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NSNA’s 64th Annual Convention Report

By Rachelle Mojado
CNSA Secretary,
AAMN Vice President,
4th Semester

From March 30th - April 3rd, my colleagues and I had the opportunity to attend the National Student Nurses’ Association 64th Annual Convention in Orlando, Fl. The experience was amazing and very inspiring. In attending these conventions, a nursing student can have a variety of experiences ranging from serving in the House of Delegates, to simply attending breakout sessions and networking.

House of Delegates

The House of Delegates involved nursing student representatives from all over the United States who met collectively to discuss and pass resolutions. Resolutions are innovative proposals to improve nursing practice, promote leadership within the nursing field, and inspire changes that make nursing better for all. The best part? Resolutions are authored by nursing students like you and me! Mix logical thinking, debating, communication, and passion, and what results is empowered change that shows that your voice does matter. Resolutions that are adopted earn the NSNA’s full support, and have the potential to reach major nursing organizations such as the ANA, ANA-C, etc… In fact, Sacramento State Nursing’s very own Melissa Byrne initially authored California’s resolution on Human Trafficking, modified and presented by CNSA Legislative Director, Jane Delay. The resolution was one of two from the state of California that passed.

Breakout sessions

For those who didn’t serve in the House of Delegates, there were other great opportunities available! Breakout sessions such as “Your License to Practice” or “Your First Year in Nursing” provided insight to all sorts of legal and ethical issues as nursing students transition into their roles of professional nurses. Convention also provided the opportunity to earn the American Red Cross Disaster and Sheltering certification. In addition, students could attend NCLEX review sessions.

Networking

Throughout the days of convention, the Exhibit Hall housed a variety of educational, career, and information booths. Some notable booths presented information on travel nursing, nursing abroad, graduate school opportunities, and programs to advance your nursing license.

Future Conventions

The 64th annual national convention was an outstanding experience. It is highly recommended for nursing students seeking to develop leadership skills and professional growth. Interested students have the opportunity to participate at the state convention, which occurs in October 2016 in Visalia, California. For more information, click here.
Choosing Nursing

By Nicolette Clark
CNSA Historian
3rd Semester

I’ve had an assortment of jobs in my life and a previous career that I felt was well-suited to my temperament and talents. I was not brought up in a family of nurses or doctors. I knew no one in the medical field. I did not dream of becoming a nurse. I’ve never cared for an ailing family member. Nursing was not “the only thing I ever wanted to do” as I’ve been told by a number of nurses during my clinical rotations.

I respect these men and women who grew up knowing they wanted to care for the sick. I, however, had no clue what I wanted to do as a youngster. I always thought I would eventually figure it out, and at one point I thought I had.

Then, I began to get restless in my career. I began to find it slightly superficial. I longed for a career in which I could really help others and make some small difference in the world. I agonized over making a career change and grappled with what I might want to do next.

I don’t remember exactly what steered me toward nursing, but all of sudden I knew this was what I wanted. This could be the answer I was searching for. However, as a profession, nursing and my current career were on opposite ends of the spectrum and I’d always been a little squeamish when it came to bodily functions. The sight of blood made me queasy.

When I got the courage to tell my family and friends about the change I wanted to make, the reaction was varied. While they were mostly supportive, I quickly became accustomed to answering the question of why. I had one individual tell me that they could not see me as a nurse. Additionally, I knew that getting accepted to the nursing program would not be easy and I would be giving up three years of my life to go back to school despite the bachelors degree I already possessed. I didn’t let any of this dissuade me from my goal.

There hasn’t been a second since being accepted to the nursing program that I’ve questioned my decision. Not even during the worst clinical experience. Nursing school is hard. It is like nothing I have experienced before. As nursing students we spend countless hours hunched over our text books, agonizing over exam scores, and practicing new skills. The days are long and shifts at the hospital can be challenging, but then there is that one day, when the child you’re caring for smiles as you enter their hospital room and you know you’re right where you are supposed to be.

I’ve had my share of “code browns” and cleaned up vomit. I’ve watched as surgeons cut open an abdomen and observed child birth, but I haven’t fainted or become nauseous once. I’ve been touched by the patients I’ve cared for and the dedicated nurses I’ve worked with. Somehow, nursing school has hardened my stomach, but softened my heart.

As the light at the end of the nursing school tunnel nears, I know I made the right choice.

Nicolette and her clinical group last semester

Why Nursing? Applying the Nursing Process

By Michael Strabala
CNSA Class Rep II
2nd Semester

“Why nursing?” is a question I have been asked numerous times. The question is a simple one, provided your answer is something like, “Why nursing? Because being a nurse is a lifelong dream!” When this just isn’t your truth, however, answering a seemingly simple question like this in equally simple terms is anything but easy. What is it about these three little words that feels more like mental exercise than friendly chit-chat?

I took intense stock of my life before making the decision to complete the prerequisite courses and apply to nursing school at Sacramento State. And only Sacramento State, in fact. (Hey, if you’re going to dream, then shoot for that moon, right?) As I look back now, although I did not yet realize I was doing so at the time, I was applying the five phases of the nursing process, ADPIE, as they applied to my life. As I sifted through each step, I discovered my way.

So, “why nursing?” Here are my reasons:

Assessment: I was in my thirties. Employed with a decent job, but it was not a career. College educated. Recently divorced. Feeling stuck. Tapped into resilience. Intelligent. Capable. Compassionate. Feelings of wanting more, more out of life, more of myself. Brave.

Diagnosis: Recognition of internal desire for change, for a chance to hit the reset button. Willingness to follow through on this. Readiness for enhanced self-concept: accepts strengths and limitations.

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As I approached the hospital on my first day of OB clinical, I was filled with anticipation for my time on the unit. My desire to be an OB nurse stemmed from my experience watching one of my older sisters labor and give birth to her son. In that moment, as a 16-year-old senior in high school, God used the opportunity to tell me my purpose in life: to care for women and their families as they go through the incredible process of welcoming their child. What I soon realized, as my nursing education continued, is that OB nursing is one of the most technical and life-altering fields of nursing.

The OB unit sees women in all stages of their pregnancies for every imaginable pregnancy and sometimes non-pregnancy reason. And, in support of these women and their unborn children are the husbands, partners, parents, and extended family. Thus, OB nurses assess and help these families navigate their new world and realize that if something is to go wrong, the ripple effects of such a crisis extend far and wide.

Life-changing complications occur daily on the OB unit. When a baby’s cord prolapses, nurses intervene to prevent hypoxemia and prepare for an emergency C-section. During a postpartum hemorrhage, nurses know what medications to give and how to prevent mom from bleeding out. After a pregnant woman arrives at triage with vague symptoms, nurses understand how to interpret the diagnostic tests and prepare for and administer the proper treatments. When a couple has to decide how to bury their stillborn baby, nurses are there.

Nurses are also present when everything is going the way it should be. Nurses monitor and support mothers and babies through the labor and birth process. If a mom feels too tired to continue pushing, the nurse is there whispering words of encouragement. When the doctor isn’t there, the nurse safely delivers the baby.

There are humorous and awkward moments to be found on the unit too – cousins having babies together, talking to a new mom as she sits on the toilet because I have to confirm that she can pee, and a baby passing gas while a rectal thermometer is inserted.

In addition, the beauty of the patient’s experiences are to be seen almost everywhere you look – mothers feeding their babies with a look of absolute contentment and beauty, fathers providing skin to skin care, and the look of pride on parents’ faces as you tell them how beautiful their child is and how they did an exceptional job bringing them into the world.

I have found on the OB unit that while the greatest joys in life are happening in one room, the greatest sorrows are occurring in the next. OB nursing is one of the most humbling nursing fields: strangers allow us to enter their world and trust us to protect them and their babies. OB nursing is everything I thought it would be and more.
The Toddler at the Pool

By Valerie Schmidl
AAMN Education Chair
2nd Semester

My journey to nursing school started when I saved a kid from drowning. When you think about someone “drowning,” the image that usually comes to mind is someone flailing to keep their head above water while they shout for help. However, when someone is actively drowning, they aren’t able to call out and their mouth is under the water. This is what I saw as I settled down into the lifeguard stand, I had just rotated to the stand, set down my water bottle, and looked up to immediately lock eyes with a toddler standing in the water.

I will never forget the look on the toddler’s face. He was drowning in about two and a half feet of water, with the water level hitting his forehead. His mouth was open as if he were crying out, and his eyes were looking right at me. Time moved in slow motion, and every step through the water didn’t feel fast enough. The whole incident was over in about ten seconds, but I had no sense of time because my entire focus was on getting him out. Once I had set him on the ground, he started wailing and all I could think was, “what do I do now?”

My manager was there a moment later, and the child was calmed and returned to his mother, but I was still shaking. That boy was the very first person that I saved. I decided that protecting people in need is what I wanted to do, which sent me down the path to the medical field. All of my adventures leading up to nursing school expanded on my first responder roots and my time as a lifeguard. You can bet that whenever I’m around a pool, I’m always guarding the water and ready to jump to someone’s rescue.

All About the Patient

By Lukas Yoga
1st Semester

In November 2015, the long awaited moment had finally arrived! I received a letter from Sacramento State, announcing that I have been selected for admission to the Spring 2016 BSN program. I was excited to meet new people and to begin my nursing journey.

“But, why nursing?” my friends often asked. Ever since I was little, I was determined to have a career in the medical field because I liked to help people. I was born and raised in Indonesia, a developing country where health care is considered to be relatively inadequate. Because there is no such thing as health insurance, it is not uncommon for people to be unable to pay for their medication or visit a doctor when they become ill. At the beginning of the program, however, I was not exactly sure why I wanted to be a nurse. I often reasoned that the educational process to be a nurse is relatively short compared to that of other healthcare professionals.

After a few months in this program, I finally know why I want to be a nurse. Other than that nursing needs more males in the nursing field, I feel that nurses are patients’ first line of care and defense. It takes a lot of responsibility and competency to provide direct and continuous patient care and to advocate for the patients’ medical needs. Also, it was very humbling to me when I realized that nursing is considered to be one of the most trusted professions and I get to be a member of that group after completion of this program. In addition to the fact that there will be a high demand of nurses in the short future due to nurse retirement and health-care reform, nurses have plenty of options to select for area of specialization, which means job security.

At the end of the day, nursing is all about the patient, and that is the main reason why I want to become a nurse: to help people get better and have a good quality of life.

Are you man enough... to be a nurse?

Join us for our last meeting of the Spring 2016 semester on Friday, May 13th at 4:30pm in Folsom Hall, room 1050.
The Nurse in the Family

By Leah Martin
CNSA Pre-BTN Director
3rd Semester

“This is my daughter, she’s going to be a nurse.” That is how my mom introduces me now. To her friends, her neighbors and to her doctor. I know that she is proud of me and what I’m doing but sometimes being the nurse in the family can be difficult. As I’ve made my way through nursing school I have gotten many phone calls from my mom and family members asking me questions about their health. And usually my answer is “Well, what did your doctor say?” or, “You should call your doctor about it.” There have also been times when my mother has called to ask me something about my dad. That is when it is hard to give the blanket answer of see your doctor. My father has many health issues, and is basically bed-ridden. He needs assistance with everything except feeding himself. So when my mom calls about my dad, I usually go straight over to their house to help.

Leah and her father on her wedding day

Like many little girls, I was a daddy’s girl. My father could do no wrong, and he was pretty much superman. He was the man everyone would call when they needed help. He could fix anything and was willing to help everyone. So seeing him now in a bed or chair all day, not able to care for himself is very difficult. I am thankful that I know what I do, so that I am able to help when I can. Many times that help is just me being the encouraging voice to call their own doctor. But sometimes I am able to be there to help translate the medical jargon that is used, or the person that knows the right questions to ask to get the answers they need.

It can be frustrating at times to be the person everyone asks their questions of, but I try to remember that it is the reason I want to be a nurse. I want to be able to help others, and if my family trusts and needs me to answer questions then I will always be there for them. To be the only nurse in the family may be a big role to fill, but I am working on being able to fill it.

Discovering Why Nursing is for Me

By Rizwan Mohammed
CNSA Post-BTN Director
3rd Semester

Sometimes I’m still surprised I decided to go into nursing. It never was something I grew up thinking I would do. Back then it always seemed too gross or too boring. Then, in my junior year of high school, my teacher’s sister came to speak to our class. She had been a nurse for over 15 years, and it really opened my eyes to nursing and the possibilities that nurses have. Still, I wasn’t convinced it was the right path for me. In our senior year, we had to do presentations on what career we wanted to pursue in college. I had no clue what I wanted to go to college for or what I wanted to study. On aptitude tests I had taken, nursing ranked pretty high as a good fit, so I decided to go with that. I figured it would have been easy enough to present on.

Then college came. I still wasn’t sure what to do, so I went with nursing. I figured I might as well, since I did all the research behind the major. I would take one or two classes towards my major at a time, never really sure if it was right for me. At some point, four years had passed and I was applying to Sac State’s nursing program. This was it. It was too late, I thought, to turn back now. After being rejected once, I finally got in the second time. I was so relieved and excited, but I wasn’t sure if it was because I’m a step closer to being a nurse, or a step closer to being done with school, and I wasn’t in limbo anymore wondering if I’d get in or not. One leg of the journey was over, and a new one began. The whole time, though, I thought to myself “I hope I like nursing.”

Turns out I do. I really like it. There is so much to learn, so much to do, and every week I feel like I’m experiencing something different. I love the variety in nursing, the multitude of possibilities from working in the NICU to the ER to doing home health. Even informatics or public health, there is a plethora of options for nurses. And I love all the people I’ve met. The professors, the nurses, and all the friends I’ve made. Students who are going through the same thing I did, who questioned why nursing, who had their doubts and accomplishments.

I really wasn’t sure why I wanted to do nursing in the first place, but now I’m really happy I did. There is always something to do, something to learn, or a person to help. It was a long journey, and I wasn’t sure if nursing was right for me. Now I learned that it definitely is.
Submit pictures for the Monthly Shot!

For each issue, it is nice to see pictures of you and/or your nursing school buddies doing awesome nursing-related activities! Become a celebrity and submit pictures for the March issue! Send pictures today to: csus.cnsa.monthlyshot@gmail.com
Important Upcoming Dates

April 29 (Friday):
MIN Meeting
4:30pm room 1050

May 6 (Friday):
Last CNSA Meeting
4:30pm room 1050

May 13 (Friday)
Last MIN Meeting
4:30pm room 1050

May 19 (Thursday):
Pinning for 4th semester students
9:00am in the University Union Ballroom

May 20-21 (Friday & Saturday):
Graduation Commencement

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Write articles for the Monthly Shot!
Each article is one CNSA event and is great for your resume! Articles should be at least 250 words, and can be about anything nursing- or school-related. We want to hear from all semesters!