

74th Annual Convention

New Jersey Nursing Students

Inside Out: Where Joy Meets Stress, Grit Meets Growth

2026 Convention

February 18- 20

Resorts Casino Atlantic City

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- » 34 credits
- » 2 years, part time, mostly online

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- » 48 credits
- » 2.5 years, part time, mostly online

MSN in Family Nurse Practitioner

- » 51 credits
- » 3 years, part time, mostly online

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- » 36 credits
- » 3 years, part time, mostly online





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Keynote Speaker



Donna Cardillo, RN

Donna Cardillo, known as the Inspiration Nurse, travels the world helping nurses to be happy in their careers and to reach their full potential. She is fiercely passionate about nursing and life in general.

Donna is the original “Dear Donna” columnist at Nurse.com. She is a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing and a Certified Speaking Professional, one of only 25 nurses in the world with this designation.

Donna is author of 4 books including the award-winning *Falling Together: How to Find Balance, Joy, and Meaningful Change When Your Life Seems to be Falling Apart*, which she will be signing after her presentation.

She has received numerous business and healthcare awards and recognitions but is most proud of being named a Diva in Nursing by the Institute for Nursing in NJ for outstanding achievements and excellence in practice.

Donna has been referred to as the “Nurse Whisperer.” She is a life- long Jersey girl with attitude to spare.

Luncheon Speaker

Leon Jarvis

Assistant Vice President - Critical Care at RWJBarnabas Health Newark Beth Israel Medical Center

Accomplished healthcare executive with diverse leadership and extensive clinical experience across academic and community health systems, currently serving as Assistant Vice President of Critical Care Services at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center. With progressive leadership spanning emergency services, cardiovascular programs, and critical care, he provides strategic, clinical, financial, and operational oversight for multiple high-acuity departments including CCU, CTICU, MICU, Rapid Response, Nursing Supervision, and Cardiovascular Services. Recognized for driving measurable performance improvement, he has achieved zero Joint Commission deficiencies, elevated Press Ganey scores from the 1st to 98th percentile within nine months, reduced Door-to-Balloon times, and led Lean Six Sigma initiatives to improve throughput and patient outcomes. A high reliability trainer and co-chair for TJC Disease Specific Care for Heart Failure, he is known for his ability to build high-performing teams, oversee large FTE groups, lead complex program development, and successfully launch new service lines. His strengths in strategic planning, quality metrics attainment, change management, and community engagement are grounded in a strong clinical foundation, military service in the United States Army, and advanced education including a Master of Science in Nursing (Public Health).

2025-2026 NJNS Board of Directors Biographies



President

Mya Solis, Saint Elizabeth University

Mya Solis currently attends Saint Elizabeth University in pursuit of a BSN. Mya is a nursing graduate from Robert Wood Johnson Barnabas Health School of Nursing (RWJBH) where she earned an AD. She also holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Management. With a strong foundation in both healthcare and leadership, she has proudly served as President of the New Jersey Nursing Students, Inc. (NJNS) and the Trinitas Student Nurses Association. In these roles, Mya has combined her business expertise with a passion for advocacy, working to uplift and empower her fellow nursing students.

Throughout her academic journey, Mya has remained deeply committed to community service and professional development. As a delegate at the 72nd NJNS Annual Convention in 2024, she gained valuable insight into the importance of active engagement in both pre-professional and professional nursing organizations. Inspired by this experience, she pursued a more hands-on role within NJNS, ultimately running for—and securing—a second term as President.

Her dedication to service extends beyond leadership roles. Through involvement with organizations such as NJNS, the New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA), and the New Jersey Integrated Black Nurses Association (NJIBNA), Mya has built a strong network of peers and mentors, further fueling her commitment to nursing advocacy, representation, and mentorship.

In addition to her academic and organizational work, Mya works full-time as a Critical Care Registered Nurse at Newark Beth Israel Barnabas Health. Previously she was employed as a Hospital Liaison where she was able to refine her communication, coordination, and leadership skills. Outside of her professional life, she enjoys spending quality time with family, attending concerts, indulging in spa days, and brightening others' days with her warm spirit.

Mya is driven by a deep desire to give back, lead with purpose, and serve her community. As a Registered Nurse, she looks forward to continuing to mentor, inspire and advocate for others across the nursing community through NJNS.



First Vice-President

Reina Garcia Perfecto, Mercer County College

Hello! My name is Reina Garcia Perfecto. I am honored to serve as the First Vice President of the New Jersey Nursing Students, Inc. I am a proud graduate of Mercer County Community College, where I completed my nursing education in December 2025. I also hold a Bachelor of Science degree in Health Studies, which has helped me develop a deep understanding of the social determinants of health and their impact on our communities.

Throughout my time in the nursing program at Mercer, I was actively involved in my school's Student Nurses' Association (SNA) and had the privilege of serving as Vice President during Fall 2025. In this role, I was committed to guiding and supporting my fellow nursing classmates as they prepared to enter the profession.

Outside of my role as a nursing graduate and student leader, I am currently employed at a community health center as a senior outreach representative. In this position, I work closely with some of our most

vulnerable populations, including individuals experiencing homelessness, public housing residents, and migrant and seasonal farmworkers. This work continues to strengthen my commitment to equitable, community-centered care.

As a first-generation college graduate, I understand the challenges that come with forging your own path. I strive to be a leader and role model for upcoming nursing students, demonstrating that with compassion, resilience, and determination, anything is possible. I chose nursing because I have always felt called to support people through both their most difficult and most meaningful moments.

In my free time, I enjoy being in nature, spending time with family and friends, and exploring new coffee shops. I believe self-care is just as essential as professional growth, and that to be effective leaders, we must nurture both our well-being and our purpose.

I am excited to be part of the executive board and look forward to contributing to the journeys of future nursing students in a positive and meaningful way.



Second Vice-President

Stacey Lozin, Rutgers School of Nursing

Stacey Lozin is a proud first-generation Haitian American and rising senior at Rutgers University–Newark. She is deeply passionate about service, community leadership, and ministry. At her local church, Stacey serves as the Children’s Youth Director, where she leads youth programming and supports the spiritual development of children in her community. She is a proud alumna of the BOLD Women’s Leadership Network, a prestigious scholarship program that empowers first-generation women students to become agents of change in their communities.

Stacey has held several leadership roles on campus. She previously served as both Treasurer and President of the Newark Student Senate, where she advocated for student engagement and campus improvements. She also worked as a Peer Tutor through the Office of Academic Services (OAS), providing academic support across various disciplines. Professionally, Stacey works as an IT Consultant for Rutgers University–Newark and as a Clinical Teaching Assistant for the Rutgers School of Nursing EOF Pre-Junior Clinical Program, where she supports student learning in early clinical experiences. She also interned with the Equity in Action Summer Internship, contributing to initiatives aimed at reducing disparities in education and healthcare.

Stacey’s global perspective has been shaped by two impactful study abroad experiences. In Ghana, she studied healthcare delivery with the School of Nursing, and in Kenya, she explored the refugee experience. She will soon be leading a six-week course based on her work with displaced populations.

In addition, Stacey has been active in nursing student leadership. She served on the Rutgers Student Nurses’ Association (RSNA) Board as Resolutions Chair and currently serves as the Second Vice President and Resolutions Author for the New Jersey Student Nurses’ Association (NJSNA). From local ministry to global service and healthcare advocacy, Stacey Lozin is committed to leading with purpose, compassion, and impact.



Secretary/Membership & Nominations Director

Matthew Dennis Argarin Canlas, Rutgers University-Blackwood School of Nursing

Salutations!

My name is Matthew, and I am privileged to serve as your 2025-2026 Secretary and Membership/Nominations Director for the New Jersey Nursing Students, Inc. (NJNS) Executive Board. I am currently a Senior finishing my last semester of the Accelerated 2+2 Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program at Rutgers University's School of Nursing on the Blackwood Campus in South Jersey. On campus, I serve as the Student Council President and a Peer Mentor for our Juniors. For Rutgers in general, I serve as the Secretary for the Rutgers Student Nurses' Association (RSNA) and as the Blackwood Campus Student Liaison for the Baccalaureate Committee, as well as the Curriculum and Evaluation Committee.

As a proud 2024 Camden County College (CCC) alumni, my initial major was Engineering Science. However, having endured the COVID-19 pandemic, the dullness of calculus and physics, and rapid artificial intelligence advancements, I switched to a Pre-nursing major. I fully acknowledge the need to fulfill a growing demand for BSN-prepared nurses and to continue providing equitable, effective, and efficient health care for the growing population.

After passing boards and obtaining my license, I strive to work in the perioperative environment. Pursuing the Registered Nurse First Assistant (RNFA) position interests me the most, having been under the knife two times in my life and wanting to advocate for my patients at their most vulnerable. In terms of graduate studies, I plan to achieve a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) in the future, possibly furthering my career as a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA). In addition, I have the passion to enlist in the United States Navy through their Nurse Candidate Program and work at least two to three years as a Naval Nurse.

Aside from academics, I work at Penn Medicine's Pennsylvania Hospital (PAH) as a Welcome Desk Ambassador under the Patient Guest Relations department. I used to volunteer weekly there conducting patient surveys regarding their wellbeing and overall hospital experience, as well as educating new parents on infant paperwork on Mother Baby units. Outside of healthcare, I try my best to balance the rigors of school alongside going to the gym, skiing during winters, and hitting tennis during springs and summers. For hobbies, I am a baseball, tennis, aviation, and automotive enthusiast.

As Secretary and Membership/Nominations Director, I hope to continue work as a role model student leader for prospective NSNA and NJNS members. I also look forward to continuing crucial work alongside my fellow Executive Board members to advance the professional identity of nurses and the collective nursing profession, as well as connecting nursing students to professional development opportunities.



Treasurer

Melissa Tomlin, Rutgers School of Nursing

Hello everyone! My name is Melissa Tomlin, and I am honored to serve as Treasurer for NJNS Board of Directors. I am entering my senior year in the traditional BSN program at Rutgers School of Nursing –New Brunswick. I currently serve as President of the Rutgers Student Nurses Association (RSNA). I am also a Peer Mentor for the School of Nursing and deeply value leadership and supporting my peers. I hope to work in critical care nursing in the future and make a meaningful impact on the lives of those in need!

I recently had the opportunity to attend the 73rd Annual NSNA Convention in Seattle, Washington and served as a delegate for Rutgers School of Nursing at the NSNA House of Delegates. The convention was an eye-opening experience that reinforced the importance of staying involved in our evolving profession. With the encouragement of my incredible RSNA advisor, I joined the NJNS Board of Directors to work alongside a team of inspiring peers committed to advancing professional development.

Outside of nursing, you can find me enjoying nature walks or exploring new coffee shops. As Treasurer, I hope to deepen my knowledge of financial management and contribute to the growth of NJNS. I am excited to grow within the Nursing field alongside passionate peers and to help inspire and support students across the state of New Jersey.



Health Policy and Advocacy Director

Quintella Cuffy, Eastern International School of Nursing

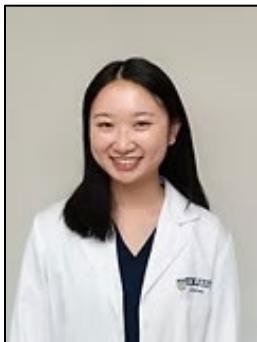
Quintella Cuffy is honored to serve as the Health Policy and Advocacy Director for New Jersey Nursing Students (NJNS). She holds an associate's degree in Community Health and is currently a senior nursing student in the baccalaureate nursing program at Eastern International College.

Serving in the New Jersey Nursing Students (NJNS) organization interests her because it

represents a chance to grow not only as a future nurse but also as an advocate and leader. Nursing has always been more than just a career goal for her—it is a calling to serve others, to be a voice for patients, and to stand alongside her peers in shaping a better future for healthcare. Being part of NJNS would allow her to connect with other nursing students who share the same passion, while also enabling her to learn from their experiences and contribute her own. She is especially drawn to the chance to be involved in health policy and advocacy, since she believes nurses must use their voices to create change that improves equity and access to care. Most importantly, serving in NJNS would allow her to give back to her community, strengthen her leadership skills and inspire her to carry these skills into her future practice as a nurse.

With over 30 years of experience at Mount Sinai Beth Israel, including 18 years working in a Geriatric Behavioral Health unit, Quintella has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to patient-centered care. Between April 2022 and April 2023, she participated in a collaborative initiative designed to enhance patient experience within a psychiatric unit. The success of this project culminated in a presentation at the 2023 Nursing Convention in Montreal, Canada—a pivotal experience that inspired her ongoing involvement with NJNS and its 2025 Student Nursing Convention.

Outside of her professional and academic endeavors, Quintella enjoys traveling, spending time with her family, playing with her dogs, and attending music and comedy events. As a dedicated advocate for nursing, patients, and community health, Quintella is committed to working alongside her NJNS colleagues to influence health policies and systems that advance quality patient care and strengthen the nursing profession.



Fundraising Director

Tammy Chao, The College of New Jersey

Tammy Chao is a rising junior nursing student and is honored to serve as the Fundraising Director for the NJNS Board of Directors. During her time with NJNS, she hopes to make meaningful and lasting contributions to fellow nurses and nursing students by providing the resources and support they need to succeed through her fundraising efforts.

On campus, she is involved in various organizations. She serves as the Director of Professional Development for The College of New Jersey's Student Nurses Association, where she plans events to support her fellow nursing students. She is also a peer tutor, providing academic support to other nursing students. In addition, Tammy serves as an ambassador for AmIOk, an organization that supports students in the Mercer County area who have experienced trauma.

Throughout her time in college, Tammy has demonstrated a passion for professional development. She completed an externship with St. Luke's University Health Network and has held assistant roles at a doctor's office, a long-term care facility, and an assisted living facility.



2025-2026 NJNS Consultants & Advisors



NJLN Consultant

Illya Devera-Bonilla, DNP, RN

Illya DeVera-Bonilla is faculty at the Trinitas School of Nursing (TSN) in Elizabeth, New Jersey. Ms. DeVera-Bonilla received her MSN in Education from the College of St. Elizabeth in Convent Station, New Jersey. Currently she is the lead faculty for the Foundations of Nursing, course lecturer for the Fundamentals of Nursing course and she mentors senior students in their Leadership & Management seminar. Additionally, she has served as manager of the learning simulation center at the school of nursing. Ms. DeVera-Bonilla coordinates the school's student success initiative, STEPS Program (Success Through Effort Planning & Support), a program which assists students in managing the rigors of nursing school through her coaching of the students. Ms. DeVera-Bonilla's passion is her mentoring of new graduate nurses and nursing students into the professional nursing role. As the New Jersey League for Nursing's mentor for the New Jersey Nursing Student (NJNS) association, she is able combine her passion for mentoring and her knowledge of leadership in developing the next generation of nursing leaders through the NJNS. Ms. DeVera-Bonilla's clinical specialty is in critical care nursing.



NJSNA Consultant

Daniel Misa, MSN, RN, CEN, CPEN, NE-BC, NPD-BC, GERO-BC, SCRN

Dan Misa is the full time night shift nurse educator and a per diem administrative manager (nursing supervisor) at Atlantic Health System Chilton Medical Center in Pompton Plains, NJ. Mr. Misa received his MSN degree in nursing leadership and management and his BS in nursing degree from the School of Nursing and College of Nursing, respectively, from Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. He is the current treasurer for the New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA) and the Institute for Nursing (IFN), serving as the chairperson of the NJSNA & IFN Joint Finance Committee. Mr. Misa has previously served as representative to the American Nurses Association Membership Assembly, president of NJSNA Region 1 (Morris, Sussex, Passaic, and Warren Counties) and chairperson of the Nominations Committee at the state and region levels. He is a frequent speaker for NJNS, having presented on the topics of emergency nursing, travel nursing, and men in the nursing profession at past annual conventions and at a Council of School Participants (COSP) event. Mr. Misa holds certifications in emergency nursing, pediatric emergency nursing, and as a nurse executive, and he is pleased to support NJNS and its nursing student members on behalf of NJSNA.



Presidential Advisor

**Norma Rodgers-Frink, BSN, RN, CCRA, ACRP-PM, RP
Manager, Clinical Operations
Syneos Health**

President, Tau Chi Chapter, Inc. Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Incorporated®
Past President, New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA) 2015-2017

Nursing Leader: Advocating for nurses and the nursing profession.

Norma Rodgers-Frink started her professional journey 39 years ago as a Licensed Practical Nurse. In 1999 she earned her Bachelors in Nursing with a minor in Business Management from Bloomfield College. In 2001 Mrs. Rodgers-Frink embarked on a career path within the pharmaceutical Industry and is currently working for Syneos Health as a Manager, Clinical Operations overseeing a team of 28 Clinical Trial Managers and Study Start Up Specialist. Mrs. Rodgers-Frink is a 2024 graduate of McKinsey Leadership Academy; 2014 Nurse In Washington Internship Fellow and 2004 Fellow of the Rutgers University

Minority Nurse Leadership Institute. For over 22 years Mrs. Rodgers-Frink has held dual research related certifications (CCRA & ACRP-PM) from the Association of Clinical Research Professionals. In 2021 Mrs. Rodgers-Frink expended her knowledge of good meeting governance and bylaws by becoming a Registered Parliamentarian (RP) with the National Association of Parliamentarians. Mrs. Rodgers-Frink currently serves as the President of Tau Chi Chapter, Inc. of Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Incorporated® and Presidential Advisor for the President of New Jersey Nursing Student, Inc.

In 1998 Mrs. Rodgers-Frink served as the 1st African American President of the New Jersey Nursing Students, Inc. Mrs. Rodgers-Frink has been very active in the New Jersey State Nurses Association/Institute for Nursing (NJSNA/IFN) for over 25 years by serving on several committees, promoting, and addressing healthcare practice and policy issues. In January 2015, Mrs. Rodgers-Frink was sworn in as the 45th President (2nd African American) of the New Jersey State Nurses Association, where she continues to advance the profession of nursing by advocating for nurses and the communities where nurses live and work, research, and education. During her presidency Mrs. Rodgers-Frink focused on Gun Violence as a public health crisis and cultural diversity in nursing. Mrs. Rodgers-Frink continues to mentor new graduates and nursing students. She is actively engaged in several professional and civic organizations, community initiatives and legislative affairs that positively impact the delivery of nursing and nursing care in all settings.

Mrs. Rodgers-Frink is a sort after speaking addressing issues related to clinical trials, nursing legislation, nursing leadership, gun violence, and a variety of cancer topics. Mrs. Rodgers-Frink has been an active member of the Tau Chi Chapter, Incorporated of Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Incorporated since joining the organization in 2008. Currently serving on numerous regional and national committees. In addition to being a lifetime member of the National Black Nurses Association, Mrs. Rodgers-Frink is a member of Delta Kappa Sigma, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Incorporated®.

Awards and Honors:

Institute For Nursing, Diva of Nursing Award; April 2019, NAACP Plainfield Community Service Award, October 2018, Northern NJ Black Nurses Association – 1st Inductee Hall of Honor; June 2017; Eta Pi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Citizen of the Year Award, 2016; Bloomfield College Alumni Hall of Honor Award, 2016; Northern New Jersey Black Nurses Association Member of the Year Award, 2013; Concerned Black Nurses of Newark, Inc. Nurse Researcher of the Year Award, 2013; New Jersey League for Nurses 2012 Nurse Recognition Award; Tau Chi Chapter, Leadership Award 2012; Tau Chi Chapter, Community Service Award 2012; Northeast Region, Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Inc. 2012 Member of the Year Nominee; Concerned Black Nurses of Newark, Inc. Nurse of the Year Award, 2003 and Who's Who Among American Colleges, 1998 & 1999.

TV Appearances:

- Dr. Oz Show July 8, 2019: Fat shaming and Bullying, S10:E170
- Steve Adubato New Jersey Capitol Report, Sept 24 2016: Gun Violence and Nursing
<https://www.njtvonline.org/programs/new-jersey-capitol-report/new-jersey-capitol-report-norma-rodgers-michael-aron-and-jim-mcqueeny-michele-byers/>



Organizational Manager

Regina Adams, MSN, RN, RNFA, CNOR

Welcome, fellow New Jersey nursing students and nursing faculty.

Gina graduated with her diploma in nursing from Capital Health School of Nursing. She later attained her BSN and MSN, from Thomas Edison State University. Gina's tenure with the New Jersey Nursing Students began in 2008 when she was on the board as Second Vice President. She went on to serve as President. for the following 2 years. After her tenure as President, she began her role as the Organizational Manager. Presently, Gina is the director of surgical services at Hunterdon Medical Center. In addition to her director's duties, Gina recently completed her registered nurse first assistant program at Delaware County Community College.

2025-2026 NJNS Board of Directors

President	Mya Solis, RN
First-Vice President	Reina Garcia Perfecto, RN
Second- Vice President	Stacey Lozin
Secretary	Matthew Canlas
Treasurer	Melissa Tomlin
Pulsebeat Editor/Public Relations Director	Closed
Membership/Nominations Director	Matthew Canlas
Population/Global Health Director	Closed
Breakthrough to Nursing Director	Closed
Health Policy and Advocacy Director	Quintella Cuffy
Resolutions Director	Closed
Fundraising Director	Tammy Chao
NJLN Consultant	Illya Devera- Bonilla, DNP, RN
NJSNA Consultant	Daniel Misa, MSN, RN, CEN, CPEN, NE-BC, NPD-BC, GERO-BC, SCRN
Presidential Advisor	Norma Rodgers-Frink, BSN, RN, CCRA, ACRP-PM, RP
Organizational Manager	Regina Adams, MSN, RN, RNFA, CNOR

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

6:45p – 7:15p	Delegate Registration *Mandatory for all Delegates*	Starlight Ballroom
7:15p – 7:45p	Delegate Orientation *Mandatory for all Delegates*	Starlight Ballroom
6:45p – 7:15p	Monitor Registration *Mandatory for all Monitors*	Atlantic 2
7:15p – 7:45p	Monitor Orientation *Mandatory for all Monitors*	Atlantic 2
8:00p – 9:00p	Student Registration	Ocean Ballroom Foyer
8:15 – 9:30	House of Delegates I Bylaws *Open to the Public* *Quorum will be called at 8:15 pm sharp* *Mandatory for all Delegates* *Dinner Session for Board, Monitors, and Delegates* Light Dinner will be served promptly at 7:45 for Board, Monitors, and Delegates	Starlight Ballroom

Thursday, February 19, 2026

7:00 – 1:00	Convention Registration	Ocean Ballroom Foyer
7:00 – 8:30	House of Delegates II Bylaws *Open to the Public* *Mandatory for all Delegates* BREAKFAST SERVED AT 6:30 FOR DELEGATES ONLY.	Starlight Ballroom
8:00 – 11:00 ----- 12:30 – 5:00	Exhibit Hall Open ----- Exhibit Hall Re-Opens *Gift Basket Drawing at 4:50 pm* *Must be present to win*	Ocean Ballroom
11:00 – 12:30	Opening Ceremony Navigating the Nursing Road, Your Challenges- Your Choices Keynote Speaker: Donna Cardillo, RN	Super Star Theater
11:00 – 12:00	Exhibitor Lunch *Exhibit Hall Closed*	Ocean Ballroom
12:30- 5:00	Exhibit Hall Re-Opened	Ocean Ballroom
12:40	Student Lunch	Ocean Ballroom
1:00 – 2:30	Deans/ Directors/ Faculty Luncheon (pre-registration required) Keynote speaker: Leon Jarvis, BSN, RN, AVP Critical Care at RWJ Barnabas Health Newark Beth Israel Medical Center	Capriccio

Speaker Schedule

Focus Session 1

9:00 – 9:50	Exams and Care Plans: Laughter Yoga, The Rx for Nursing Students Speaker: Sandra Foley, DNP, RN	Horizon Ballroom
9:00 – 9:50	AI in Healthcare and Nursing Education Speaker: Larider Ruffin, DNP, APN, ANP-BC, AGNP-C, CRNP, CTTS, FAAN	Atlantic 2
9:00 – 9:50	Building Resilience in Nursing Students and Faculty Speaker: Tammy Gerrity, MSN, RN	Atlantic 3
9:00 – 9:50	Coming back from the edge: A professional nurse's journey through Speaker: John Lanier, MS, RN, NE-BC	Atlantic 4
9:00 – 9:50	Caring without Barriers: Language, Trust, and Patient Safety Speaker: Barbara McCormick DNP, RN, CEN Cindy Hou, DO, MA, MBA, CIC, CPHQ, FACOI, FACP, FIDSA, FAPIC Christina Carty, BA, Jessica Vidal-Navas	Atlantic C&D

Focus Session 2

10:00 – 10:50	Pharmacology Made Insanely Easy for NCLEX® Success! Speaker: Loretta Manning, MSN, RN, GNP	Horizon Ballroom
10:00 – 10:50	AI in Nursing: Confidence, Caution, and the Future You're Walking Into Speaker: Lendra James, DNP, MS, RN, NE-BC	Atlantic 2
10:00 – 10:50	Inside Out: The Emotionally Intelligent Nurse—Where Stress Meets Skill and Grit Becomes Growth Dr. Lois V. Greene, DHA, MBA, BSN, RN, NEA-BC, FADLN	Atlantic 3
10:00 – 10:50	From Stress to Success: Growing Joyfully Through Transition to Practice Speaker: Harriet Sarkodie, DNP, RN, MEDSURG-BC, NPD-BC, and Elsie Alabi-Gonzalez, MSN, RN, CNE, CNEcl, MEDSURG-BC, PCCN	Atlantic 4
10:00 – 10:50	New nurse, New role: Thriving During Your First Year of Professional Practice Speaker: Joset E. Brown EdD, MSN, RN	Atlantic C&D

Focus Session 3

1:00 – 1:50	Medical Surgical Nursing Made INSANELY EASY! Speaker: Loretta Manning, MSN, RN, GNP	Horizon Ballroom
1:00 – 1:50	What Do I Do with Nurse Money?! A practical guide to making, saving, and thriving. Speaker: Lucas Lipari BSN, RN, CCRN, MICN	Atlantic 2
1:00 – 1:50	The Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner: Intersection of Care and Justice Speaker: Desiree Allison MSN, RN, CEN, FN-CSA	Atlantic 4
1:00 – 1:50	Clinical Judgment Made Simple for Pharmacology and the NCLEX Speaker: Mary Jane Genuino, DNP RN MEDSURG-BC AGPCNP-BC FSIEN	Atlantic C&D

Focus Session 4

2:00 – 2:50	Surviving Your First Day: A Brand-New Nurse Discussion and Q&A Speaker: Dave Dovell, RN, BSN, PCCN	Horizon Ballroom
2:00 – 2:50	Pursuing an Advanced Nursing Degree: Next Steps in Your Career Speaker: Alexander Murphy	Atlantic 2
2:00 – 2:50	Inside-Out Excellence: From Survival to Strategic Leadership Speaker: Olayinka Lowe, DNP, MSN, FNP-BC	Atlantic 4
2:00 – 2:50	From Caregiver to Leader Speaker: Sarmite Catalfomo MSN, RN, PCCN	Atlantic C&D

Focus Session 5

3:00 – 3:50	Inside Out in Emergency Nursing—Feel the Emotions! Speaker: Daniel Misa, MSN, RN, CEN, CPEN, NE-BC, NPD-BC, GERO-BC, SCRN	Horizon Ballroom
3:00 – 3:50	Test-Taking Skills: Mastering Questions Like a Pro Speaker: Rachel Taylor, MSN, BSN, RN	Atlantic 2

3:00 – 3:50	Beyond the Bedside: Non-Traditional Nursing Careers Speaker: Rebecca Meyer MSGH, BSN, RN, CCRN	Atlantic 4
3:00 – 3:50	Get Your Dream Job! How to ace your interview Speaker: Susan Moraca DNP, MSN, RN	Atlantic C&D

Focus Session 6

4:00 – 4:50	NCLEX® 101: Hurst Review's Clinical Judgment Approach for NCLEX® Success Speaker: Ashley Griffin MSN, RN	Horizon Ballroom
4:00 – 4:50	Fighting Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Beyond the Bedside: A Career Providing Trauma-Informed Care at the Intersection of Sexual and Reproductive Health Speaker: Sakura Roberta Ando, MSN, RN	Atlantic 2
4:00-4:50	From Crawling to walking and thriving Speaker: Kwame Osei-Agyepong	Atlantic 4
4:00-4:50	Know your Patho: Putting Ischemic Cardiomyopathy into Clinical Practice Speaker: Olivia Mertz MSN, RN, CCRN	Atlantic C&D

4:55-5:10	Drawing for Gift Baskets *Must be present to win*	Ocean Ballroom
6:00 – 9:00	1st Night Party: Inside out Come dressed in your favorite emotion for a night of dancing, a photo booth, and food!	Atlantic Ballroom

Friday, February 20, 2026

7:00 – 8:30	House of Delegates III *Open to the Public* *Mandatory for all Delegates* BREAKFAST SERVED AT 6:30 FOR DELEGATES ONLY.	Starlight Ballroom
8:45 – 9:15	Delegate Voting *Mandatory for all Delegates*	Starlight Ballroom
9:15 – 9:30	2026-2027 NJNS Board Elections Results	Horizon Ballroom
9:30 – 12:30	Mini NCLEX® Review - Hurst Review's Step by Step Approach to NCLEX® Success	Horizon Ballroom

Dr. Joset E. Brown EdD, MSN, RN

New nurse, New role: Thriving During Your First Year of Professional Practice

Abstract: The transition from student nurse to professional registered nurse is a pivotal period that significantly influences confidence, competence, job satisfaction, and retention in the nursing profession. Although many newly graduated nurses enter practice academically prepared, they often experience emotional, professional, and role-related challenges as they adapt to workplace expectations and complex care environments. This educational breakout session examines the realities of graduate nurse transition to practice, drawing on evidence-based transition frameworks and the presenter's extensive experience in nursing education and graduate nurse development.

Participants will gain insight on the more common challenges encountered during the first year of practice, including role transition, clinical decision-making, professional identity formation, and stress management. Emphasis will be placed on building confidence, resilience, and critical thinking beyond technical skill acquisition. Practical strategies for leveraging mentorship, preceptorship, and support systems will be discussed to enhance transition success.

Designed for student nurses preparing to enter professional practice and newly licensed nurses navigating early career roles, this session provides tools to normalize transition stress, promote self-efficacy, and reframe early professional challenges as essential components of growth. Participants will leave with actionable strategies to support a successful, sustainable, and fulfilling transition into professional nursing practice.

Bio: Dr. Joset Brown is a nurse educator and academic leader with over twelve years of experience in higher education and more than thirty years of clinical nursing experience. She earned a Master of Science in Nursing Education and a Doctor of Education in College Teaching and Learning from Walden University. Dr. Brown brings extensive expertise in didactic and clinical instruction, with a clinical background in emergency, trauma, and medical-surgical nursing. She currently serves as program director for the traditional and second-degree programs on the Newark campus, providing academic leadership, advising, and faculty collaboration to support student success. Dr. Brown has developed a nationally and internationally recognized program of scholarship examining the transition of graduate nurses into clinical practice. By bridging the gap between nursing education and clinical practice, her research advances evidence-based strategies that promote workforce readiness, retention, and long-term professional commitment among newly licensed nurses.

Dr. Larider Ruffin, DNP, APN, RN, AGNP-C, CTTS, FADLN, FAANP, FAAN

AI in Healthcare and Nursing Education

Abstract: Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming healthcare and nursing education, offering innovative solutions to enhance clinical decision-making, patient care, and learning experiences. This presentation explores AI applications in healthcare, including diagnostic tools, and administrative automation, while emphasizing the role of nurses in critically evaluating AI-generated information. We will discuss the benefits, challenges, and ethical considerations of AI, alongside its integration into nursing education through simulations, tutoring systems, and tele-education. By fostering critical thinking, nurses can ensure AI serves as a supportive tool rather than a replacement. The session concludes with future trends and strategies for AI adoption in nursing.

Bio: Dr. Larider Ruffin is a distinguished nurse leader, educator, and clinician dedicated to advancing nursing practice and education. As Chair of the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program and Associate Professor at Stockton University, he mentors future nurse practitioners while maintaining an active

clinical practice as founder and chairman of Ruffin Medical Group. An Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner, Dr. Ruffin is the owner of Ruffin Medical Group where he manages chronic diseases. A passionate advocate for health equity, he leads efforts to eliminate smoking and vaping disparities. He has published extensively and is a sought-after speaker on mental health, diabetes, and substance use disorders. A Fellow of both the American Association of Nurse Practitioners and the American Academy of Nursing, Dr. Ruffin has received numerous accolades for his contributions to nursing. His leadership and commitment to mentoring continue to shape the future of advanced practice nursing.

Sakura Roberta Ando, MSN, RN

Fighting Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Beyond the Bedside: A Career Providing Trauma-Informed Care at the Intersection of Sexual and Reproductive Health

Abstract: Beyond the nursing specialties introduced in nursing school, there is a world of nursing that works closely with the community, fighting for New Jersey's sexual and reproductive health beyond the bedside. Sakura Ando introduces family planning and sexual, reproductive health nursing, sharing with attendees its pivotal role in maintaining the health of not just one community, but the generations that follow. Come learn about the impact of trauma-informed reproductive care in healing patients at all stages of life and how you can also become a nurse in sexual and reproductive health.

Bio: Sakura Roberta Ando, MSN, RN, has over a decade of experience spanning reproductive health, maternal-child health, and nursing education, including seven years as a hospital labor and delivery nurse and six years as a clinical nursing professor. Sakura earned her master's degree in nursing leadership from Rutgers School of Nursing and is currently pursuing a PhD studying individual- and community-level health disparities among New Jersey childbirth hospitalizations admitted with preeclampsia. Sakura recently stepped into the role of Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Nurse Manager at the New Jersey Family Planning League, where she leads quality initiatives supporting New Jersey's Title X and family planning clinics—an irreplaceable source of sexual and reproductive healthcare for communities across the state.

Harriet Sarkodie, DNP, RN, MEDSURG-BC, NPD-BC

Elsie Alabi-Gonzalez, MSN, RN, CNE, CNEcl, MEDSURG-BC, PCCN

From Stress to Success: Growing Joyfully Through Transition to Practice

Abstract: The transition from student to professional nurse demands a strong mindset and a resilient attitude. This session focuses on how new nurses can cultivate wellness practices, emotional regulation, and a growth mindset to navigate uncertainty with confidence. Participants will explore practical strategies for managing stress, reframing challenges, strengthening self-belief, and developing habits that support well-being and professional joy. Emphasis is placed on helping new nurses build resilience, maintain a positive attitude, and approach clinical experiences as opportunities for learning and growth. This presentation highlights how intentional mindset development can empower new nurses to transform stress into success.

Speaker Bios: Harriet Sarkodie, DNP, RN, MEDSURG-BC, NPD-BC, is an Education Specialist at Hackensack University Medical Center in Hackensack, New Jersey, where she plays a key role in supporting the educational needs of off-shift nursing staff. In this role, she develops, implements, and evaluates educational initiatives that enhance clinical competency, promote professional growth, and improve patient-care outcomes.

Dr. Sarkodie also serves as an Assistant Teaching Professor in the School of Nursing at Montclair State University, where she teaches in both undergraduate and graduate programs. She brings more than 27 years of clinical nursing experience and 19 years of academic teaching expertise, bridging practice gaps with learner-centered instruction.

Board-certified in Medical-Surgical Nursing and Nursing Professional Development, Dr. Sarkodie is committed to advancing the nursing profession through quality education, mentorship, and excellence in practice. Her extensive background in clinical care and teaching uniquely positions her to support nurses at all stages of their professional journey.

Elsie Alabi-Gonzalez, MSN, RN, CNE, CNEcl, MEDSURG-BC, PCCN, serves as a Nurse Professional Development practitioner at Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center. In her NPD role, Ms. Gonzalez supports the professional growth and competency of nurses across the continuum by supporting initiatives in onboarding, transition-to-practice, competency validation, and continuing education. She is a Certified academic nurse educator, a Certified academic clinical nurse educator, and board-certified in medical-surgical and adult progressive care nursing.

She also serves as an Assistant Teaching Professor and the Faculty advisor of the Student Nurses Association (SNA) at Montclair State University School of Nursing, where she teaches in prelicensure undergraduate and graduate programs. Ms. Gonzalez is passionate about cultivating the next generation of nurses through active learning, evidence-based teaching, and mentorship. She is deeply committed to creating inclusive, equitable, and psychologically safe learning environments. Ms. Gonzalez integrates active learning, simulation, and evidence-based strategies to support diverse learners and foster confidence, critical thinking, and professional identity development.

Dr. Lendra James, DNP, MS, RN, NE-BC

AI in Nursing: Confidence, Caution, and the Future You're Walking Into

Abstract: Artificial intelligence is already shaping healthcare, whether nurses are prepared or not. This session demystifies AI for nursing students by breaking down what AI is, what it is not, and how it is currently being used in healthcare and education. Students will learn how to use AI responsibly, ethically, and confidently without compromising critical thinking, professionalism, or patient safety. Drawing from real-world examples and national conversations on responsible AI use, this session empowers future nurses to see AI as a tool for support and innovation, not replacement. The goal is confidence, discernment, and readiness for the future of nursing.

Speaker Bio: Dr. Lendra James, DNP, MS, RN, NE-BC is a nurse executive, entrepreneur, speaker, and AI consultant with nearly 25 years of experience in healthcare leadership, education, and innovation. She is the founder of DLJames Consulting and Premier Infusions & Wellness, where she works with healthcare professionals and organizations to address burnout, leadership development, and responsible innovation. Dr. James is the author of *Confessions of a Nurse Executive: Conscious and Unconscious Bias in Healthcare* and the host of the *Nurses With Voices* podcast, which amplifies critical conversations on advocacy, leadership, and the future of nursing. As a certified AI consultant, she focuses on ethical and practical applications of artificial intelligence in healthcare and education. Dr. James is passionate about preparing nursing students to think critically, lead confidently, and navigate emerging technologies responsibly as they enter an evolving healthcare landscape.

Desiree Allison MSN, RN, CEN, FN-CSA

The Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner: Intersection of Care and Justice

Abstract: This presentation introduces forensic nursing as a specialty focused on sexual assault care in adult and pediatric populations. The role of the Forensic Nurse Examiner will be explored, including trauma-informed assessment, evidence collection, forensic photography, narrative interviewing, and evaluation of nonfatal strangulation. The importance of advocacy and collaboration with law enforcement will be discussed, along with an overview of forensic nursing education and career pathways in New Jersey.

Bio: Desiree Allison has been a registered nurse since 2008 with a clinical background in emergency nursing. For more than 13 years, she has practiced as a Forensic Nurse Examiner in New Jersey, specializing in adult and pediatric sexual assault and nonfatal strangulation. Her work includes physical examination, evidence collection, forensic photography, narrative interviewing, advocacy, and bridging healthcare with law enforcement. Desiree works as a faculty professor at Mercer County Community College, and maintains active clinical practice, along with her work at the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office. This presentation focuses on forensic nursing as a specialty in New Jersey.

Kwame Osei-Agyepong, RN

From Crawling to Walking and Thriving

Abstract: This is going to be a motivational speech grounded in the theme inside out-where Joy meets Grit and growth. The core of the session is to help nursing students realize that the difficulty they face in the program is not a stumbling block but a feature of the process. This helps them realize their true potential as people who can live and thrive in the difficulty that they are facing.

Biography: Kwame Osei-Agyepong currently works at a level one trauma center in Newark NJ as a nurse on a liver transplant unit. Kwame Osei-Agyepong received his associate degree in nursing from Essex County College. Kwame Osei-Agyepong credits the nurse he has become today to Essex County College and the professors, colleagues, organizations, and the community. Kwame Osei-Agyepong has always been a servant at heart and has applied himself in that direction for as long as he can remember. Kwame Osei-Agyepong served as class president of his nursing cohort in his first year and as President of the NJNS board in 2023. He currently serves as secretary on the RBC unit council where data is collected and assesses issues that may be problematic for the unit or address tasks that can maximize patient satisfaction and maintain a standard of excellence.

Lucas Lipari BSN, RN, CCRN, MICN

What Do I Do with Nurse Money?! A practical guide to making, saving, and thriving.

Abstract: You've worked your tail off to get through school, prep for the NCLEX and get into a residency program. You're going from below poverty level to upper middle class (yes, it's true!). What do you do with all that money? What's important to invest in? What even is a retirement account? All of these questions will be answered and more in this 1 hour practical session to get you on your financial feet and speeding toward success.

Bio: After earning his Bachelor's in Economics from Rider University in 2012, Lucas Lipari earned his BSN in May 2019 from Rutgers University as a Second Degree student on the New Brunswick campus. There, he served as both class President and RSNA 2nd Degree Representative. He started his nursing career at The Valley Hospital's Critical Care Residency Program as a CSICU RN. Following the initial COVID surge, Lucas expanded his horizons and is now also employed as a Mobile Intensive Care Nurse (MICN) at University Hospital's EMS division in Newark where he serves as a Critical Care Transport RN, a Nurse-Paramedic, and a Rescue Technician. Lucas continues to serve the nursing community as the American Association of Critical Care Nurse's (AACN) Central New Jersey President. Of late he has graduated from a competitive flight nurse preparation program called ECHO Future Flight Crew and is actively pursuing a career in flight.

Alexander Murphy

Pursuing an Advanced Nursing Degree: Next Steps in Your Career

Abstract: Ready to take the next step in your nursing career? Advanced degrees open doors to leadership, clinical expertise, and research that shape health care's future. This session explores MSN, DNP, and PhD pathways, plus Post-Master's Certificates, highlighting roles in advanced practice, education, policy, and organizational leadership. We'll share strategies for crafting competitive applications, navigating holistic review, and exploring funding resources. Learn how to align your professional goals with program missions and position yourself for success. Participants will leave with insights to confidently approach graduate admissions and plan the next chapter of their academic and professional journey.

Bio: Alexander Murphy (he/they) currently works as the Assistant Director of Admissions and Recruitment for the DNP Advanced Practice Tracks at the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing and brings seven years of experience in undergraduate and graduate admissions and recruitment at leading research institutions. Currently pursuing a Master of Professional Studies in Higher Education Administration at Georgetown University, Alexander was part of the 2025 cohort of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's (AACN) Access, Connection, and Engagement (ACE) Leadership Institute, where they evaluated the effectiveness of recruitment initiatives on student decision-making. Committed to equity and excellence in education,

Alexander is passionate about guiding students to craft competitive, compelling applications that align with their academic and professional aspirations.

Dave Dovell, RN, BSN, PCCN

Surviving Your First Day: A Brand-New Nurse Discussion and Q&A

Abstract: Starting your first nursing job can feel overwhelming, even after years of nursing school and clinicals. *Surviving Your First Day: A Brand-New Nurse Discussion and Q&A* is a 50-minute interactive session designed for students and newly licensed nurses preparing for their first shift. The first half focuses on common day-one stressors, realistic expectations, and practical strategies to build confidence on the unit. The session concludes with an open, supportive Q&A where participants can ask real questions and gain reassurance for stepping into practice with clarity and confidence.

Bio: Dave Dovell, RN, BSN, PCCN is the author of *Brand-New Nurse: Surviving Your First Day on the Job* and the writer behind *The New RN* blog. He currently works on a progressive care unit caring for a diverse range of patients. His background includes emergency medical experience as an EMT Crew Chief in a 911 system and several years as an emergency department technician. Throughout his career, Dave

has received multiple honors, including a DAISY Award, Star of the Month, Guardian Angel Award, and a CPR Save Commendation. Beyond the bedside, he serves in leadership roles including cochair of his hospital's Transformational Leadership Council and chair of his unit's Shared Governance, Editor-in-Chief of a hospital wide newsletter, and MAGNET champion. Dave is passionate about supporting and educating new nurses as they begin their careers.

Rachel Taylor, MSN, BSN, RN

Test-Taking Skills: Mastering Questions Like a Pro

Abstract: This engaging breakout session helps nursing students shift from memorizing facts to truly thinking like a nurse—one question at a time. Through interactive discussion and guided practice, participants will explore proven strategies for breaking down questions, eliminating distractors, and choosing the safest, most clinically sound answer. Come ready to participate and leave ready to perform at your highest level.

Bio: Rachel Taylor began her nursing career in the fast-paced Intensive Care Unit (ICU), where she developed strong clinical skills and a deep commitment to patient-centered care. Driven by a passion for student success and advancing the nursing profession, she transitioned into nursing education as a Student Success Tutor for a BSN program. With over five years of experience in nursing education, Rachel earned her master's in nursing education from Grand Canyon University. She currently serves as the Director of Nursing Services at Archer Nursing, where she leads nursing education initiatives, curriculum development, and student success strategies. In this role, she supports learners across the full nursing journey—from pre-nursing and nursing school to NCLEX preparation and advanced certifications—while also supporting faculty and program development. Rachel is an active member of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, the National League for Nursing, Alpha Chi, and the National Society of Leadership and Success.

Tammy Gerrity MSN RN

Building Resilience in Nursing Students and Faculty

Abstract: In the demanding field of nursing, resilience is a critical skill that enables both students and faculty to navigate challenges effectively. This presentation explores strategies to foster resilience within nursing education environments, benefiting both learners and educators.

Key Topics Covered:

1. Understanding Resilience:

- Definition and importance of resilience in the nursing profession.
- The impact of resilience on mental health, academic performance, and professional longevity.

2. Challenges Faced by Nursing Students and Faculty:

- Common stressors, including academic pressures, clinical placements, and work-life balance.
- The unique challenges faced by faculty, such as workload and maintaining student engagement.

3. Strategies for Building Resilience:

- Incorporating resilience training into nursing curricula.
- Techniques such as mindfulness, stress management, and reflective practice.
- The role of mentorship and peer support in fostering a resilient community.

4. Institutional Support and Resources:

- The importance of creating a supportive educational environment.
- Resources and programs that institutions can implement to support resilience-building.

The presentation concludes with a call to action for nursing educators and administrators to prioritize resilience as a key component of nursing education. By equipping students and faculty with the tools to build resilience, the nursing profession can ensure a healthier, more effective workforce capable of meeting the demands of healthcare.

Bio: Tammy Gerrity is a dedicated Integration Specialist Nurse Educator with a rich background in nursing and education, currently residing just outside Philadelphia, PA. She began her nursing journey in 1988 after completing her education at a hospital-based diploma program. Tammy spent most of her clinical career in the fast-paced environment of the Emergency Department, where she honed her skills and developed a passion for patient care and education.

In 2009, Tammy advanced her expertise by earning a master's degree in nursing education, which propelled her into teaching roles in both RN and PN programs. Her commitment to nursing education led her to join the ATI team in 2014 as a part-time live review educator. Her leadership and dedication quickly earned her a full-time position as a Team Lead for the Northeast Team of NCLEX Services. In 2022, Tammy transitioned to her current role as an Integration Specialist Nurse Educator for ATI, where she supports faculty in integrating ATI resources at partner schools throughout the Northeast Region. Her work is instrumental in enhancing the educational experience and success of nursing students.

Outside of her professional life, Tammy enjoys traveling and cherishing moments with her family. Her passion for nursing and education, combined with her love for exploration and family, makes her a well-rounded and inspiring figure in the field of nursing education.

Rebecca Meyer MSGH, BSN, RN, CCRN

Beyond the Bedside: Non-Traditional Nursing Careers

Abstract: Go beyond the bedside to explore how your nursing superpowers can transform health care. Dive into nurse informatics to improve telehealth systems and enable better patient outcomes. Fuel cutting-edge research in and out of the laboratory as a clinical research nurse. Champion survivors as a SANE or forensic nurse. Master vascular access on the PICC team. The sky is the limit as we explore non-traditional nursing roles together.

Bio: Rebecca Meyer MSGH, BSN, RN, CCRN specializes in critical care, with a focus on trauma. She holds a bachelor's in nursing from Purdue University and a master's in global health from Northwestern University. As a member of the @UWorldNursing team, she develops NCLEX review questions, videos, and study guides; leads live NCLEX study sessions; and presents at conferences and campus events.

Loretta Manning, MSN, RN, GNP

Pharmacology Made Insanely Easy for NCLEX® Success!

Abstract: Come and experience a dynamic hour with Loretta Manning, MSN, RN, GNP, author of the bestselling book, *Pharmacology Made Insanely Easy!* This is back by popular request! You will spend one hour filled with learning EASY and FUN Strategies to assist with remembering priority medications,

so you can be successful in answering questions evaluating high level clinical decision-making. You will learn to prioritize medications, nursing care, and associate learning by using images, mnemonics, active learning, and music. Five words summarize this pharmacology session, Success CAN BE FUN!"

Bio: Loretta is the CEO and Co-Founder of I CAN Publishing®, Inc. an organization that specializes in services and resources to assist students and faculty in achieving successful educational outcomes. She is also the Co-Executive Director of Leading Learning, LLC an organization that provides consultation to nursing faculty in the areas of curriculum development, item writing, teaching strategies, critical thinking, and clinical teaching. She is a nurse practitioner with a clinical background in pediatric trauma. She has taught in ADN, BSN and MSN programs. She has been a Director of Children's and Woman's Services at Willis Knighton Medical Center in Shreveport; LA. Loretta serves as a consultant in many schools of nursing throughout the United States. Loretta earned her MSN in nursing from Indiana University, BSN from Indiana State University in Terre Haute, Indiana, and nurse practitioner certificate from The University of North Carolina in Greensboro, NC. She is an international speaker and a sought-after resource for faculty development and student presentations. Her expertise is in developing nursing faculty particularly in the areas of NCLEX®, item writing, teaching strategies and pharmacology focusing on integrating patient safety, Joint Commission, and NCLEX® Standards in both the classroom and clinical.

Loretta Manning, MSN, RN, GNP
Medical Surgical Nursing Made INSANELY EASY!

Abstract: A program designed to help you MASTER volumes of medical surgical nursing information by simplifying information to assist with memory. Once you can easily remember nursing information, then you will learn how to MASTER answering NCLEX® style questions evaluating complex clinical decision making. You will sing, laugh, and better yet walk out remembering a minimal of ten new ways of organizing medical surgical nursing information.

- Discover strategies to MASTER Medical Surgical Nursing information.
- Practice answering NCLEX® style questions evaluating clinical decision-making.

Bio: Loretta is the CEO and Co-Founder of I CAN Publishing®, Inc. an organization that specializes in services and resources to assist students and faculty in achieving successful educational outcomes. She is also the Co-Executive Director of Leading Learning, LLC an organization that provides consultation to nursing faculty in the areas of curriculum development, item writing, teaching strategies, critical thinking, and clinical teaching. She is a nurse practitioner with a clinical background in pediatric trauma. She has taught in ADN, BSN and MSN programs. She has been a Director of Children's and Woman's Services at Willis Knighton Medical Center in Shreveport; LA. Loretta serves as a consultant in many schools of nursing throughout the United States. Loretta earned her MSN in nursing from Indiana University, BSN from Indiana State University in Terre Haute, Indiana, and nurse practitioner certificate from The University of North Carolina in Greensboro, NC. She is an international speaker and a sought-after resource for faculty development and student presentations. Her expertise is in developing nursing faculty particularly in the areas of NCLEX®, item writing, teaching strategies and pharmacology focusing on integrating patient safety, Joint Commission, and NCLEX® Standards in both the classroom and clinical.

John Lanier, RN, MS
Coming back from the edge: A professional nurse's journey through healthcare and mental illness.

Abstract: One aspect in health care which is under recognized today is the personal journey with mental illness specifically related to depression. Studies found 8.3% of adults and 20.1% of adolescences

experienced one depressive episode the previous year (NIH, 2021) and 49,000 people died by suicide (CDC, 2023). Whether it is the stigma of the illness or the fear of judgement many of us do not discuss their experiences with mental illness. This presentation hopes to change that perspective considering one nurse's journey. And with that change comes a better understanding of the impact a nurse can have with these persons.

Bio: John has been a member of healthcare teams since 1973 in roles from medical technician to administrative and clinical nursing leadership in multiple organizations. He received his entry level education from Somerset County Vo-Tech (LPN), Somerset Community College (ADN), undergraduate baccalaureate degree from the University of Phoenix and an Executive master's degree in nursing administration from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Clinical experience is in critical care nursing, general medical and neurology. His major focus is in the area of nursing leadership at the nursing unit level since 1990. He has been a nursing educator in entry level and advanced degree programs.

Within the nursing community he has been a member of the NJSNA and the National League for Nursing.

Within the New Jersey Community he has been a member of the New Jersey League for Nursing since 2010 and a past president of the organization.

Sarmite Catalfomo MSN, RN, PCCN

From Caregiver to Leader

Abstract: This presentation highlights early leadership in nursing, focusing on the charge nurse as the foundation for long-term career growth. It examines how bedside nurses step into formal and informal leadership through clinical judgment, delegation, communication, and team coordination. Common challenges for new charge nurses are explored, along with strategies to lead peers effectively while ensuring patient safety. The session also emphasizes how early leadership experiences build confidence, professional identity, and readiness for advanced roles in healthcare.

Bio: Sarmite Catalfomo is an Assistant Director at RWJ Hospital Hamilton and an Assistant Professor at Mercer County Community College. She has over 20 years of nursing experience, including nine years at the bedside as a telemetry nurse, more than eleven years in nursing leadership, and over five years as nursing faculty. She is a Progressive Care Certified Nurse (PCCN), holds a master's degree in nursing, and is currently pursuing a PhD in Nursing Research. Her professional interests focus on preparing new graduate nurses for early leadership roles by strengthening clinical confidence, communication, and leadership presence in practice settings.

Mary Jane Genuino, DNP RN MEDSURG-BC AGPCNP-BC FSIEN

Clinical Judgment Made Simple for Pharmacology and the NCLEX

Abstract: Pharmacology and NCLEX-style questions challenge many BSN students due to heavy memorization and limited emphasis on clinical judgment. With the Next Generation NCLEX prioritizing clinical reasoning, students must learn how to analyze medications rather than recall isolated facts. This interactive session introduces a practical clinical judgment framework that integrates pathophysiology, expected medication effects, high-risk side effects, and priority nursing actions. Through guided case studies and NCLEX-style practice questions, participants will learn how to identify key data, eliminate

distractors, and select safe, evidence-based answers. Attendees will leave with strategies to improve pharmacology performance, exam confidence, and clinical readiness.

Bio: Dr. Mary Jane Genuino, DNP, RN MESURG-BC, AGPCNP-BC FSIEN, is a nurse educator and nurse practitioner, with decades of experience in acute care, higher education, and academic leadership. She currently serves as Assistant Professor at William Paterson University. Her previous roles include Chair of Nursing at Berkeley College and faculty appointments at Felician University, where she led accreditation initiatives, curriculum innovation, and online learning integration. A recognized scholar and author, Dr. Genuino has published peer-reviewed research, authored nursing and children's books and contributed to clinical texts. Her honors include the American Nurses Association National Award for Foundations of Nursing Practice and recognitions in nursing education. Actively engaged in professional service, she served on the Board of the Society of Internationally Educated Nurses and nursing allies and currently serves on the Research and Education Committee of the Philippine Nurses Association of New Jersey, and treasurer for the National Consortium of Academic Nurse Educators (NC-ANE).

Sandra Foley, DNP, RN

Exams and Care Plans: Laughter Yoga, The Rx for Nursing Students

Abstract: Stress has a profound impact on the health and wellbeing. Nursing Students' daily stress can be attributed to assignment workload, clinical assignments, and testing and project obligations and deadlines. Nursing Students suffer from the aforementioned daily stressors. The objective of this presentation is to educate the participants on the science of laughter and benefits of Laughter Yoga. Studies involving nursing students have shown that Laughter Yoga interventions are effective in lowering their perceived stress and anxiety while enhancing well-being and coping. In addition, laughter brings joy, fosters human connections, and contributes to the overall health and well-being of an individual.

Bio: Dr. Foley is an undergraduate and graduate nursing educator and a recent Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) graduate from William Paterson University. She earned both a Master of Science in Nursing with a concentration in Education and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the College of St. Elizabeth, following an associate degree in nursing. Dr. Foley transitioned into academia at William Paterson University, bringing 35 years of specialized experience in acute clinical care. She is the Immediate Past President of the New Jersey State Nurses Association and Past Chair of the Institute for Nursing. Most recently, Dr. Foley was elected to the position of American Nurses Association Nomination and Election Committee for 2026-2027. A certified Laughter Yoga Instructor since 2010, Dr. Foley has integrated therapeutic humor into nursing education and leadership. Laughter Yoga played a significant role during the COVID-19 pandemic, supporting healthcare teams and frontline nurses by reducing stress and promoting resilience.

Daniel Misa, MSN, RN, CEN, CPEN, NE-BC, NPD-BC, GERO-BC, SCRN

Inside Out in Emergency Nursing—"Feel the Emotions!"

Abstract: What does it take to be an emergency nurse? Rapid decision-making, technical skill, and emotional resilience—just to name a few. Explore some of the emotional experiences that shape emergency nursing practice and influence patient care, teamwork, and nurse well-being. This presentation highlights common emotions encountered in high-acuity settings, such as joy, sadness, and fear, and examines how emotional awareness supports effective communication and clinical judgment. Through relatable scenarios, nursing students will learn practical strategies to recognize, manage, and harness emotions as tools for resilience in the emergency department.

Bio: Dan Misa is happy to impart his experiences in emergency nursing and transition to practice. He is the New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA) Consultant to New Jersey Nursing Students, Inc; New Jersey Emergency Nurses Association (NJENA) President Elect; and NJSNA Region 1 Secretary. Dan belongs to the Association for Nursing Professional Development, Organization of Nurse Leaders New Jersey and Philippine Nurses Association of New Jersey. Dan is a nighttime nurse educator and administrative manager at Atlantic Health -Chilton Medical Center. He is a past recipient of the Institute for Nursing Diva and Don Award, New Jersey League for Nursing Nurse Recognition Award and NJENA Rising Star, Behind the Scenes, and President's Awards. Dan is a two-time alumnus of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, and he is certified in nursing professional development, emergency nursing, pediatric emergency nursing, gerontology nursing, stroke nursing, and as a nurse executive.

Barbara McCormick DNP, RN, CEN

Cindy Hou, DO, MA, MBA, CIC, CPHQ, FACOI, FACP, FIDSA, FAPIC

Christina Carty, BA

Jessica Vidal-Navas

Caring without Barriers: Language, Trust, and Patient Safety

Abstract: Session will discuss the importance of language access to improve healthcare in both the hospital and community settings through an interprofessional lens. Language equity ensures that everyone can understand the language we sign or speak, regardless of primary/preferred language; it reduces barriers and challenges to communication and comprehension. Language access, paired with Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), presents barriers to care for local communities. Increasing awareness of language interpreter services for healthcare professionals to better serve patients is key to breaking down these barriers. Attendees will gain insight into legal implications and knowledge to improve communication and patient care.

Bios: Barbara McCormick DNP, RN, CEN has over 30 years of nursing experience. She earned her ADN (1993) from Atlantic Community College, BSN (2003) and MSN (2007) at Holy Family University and DNP at Drexel University in 2019. In 2020 she returned to the bedside after a variety of roles, as a resource nurse for critical care and the emergency department. Barbara supports leadership for nursing recruitment, retention, education, and grant projects. She recently transitioned to a retired nurse role. Barbara retired at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel with 30 years in US Air Force Nurse Corp in December of 2025. She is an Adjunct Professor for Thomas Jefferson University. She is a board-Certified Emergency Nurse and is an active member of many community and nursing organizations. Barbara served as the 2025 president for NJ Emergency Nurses Association and is a past President for New Jersey State Nurses Association Region Five.

Dr. Cindy Hou is an infectious diseases physician with Jefferson Health in New Jersey. As the Infection Control Officer, she has worked extensively in multidisciplinary committees with high nursing collaboration, including those to help fight hospital onset infections. She is a previous recipient of a grant from the American Nurses Association to perform infection prevention research. Furthermore, she is a co-author in four separate articles about nursing's role in antibiotic stewardship. She has previously been a collaborator for a Jefferson course on nursing and antibiotic stewardship. Dr. Hou is the Principal Investigator of a federally funded grant from the Office of Minority Health on Project ROLE (Reducing Risk of Readmission, Optimizing Language Access and Improving Equity). Outside of Jefferson, she is the Chief Medical Officer of Sepsis Alliance. Dr. Hou has lectured locally, regionally, and nationally on topics such as language access, equity, sepsis, antimicrobial stewardship and infection prevention.

Christina Carty is the Director of Operations, Grants & Special Projects for Jefferson Health – New Jersey, where she provides strategic and operational leadership for a diverse portfolio of federal, state, and philanthropic grants. For the past three years, Christina has served as a Co-Investigator on Project ROLE (Reducing Risk for Readmission, Optimizing Language Access, and Improving Equity), a U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Minority Health–funded initiative. Christina also oversees Jefferson Health – New Jersey’s HIV and infectious disease grant portfolio. In addition, Christina directs Jefferson Health – New Jersey’s community outreach and engagement strategy, leading multidisciplinary teams of community health workers, social workers, and outreach staff. Prior to joining Jefferson, Christina spent more than twenty years in the nonprofit sector developing and leading programs and policies supporting individuals with disabilities and their families. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Rutgers University.

Jessica Vidal-Navas is an Ambulatory Operations Project Manager specializing in grants and special projects that advance language access, health equity, and community engagement. She leads interprofessional initiatives that improve patient safety, reduce health disparities, and strengthen culturally responsive care for individuals with limited English proficiency. Jessica oversees multiple federally and state-funded programs, managing budgets, compliance, reporting, and strategic partnerships to ensure measurable outcomes and sustainable impact. Passionate about language justice and equitable healthcare delivery, Jessica is committed to developing scalable models that empower healthcare teams and improve access to high-quality care for diverse populations.

Olayinka Lowe, DNP, MSN, FNP-BC

Inside-Out Excellence: From Survival to Strategic Leadership

Abstract: Nursing students encounter a range of challenges—academic, clinical, financial, and emotional—that often drive them to focus on mere survival rather than personal growth and leadership. This session seeks to redefine leadership as an internal process rooted in personal identity and values, rather than in titles or the pursuit of perfection. Using an equity-centered, faith-affirming approach, we will examine how stressors such as impostor syndrome and caregiving can catalyze leadership development. Participants will be encouraged to reframe stress as a preparatory tool, explore authentic leadership styles, and learn how to lead effectively without formal authority. This session will celebrate diversity and advance inclusive leadership. By the conclusion, participants will gain a clearer understanding of what it means to strive for excellence, cultivate their leadership identity, and commit to leading with integrity and purpose throughout their nursing careers.

Bio: Dr. Olayinka Lowe is a DNP–prepared nurse leader, educator, and healthcare entrepreneur with extensive experience in clinical leadership, nursing education, and student mentorship. She has led multidisciplinary clinical teams, developed workforce training programs, and supported nursing students across diverse educational pathways. Passionate about equity, authentic leadership, and holistic professional development, Dr. Lowe is known for translating real-world clinical and leadership experiences into practical, empowering guidance for future nurses. Her work emphasizes purpose-driven excellence, resilience without burnout, and integrity in leading before and after licensure. She is committed to preparing nursing students not only to succeed academically, but to lead confidently, ethically, and compassionately in an evolving healthcare system.

Susan Moraca DNP, MSN, RN

Get Your Dream Job! How to ace your interview

Abstract: Get Your Dream Job! How to ace your interview" provides nursing students and new RNs with the tools to excel in that special interview. Attendees will learn how to prepare effectively, communicate their skills with confidence, showcase patient-centered experiences, answer common questions, and make a strong professional impression with hiring managers. The session also covers follow-up techniques and tips to stand out from other candidates. By the end, participants will feel confident, prepared, and ready to ace any interview opportunity.

Bio: Dr. Susan Moraca is a nursing educator and academic leader with extensive experience in curriculum development, clinical education, and RN-to-BSN program leadership. She is Faculty and Coordinator of the RN to BSN Program at The College of New Jersey and previously served in Director positions at La Salle University. Dr. Moraca teaches across pediatrics, maternity, and quality & safety nursing courses, and has supervised clinical learning in acute care settings. Her scholarship focuses on pediatric concussion management, evidence-based teaching strategies, and publication regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion in nursing education. A recipient of the DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurse Educator, Dr. Moraca is committed to advancing innovative teaching practices, mentoring nursing students, promoting excellence in clinical practice, and strengthening academic-practice partnerships to prepare future nurses for complex healthcare environments.

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KAPLAN UNIVERSITY*NJ**

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UNIV OF PHOENIX-NJ*NJ**

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VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY*NJ**

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ATLANTIC CAPE COMM CLG**NJ**

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BERGEN COMM COLLEGE**NJ**

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BLOOMFIELD COLLEGE**NJ**

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HOLY NAME HOSPITAL NJ

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NEW JERSEY CITY UNIV **NJ**

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SCHOOL TOTALS		1

OUR LADY OF LOURDES SCH **NJ**

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PASSAIC CNTY COMM COLLEGE **NJ**

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RAMAPO COLLEGE - UMD **NJ**

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SCHOOL TOTALS		1

ROWAN CLG AT BURLINGTON NJ

22250	MOUNT LAUREL	1
SCHOOL TOTALS		1

ROWAN CLG OF SOUTH JERSEY NJ

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22254	VINELAND	0
SCHOOL TOTALS		1

ROWAN UNIVERSITY NJ

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SCHOOL TOTALS		0

RUTGERS UNIV SCH OF NSG

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22611	NEWARK/NEW BRUNSWICK	57
SCHOOL TOTALS		60

SAINT PETERS UNIVERSITY NJ

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SCHOOL TOTALS		6

SALEM COMMUNITY COLLEGE NJ

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SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

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SCHOOL TOTALS		0

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WARREN COUNTY COMM C.I.G. N.I.

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WILLIAM PATERSON UNIV

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		4

Convention Code of Attire & Conduct

The 2005-2006 NSNA Board of Directors developed a Code of Conduct for NSNA Meetings. Item five under Meeting Etiquette states that “Professional business attire or business casual attire is acceptable style of dress for professional meetings.” The following suggestions are provided as guidelines for professional business and business casual attire.

Professional Business Attire:

Suit or jacket and pants or skirt	Suit or jacket and slacks
Skirt length - knee length or below	Shirt - traditional shirt with collar
Tailored dress; Blouse	Tie or bow tie
Shoes - comfortable low-heel (no more than 2" high), loafers or boots	Socks
Simple jewelry	Dress shoes

Business Casual Attire:

Business casual	Not considered business casual
Shirt with collar or polo style	T-Shirts and jeans
Slacks	Shorts or mini skirts
Chinos or Dockers – pressed	Bare midriffs or low-cut garments (back or front)
Skirts	Flip flops, sneakers, or sandals
Blazer or sweater	Athletic wear or leggings
Loafers or lace-up shoes	

Accessories can add a special touch of color, texture, and pattern to your outfit and are considered a complementary part of both business professional and business casual attire. Also, if you wear fragrance, keeping it light and minimal is recommended in a professional setting to be considerate of others you meet with that may be sensitive to chemicals.

Remember to shake hands, smile, and introduce yourself to new friends and old acquaintances. Exchange business cards (use caution when giving out personal information such as home address, phone number, and e-mail address) and keep a file of contacts for future networking.

At the end of the convention, you'll be ready to schedule the many interviews you'll want to make with exhibitors; accept speaking engagements at state and school chapters; and attend meetings of professional nursing organizations. You've made a lasting first impression on your peers and the many business and nursing professionals you have met. You are on your way to a very successful nursing career!

References:

Dress to Impress: Secrets of Proper Attire, The Career Center, Florida State University
Business Casual Attire, Career Services, Virginia Tech

Rules for Business Meetings

Rule 1. All delegates shall keep badges in evidence throughout business sessions.

Rule 2. All delegates shall sit in the space designated for their respective constituents. Only delegates, monitors, and NSNA staff on official business are allowed in the delegate area.

Rule 3. Delegates may not leave or be seated while a vote is in progress. Delegates and monitors must remain in place during a vote.

Rule 4. An alternate may only substitute for a delegate when the delegate will be absent for the entire business meeting of that day. The alternate's name and signature must appear on the Delegate Credential Form, and the alternate must be wearing the delegate's ribbon at the time of the substitution. The alternate will remain the delegate for the entire business meeting of the day.

Rule 5. All speakers shall give their name and the name of their constituent chapter, and nothing else.

Rule 6. Prior to presentation, motions must be written on the form provided and delivered to the chair.

Rule 7. Only delegates may propose or vote on motions.

Rule 8. Debate on a single issue shall be limited to 15 minutes.

Rule 9. When speaking to a motion, each delegate shall be limited to 2 minutes. Members of NSNA and other guests who are not delegates shall be limited to 1 minute.

Rule 10. No delegate shall speak more than twice to a motion, and no delegate who has already spoken may speak again until those who desire to speak have had an opportunity to do so. Members of NSNA and other guests who are not delegates may speak once to an issue.

Rule 11. Speakers are recognized by the Chair in the order in which they reach the microphone, alternating between pro and con speakers as long as a normal flow of debate is maintained. Debate on a motion cannot be closed until a minimum of one pro and one con have been heard unless there are no pros and cons to be heard.

Rule 12. Speakers must use a red card at the designated microphone to make a point of order, parliamentary inquiry, appeal the decision of the chair, or ask for division of a question. These will have precedence over all other speakers.

Rule 13. Monitors may pass notes that pertain to business before the House of Delegates among people present at the House of Delegates business meeting.

Rule 14. All main motions introduced to the House shall be accompanied by a rationale and estimate of cost to the association, if appropriate.

Rule 15. Only topic and proposed changes for resolutions be read in the House of Delegates.

Parliamentary Rules

Business Meetings

To participate effectively in the proceedings of the House of Delegates, each delegate needs to be familiar with the fundamental rules of parliamentary procedure. These rules enable the delegates to transact business with the least possible friction, with expediency and efficiency, and in a manner fair to all. The minority, as well as the majority, is enabled to express its views, to make motions, and to vote.

The parliamentary rules guideline followed by the National Student Nurses' Association is *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

Main Motions

A main motion introduces a new item of business; until this is disposed of, no other main motion may be considered, as there can be only one main motion pending at a time. The making of a motion comes first, discussion follows.

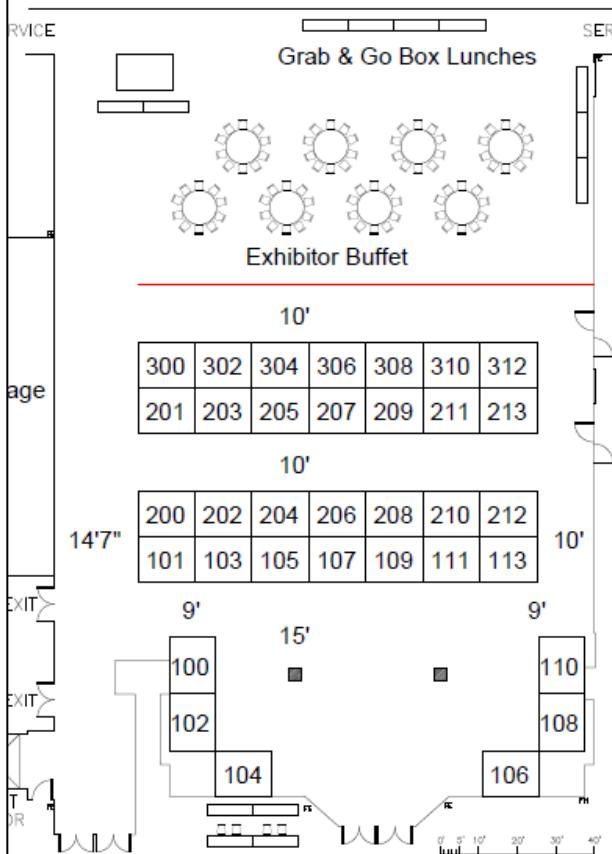
The steps relating to the handling of a main motion are:

- The motion is printed on a motion form signed by maker and seconder, passed to a monitor who will relay it to the chair. The maker of motion keeps the last copy.
- The motion is introduced by a delegate. The delegate states his/her name, constituency and motion number. **"I make a motion..."**
- A delegate may second the motion if needed by calling out, **"I second the motion."** (Committee motions do not require a second.)
- The Chair restates the motion.
- The Chair then asks for discussion giving the maker of the motion the first opportunity to speak (thereafter, insofar as possible, debate alternates between those in favor and those against).
- Any NSNA member may speak; only official delegates, however, may make motions or vote (*NSNA Bylaws*, Article VII, Sections 4 and 5).
- A delegate may, during the discussion and when recognized by the Chair, introduce a subsidiary, incidental, privileged, or certain other motion.
- The discussion at all times must relate to the immediately pending question.
- After the discussion, or as it appears appropriate, the Chair asks, "Are you ready for the question?" or "Is there further discussion?"
- The Chair repeats the motion and calls for affirmative vote, then calls for the negative vote.
- The Chair announces the result of the vote. If the vote is on any motion made subsequent to the main motion, the discussion is directed to the next ranking motion until there has been a decision concerning the main motion.

New Jersey Nursing Students 2026

February 19th, 2026

Ocean Ballroom - Historic Resorts, AC



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Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU)	103
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