some of the spirituals in church; songs sung by their ancestors to bring them peace and comfort as they worked in the fields and on plantations during their enslavement. Songs like *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*, composed by Wallace Willis around 1865, were sung every Sunday at church. Created in the cotton fields of Oklahoma's old

Black Americans: Music as a ...continued on page 10

VNA President's Message

Stronger Together, Leveraging our Collective Power

By Dr. Sherri Wilson, DNP, MPA, RN, FAAN

As we embark on a new year filled with anticipation, hope, and a renewed focus on our goals, I want to encourage you to keep going, as nursing needs you! As I meet nursing colleagues from across the commonwealth, I am inspired by the unique sets of skills and talents we bring to the profession. Just reflect on our accomplishments over the past year. All things are possible. When the novelty of the new year starts to fade, and we have moments of discouragement, I remind you of the inspiring reach of the power of nursing. At the forefront of my mind, and in honor of Black History month, I reflect on the contributions of the late Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson from Texas, the first nurse to be elected and serve in the United States Congress. She was re-elected nine times since 1992. Her impacts were countless. As a fierce advocate for access to healthcare, education, STEM, and climate change, she co-authored more than 150 bills that were passed by the House and the Senate. As an Education Policy Fellow in 2021, I was fortunate to have Rep. Johnson address my cohort in one of our Policy Seminars. It was inspiring to learn from her as a policy maker who addressed social determinants at the intersection of education and healthcare policy, which continues to be a passion of mine. Her contributions have left an indelible mark on the world, shining as a beacon of hope and inspiration, guiding us forward with renewed purpose and determination throughout the year.

In 2007, Rep. Johnson became the first African American and first woman to chair the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment. In 2010, she became the first African American and first female ranking member of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. She later introduced the Broadening participation in STEM Education Act which led to increased funding for students of underrepresented groups to pursue STEM degrees and expanded the number of faculty from underrepresented groups at colleges and universities. In 2021, she attended the United Nations Climate Change Conference as part of a Congressional delegation led by Senator Nancy Pelosi and advocated for the urgent need for global climate change coordination of climate action. She also provided testimony in the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. In her opening statement, she said, "... As I said at COP26, we deal with science and facts

on the Science Committee. And we know it is time for us to act on climate backed up by good science policy. The science of climate change has been clear for many years now. It is up to us in Congress to begin implementing the innovative technologies and policies that are already available to us to address climate change. This effort needs to include robust bipartisan legislation to support our Federal science agencies as they work to address the climate crisis."

Rep. Johnson began her career as a diploma nurse. She later earned a BSN in 1967 from Texas Christian University and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Southern Methodist in 1976. Rep. Johnson's legacy will live on through her family and the countless lives she impacted by creating public policies that provide access and opportunities for others. In addition to partnering with nursing colleagues, she has worked with multiple stakeholders and in a bipartisan manner to accomplish some of the most challenging pieces of legislation. May her life be a testament to what we can accomplish when we leverage our collective power to transform health and healthcare and achieve the common good. A staunch reminder that we are truly Stronger Together.

Sources:
<https://www.congress.gov/115/meeting/house/105558/witnesses/HHRG-115-HA00-Bio-JohnsonE-20170215.pdf>
<https://www.congress.gov/117/meeting/house/114680/documents/HHRG-117-SY00-MState-J000126-20220428.pdf>



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Virginia Nurses Today reserves the right to edit all materials to its style and space requirements and to clarify presentations.

VNF Mission Statement

VNF is committed to improving the health of Virginia's communities by developing an educated and diverse nursing workforce through leadership development, research, and innovation.

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Why Share Your Story?

Your mentorship journey is a testament to the incredible impact mentorship can have on both mentors and mentees. By sharing your experiences, you contribute to the collective knowledge and inspire others to embark on their mentorship journeys. Your story could be the guiding light for someone navigating the challenging yet rewarding path of professional development.

How to Participate:

- **Express Your Interest:** Complete this [short form](#) to tell us more about your mentorship experience and be considered to share with our conference participants!
- **Record Your Story:** If accepted, record a brief video sharing your mentorship journey. Highlight key moments, milestones, and the positive impact mentorship has had on your professional growth.
- **Submission Deadline:** Submit your recorded video by April 8, 2024. Late submissions may not be considered for inclusion in the conference.

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VNA & VNF Spring Conference 2024...continued from page 1

Dates for Submission

Proposals: Due March 1, 2024.
Notification: Selected presenters will be notified by March 22, 2024.

Who May Submit

Any individual or interprofessional team who has a best practice, fail forward, or idea to transform the nursing work environment!
Individuals who will use their presentation to promote or sell a product or service are not eligible to serve as presenters.

Celebrating Mentorship Success Stories: Share Your Inspiring Journey at the VNA & VNF Spring Conference 2024!

Join us in celebrating the power of mentorship at the upcoming VNA & VNF Spring Conference 2024, Re-Engage! We are calling on nurse mentors and mentees who have experienced positive transformations through mentorship to share their inspiring stories. Your journey could inspire and guide fellow nurses, fostering a community of support and growth within the nursing profession.

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VNF President's Message



VNF President
Phyllis Whitehead,
PhD, APRN/CNS,
ACHPN, PMGT-BC,
FNAP, FCNS, FAAN

“Suck it up, Buttercup” Mentality: NO MORE!

Phyllis Whitehead, PhD, APRN/CNS, ACHPN, PMGT-BC, FNAP, FCNS, FAAN

I have often been asked, what has kept you in nursing all of these years? What is different now with nursing? As I reminisce about when I was starting out in nursing, work expectations were “No matter what, always do what is best for your patients, including working extra shifts and not taking approved time off.” I was taught being a nurse meant making sacrifices even when it was harmful to me: the “Suck it up, Buttercup” mentality.”

During the years I have been in leadership meetings, whenever something comes up that would affect working conditions, this statement comes to mind, “Well this sounds like a suck it up buttercup situation.” Sound familiar to you?

Let’s take a moment to ponder this statement. Not only is it offensive to call nurses Buttercup or to suck it up, I hate the mentality that nurses just need to be okay with bad working conditions.

It is our responsibility to advocate for better work environments. According to Macmillan Dictionary, “suck it up” means accepting an unpleasant or uncomfortable situation. Similar terms that could be used interchangeably are:

- Get over it
- Deal with it
- Get it together
- Get your head in the game
- Toughen up

This statement implies weakness or even femininity.

If you’re a fitness instructor or trainer, “Suck it up, Buttercup” might be a helpful phrase, indeed. If your class attendees or trainees complain about the exercises you task them with you can reply, “suck it up, Buttercup, it’s for your own good!”

This phrase isn’t new. It made its appearance in the Urban Dictionary in 2004.

“Suck it up” is even older. That phrase became common during World War II when pilots had to literally “suck it up” if they vomited into their oxygen masks. If not, they risked suffocating on the acidic fumes or choking on the vomit in their lungs.

Once again, “buttercup” got added mainly because it rhymes and because it adds a bit of sarcasm or irony to the phrase and perhaps a bit of an insult to certain people.

As a seasoned, experienced nurse (AKA: OLD), I recall that it was expected that, as a new nurse, I needed to toughen up initially and then as time went

on, it was just the norm for nurses to accept the work environment, staffing, treatment by patients, families, physicians, administrators. Somehow we were made to believe that was what a “good” nurse does. We just had to get over it, (whatever “it” was) and do the right thing for our patients. There was never a conversation about what was best for me as the nurse....it was expected that I needed to sacrifice my wellbeing to serve a great cause...the well being of my patients. This concept continues to exist among my nursing colleagues of my generation.

BUT it does not exist among Generations Y (Millennials) and Z. So I have asked myself, did I get it wrong? Maybe it is time I reject/shed the “Suck it Up, Buttercup” mentality’ and open myself up to seeing another way, a better way of nursing practice. Somehow, I do matter and so does my wellbeing, BUT my patients also matter. So the imperative is to continue our quest to have *both* excellent patient care while also preserving nurse wellbeing.

We have help... we are not alone. The Virginia Nurses Foundation has been and will continue to focus on nurses’ wellbeing.

Every nurse matters, so it is imperative that we care for our own. Tragically, a survey conducted in May 2022 by Trusted Health, revealed that 1 in 10 nurses reported they have had suicidal thoughts since the start of the pandemic, more than twice the incidence of such thoughts among U.S. adults.

SafeHaven™

In response, VNF has partnered with the Medical Society of Virginia to bring their [SafeHaven™ program](#), created in partnership with VITAL WorkLife, to nurses through their employers. Thanks to recent legislation, this wellness, counseling, and coaching program brings with it improved assurances of confidentiality, meaning that participating healthcare professionals are far more likely to access this service as opposed to their Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

ALL IN: Caring for Virginia's Caregivers

Additionally, VNF is partnering with the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association and MSV to jointly support a new statewide initiative called [ALL IN: Caring for Virginia's Caregivers](#). The goal of this initiative is to enhance healthcare organizational efforts to protect the mental and emotional well-being of healthcare professionals. This project is led by the ALL IN: WellBeing First for Healthcare coalition, co-founded Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes’ Foundation and #FirstRespondersFirst. The ALL

IN: Caring for Virginia’s Caregivers initiative seeks to support Virginia hospitals and health systems in redesigning their workplace environments to help team members feel valued and supported.

Nurse Leadership Academy

We are launching our 2024 class of the year-long [Nurse Leadership Academy](#), which is intended for new and aspiring nurse leaders across ALL healthcare settings. Nurses are not only care providers but also leaders in their communities and workplaces. The year-long Academy provides opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge they need to become effective leaders and advocates and has received rave reviews from its first class of graduating fellows!

The curriculum includes the following:

- Fundamentals of Effective Leadership
- Fundamentals of Effective Leadership Cont’d.
- Organizational Culture
- Facilitating a High Reliability Environment
- Influencing Change: Driving Outcomes through Strategic Action
- No Margin No Mission- Examining the Finances of Healthcare
- Applied Leadership Project Presentations

The first six months of the Academy program are dedicated to live didactic sessions and webinars focused on effective leadership, organizational culture, influencing change, finances and more. During the subsequent six months, fellows develop an applied leadership project with support from their individually identified mentor.

Mental Health Resources

A number of mental health resources, in addition to the above. Visit us [online](#) for:

- Suicide & Crisis Hotlines
- SafeHaven | a Confidential Wellness Program
- Healthy Nurse, Healthy Nation
- ANA Resources & Websites
- Webinars & Apps for Nurse Mental Health & Well-Being
- Scholarly Articles & Research on Mental Health Programs

Please take advantage of these amazing services and opportunities. You deserve to be well!

New VNF Scholarship to Honor Dr. Vivienne McDaniel

The Virginia Nurses Foundation is excited to announce the creation of the Dr. Vivienne McDaniel Health Equity Scholarship. The scholarship is intended for nurses pursuing an advanced degree with a focus on health policy and equity. We hope to present the first scholarship(s) to deserving candidates this fall and need your help to support this new program. **Please [give generously](#) to fund this scholarship!**

Dr. McDaniel is the inaugural chair of the VNA & VNF Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Council and has recently concluded a five-year term as Diversity Ambassador on the VNF Board of Trustees. She is actively involved in healthcare policy and advocacy in Virginia and nationally, with efforts focused on achieving equity across the continuum of healthcare and nursing.

Dr. McDaniel recently served as the Interim Executive Director of the National Black Nurses Association and has also led the NBNA Central Virginia Chapter as president. In 2022, she was honored with the Leadership in Ethics Award by the American Nurses Association Board of Directors for having demonstrated the highest standards of ethics and leadership in her daily nursing practice.



Dr. Vivienne
McDaniel

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Janet Wall, MS

High Praise for National Commission to Address Racism in Nursing

A [national survey](#) of more than 5,600 nurses conducted by the [National Commission to Address Racism in Nursing](#) (the Commission) shows that “racism is an insidious problem within the profession.” Nearly half of nurses agree there is ‘a lot’ of racism in nursing. While change can’t occur without action, education is also of paramount importance to our efforts to dismantle racism in nursing and ensure health access and equity for all Virginians.

During this, Black History Month, I encourage everyone to listen to the Commission’s highly lauded Project ECHO® on Racism in Nursing. The live presentations have already taken place, but don’t fret if you missed them. They have all been recorded and are available on-demand (free). The three-part series was conducted as part of the ongoing work of the National Commission to Address Racism in Nursing, a multi-organizational collaborative of leading nursing organizations – including the American Nurses Association -- to examine the issue of racism within nursing nationwide and the impact on nurses, patients, communities, and healthcare systems to motivate all nurses to confront systemic racism. The program connects nurses with numerous excellent Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) experts using brief lectures and case-based learning, and discussion. The ECHO Series serves as a forum for nurses to increase their knowledge about how racism “shows up” in the profession and in healthcare and improves the skills needed to confront systemic racism and empowers nurses to become allies. We can all learn from the valuable lessons contained within this series.

Series 1.0 and 2.0 each include multiple sessions addressing everything from “Understanding Unconscious Bias & Microaggressions” and “Nursing Code of Ethics & Ethical Implications of Racism” to “Handling Retaliation” and “Building a Supportive Academic Environment & Navigating New Graduate Challenges.”

[Access Series 1.0](#)

[Access Series 2.0](#)

Series 3.0 explores the root causes of health inequities and discusses the concepts and strategies for taking action toward health equity in everyday practice. Sessions include “How do equity-minded nurses advance antiracism,” “How can we break barriers to health equity? Combating stereotypes and bias in healthcare,” “How can cultural intelligence be the catalyst that perpetuates health equity?” and much more. Each session in the series, as well as a multitude of additional readings and resources are listed on the web page.

[Access Series 3.0](#)

More recently, the Commission selected 10 organizations from more than 130 submissions, to receive a total of \$200,000 in funding provided by the American Nurses Association. Those organizations will now begin to develop and implement evidence-informed strategies, programs, and interventions aimed at dismantling institutional, structural, and systemic racism in nursing.

The winning programs were selected from more than 130 submissions. The selected recipients and their respective evidence-based initiatives range anywhere from student education to patient care to

workplace training. The ten recipients will work with the Commission throughout the year to optimize their program work and to regularly report on project status.

The 2024 winning proposals are:

- **The American Association of Colleges of Nursing** will add an antiracism component as the fifth component of the Inclusive Excellence Ecosystem for Academic Nursing that assists nursing schools with organizing and guiding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts.
- **Carle Health** will provide anti-racism education and training in the form of a one-hour event followed by 20 weeks of ongoing micro-learning directed at patient care nursing leaders and their staff.
- **Children’s National Hospital** will create a national practice standard that supports proper hair care for hospitalized adolescents and children of every ethnicity so that all children and adolescents receive equitable care.
- **East Carolina University College of Nursing** will address the lack of African American (AA) males choosing nursing as a major by understanding perceptions and creating a mentorship pipeline program.
- **International Academy of Nurse Editors (INANE)** will develop a set of questions to detect biases, micro/macroaggressions, incorrect analyses or discussions in writing that might perpetuate stereotypes and racism, foster attribution biases, or incorrectly generalize research findings to underrepresented or marginalized populations.
- **Mercy University School of Nursing** will be working to improve the quality of nursing education through the development of a nurse faculty residency program with the express purpose of facilitating the transition of nurse educators into the role of health equity influencers.
- **North Carolina Nurses Association** will partner with two other southern state nurses associations to increase the number of nurses of color prepared and willing to pursue and accept positions of leadership in professional organizations and professional nursing positions.
- **Norton Sound Health Corporation** will work to increase the number of Native Alaskan children who are fully vaccinated and attending well child visits by community education, a novel incentive program, and culturally competent staff training.
- **University of Illinois Chicago** will create innovative virtual reality (VR) simulations tailored for nursing faculty and students to provide a fully immersive and experiential platform to deliver diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training.
- **University of Portland School of Nursing & Health Innovation** will establish the psychometric properties of the Curriculum Evaluation Tool for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (CET-DEI) and develop a baseline aggregate measurement of curricular DEI.

We are also working on a couple initiatives focused on health equity; one specific to health issues for migrant and seasonal healthcare as it relates to climate change, and the other a six-part maternal health series slated to launch this September. We’ll be sharing much more information about each initiative as they develop!

It’s incumbent on each of us to educate ourselves and be an active part of the solution. Together we can effect positive change in equity in nursing and our communities!



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UVA Health Faculty and Nursing Students Recognized with 2024 MLK Award

Two UVA Health System faculty members and one student nursing group have won UVA Health's Martin Luther King Jr. Award for 2024, the health system's distinguished annual award for remarkable work in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Associate dean **Jeanne Alhusen, PhD, CRNP, RN** was lauded for her NIH-funded research on women with disabilities, and clinical instructor **Mesha Jones, MSN, RN** was praised for her community engagement and health system leadership, and the **founder-leaders of the Black Student Nurses Alliance student group** were honored for their vision, leadership, and advocacy.



Clinical Instructor Mesha Jones and Associate dean for research and NIH-funded nurse scientist Jeanne Alhusen, the Endowed Professor of Nursing at UVA Medical Center

Dr. Alhusen, a nurse scientist with more than \$8.5 million in research grants, was nominated for her singular focus on an often marginalized population: women living with disabilities who are just as likely as their non-disabled peers to want and have children, often lack access to family planning healthcare, and accommodations by clinicians, and who are disproportionately impacted by violence, and, with their children, often suffer the ill effects of these factors throughout their lives.

Alhusen—the first scientist to demonstrate the link between exposure to violence during pregnancy and infants' risk of being born small-for-gestational-age—has so far earned NIH grants totaling nearly \$3 million for this work since 2018. Thus far, she's found that more than one-third of disabled women become pregnant as a result of sexual violence:

they are nearly 20% more likely to experience an unintentional pregnancy and are 2.5 times more likely than their non-disabled peers to be victims of violence in the year leading up to pregnancy.

Mesha Jones, clinical instructor, NPGO president, and a UVA Health ambulatory care nurse

Jones, a nurse leader at UVA Health and the **Virginia Nurses Association and Foundation**, was nominated for the diversity of her advocacy, including for her leadership role as president of UVA's Nursing Professional Governance Organization, as commissioner on nursing practice and board member for both VNA and the Virginia Nurses Foundation, her DEI role with VNA and VNF, and her role as past president of the VNA's Piedmont chapter. Noted in her nomination, written by UVA assistant professor and VNA board member/commissioner on government relations Ashley Apple, was Jones's impressive trajectory: her start as a patient care tech, her journey through an ADN, BSN, and MSN program, and her meteoric rise as a nurse leader at a major health system.

"Mesha leverages her professional success to advocate on behalf of women and minorities, seizing every opportunity to raise awareness on important issues ... and to amplify and celebrate the voices of women and minority leaders in healthcare."



Assistant Prof Ashley Apple in her nomination of Mesha Jones, clinical instructor, for the 2024 UVA Health MLK Award

Black Student Nurses Alliance (BSNA) student founders – The nearly two-year-old BSNA was established by fourth year BSN students Morgan

Allen (its president) and Donna Nkurunziza (vice president), along with Amia Graham, Niyah Harris, Mya Johnson, Elise Nganou, and Elizabeth Zeleke, in spring 2022. Its stated purpose was to build a community space for nursing students of color, spread awareness about health issues that impact people of color, and advocate for individuals and collectives who are part of these groups. Through in-person events, themed gatherings, and social media, they marked important cultural events, like Women's History Month, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and Black History Month, showcased Black clinicians and nursing faculty, and built community and understanding for students of color at UVA, which remains a predominantly white institution.

Congratulations to Designated and Redesignated Magnet & Pathway Facilities

Congratulations to Inova Alexandria Hospital Chief Nursing Officer Dr. Francine Barr and the entire nursing team for being newly-designated as a Magnet® facility.

The Magnet Recognition Program also voted to confer Magnet redesignation to:

- Sentara RMH Medical Center, whose Chief Nursing Officer is Gina Yost, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, CL SSB
- Winchester Medical Center, whose Chief Nursing Officer is Kris Maddalena, MSN, RN, NE-BC.

The Magnet Recognition Program designates organizations worldwide in which nursing leaders successfully align their nursing strategic goals to improve the organization's patient outcomes.

Good luck to the nurses of the following hospitals as they pursue Magnet designation and redesignation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center!

- Chesapeake Regional Healthcare
- Sentara Williamsburg Medical Center
- Sentara Virginia Beach

Congratulations, too, to the Valley Health System Warren Memorial Hospital nursing team and Chief Nurse Executive Theresa Trivette for their Pathways to Excellence re-designation.



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Foundation Welcomes Jones and Littlefield to Board of Trustees



Angela Jones, EdS, NCSP

Dr. Angela Jones is the Director of Culture, Climate, and Student Services with Richmond [City] Public Schools, which serves a student population of 20,000. She received the Lucille M. Brown Impact Award last November for her unparalleled contributions to the well-being of Richmond Public Schools students during the past 27 years. She has spoken on the issue of Youth Mental Health at a VNF Mental Health Roundtable meeting, has a collaborative spirit, and brings educated insights and experience to the table.



Nancy Littlefield, DNP, MSHA, RN, FACHE, NEA-BC

Dr. Nancy Littlefield, a 4th-generation nurse, joined Hospice of the Piedmont in October 2023 as President & Chief Executive Officer. She has a deep breadth of experience in healthcare and previously served as the Executive Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer for Riverside Health System. There, she led clinical and financial operations, as well as service outcomes, across a five-hospital system, including nine long-term care facilities and hospice/palliative care services. Prior to that, she was the Chief Nursing Officer for Spotsylvania Regional Medical Center and has also served in leadership positions both for Evercare Hospice and Palliative Care and Capital Hospice, now Capital Caring.

Foundation President Phyllis Whitehead, PhD, APRN, ACHPN, PMGT-BC, HEC-C, FNAP, remarked, “We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Jones and Dr. Littlefield to our board and are confident that the diverse wealth of knowledge and experience they bring to the table will be of tremendous benefit to VNF as we work to improve the health of our communities and provide professional development opportunities for nurses throughout Virginia.”

FACULTY OPENINGS

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2024 Nurses Month Expressing Gratitude: Celebrating Nurses' Dedication and Impact

In recognition of your unwavering commitment and the invaluable contributions you make, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all nurses. While Nurses' Week and Nurses Month offer a dedicated time to celebrate your expertise, advocacy, professionalism, and compassion, we want to emphasize that your impact is appreciated beyond measure every single day.

As we delve into Nurses Month, we draw inspiration from the legacy of nursing pioneer Florence Nightingale, whose birthday falls on May 12. Reflecting on her contributions and those of other nurse leaders, both past and present, serves as a reminder of the continuous advancements in the nursing profession.

The 2024 Nurses Month theme, "Nurses Make a Difference," underscores the pivotal role nurses play in shaping the health and well-being of our communities. Whether responding to a national health emergency or providing routine daily care, your vital contributions leave an indelible mark on the lives you touch.

To honor nurses and bolster the nursing profession, the American Nurses Association, in collaboration with VNA, has chosen to promote weekly themes and activities throughout May. We encourage everyone to find creative ways to engage in celebrating the incredible impact nurses have on individuals and communities alike. Your dedication does not go unnoticed, and for all you do, we extend our sincere thanks.

Week 1: Self-care (May 1–7)

- Cultivate and maintain your optimal mental health and physical well-being.

Week 2: Recognition (May 8–14)

- Honor the work of nurses who lead, excel, and innovate, not only in our healthcare systems, but also in our communities which makes them vital to transforming the future of health care.

Week 3: Professional Development (May 15–21)

- Access resources and insights to guide you in your professional development. Focus on how you can excel and lead in your nursing career or inspire and help others in their professional nursing journey.

Week 4: Community Engagement (May 22–31)

- Focus on engaging with your community this week! Educate members of your community on what nurses do beyond the bedside — advocacy, shaping public policy, or serving as organizational board members, among other duties. Encourage them to support current and future nurses.

If you or your practice setting had or has planned an exciting Nurses Week event, please share your photos with us!

We'd love to know more about your:

- Florence Nightingale's birthday anniversary celebrations
- Nurses Month celebrations
- Nurses in action
- Donations and gifts from the community for nurses

You can share the photos on Facebook and tag us @Virginia Nurses Association, or on our Instagram @virignianurses. You can also send photos of your celebrations and events directly to VNA Communications Manager Elle Buck, at ebuck@virignianurses.com.

Make sure to frequently check our website, www.virginianurses.com, for updates, resources, and nurse-specific discounts!

If there is a nurse (or nurses!) you'd like to publicly honor during Nurses Week, you can fill out the Virginia Nurses Foundation's Honor a Nurse form at <https://tinyurl.com/u76zro6>. This is the perfect opportunity to celebrate a nurse friend, colleague, or family member or to say thank you to a nurse who has made a difference. We will publish the names of honored nurses on our website on the Honor a Nurse Tribute Wall and in our quarterly publication, *Virginia Nurses Today*. Additionally, all honorees will receive an email letting them know you wanted to say thank you. For check donations, go to <https://tinyurl.com/y9bvcuy2> to download the form to be mailed with your check.

To learn more about the history behind National Nurses Week, visit ANA's webpage at <https://www.nursingworld.org/education-events/national-nurses-week/history/>.

In Case You Missed It: Our Legislative Summit is On-Demand thru March 31!

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In an era where legislative decisions shape our future, staying informed and engaged is paramount. Our [Legislative Summit](#), a culmination of expertise and insights from prominent leaders, is now available on-demand until March 31. This exclusive program offers an unparalleled opportunity to delve into critical issues, gain perspectives from thought leaders, and chart a course for informed decision-making.

Don't miss this chance to be part of a transformative experience that can shape perspectives and empower action. Join us at the Legislative Summit and be at the forefront of understanding the dynamics driving legislative decisions.

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2024 Chapter Scholarships
Open until Monday, April 1!

Help us Spread the Word to Deserving Students!

Every year, VNA's 12 chapters award (1) \$1000 scholarship to a prelicensure nursing student in their area who has successfully completed at least 4 prelicensure nursing courses. In 2024, the 3 largest chapters (Central VA, Northern VA, and Hampton Roads) will award an additional \$1000 scholarship for a total of two in each of those areas.

Purpose

The purpose of the scholarship program is to provide financial assistance to nursing students completing requirements for a degree at a state approved and nationally-accredited school of nursing.

Application Requirements

All applications must include:

- A transcript from the college or university that provides evidence of academic standing, current enrollment in nursing courses required for the nursing degree, and completion of at least four nursing courses. A copy of a transcript is acceptable. VNF reserves the right to verify enrollment.
- A personal statement written by the applicant that describes why the individual chose a career in nursing and explains any financial need.
- A resume that includes community service, employment, awards, scholarships, professional organizations, and any honors received.
- One letter of recommendation from a faculty member or a reference who can speak to the applicant's character. We strongly recommend a recommendation letter from a faculty member. An optional second letter of recommendation may also be included.

Application Procedure

- All applications must be submitted online.
- Students should apply for the scholarship via the VNA chapter that covers the area in which their school is located. A map is included on the application form for easy reference.
- The application period closes on April 1, 2024 at 11:59 pm.

Scholarship Award Details

The award is a one-time gift paid directly to the school to be credited to the student's account.

Evaluation

A committee composed of no fewer than three members will evaluate each application. A point value system will be used to evaluate each candidate, and the applicant(s) with the highest total points will receive the award(s).

Notification

Recipients of these scholarships will receive official notification of their awards from the Virginia Nurses Foundation in May 2024. Apply for a chapter scholarship at <https://virginianurses.com/page/LocalChapterScholarshipInformation>.



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Enhance Your Practice with the Healthy Workforce Institute’s Eradicating Bullying & Incivility eCourse

This program is an essential first step in recognizing, addressing, and eradicating the prevalent, disruptive behaviors that are undermining your workforce culture. Introducing the Healthy Workforce Institute’s foundational virtual learning course, Eradicating Bullying & Incivility (EBI): Essential Skills for Healthcare Leaders.

As part of the Healthy Workforce Academy, this online course is designed to provide a solution for frontline leaders who want to cultivate a professional, supportive, and respectful workforce culture; free from bullying and incivility.

In this course, you will...

- Distinguish key differences between bullying and incivility

- Differentiate overt and covert behaviors
 - Apply techniques to establish behavioral expectations in collaboration with team members
 - Summarize a strategy to confront individuals exhibiting disruptive behaviors
 - Describe strategies on how to hold individuals accountable for their behaviors
- By the end of this course, you will...
- Be equipped with the tools to quickly identify disruptive behaviors that undermine a culture of safety
 - Possess an arsenal of well tested strategies they can implement on a consistent basis to maintain a healthy workplace

- Own the confidence to immediately address issues before they get out of hand
- Uncover tried and true approaches to hold staff accountable for professional behavior
- Be prepared to comply with The Joint Commission and Magnet® requirements
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A quick look at the 2024 Virginia General Assembly Session & VNA's Lobby Day

The 2024 session of the General Assembly is underway, and legislation is moving quickly! A few key highlights following the first full week of the session are below:

- Nearly 2,400 bills and joint resolutions were introduced by the January 19 deadline
- VNA is currently tracking 67 pieces of legislation, including 5 bills from [Nursing's 2024 Public Policy Platform](#)
- [HB978](#) and SB to regulate APRNs solely under the Board of Nursing
- [HB971](#) and HB983 to reduce the transition period for NPs to practice autonomously from 5 years down to 2 years
- [HB1322](#) to remove the supervision requirement for CRNAs
- [HB763](#) and SB537 to require the use of surgical smoke evacuation equipment during surgeries that create smoke in the operating room

VNA holds Lobby Day on Thursday, January 18

Nearly 100 nurses gathered at the nation's capitol Thursday, January 18 for VNA's annual, in-person Lobby Day. Advocates spoke to legislators on behalf of APRN and CRNA practice authority, joint board elimination, and more!

Be sure to check out VNA's [Public Policy Platform](#) on our website as well as [ways you can take action!](#)

Committees will move quickly to hear all of the introduced legislation between now and the crossover deadline of February 13.

- VNA will keep you informed of the legislative progress throughout the session and provide you with opportunities to write and call legislators on key legislation, or to attend committee meetings in person.

The Governor's introduced budget included increased funding for several key nursing workforce priorities:

- \$8 million for the Earn to Learn program, which compensates nursing students for working in healthcare facilities to gain experience while enrolled in school
- \$4 million for Nursing Scholarships administered by the Department of Health
- \$7 million for the Virginia Preceptor Incentive Program to increase access to clinical education for nursing students in Virginia
- \$16.1 million for the Behavioral Health Loan Repayment Program, which includes psychiatric nurses
- The General Assembly will consider revisions to the introduced budget between now and February. VNA will advocate for at least maintaining these increases to support growing the nursing workforce.

Stay in the Know

Be sure to stay informed by signing up for [VNA Action Alerts!](#) Receive real-time texts and/or emails notifying you to take action and contact your legislators in support of certain bills and nursing issues.



Black Americans: Music as a ...continued from page 1

Choctaw Nation, Wallace's song went on to become Oklahoma's official state gospel song (Oklahoma Music Trail, n. d.). Folklore has it that Wallace's song, [Steal Away](#) is said to have been sung as slaves made their way from the South to the North and Canada through the Underground Railroad (Weerts, 2021). *Steal Away* is another song that I remember learning in the 60's.

When spirituals were not playing on the [Victrola](#) at my house, [Jazz](#) was. I was privileged to meet many of the jazz artists I listened to on the Victrola as a child when I worked in the music industry prior to becoming a nurse. The poet Hans Christian Andersen once said, "Where words fail, music speaks," (Andersen, n. d.). That adage rings true for the jazz genre as musicians use their instruments to express their emotions and to inspire their audiences. History tells us that jazz was born in the colorful city of New Orleans with jazz greats like Buddy Bolden, King Oliver, Jelly Roll Morton, and Sidney Bechet (McNulty, n. d.). While these jazz musicians were not household names across the United States, to those who love and know jazz they are held in high regard. In Congo Square, on the edge of the French Quarter, enslaved Africans and Native Americans were allowed to congregate, make music, and dance. This is significant because I believe music was therapy to the enslaved and oppressed. Today the area in which slaves were allowed to make music is part of a park named for another great New Orleans' jazz musician Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, who is most known for his song, *Hello Dolly*.

For decades, musical artists, and songwriters have created music highlighting the social injustices against Black Americans and other historically marginalized people. A friend I have known since the early 1980s, is a jazz musician who also hailed from New Orleans. [Terence Blanchard](#) is a seven-time Grammy winner, two-time Oscar nominee who has been at the forefront of giving voice to sociocultural issues and racial injustices through his work (Blanchard, 2024). Terence has been exceedingly successful in the performing arts. Early in his career he partnered with film writer, director, and producer [Spike Lee](#), composing most of his movie scores, including *Malcolm X* (1992), and *Da 5 Bloods* (2020).

In 2021, Terence was the first African American composer to grace the stage of the once segregated Metropolitan Opera House in New York in its 136-year history. His operas, [Fire Shut Up in My Bones](#) and [Champion](#) are cultural wonders that bring focus to racism, bullying, dementia, and LGBTQIA discrimination. His music scores continue to amaze and motivate me. His score, [When the Levees Broke: a Requiem in Four Acts](#), and one of my favorites, a studio album he recorded in 2007, [A Tale of God's Will \(A Requiem for Katrina\)](#) pays homage to his beloved New Orleans Ninth Ward and laments the devastation hurricane Katrina caused.

I could easily connect the solemn music I heard while growing up to periods of oppression. Who can forget the riveting and daunting lyrics of [Strange Fruit](#) written by Abel Meeropol (aka Lewis Allen) and recorded by jazz singer, [Billie Holiday](#) protesting the lynching of Black Americans. American singer-songwriter, musician, and record producer, [Stevie Wonder](#) has been an activist throughout his entire music career. One of his songs, [Cash in Your Face](#), emphasizes the deeply ingrained biases and prejudices against Black people trying to obtain housing in America. Written in 1980, unfortunately, the words of the song are still relevant today. Another one of his popular songs [Happy Birthday](#), paid homage to [Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) and served as a campaign to have Dr. King's birthday recognized as a national holiday.

In the early 1970s other artist such as, [Marvin Gaye](#), [James Brown](#), and the [Temptations](#) expressed their positions on injustices and discrimination against Black Americans through their music. Gaye's songs [What's Going On](#) lays out the state of the Black community in the aftermath of the Vietnam war and [Mercy Mercy Me \(The Ecology\)](#) written in 1971, addresses the effects of what we know today as climate change. These recording artists used their music to inspire and elevate Black communities and to make an outcry for equity. Brown's song [I Don't Want Nobody to Give Me Nothing \(Open Up the Door: I'll Get it Myself\)](#) is an anthem of determination, equity, and self-sufficiency. However, if you listen closely to the words of the Temptations' [Ball of Confusion](#) you will quickly learn that although the song was released in 1970, the same issues and injustices are still occurring.

I have asked the question, *is there anything music cannot heal?* I have long posited that music is therapeutic and can heal almost anything.

Research has demonstrated the use of music has psychological and physical benefits such lowering pain, reducing anxiety, and agitation, and possibly stimulating people who are unconscious (Lancioni et al., 2021). Upon arriving at my friend's opera, I had a migraine headache. As soon as the music started the headache abated. When the music stopped, the headache returned but with less intensity. I bear witness to music's positive impact on patients and loved ones I have cared for and I must show gratitude to those who created and recorded it. I literally wake up with a song in my head every day and cannot remember a time when music was not a part of my life. Perhaps we all should take a hint from [The O'Jays](#), and make it a daily ritual to [Sing a Happy Song](#). Music may really be the healing force of the world.

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(Vivienne McDaniel with film writer, producer, and director Spike Lee at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York in 2023)



(Vivienne McDaniel and composer Terence Blanchard at the opening of his opera, Champion at the Metropolitan Opera House in 2023.)

Kudos to VNA's
Newest Board
Member!

Embracing Service: Recognizing New and
Outgoing VNA Chapter Leaders

Melissa Whited, MSN, RN, NE-BC, has been elected as the new Director-at-Large, Chapter Representative on the VNA Board of Directors, succeeding Suzanne Bowser. Currently serving as the Chief Nursing Officer at Johnston Memorial Hospital, Melissa is dedicated to elevating patient care standards.

In her pursuit of a DNP, Melissa demonstrates her commitment to staying at the forefront of healthcare. With past service as the Government Relations Chair for the Southwestern VA chapter and currently in her second term as President for the same chapter, she has shown exceptional leadership, advocating for both patients and healthcare professionals.

Melissa's new role builds upon Suzanne Bowser's distinguished service. We congratulate Melissa on this achievement and anticipate her positive impact on the VNA Board of Directors. Her dedication and leadership are assets to the nursing community in Virginia.



Melissa Whited

In the dynamic landscape of today's healthcare, our nurses shine as beacons of strength, managing – and leading – through a myriad of issues. Our chapter leaders have also risen to the challenge, answering the call to service and contributing to the advancement of our profession and growth of the Virginia Nurses Association.

We are so very grateful to the outgoing chapter leaders who have been instrumental in guiding [VNA's chapters](#), ensuring members are engaged and well-informed, and creating connections with future nurses. Thank you!

Director-at-Large, Chapter Representative and Roanoke Valley Chapter President: Suzanne Bowser

Hampton Roads Chapter: Board of Directors Vanessa Moore

Central VA Chapter: Treasurer Beverly Ross, Board of Directors Olayinka Makjekounmi, and Nominating Committee Kalay Naidoo

Piedmont Chapter: President Mesha Jones

Northern VA Chapter: President Melody Dickerson

Farmville Chapter: President Aileen Cassada

The Virginia Nurses Association's newly-elected Chapter leaders' 2-year terms began January 1. They will be formally inducted at the upcoming Chapter Leaders' Summit slated for February. VNA extends a warm welcome to the newly elected chapter leaders, ushering in a period of renewed dedication and leadership.

Director-at-Large, Chapter Representative and Southwestern VA Chapter: Incumbent President Melissa Whited

Roanoke Valley Chapter: President Charles Bullins

Hill City Chapter: Incumbent President Jenna Lloyd Fisher

Hampton Roads Chapter: Board of Directors Llewellyn Smith

Central VA Chapter: Incumbent President June Noel, Treasurer Phyllis Wyche, Board of Directors Kalay Naidoo, Board of Directors Beverly Ross, and Nominating Committee Chante Logan.

Northern VA Chapter: President Patricia Lane

Augusta Chapter: President Nicole Tucker

New River Valley Chapter: Incumbent President Kristi Hall

N. Shenandoah Valley Chapter: Incumbent President Christina Paxton

Congratulations to our newly-elected chapter leaders! Your commitment is truly commendable, and we are excited about the innovative ideas you will bring to the forefront. For those interested in exploring local chapter leadership opportunities within your area, please connect with Membership Manager MJ Gearles, at mgearles@virginiannurses.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

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Southwestern VA Chapter and Director-at-Large, Chapter Representative: Incumbent President Melissa Whited



Roanoke Valley Chapter: President Charles Bullins



Hill City Chapter: Incumbent President Jenna Lloyd Fisher



Hampton Roads Chapter: Board of Directors Llewellyn Smith

Central VA Chapter:



Incumbent President June Noel



Treasurer Phyllis Wyche



Board of Directors Kalay Naidoo



Board of Directors Beverly Ross



Nominating Committee Chante Logan



Northern VA Chapter: President Patricia Lane



Augusta Chapter: President Nicole Tucker



New River Valley Chapter: Incumbent President Kristi Hall



N. Shenandoah Valley Chapter: Incumbent President Christina Paxton

Transforming Healthcare Series: The Comprehensive Guide to AI in Nursing: Knowledge, Implementation, and Future Applications

Part 1: The Essentials of AI in Nursing

By VNA Vice President
Jennifer Shepherd, DNP,
MHA, RN, NEW-BC, NPD-
BC, CHPN, CCRN-K

This is the first in a series
authored by multiple VNA
nursing leaders.

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has revolutionized healthcare by applying computational techniques to analyze medical data and enhance patient care. According to a 2023 report, the “global AI in healthcare market size was estimated at USD 22.45 billion... and is expected to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 36.4% from 2024 to 2030” (Grand View, p.1, 2023). This article provides a concise overview of AI in the nursing profession, covering its definition, categories, and applications such as decision support and natural language processing.



Jennifer Shepherd

Understanding AI and Machine Learning

Definition and Concepts

Understanding Artificial Intelligence (AI) involves delving into computer science, where machines are designed to simulate human intelligence. A subset of AI is Machine Learning (ML), a paradigm that empowers systems to learn from data and improve their performance over time without explicit programming (Agyemang-Gyau, P., 2021). The crux of ML lies in algorithms that enable computers to identify patterns, make predictions, and adapt to new information. Imagine utilizing streaming platforms like Netflix™, Spotify™, or even Amazon™ for shopping and pondering over the mechanism behind their personalized recommendations. The answer lies in the sophisticated algorithms powering these technologies, which systematically learn, evolve, and make decisions based on user experiences without requiring explicit programming (Shepherd, 2024). The learning process is categorized into supervised, unsupervised, and reinforcement learning, aiming to enable machines to generalize knowledge from specific instances, promoting autonomy and adaptability in problem-solving (IBM, 2023).

Key Terminology

Using AI and Machine Learning requires a foundational understanding of key terminology. Algorithms serve as the backbone of AI, representing a set of instructions or rules that guide the computer

in performing specific tasks (Joshi, 2022). Pivotal terms include:

- Algorithm: A set of instructions or rules that guide the computer in performing specific tasks. In the context of AI and ML, algorithms can be used to process data, make predictions, and learn from experience.
- Deep Learning: A subset of ML that uses neural networks with many layers which enable the learning of complex patterns in large amounts of data.
- Neural Network: A computing system inspired by the human brain. It involves a network of artificial neurons, and it's used in deep learning algorithms.
- Training: The process of teaching an ML model. It involves providing the model with data, allowing it to make predictions, and then adjusting the model's parameters based on the accuracy of its predictions.
- Inference: The process of using a trained ML model to make predictions. (AI CoE, 2024).

As nursing leaders explore the potential of AI in healthcare, familiarity with these terms becomes indispensable for effective communication and collaboration with nurses, data scientists, and other healthcare team members, driving AI innovations.

Historical Perspective

The historical perspective of AI in healthcare unveils a journey marked by pioneering applications that have significantly influenced the landscape (Fig 1). In the early stages, AI found its place in healthcare through rule-based and expert systems designed to assist with diagnosis and treatment planning. In 1950, the first practical application of AI emerged with a remote-controlled mouse navigating and successfully recalling its path out of a labyrinth (Roser, 2022). Though rudimentary compared to contemporary AI capabilities, these systems laid the groundwork for more sophisticated applications. The 1970s witnessed the emergence of computer-aided diagnosis, where AI algorithms analyzed medical data to support physicians in decision-making processes (Kaul, et al, 2020). As technology advanced, AI applications expanded into imaging analysis, developing systems capable of interpreting medical images such as X-rays and CT scans (IBM, 2023). These early forays into healthcare AI set the stage for a transformative evolution that could revolutionize nursing practices and patient care.

The dynamic evolution of AI in nursing, driven by technological progress and recognition of benefits, has integrated AI into practices for improved outcomes and efficiency. In recent years, AI has become an integral component of nursing practices, contributing to improved patient outcomes and operational efficiency (Tiase & Cato, 2021). Nursing leaders, driven by a commitment to transformative healthcare, have embraced AI in areas such as predictive analytics for patient monitoring, personalized treatment plans, and workflow optimization (Peltonen L.M. & Topaz M., 2021). AI-powered clinical decision support systems have emerged to assist nurses in making informed choices based on comprehensive data analysis. As nursing workflows continue to evolve, the integration of AI technologies promises to enhance patient care, reduce workload pressures, and foster a new era of data-driven, patient-centered nursing practices (Shepherd, 2024).

Types of AI in Nursing

Decision Support Systems

Decision Support Systems (DSS) stand as a cornerstone in the application of AI within nursing. These systems leverage AI algorithms to analyze vast datasets, aiding healthcare professionals, including nurses, in making informed decisions about patient care (ARHQ, 2024). DSS provide real-time information, interpret clinical data, and offer evidence-based recommendations, thereby enhancing the quality and efficiency of decision-making processes. Clinical decision support tools include:

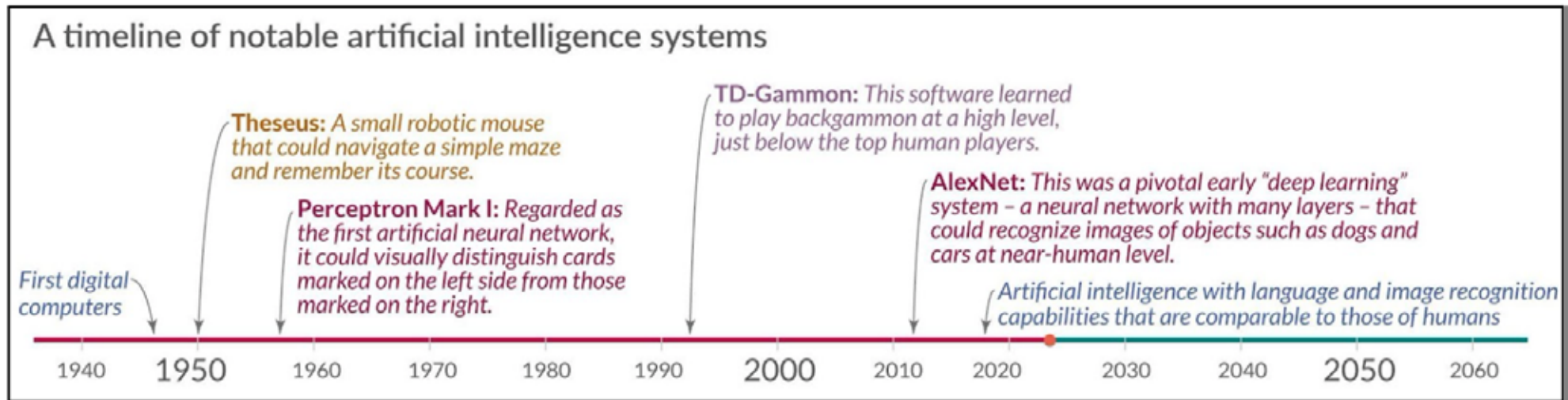
- Order sets created for particular conditions or types of patients
- Documentation templates and diagnostic support to facilitate clinical workflows
- Alerts and notifications about potentially dangerous situations or drug interactions (ARHQ, 2024).

For nursing leaders, the integration of DSS into healthcare workflows represents a valuable tool for optimizing patient outcomes, ensuring adherence to best practices, and ultimately elevating the standard of care provided by nursing teams (Ronquillio, et. AI, 2021).

Robotics and Automation

The realm of robotics and automation has become increasingly relevant in nursing, presenting innovative solutions to streamline various healthcare tasks. Robotic systems designed for

Figure 1 (Roser, 2022. With Permission)



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Nurturing a Healthier Tomorrow: The Crucial Role of Philanthropy in Supporting the Virginia Nurses Foundation

VNA & VNF CEO, Janet Wall, MS

In the intricate dance of healthcare, the Virginia Nurses Foundation emerges as a guiding light, committed to improving the health of Virginia's communities through the development of an educated and diverse nursing workforce. At the heart of this mission lies the transformative power of philanthropy, inviting individuals and organizations to become partners in shaping a healthier tomorrow. As we delve into the foundation's crucial initiatives and four unique pathways for giving, it becomes evident that philanthropy is the catalyst for positive change.

Four Pathways for Giving:
Link to Donate: [VNF Donation Webpage](#)

- 1 **Embracing the Nightingale Legacy Fund**
The Nightingale Legacy Fund, a tribute to nursing leaders who have left an indelible mark, serves as the cornerstone of the Virginia Nurses Foundation's commitment to excellence. This fund, designed to support the Nurse Leadership Academy, encapsulates the spirit of honoring the past while forging ahead. Donors are invited to make a lasting impact through one-time or annual contributions, directing their support to specific causes that resonate with their values.
- 2 **Annual Giving: A Commitment to the Future**
Annual Giving stands as an invitation for sustained commitment. Donors have the flexibility to make an annual contribution or

a one-time donation, allowing them to choose where their support is directed. The options for support under Annual Giving include:

- Dr. Vivienne McDaniel Health Equity Scholarship:
Addressing health disparities is a priority, and this scholarship aims to bridge the gap, ensuring equitable access to quality healthcare for all.
 - General Nursing Scholarships:
Empowering aspiring nurses, this option contributes to the growth of a diverse nursing workforce, reflective of the communities it serves.
 - Nurse Leadership Academy Scholarships:
Fostering leadership development, donors supporting this scholarship invest in the future of nursing leadership.
 - Public Policy Scholarships: Advocacy is a powerful tool for change. This scholarship supports nurses dedicated to influencing policies that shape healthcare for the better.
 - Mental Health Initiatives for Nurses and K-12 Youth:
The foundation recognizes the critical importance of mental health, addressing distress and suicidal ideation among nurses and youth through education and outreach.
 - DEI Initiatives:
Promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives ensures that the nursing workforce mirrors the rich tapestry of Virginia's communities.
 - Named Scholarships:
A Personalized Contribution to Nursing Education
Contributing to the ongoing education of nurses in the commonwealth, Named Scholarships allow donors to leave a lasting mark. A VNF scholarship bearing the donor's name becomes a testament to their commitment to nursing education.
- 3 **Charitable Bequests: Securing a Legacy of Care**
For those with a long-term vision, Charitable Bequests offer a pathway to ensure the foundation's ongoing success. By including the Virginia Nurses Foundation in their will or trust, donors secure the future of healthcare initiatives, leaving a lasting legacy that positively impacts the health and well-being of communities for years to come.
- 4 **Current Foundation Initiatives: Making an Impact Today**
The Virginia Nurses Foundation's commitment extends beyond financial support, as evidenced by its ongoing initiatives:
- Health Equity: The foundation strives to improve access to healthcare and address health disparities. Through education and community outreach, they work toward ensuring quality healthcare for all, irrespective of background or circumstances.
 - Mental Health for Nurses and Communities: Acknowledging the mental health challenges faced by nurses and youth, the foundation has taken proactive steps. Training school nurses and students in mental health first aid programs is a significant stride toward building resilience.
 - Nurse Leadership Academy: By providing opportunities for new and aspiring nurse leaders, the Nurse Leadership Academy sets the stage for effective leadership and advocacy. The positive reviews from the first class of graduating fellows speak volumes about the program's success.

Please join us in cultivating health, recognizing that philanthropy is the lifeblood that nourishes the roots of positive change. By [contributing to the foundation](#), we all become architects of a healthier, more equitable future for Virginia's communities.

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Level Up with the Virginia Nurses Foundation's Senior-Level Nurse Leadership Program, Next Level Leadership!

Calling all senior-level nurse leaders! Are you ready to take your leadership skills to new heights? The Virginia Nurses Foundation and Virginia Nurses Association, in collaboration with the esteemed [Dennis McIntee and Leadership Development Group](#), proudly present the transformative Next Level Leadership course, designed to empower you with the art of Intentional Leadership. Next Level Leadership is intended to help nurse leaders advance their leadership potential and thrive!

Why Next Level Leadership?

In today's ever-evolving healthcare landscape, leadership isn't just about managing tasks—it's about inspiring change, fostering innovation, and championing your team to success. Our Next Level Leadership program equips you with the skills, knowledge, and mindset to excel as an Intentional Leader. The program commences May 2024 – This program will be limited to the first 30 registrants, so reserve your spot now!

- Dive deep into 10 essential leadership modules and discover the secrets to unlocking your full leadership potential.
- Join 6 live Zoom sessions, from the comfort of your home or office, to be held in 2024 from 10-11AM on May 10, June 7, July 12, August 16, September 13, October 18
- Benefit from two one-on-one leadership coaching sessions with the esteemed Leadership Development Group.
- Connect with fellow nursing professionals and mentors to expand your network and gain invaluable insights.
- Mark your calendars for the in-person half-day Closing Workshop on November 21, 2024, which will serve as a pre-conference event to our Fall Conference.

Exclusive Bonus: As a "Next Level Leadership" participant, you'll receive complimentary registration to the in-person VNA & VNF Fall Conference on November 22-23, 2024—a value-added opportunity you won't want to miss!

Cost:

Members: \$2300
NonMembers: \$2500

Don't worry if you're not currently a member of our association. Your non-member program registration automatically includes membership, giving you access to a wealth of resources and a supportive community!

Registration: Visit <https://virginianurses.com/mpage/NextLevelLeadership> for more information and to secure your place!

Have Questions?

For inquiries or assistance, please contact Lindsey Cardwell, Lcardwell@virginianurses.com.



Fall Conference

2024

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November 23 Celebrate nursing at Virginia Nurses Foundation's spectacular Gala!



Join us on November 23 at the Hilton Hotel & Spa in Short Pump, VA (just 20 minutes from downtown Richmond). Be part of an enchanting evening rekindling connections with colleagues, and acknowledging the remarkable achievements of nurses across the commonwealth through our esteemed "Leadership Excellence" awards and more. It's all on the agenda!

Stay tuned for additional details on the VNF Gala, including ticket prices and exclusive hotel rates, coming soon on [the Gala webpage](#). Let the festivities begin!

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A Just Culture Is a Safe Culture

by Dr. Nina Beaman Ed.D., MSN, CNE, RN PMH-BC, RNC-AWHC, CMA (AAMA), VNA Workforce Issues Commission



Dr. Nina Beaman

When finding blame for errors that occur in the workplace seems more important than fixing systemic problems, the nursing culture has moved into an unjust, punitive, and unsafe culture. The only safe culture is a transparent culture that fosters the ability for a nurse who makes a mistake to be able to report it and collaboratively help to determine the root cause analysis and move forward with a change so the error does not reoccur. According to Professor Sir Norman Williams (2018), in a just culture, colleagues will consider systemic issues when things go wrong, empowering professionals and those operating within the system to learn from the error without fear of retribution.

Accidents are often described as following a “Swiss Cheese Model” in which any intervention in the system leading to the accident or incident could have prevented an error from occurring. The focus should not just be on firing and replacing nurses, but on changing the dynamic that leads to the error.

According to the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), systems are comprised of learning systems, systems designs, system reliability, human performance and error tolerance, recovery/catching errors, barriers, redundancy, and behaviors. Failure of any of these systems can lead to error. The performance of efficient checks on these systems can preserve safety.

To err is human, but there are three kinds of errors: knowledge-based, skill-based, and rule-based (ASHP, n.d.). Knowledge-based errors occur when a nurse uses trial and error in a new situation to make decisions. The solution to these errors is application-based education. Skill-based errors occur when there is a lapse in education/training or the nurse skips important steps. This nurse needs to be re-educated on the skills and the importance of each step should be emphasized. Rule-based errors occur when the nurse applies the wrong rule, applies a rule inappropriately, or does not comply with a rule. When these occur, a root cause analysis should be done to see if the rule needs to be clarified, retaught, or modified.

Nurse behaviors can result in simple mistakes and inadvertent lapses, which happen and should result in the repentant and cooperative nurse being consoled, not punished. If the nurse engaged in some at-risk behaviors like using a shortcut/workaround, an analysis of what led to the feeling that this workaround was necessary (workload or workflow issues, for example) needs to be conducted. If the nurse engaged in reckless behavior and consciously disregarded the safety of patients, was impaired, or had malicious intent, discipline is necessary. However, discipline should have the purpose of changing behavior, not shaming in front of colleagues. Shaming leads to a culture in which nurses fear being transparent about the system and personal errors. This lack of transparency can lead to hiding errors, which can endanger patients, as it prevents the open analysis of the systems failures that led to the error and the changes necessary to prevent their recurrence.

If your workplace does not have a just culture, consider using shared governance or personal influence to change the culture in which you work. Also, [consider advocating with the Virginia Nurses Association](#) for measures to assure a just culture in all healthcare settings. Your patients and colleagues are expecting and deserving of a just culture.

References
ASHP. (n.d.). *Just culture toolkit*. Retrieved January 11, 2024. <https://www.ashp.org/-/media/assets/pharmacy-practice/resource-centers/patient-safety/Just-Culture-Toolkit-Final.pdf>
Williams, M. N. (2018, June 27). Review of gross negligence manslaughter in healthcare. *BMJ*. 361, k2779. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.k2779>



VNA rolls out Associate Memberships for businesses

The Virginia Nurses Association has just launched a new Associate Membership category for businesses that are eager to connect with nurses throughout the commonwealth.* If you are – or know of – a:

- legal nurse consultant
- owner of a home health agency
- licensed massage therapist
- proprietor of a non-nursing business selling, for example, artwork, soy candles, or...we're confident we can help you grow your business!

And for **each** unique lead you provide us that converts to a VNA Associate Member, we'll discount your 2024 VNA Fall Conference registration by \$10. You could quite possibly cover the cost of much if not **all** of your conference registration! Our Fall

Conference will be held November 22-23 at the Hilton Hotel & Spa, Short Pump (10 minutes west of downtown Richmond).

- Perks of Associate Membership include:

- An online presence at VirginiaNurses.com
- Direct engagement with nurses at any of our 12 local chapters
- As an Associate Member, Promotion in our professional publications
- A \$300 discount on a VNA Fall Conference exhibit table

All for just \$500/year! Leads of potential businesses you can refer us to? [Click here](#). Associate member [JOIN](#) form! Questions? Reach out to MJ Gearles at mjgearles@virginiannurses.com.

*** Business owners do not need to be a nurse**

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ALL IN: Empowering Virginia's Caregivers through the "Caring for Virginia's Caregivers" Program

Caregivers are the unsung heroes of our communities, dedicating themselves to supporting loved ones with compassion and selflessness. Recognizing the invaluable contributions of these caregivers, the "Caring for Virginia's Caregivers" program, aptly named ALL IN, stands as a beacon of support and empowerment.

What is ALL IN?

ALL IN is a comprehensive program designed to address the needs, challenges, and well-being of caregivers across Virginia. It offers a multifaceted approach aimed at providing resources, education, and a supportive network for those who dedicate their lives to caring for others.

Virginia Nurses Association Unveils Exclusive Apparel Collection with Online Merchandise Store

Calling all Virginia nurses! The Virginia Nurses Association is excited to introduce our brand-new [online merchandise store](#), featuring an exclusive collection of items tailored just for you.

Indulge in our trendy t-shirts to express your nursing pride with style. Stay warm and comfortable with our cozy sweatshirts, crafted from quality materials for the perfect blend of style and comfort. For warmer days or intense workout sessions, our relaxed tank tops provide an ideal combination of breathability and flexibility.

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ABOUT

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Key Initiatives of ALL IN:

1. Education and Training: The program provides access to educational materials, workshops, and training sessions tailored to equip caregivers with essential skills and knowledge. These resources cover various aspects of caregiving, including healthcare, emotional support, and practical caregiving techniques.
2. Support Networks: Caregiving can often feel isolating. ALL IN establishes support networks, both online and in local communities, where caregivers can connect, share experiences, and find solace in a community of individuals facing similar challenges.
3. Resource Access: Navigating the landscape of available resources can be overwhelming. The program streamlines access to essential services, financial aid, legal guidance, and other support systems, easing the burden on caregivers.
4. Advocacy and Recognition: ALL IN advocates for caregivers' rights and recognition, aiming to elevate their status within society and ensure they receive the respect, support, and appreciation they deserve.

How to Engage with ALL IN:

Caregivers in Virginia can engage with ALL IN through various channels—ambassadorships, local community events, workshops, and informational sessions. The [program's website](#) serves as a hub for information, resources, and a calendar of upcoming events, making it easy for caregivers to get involved.

Why ALL IN Matters:

By addressing the holistic needs of caregivers, ALL IN aims to alleviate stress, enhance well-being, and empower these individuals to continue providing exceptional care to their loved ones while taking care of their own health and needs.

Caring for Virginia's Caregivers isn't just a program—it's a lifeline for those who selflessly devote themselves to the well-being of others. ALL IN stands as a testament to Virginia's commitment to supporting and honoring the invaluable contributions of caregivers throughout the state.

To learn more about ALL IN or to get involved, visit the program's website at <https://www.allinforhealthcare.org/resources/>.

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A Tribute to Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson

By VNA & VNF DEI Council Inaugural Chair, Dr. Vivienne McDaniel, DNP, RN

(December 3, 1934 – December 31, 2023)



(Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson, Photos by Vivienne McDaniel)

In 2019, I had the opportunity to interview Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson and from that interview I started calling her the “nurse of firsts.” Continue reading and you will learn why.



(Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson is emotional as she receives her award for 30 years of service in Congress.)

U. S. Congresswoman, Eddie Bernice Johnson was an icon in nursing and throughout the halls of Congress! A leader in Congress, Rep. Johnson - affectionately called EBJ - became the first Black woman to chair the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. She left office in January 2023, after repeatedly delaying her retirement. A long time Congressional Black Caucus member, EBJ was celebrated for three decades of service during the 2022 Congressional Black Caucus Foundation conference. As her tenure ended, her colleagues showered her with appreciation and accolades.



(Dr. Vivienne Pierce McDaniel and Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson celebrating her final year in Congress during the 2022 Congressional Black Caucus Foundation conference.)

She was born in Waco, Texas and grew up in the segregated South. She stated that she had to leave Texas to attend nursing school in South Bend, Indiana because schools in her state would not accept her because of her race. She also told me that her experiences with overt racism were the catalyst for her getting involved with politics.

She was the first Black chief psychiatric nurse at Dallas' Veteran Affairs (VA) hospital. EBJ said when the VA Hospital hired her, they were shocked to learn that she was Black and would not allow her to live in the dorm on their campus. Undeterred, she stated that she "met the challenges with determination to be successful so she could pave the way for other Black nurses." Coincidentally, in 2019, Dallas' once-segregated Union Station was renamed in her honor.

Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson's legacy will live on through all who knew her and loved her.

A Timeline of former Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson

- 1934** – Born December 3rd in Waco, TX to Edward and Lillie Mae White Johnson
- 1955** – Received nursing certificate from St. Mary's College in Indiana
- 1956** – Started work at Dallas VA Hospital
- 1967** – Received a bachelor's degree in nursing from Texas Christian University
- 1972** – Elected to the Texas House
- 1976** – Received a master's degree in public administration from Southern Methodist University
- 1977** – Appointed as the regional director of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare by President Jimmy Carter
- 1986** – Elected to the Texas Senate
- 1992** – Elected to U.S. House of Representatives (first nurse)
- 2001** – Elected chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus
- 2019** – Became chair of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology
- 2023** – Retired from U.S. House of Representatives after 15 terms
- 2023** – Died in Dallas, TX at the age of 89

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