

E K G
Exciting Knowledge for GANS

A Publication of the Georgia Association of Nursing Students
www.ganursingstudent.org

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Fall into Your Career! Editorial

Hello Georgia Nursing Students!

It seems like summer just flew by in a blink of an eye. I hope that you were able to rest and recuperate for a fall semester filled with great learning and experiences. Whether you are starting nursing school or have a few semesters on your back, I

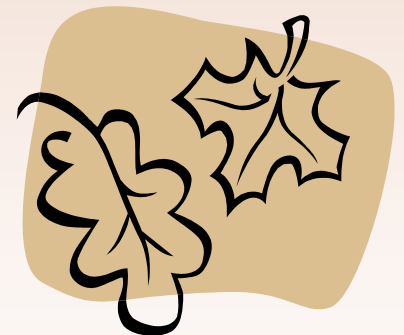
wish you all a great start. It's time to hold your head high and show the world what you're made of and what you got.

Congratulations to those who have survived the journey. Good luck with your career and encourage those who are behind you. Just as you have joined student nurses associations, explore what the professional nurses associations have to offer you.

Our website is full of information as well as career opportunities. Looking for employment or internship opportunities? Take advantage of the resources link on the GANS website (<http://www.ganursingstudents.org>) and click on Job Resources link under GANS Resources. Sign up to receive e-mails to notify you when new job/externship opportunities are present. Please check out the GANS website for information on the GANS 58th Annual Convention, legislative matters, BTN and Community projects, and many others!

The EKG is made for **YOU**, the future nurses of Georgia. Please send me any ideas, suggestions, a story, or an article that you would like to be in the next EKG edition at gans.ekg@gmail.com. Your involvement is very much appreciated.

Sincerely, Loan Nguyen Land, RN, BSN



GANS Mission Statement

The GANS Mission is to:

Organize, represent, and mentor students preparing for initial licensure as registered nurses, as well as those enrolled in baccalaureate completion programs; convey the standards and ethics of the nursing profession and NSNA; promote the development of skills that students will need as responsible and accountable members of the nursing profession; advocate for high quality healthcare; advocate for and contribute to advances in nursing education.



President’s Message:

Kelly Aikens

ganspresident@gmail.com

Hello GANS members and welcome back to school!

For those of you who had a summer break, I hope you enjoyed your time off and are ready to learn! The GANS board has been very busy and focused throughout the summer preparing for our annual GANS convention, which will be held in Columbus, GA, October 14-17, 2010. We are very excited to present this year’s convention options to you! Our theme this year, “Spring into Nursing, Fall into Your Career”, has kept us focused on offering you the top focus sessions that we can provide, including highly sought after nursing career choices and several ways to help you in your path to success. We will also be including some new and exciting events, including our first annual NCLEX Bowl as well as an interactive mix and mingle! We will also be having both a Red Cross Blood Drive and Bone Marrow Registry Drive! You can easily sign up for both when submitting your registration. Last but not least, save your money for this year’s silent auction and raffle! We are offering a sneak peak at available items on our website, which include a beautiful original quilt made by Georgia nursing students at this year’s COSL, a vacation stay in Florida, as well as a hot air balloon ride! With all these events and much more offered, we can promise that you will not want to miss this year’s convention!

If you have thought about becoming involved with GANS, and are interested in a board position for the upcoming year, please make sure and read the NEC (Nominations and Elections Committee) section of this EKG to learn how to become a candidate running from the floor.

More information related to convention can be found on our website, www.ganursingstudents.org. If you have any questions or concerns regarding convention or other items of interest, please feel free to contact me at ganspresident@gmail.com. Best wishes and good luck with the upcoming school year! I look forward to seeing you all in October!



GANS 57th Annual Convention
October 2009



First Vice President's Message:

Kathleen Kebe

gans1stvp@gmail.com

Hello to all & welcome back to classes for most,

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer vacation and took time to relax and clear your minds, so that you can jump right into the new semester with a

fresh start!

The GANS board has been working very hard over the summer to get ready for this year's convention scheduled for **October 14-16, at the Iron Works Trade Center in Columbus, GA**. The board is looking forward to see returning attendees, first time attendees, and even our recent graduates that will be attending as Alumni!

If you haven't already heard, this year's convention is going to be one to remember. We have invited amazing speakers presenting topics such as: "Traveling Nurse-Been There, Done That" to "Breaking Down Stigmas of Mental Health". Lookout for the Grand Exhibit Hall, the all new Silent Auction/raffle, and our first annual NCLEX Bowl, there will also be a chance to donate blood, and also register to become a bone marrow donor. Convention, even offers a chance for you to cut back, relax and meet new people at our nightly parties! Please look to our website weekly for the most updated convention information on speakers, registrations, and more. Don't forget that you can begin to reserve your rooms now at the Columbus Marriott. **For the discounted rate of \$130.00+taxes a night, please contact 1.800.MARRIOTT and make reservations under the GA Nursing Assoc block, before September 22, 2010!**

Let this be the year that you decide to take on a new leadership position, and run for a position for the 2010-2011 GANS Executive Board, earn a scholarship, or even win money and recognition for an awesome event your school put on.

We look forward to seeing you all at the 58th Annual GANS Convention!



GANS 57th Annual Convention
October 2009

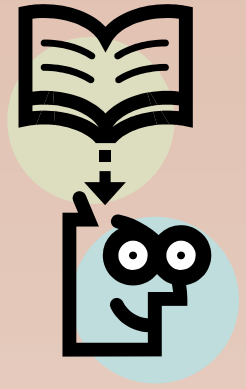


Second Vice President

Reed Halterman

gans2ndvp@gmail.com

I hope everyone is getting excited for the Convention in October. I have been diligently working to find the best and most interesting speakers for you to enjoy. Please check to the website to see just some of what we will have to offer!



Study Tips

Katy Cown

gans.secretary@gmail.com



Hello GANS members! I hope that everyone's year is going well. I came to nursing from another degree, and you would think that I learned how to study in the first four years of school, however, nursing school required me to apply myself even more. I am going to share some of the tips that I've learned throughout my (almost) six years of college.

The number one study tip that I offer anyone who asks is FIND A STUDY GROUP! These will be the most important people in your nursing school career. Try to keep the number at 5 people or less, and make sure that you all contribute to the group in some way. It's always easier to study when you do it with friends.



Find a method of organizing the information so that you can remember it more easily. Some people like to make charts, some like pictures, and some like flashcards. Try any and all methods and see what helps you retain the information the best.

Use a digital voice recorder to record lectures and then listen to them in the car, on a walk, or at your desk. These recordings have helped me sort information out more than once. This is especially helpful for those of you who have long commutes to work or home.

The newest research out says that you retain the most information when you change your study location regularly. So seek out a few places to study other than a desk at home. I like cafes and bread companies as well as coffee shops because there are generally private booths and quiet areas.

Don't study in your bedroom if you can help it. Keep your books and computer in a place outside of your bedroom. I learned this lesson early. It can cause insomnia and then it doesn't matter where you study if you're not sleeping, because nothing sticks in a tired mind.

That's just a few of the things that have helped with my success in nursing school and I hope that it will help some of you with your success!





Community Health:

Mary Steimer

gans.community@gmail.com

Update on COSL Community Service Project

Over 40 fleece blankets were created by Georgia nursing student leaders at the Council of Student Leaders retreat held this May.



These blankets will be donated to Covenant House, a national organization dedicated to serving homeless youth. Covenant House has a local chapter in Atlanta, GA. To read more about the local Covenant



House please visit <http://www.covenanthouse.org/houses/georgia>. Thank you to those who participated in this wonderful project. Please click on the [link](#) to view pictures of the quilt.



Breakthrough to Nursing (BTN) Update:

Chiemela Njoku

gans.btn@gmail.com

Be a part of the National Marrow Donor Program and **BE THE MATCH** that saves a person. It is a painless procedure to join the registry. It only takes a cheek swab and 25 minutes of your time.

Where: Georgia Association of Nursing Students' 58th Annual Convention

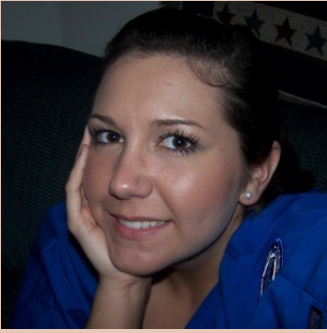
Columbus Georgia Convention & Trade Center

801 Front Ave, Columbus, GA 31901

When: Friday, October 15 from 11 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Why: To save someone's life





District Directors:

Sunnie Hanson, East District Director - Chair
gans.eastdistrict@gmail.com

Emily Pandolfi, North District Director
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Amy Morgan, West District Director
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2010 Council of Student Leaders Retreat

This year's COSL Retreat was a fun-filled success! We had nearly 100 students and faculty representing 14 schools across Georgia attend the COSL retreat in May. Everything, from the obstacle course and slip-n-slide, to the luau dinner and bonfire, and the focus sessions was so much fun. Our board members really enjoyed getting to meet our fellow student leaders from across the state.

Those of you who did not attend should think about going next year, because it is sure to be a blast! We hope that you all had fun and also learned some useful information about getting your schools involved and how you can stay actively involved in your student nurses associations.

COSL Recap:

Thursday: On that hot and sunny day, the GANS board met to do last minute preparations for the retreat. We also had the opportunity to endure through some team building ropes course and exercises, too!



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Friday: After checking in, the students headed up a hill to a ropes course where we got to learn each others' names and had team building activities.

Later that evening, we enjoyed a luau dinner. Our special guests were from the local Newton Medical Center EMS in Newton County.

Kevin Johnson, Director of E.M.S. was the keynote speaker. **Andrew Strickland** (EMS Captain), **Charles Queen** (EMS Captain), and **Kennth Gosse** (EMT-I) also joined us in an evening of us into the world of emergency response, partnership between EMTs

and ER nurses, and a thorough look at emergency response devices and an ambulance. It was truly a great learning pleasure to get a sneak peak of what they do and what the patient experiences before they get to the emergency department nurses. Thank you!



Saturday: This day was filled with learning, fun, and creativity! We began with focus sessions to help school leaders improve and expand their nursing students organizations. After a hearty lunch, we had competitive obstacle courses. To cool us down during the hot summer day, we ended the activities with hours of wet and muddy slip and slide. Winding down and to end the retreat, COSL retreat attendees worked together to make fleece blankets for women's shelters and collaborated to create a quilt that will be auctioned during the GANS convention. It was awesome to see that male student nurses join in on the craft night and design nice patches of quilt.

We've also gained two board members from the event and many pre-slated candidates for the 2010-2011 GANS board of directors!

We received many positive feedbacks and strive to make next year's even better and more accommodating for everyone.



GANS 2010 COSL Retreat

Guatemala Mission Trip

Kendall Martin and Gloria Myles, Clayton State University



I went on a nine day trip to Guatemala for several reasons. First, I had never been out of the United States and I wanted to see a different country. Second, I had friends who went the year before and had talked up the trip as nothing short of an amazing experience. Third, I had an overwhelming curiosity about what we would encounter on this trip. I expected to see things I had never seen before. I had no idea with how much I would be blown away by my experiences there.

One thing that sticks out about this experience is the attitudes of the Guatemalans. If all we did was give a woman fifteen multivitamins, her reaction suggested we gave her a lifetime supply. At one village, we were hugged repeatedly by a woman as soon as we jumped off the truck. We had not even set up for the clinic. She was thankful for us just showing up. Where I have perceived a sense of entitlement in America in regards to healthcare, villagers were immensely thankful for one pill to treat worms. Also, I never saw anyone get angry. Even after having to stand for hours in the heat, the people still smiled and thanked us, and some even joked with us.

The living conditions of one house we saw literally left me in tears. I was one of four students allowed to go along to the house of a woman who needed help. The living conditions in her neighborhood were appalling. In the week I have been back, I have heard several people complain about some aspect of their home. That is now something for which I have little tolerance, having seen people living in a home that was not fit for rats. It is one thing to see a picture of poverty on the front page of the newspaper. It is something entirely different to stand in poverty's living room.

A nine day trip to Guatemala far exceeded anything I could have imagined. From a little girl leading her grandfather down the road by his hand, the most adorable laugh by a child that I have ever heard, and a group of fifty people laughing at my attempts at Spanish to two young children walking down a dirt road with no shoes, an elderly man with Parkinson's disease looking for medication we did not have, and a mother holding her standing toddler on her thigh while riding a motorcycle, the images are ones that I will not forget. And, I cannot wait to go back.

- Kendall Martin



Going on a mission trip has been a dream of mine for a long time. When the opportunity presented itself to go to Guatemala through Clayton State University, I jumped on it. I have an obstetric background and my instructor Dr. Weaver let me know that they planned on doing a study centered on educating the comadronas: the American equivalent of midwives. For the past 30 years, I have worked in Labor and Delivery and have been involved in improving safety in perinatal care. I was very interested in doing this education for the comadronas.

We flew into Honduras because it is actually closer to where our hosts, Brian and Marleni Buchanan live in Guatemala. Their organization Jungle Medic Missions, sponsors groups like us to go out to the villages of Guatemala and provide basic healthcare to the villagers. On the first day of our 10-day trip, we sorted supplies and medications that we brought with us. We ate at their outdoor dining area, which had a beautiful tile table large enough to accommodate our group of 20. The meal consisted of local fare, beef, and tortillas along with wonderful homemade salsa!



We slept in bunk beds in the dorms located in the 3-story structure that Brian built to house his family along with the groups that he and Marleni sponsor. We had access to what Brian described as “refreshing cold showers!” On the bottom floor, there is also a clinic, which doubled as a small pharmacy. Noted in the newsletter, which Brian puts out periodically, they have since built a small brick pharmacy. Villagers often show up at any hour to seek medical care for a variety of ailments or injuries at the small clinic. While we were there several people sought out care at the clinic. One older woman had cut her palm deep enough to require stitches, which the students help sew back up under Brian and Marleni’s instruction. We also helped treat a couple of young brothers who had injured themselves in a motorcycle accident. One had crushed his left leg and the other broke his arm. The local volunteer ambulance drove them to the hospital 2.5 hours away after we started an IV and stabilized the leg on the brother who had crushed his leg. We medicated both brothers for the severe pain they were both in. One sad case was a child brought to the clinic by her mother after the hospital sent the child home to die. Although the child looked about 8 months old she was actually 2 years old with hepatitis and was a sickly color of yellowish-brown. We gave the mother formula and antibiotics for the child but there was very little hope for survival.

We drove two vehicles to reach the first location, a truck and a bus converted into a makeshift clinic. The first location that we went to had people from 9 villages attending the clinic. Brian and Marleni did basic triage based on signs and symptoms described by the villagers, and we passed out medications and vitamins accordingly. We had one member who was fluent in Spanish and several members who spoke limited Spanish. By the time we left everyone was able to speak some Spanish! We treated colds, cough, worms, fungal infections, shingles, bacterial infections and a variety of stomach ailments. We also passed out a lot of children and adult vitamins. Brian told us that for most of the villages this is the first healthcare they have received in years. The villagers seemed very appreciative! They thanked us and in some cases hugged members of our group for the medication and care they received.

The ride out to the villages was hot, bumpy, beautiful and usually several hours. We usually saw and treated people from 3 to 9 villages at each location. Our bus broke

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down on the way back from one of the villages and we ended up riding in the back of the truck and also using an open trailer for transportation on several days. It was beautiful but slightly scary to ride through some of the streams in the trailer. The water came up through the bottom of the trailer soaking some of our backpacks. One village was reachable only by boat on Lake Izabal, the largest lake in Guatemala. We were actually able to see Brian and Marleni's house from the boat ride on Lake Izabal.

We drank lots of water to avoid heatstroke and put up awnings on the side of the bus to provide shade to the villagers and ourselves during the clinics. For lunch we had sandwiches of cold cuts or peanut butter with chips and cookies. (Since I did not eat beef I often had a sandwich of lettuce, tomato and mayonnaise! It tasted wonderful!) To avoid offending the local villagers, Brian and Marleni often ate the local food the villagers would bring them for lunch. This was usually some kind of beef or chicken and tortillas, beans and rice. Although some of the members of our group got sick from eating similar foods at our breakfast times and dinner, Brian told us that because they were used to eating those foods, he and Marleni never got sick. I had my own bout of diarrhea and took Cipro for 3 days to help recover!

Dr. Nteff, Michelle Robinson and myself (Gloria Myles) taught the childbirth education to the comadronas. We were able to do Obstetric education at 4 of the villages. We taught in the local village schoolrooms and on one of the days in our converted clinic bus. The Obstetric education consisted of a Childbirth video shown on a laptop computer; a power point with lots of pictures and written in Spanish and English on the topics of labor, childbirth, shoulder dystocia, postpartum hemorrhage, and breastfeeding; and demonstration/pantomiming of how to manage shoulder dystocia and post partum hemorrhage. One village had a breastfeeding mom that we were able to use to show proper breastfeeding technique to the comadronas. In two of the villages the comadronas asked to see the childbirth video a second time! One of the comadronas was actually licensed in Guatemala and proudly showed us her certificate. Brian explained to us that in one village where the comadronas did not show up for the education that sometimes they did not want to hear what the Americans had to say about childbirth. For the villages that we did do the education the comadronas seemed very receptive asking us questions and hugging us when we were done. We asked the comadronas about their practices and found that many of them do not do vaginal exams on the women while they are in labor. Several of the comadronas also told us that they did not cut the umbilical cord until it stops pulsating. At the end of the education sessions we gave out basins that contained supplies for a vaginal delivery: cord clamp/or shoelace to tie off the cord, scissors, bulb syringe, peripad, underpad, diaper and a small baby outfit.

We did have several opportunities to enjoy the beauty of Guatemala when Brian took us swimming in some local rivers and at Lake Izabal. We also went to a hot water springs on the last day, which was wonderful. I bonded not only with Brian and Marleni but also my fellow students on the trip. (I had to slay several bugs for my fellow student and dorm mate across the way! The bugs were especially attracted to her bunk bed!) I will never forget my experience in Guatemala and hope to return there someday.

- Gloria D. Myles BSN, RNC-OB





Running for Office

Katie Jankiewicz, Nominations and Elections Committee

West Chair

gans.necwest@gmail.com

A new school year brings many exciting events!!! Convention is right around the corner and with convention comes elections. A new GANS board will be elected at convention. I have spoken with so many of you that are interested in running for an office. The deadline for pre-slating for convention has past.

There are three ways to run for office:

A candidate is pre-slated when all paperwork is postmarked by September 10, 2010. This ensures that the candidate will be included in the convention booklet and may begin campaigning from the time they receive notification that their paperwork is complete but must wait until after the September 10 deadline to campaign. This also allows the candidate to campaign for the entire convention!

A candidate may decide to run at convention, this is “running from the floor.” The candidate must be nominated from the floor. The candidate must have a delegate nominate him/her from the floor. Please remember no campaigning can be done prior to nomination. Discussion of position and/or platform prior to nomination will lead to disqualification. In addition please remember in running from the floor paperwork is still required, and it is mandatory to have a signature from a faculty member and the chapter president from the candidate's school.

The last way to run is a “write in”. It is possible to have delegates write in a candidate’s name in positions during elections.

Please keep in mind that each candidate must give a three minute speech! Sometime, this causes concern – Please remember that these are your classmates and future colleagues and we all encourage and support one another!

I have had the question several times “who gets to vote?” – The delegates chosen from each school get to vote. Therefore, each school has a different number of votes as the number of delegates depends on the enrollment in NSNA – So encourage your classmate to join!!!

Please remember that I am happy to go over the process with anyone!

One thing I have not gone in to detail about is each position’s responsibilities. Please know that I am happy to discuss any position and put you in touch with the proper board member should you have questions I cannot answer. Also, for a detailed list of positions and responsibilities, please refer to our website!!

Blessings to you all as you kick off a new school year!

Katie Jankiewicz



From Student Nurse to Practicing RN

Kristen Clay, RN

gans.publicrelations@gmail.com

After several mornings waking up insanely early for clinical, numerous days spent in classes, and countless hours studying and doing clinical paperwork...I am finally a practicing registered nurse.

June 25th, 2010, was one of the most exciting days of my life. My name and license number appeared on the Georgia Board of Nursing website. As strange as this may sound, I actually felt like a different person. Not being in nursing school anymore has given me a lot of time to reflect on my days in nursing school and to think about how life has changed. I wanted to share some of these thoughts with you, and share some words of encouragement as you continue on in your journey of becoming an RN. Please keep in mind that these are my own experiences and opinions, and that you may have different experiences. I can only hope that yours are as great as mine have been.

First of all, **YOU CAN DO THIS!** When I was in school, there were so many times that I felt like I wasn't going to make it. So, I know how you're feeling. Keep pressing on. It is so very worth it.

Now, I'm not going to lie to you...Sometimes, this has been quite an overwhelming transition. The day I took the NCLEX was the most emotional day of my life. When the computer shut off, I don't think I've ever been so terrified. I cried when I left, and I cried when I got my results. I finally felt like I could breathe again... something I hadn't felt like I could completely do for over 2 years. Since I've taken boards, I've had a few days that I left work in tears wondering, "Am I going to be able to do this?". Then, I stop and think, "I made it through nursing school...Of course, I'm going to be able to do this!" While I was in nursing school, I knew that I was going through something difficult, but I didn't realize how difficult it was until I was out of school and in the real world. Thank God it was that hard, though. Had it not been that difficult, I don't think I would have been prepared for what I have encountered. I was equipped with invaluable skills that I use on a daily basis.

I am currently working for the Georgia Neuro Center at the Medical Center of Central Georgia in Macon. I absolutely love my job! The orientation process was quite long, but I learned a lot that was added to the knowledge I had already obtained in nursing school. I have had the incredible joy of working on a floor where the "seasoned" nurses are willing and eager to help new nurses. They have never made me feel like I was asking dumb questions, and believe me; I've asked a lot of questions. There have been times when I felt like I had completely forgotten things I learned in school. Thankfully, I went through a class that helped new nurses transition into practice. One of the physicians even came to talk with us to help us with interacting with physicians. I have to say that I was most nervous about this aspect of being an RN.

I feel that the one thing in which I didn't get experience while I was doing my clinical was interacting with physicians. Now, while I was an extern, I was able to interact with physicians, but it still wasn't the same as how the RN interacts with the physician. I was terrified that I was going to sound like an idiot when I had to speak with a physician. Surprisingly enough, it wasn't as bad as I thought it was going to be. I found that as long as I had all of the details together before I even paged the physician, it was easier to be confident about why I was calling.

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I think the biggest piece of advice I can pass on, is to believe in yourself. Even when you think you can't make it, know that you can. I believe that confidence plays a big part in becoming competent. So, believe in yourself and do what you do with confidence. I look forward to you becoming a part of one of the most valued professions in the world. Best wishes as you continue pressing on! ■

The GANS Board would like to welcome TWO board members who have joined the team after attending COSL in May.



Alternate Board Member:

Joanna Gwin, Medical College of Georgia-Athens
gans.abm@gmail.com

Greetings fellow future nurses! My name is Joanna Gwin and I am so excited to become a part of the Georgia Association of Nursing Students Board! As the Alternate Board Member it is my duty to fill in any vacant positions on the board as well as assist the current board members. If there is one thing I've learned so far in nursing school it is flexibility, and that's what makes this position so exciting for me.

I would like to take a quick moment to let you know how important the GANS organization is and what it means to me. In what I jokingly describe as my past life, I worked as a dedicated veterinary nurse. I was a part of a brilliant and caring profession that struggles both in the public and the veterinary environment to elicit the respect that it deserves. Nursing was also once a struggling profession. There is no doubt that it has become the respected art and science of compassion that it is today only through the strength of organizations like GANS. This belief was beautifully summarized by someone I have great respect and admiration for, Rebecca Patton, President of the American Nurses Association, when she said "The more nurses are engaged and speaking with a united voice, the more influence nursing and its values will have..." GANS is our united voice and I am proud to be one of its active members!



Assistant to the District Directors:

William Baxter, Middle Georgia College
gansasstdd@gmail.com

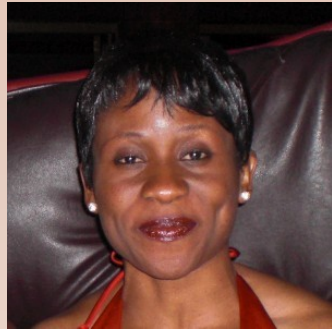
My name is William Baxter III. I was born on Feb 25, 1980. I have been to Germany twice as a kid in a military family. I have been across the US and along the east Coast. I am an eagle scout. I am currently a sophomore nursing student at Middle GA College in Dublin, Ga. The best thing I like about nursing is the ability to help others in an aspect that is just doing your job. ■

Board Member of the Month

Beginning with the month of January in 2010, GANS board members who have displayed exceptional dedication and effort in the previous month were recognized. The May through September “Board Member of the Month” are as follows:

May

Ojong Klages



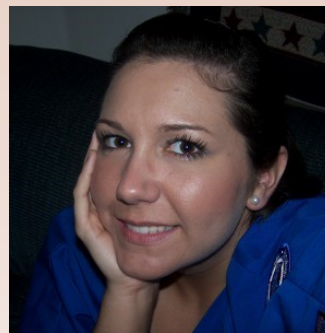
June

Kristen Clay



July

Sunnie Hanson



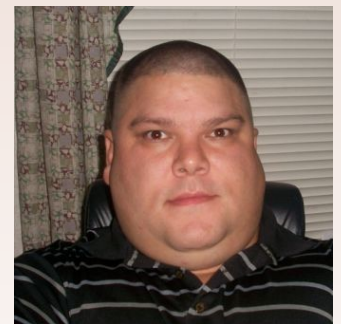
August

Katie Jankiewicz



September

William Baxter



Job well done!

Mike, RN, Denver • Kendra, LPN, Miami • Riley, RN, Sarasota • Rose, RN, Milwaukee • Caroline, LPN, San Diego • José, RN, Lubbock • Marcia, RN, Fayetteville • Denise, LPN, Columbus • Elise, RN, Charleston • Maisie, LPN, Moab • Tasha, RN, Mountaintown • Keely, RN, York • Lisa, RN, St. Charles • Ronald, LPN, Sioux City • Leigh, LPN, Oklahoma City • Marta, LPN, St. Lawrence • Hector, RN, Orlando • Michaela, RN, Tampa Bay • Sara, LPN, Green Bay • Morgan, RN, Oak Park • John, RN, Lake George • Ali, LPN, Ann Arbor • Tristin, RN, Denver • Loretta, RN, Lancaster • Elizabeth, RN, Crested Butte • Randy, LPN, Seattle • Laura, RN, Knoxville • Peter, RN, Atlanta • Grant, RN, Toledo • Paula, LPN, Philadelphia • Avery, LPN, Jackson • Jackie, LPN, Traverse City • Bonnie, RN, Reno • Mike, RN, Arlington Heights • Callista, LPN, Miami • Brent, RN, Dearborn • Kathleen, RN, Memphis • Brenda, LPN, Los Angeles • Suzanne, RN, New York • Margo, LPN, Chicago • Cassie, LPN, Lake Charles • Jack, RN, Brooklyn • Ginger, LPN, Houston • Pat, RN, Pagosa Springs • Merideth, RN, Sacramento • Jen, RN, Ithaca • Ronaldo, LPN, Scottsdale • Evelina, LPN, Mendocino • Margaret, LPN, Flint • Janie, RN, Columbia • Deirdra, RN, Dover • Ken, LPN, Miami • Carter, RN, Kansas City • Andrea, RN, Wichita

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The Nurse Who I Am

Since I was a child, I had always known that I wanted to be in the healthcare field. I did not think about nursing when I had first started to go to college but I am certainly glad that I finally found the profession that I love. I was first aware of nursing when I was in the hospital for the first time that I can remember.

When I was seventeen, I experienced days of lower abdominal pain and had to have an emergency exploratory surgery. Due to days of dehydration, it took a few nurses a total of ten tries to get an IV started in my right antecubital. I didn't feel the first nine until the gauge was increased to 18 for the last attempt. I ingested a solution for a CT scan and immediately vomited. The nurses assured me that it was not a problem and cleaned it up. I was transferred to the operation room. The incision was vertical starting from under my umbilicus. I left the operation room with a different intravenous site from when I had entered. I thought that my nurses who took care of me while I was on the medical surgical floor were excellent at that time. They told me to ambulate when I was awake and asked for my pain rating. They also reassessed my pain after medications. I thought they were wonderful until the first semester of nursing school.

During the first semester, I learned the things that would have been

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tremendously important to know post abdominal surgery. I was afraid to take pain medication unless it was almost unbearable. I usually did not experience that level of pain until it was time to sleep. I feared that my incision would simply dehisce if I lay flat, and the pain of being flat did not help either. I learned after a couple nights to place a pillow under my knees. It took a few days to learn about splinting when I coughed. I was fortunate that I did not experience any infections because I would not have known what to do about it or if the symptoms of infection were normal or not. After the eighteen staples that were holding my abdomen together were removed, my wound dehisced. Panic set in, and I cried for weeks. My family and I did not know what to do. We did not even think about going back to the physician because we thought that it might be normal. Nobody taught us anything.

The nurses never changed my bed sheets during the three days while I was recovering at the hospital. They offered a sponge bath to be done by complete strangers for a seventeen-year-old girl while my mother was at my bedside. They never taught me about pain control before it became unbearable. I never saw an incentive spirometer nor learned how to splint the incision when laughing, sneezing, or coughing. I was never told to turn, cough, and deep breath. Perhaps, these were no currently the common nursing practices as today. Nonetheless, the nurses who I thought were so wonderful and led me to want to be a nurse are the same people who I do not want to be.

I am the patient's advocate. I am the nurse who provides emotional and physical support. I am the nurse who keeps the patient's dignity to the best of my ability. I am, especially, the nurse who provides teaching to patients about their procedures and illnesses, what to expect, how to manage their activities of daily living, and complications that may happen. I am the nurse who changes the image of nursing one patient at a time.

-LN

NSNA 58th Annual Convention in Orlando

April 2010

At the NSNA Convention, many school associations as well as state associations were present. The proof is with the GANS Penny Wars where most of the states were represented by participation. The winner of the GANS Penny Wars was Hawaii!

During the awards ceremony, the Georgia Association of Nursing Students won **three** awards as follows: **Financial Excellence Awards**, **Image of Nursing Award**, and **Disaster Preparedness Award**. Georgia, represent!

School Spotlight!

Congratulations to **Emory University** and **Georgia Baptist College of Nursing** for being awarded the NSNA **Stellar School Chapter Recognition!** Emory University and Georgia Baptist were two of the five schools recognized.

Congratulations to **Clayton State University** for being awarded with the **Most Outstanding School Website!**



Hospice Advantage

Volunteer Opportunity

Hospice Advantage relies on volunteers in many unique and important ways. Each volunteer brings something special to Hospice to help fulfill our mission of providing quality hospice care to patients and their families. Volunteers are truly the heart of hospice. Volunteers perform a variety of functions for hospice patients and their family members. They may sit with a dying patient, may get the patient to talk about the “good old days” or read to them.

Volunteers sometimes hold hands, listen to the same story over and over again, and laugh with the patient. They realize that hospice patients and families sometimes just need to talk and as a volunteer their greatest contribution will be to listen. The depth of what our volunteers do is enormous.

We have many patients throughout Georgia that would benefit from a volunteer. As you know a little time with someone can mean so much to someone in need. The amount of time volunteering is totally up to the volunteer. We accept volunteers starting at the age of 16. Please consider being a volunteer or pass this information on to someone that maybe interested in volunteering.

Contact: Shari Koch
skoch@hospiceadvantage.com

Volunteer Coordinator
1925 Vaughn Rd Suite 200
Kennesaw, GA 30144
770-218-1997



AfterCollege Blue Book

AfterCollege Blue Book: The Essential Nursing Career Manual

AfterCollege designed the Blue Book to help nursing students make the transition from academic life to work life. If you are a nursing student, the Blue Book can help you get to the next level of your career. If you are a faculty member, the Blue Book can be an important part of your curriculum as you prepare your students for life in the real world.

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- Resume and cover letter guide
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SAVE THE DATES

GANS 58th Annual Convention 2010

October 14-16, 2010

Columbus Georgia Convention & Trade Center in Columbus, GA

NSNA Annual Convention

April 6-10, 2010

Salt Palace Convention Center in Salt Lake City, UT

NSNA Membership

You can sign up for new membership, renew your membership, or change your contact information using NSNA's membership website.

Sign up for NSNA's Annual Convention.

<https://nsnamembership.org/>

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The EKG wants *you* to submit writing for our next publication!

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