

NBNA NEWS

PUBLIC POLICY & ADVOCACY

35TH ANNUAL NATIONAL BLACK NURSES DAY ON CAPITOL HILL



Special Issue

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NBNA

ON CAPITOL HILL



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Health Equity, Reckoning & Wellness: NBNA's Renewed Call to Action at the 35th NBNA Day on Capitol Hill

Martha A. Dawson, DNP, RN, FACHE, FAAN
Associate Professor University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Nursing
President, National Black Nurses Association

NBNA DAY ON CAPITOL HILL was a huge success! As you may know, in February of this year, the NBNA held its annual Day on Capitol Hill. Hosting more than 300 attendees, this event provides an opportunity for our members to come together and advocate for policies that will improve the health and well-being of our communities.

This year, our advocacy efforts focused on seven important legislative issues, including increasing funding for nursing education and workforce development programs, improving access to quality healthcare services, and addressing health disparities in underserved communities.

I am pleased to report that our efforts were successful. We were able to meet with nine lawmakers and policymakers to discuss these important issues, and we received a great deal of support and encouragement for our organization.

In addition to our advocacy initiatives, we also hosted a Partners Meeting where attendees were able to network with

members on our Whova App. This resource provided an opportunity for us to learn from one another and to share our experiences, pictures, and perspectives on a range of nursing-related topics.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of our members who participated in this year's Day on Capitol Hill. Your dedication and commitment to improving the health and well-being of our communities is truly inspiring.

As we move forward, I want to encourage all our members to continue to be advocates for nursing public policy at the local, state, and national levels. We have a powerful voice, and we can make a real difference in the lives of our patients and communities.

Thank you for all that you do, and I look forward to continuing to work with you to advance the nursing profession and improve the health and well-being of our communities.



NBNA Mini Nurse Academy: A Strategy to Diversify the Nursing Workforce

Jennifer J. Coleman, PhD, RN, CNE, COI Co-editor

SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES TO increase racial, ethnic, and gender diversity in the nursing workforce are long overdue. The number of minority nurses in the U.S. has not significantly increased in the past 4 decades. Of the nearly 4 million registered nurses, Blacks represent only 7.8% with all minorities accounting for a total of 26.7% of the RN population (AHRQ, 2019; U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2018). Men in nursing represent 9.6% of the total number of RNs in the country. The continuing lack of diversity in the nursing workforce may contribute to perceptions by a significant number of care recipients that their needs are not being fully addressed. Differences in levels of care may exist, in part, due to mistrust and misunderstandings between minority patients and their non-minority health care providers (Smedley et al., 2003). When a care recipient perceives that their values, beliefs, and experiences are not acknowledged and respected, there is an increased risk for care that is not culturally sensitive.

A strategy to address the lack of nursing diversity is the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) Mini Nurse Academy, an innovative program designed to provide students from traditionally underrepresented communities with opportunities to share experiences with professional nurses. The inaugural Academy, piloted in Alabama by the Birmingham chapter in 2018 and 2019, is now expanding into NBNA chapters across the country. In this issue of NBNA News, four NBNA chapters offer details on how they have operationalized the Academy in their local areas.

NBNA's mission, for over five decades, has been to position "Black nurses to advocate for and implement strategies to ensure access to the highest quality of healthcare for persons of color". We believe that the recruitment, retention, and graduation of a diverse nursing workforce is likely to increase opportunities for access to culturally sensitive health care for all Americans. I challenge each NBNA chapter to consider joining the NBNA Mini Nurse Academy program. Our care recipients are counting on us to remain committed to our goal of increasing the numbers of nurses who share the values, beliefs, and lived experiences of all Americans. For more information, contact the NBNA Mini Nurse Academy Regional Coordinators (Loretta Lee, llee@uab.edu; Jennifer Coleman, jacolema@samford.edu).

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Health Policy is Needed to Reduce the Consequences of Obesity

Pamela G. Bowen, PhD, CRNP, FNP-BC

ACCORDING TO THE CENTERS for Disease Control and Prevention, obesity prevalence in 2021 has doubled since 2018, with 19 states and two territories having an obesity prevalence $\geq 35\%$. Obesity is a costly, complex, and chronic medical condition with serious consequences for overall health, and obesity-related healthcare costs in the United States are roughly \$173 billion annually. Equally important is the obesogenic environment, which primarily impacts minority and low-income populations, and the role that environmental factors may influence people's participation in daily physical activity and the consumption of healthy foods to decrease the risk for obesity and its related complications.¹⁻⁴

Obesity is a major risk factor for many chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, certain cancers, stroke, and cognitive decline, all of which have a higher prevalence in African American populations. To address the growing problems related to obesity and obesogenic environments, culturally appropriate health policies are needed. According to Healthy People 2030, health policies are essential to keep people safe and promote health and well-being by using laws and policies at the local, state, and federal levels.⁵ Furthermore, programs and policies that establish consensus about future directions to assist people with becoming more physically active and consuming nutritious and balanced foods for obesity reduction and improved health outcomes are essential.^{5,6}

Legislators who develop policies related to obesity management in healthcare should be advised by healthcare providers such as advanced practice nurses, registered nurses, physicians, and professional organizations like the American Medical Association (AMA) and the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA). Because the AMA recognized obesity as a disease in 2013, increased awareness of the consequences related to living with overweight and obesity has slowly but gradually moved to the forefront of the minds of the many healthcare professionals and politicians.

Healthcare providers are urged to treat patients living with overweight (a body mass index [BMI] of 25 to 29.9, and one

risk factor, such as high blood pressure or high cholesterol) and obesity (BMI of 30 or higher).⁷ To improve overall health and decrease the risks associated with obesity, the goal is for all people to achieve and sustain a healthy weight in a healthy manner. People often like to set unrealistic goals when it comes to weight loss, however, it is important that people learn healthy lifestyle behaviors to achieve healthy habits that contribute to a healthy weight. Initially, a modest weight loss is equivalent to 5% -10% of the person's total weight. For example, a person who weighs 200 pounds would begin to see improvements in their health when they lost 10-20 pounds.⁸

With the growing obesity crisis in our country, policies such as the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act of 2021 are urgently needed. Senator Thomas R. Carper introduced this legislation on April 3, 2021, which aims "to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coordination of programs to prevent and treat obesity and for other purposes." If this legislation were passed, people living with obesity (a medically treatable disease) would have an increased opportunity to receive access to reasonably priced, comprehensive medical care. Patients would have expanded coverage to receive intensive behavioral therapy (IBT) as a treatment for obesity. IBT is a high-intensity behavioral counseling and therapy program that focuses on nutrition and exercise strategies to promote long-term weight loss.^{9,10} Furthermore, this ACT would also expand the types of providers who could administer IBT, which would expand access to IBT.

Nursing is the largest sector of the healthcare system, and our profession is well positioned to advocate for and promote needed health care policy changes. The National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) serves as the professional voice for over 300,000 African American registered nurses, over 99,000 licensed vocational/practical nurses, nursing students, and retired nurses from across the USA. NBNA recognizes the importance of disease prevention and health promotion as a fundamental basis of the profession. Obesity

continued on next page

is a complex but preventable chronic health disease condition, and erecting health policies that focus on reducing health disparities and improving health equity for all people living with overweight and obesity, especially communities of color and marginalized populations, is needed.

To learn more about how to take action to eliminate barriers to healthcare, especially among communities of color, please visit the information on the following links:

- Health Equity Coalition for Chronic Disease - HECCD
<https://healthequityaction.org/>
- Obesity is a disease we know how to treat.
<https://blavity.com/nurses-know-best-obesity-epidemic-black-americans?category1=opinion>

Pamela G. Bowen, PhD, CRNP, FNP-BC is an Associate Professor and a certified FNP. Her program of research focuses on promoting healthy lifestyle behaviors especially physical activity among African Americans, thus reducing obesity and the associated risk factors. Bowen's patient population has been predominantly low-income and minority populations with obesity and chronic related conditions, such as hypertension, diabetes, arthritis, and heart disease. Dr. Bowen can be reached at pbowen@uab.edu.

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The NBNA End-of-Life Care (EOL) Ad-hoc Committee: A Year in Review

Marcia Lowe, PhD, MSB, BSN, RN, GERO-BC

NATIONAL HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE Care Month is observed in November, and the theme for 2022 is “Meeting you where you are.” By attempting to understand where someone is in their journey, we may meet them where they are by putting aside our own desires for them. And that is precisely what the End-of-Life Care Ad Hoc Committee (EOL) of the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) is doing. Dr. Martha A. Dawson approved the committee in September 2021 with the goal of removing obstacles through raising awareness concerning palliative and hospice care in the black community. The EOL committee is dedicated to use its chapter champions to help to spread knowledge on hospice and palliative care within NBNA. Several barriers, including education, have historically prevented the Black community from utilizing hospice and palliative care to its full potential. Eliminating these difficulties may increase enrollment.

Dr. Marcia Lowe, the second vice president of the NBNA was appointed as the committee’s chairperson and peers voted Dr. Alma Dixon a member of the Volusia Flagler chapter as co-chair. The committee established its charter, goals, objectives, and deliverables during its initial meeting in October 2021. The membership received an invitation to join the committee and identify champions during that month.

An article about the hospice experience from a caregiver’s perspective was written by Dr. Lowe. The article was published in the November 2021 special edition of the NBNA newsletter. The special edition was published in honor of Hospice and Palliative Care Month. The committee took part in a webinar on grieving over the holidays in December with VITAS Healthcare, and was represented by Ms. Trilby Barnes-Green, a member of the New Orleans chapter.

In January 2022, the group re-assembled to discuss additional plans for the year. Mid-January, Dr. Helen Bhagwandin a member of the EOL committee, Diane Deese of VITAS Healthcare, and Dr. Lowe took part as subject matter experts in a health equity blog interview with the Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC). Dr. Bhagwandin was credited as the main author for the blog titled, “Acknowledging

Barriers and Implementing Strategies to Reach Black People with Serious Illness.” The blog was updated and is featured on CAPC’s website. Mark Slobodien, VP for Public Affairs at VITAS Healthcare gave a presentation on hospice and palliative care during the NBNA Day on Capitol Hill on February 3, 2022. The committee met in April 2022 to talk through preparations for the NBNA national conference held in Chicago, Illinois, from July 1–August 1, 2022.

Dr. Lowe, Diane Deese, and Ottamissiah (Missy) Moore, attended the End-of-life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) summit in Pasadena, California, in April 2022. The End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) newsletter featured Missy as a national trainer. In June 2022, it was decided that the committee would participate as an exhibitor at the NBNA conference. The booth was placed close to City of Hope and our sponsor, VITAS Healthcare. Many thanks to Dr. Betty Ferrell of City of Hope and Diane Deese of VITAS Healthcare, with whom NBNA has enjoyed a collaborative partnership for more than 20 years. We spoke with so many amazing nurses, who had experienced hospice and palliative care on a personal level. To all the committee members who attended the conference and helped at the booth, I want to convey my appreciation. In August 2022, Dr. Betty Ferrell honored the NBNA EOL committee in the ELNEC newsletter, which is published in the United States, plus 101 international countries.

In honor of Hospice and Palliative Care Month this year, the committee teamed up with VITAS Healthcare to plan an End-of-life Care summit held on November 12, 2022. The national speakers and CEUs were provided by VITAS Healthcare.

The work of the NBNA End-of-Life Care Ad-hoc committee is highlighted in this year in review. We anticipate an incredible year and expect to keep growing as a committee. We greatly appreciate the support of Dr. Martha A. Dawson President of NBNA, the Board of Directors, staff, members, chapter leaders, committee members, champions, and advocates.

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NBNA's 2nd VP Recall of NBNA's 35th Annual Day at Capitol

Marcia Lowe, PhD, MSB, BSN, RN, GERO-BC

ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2023, the NBNA President, Dr. Martha A. Dawson, and representatives from the NBNA Executive and Health Policy Committee met with Dr. Xavier Becerra, the 25th United States Secretary of Health and Human Services. United States Representative Cori Bush from Missouri was also present at this meeting. On Thursday, February 2, I spoke to the audience about the End-of-Life Ad Hoc Committee and the Hospice and Palliative Care Education Training Act with Mark Slobodien and Dianne Deese from VITAS Healthcare. Members of the Birmingham Black Nurses Association (BBNA) met via Zoom with correspondents from Senator Britt and Senator Tuberville's offices from the great state of Alabama to discuss issues affecting our profession and the community. The nursing workforce, gun violence, obesity, and maternal mortality were all discussed. Several Birmingham chapter members who were unable to attend in person participated on the Zoom call. Later that afternoon, Alabama Congresswoman Terri Sewell made a personal appearance and spoke to over 300 attendees. In addition, we had ten other representatives from Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, Illinois, California, Missouri, and other states make in person appearances.

There were over 90 students from across the United States in attendance at this great event. The future of nursing looks

very bright. On Friday, February 3rd, the NBNA board of directors met with Dr. Earnest Grant, immediate past president of the American Nurses Association (ANA), and Dr. Jennifer Mensik Kennedy, the current president, during the NBNA board meeting to discuss further ANA's position on racism in nursing. The NBNA Day on Capitol Hill occurs the first Thursday of February every year, we hope to see you there next year.



Dr. Marcia Lowe, Congresswoman Terri Sewell, NBNA's president Dr. Martha A. Dawson

End-of-Life Care (continued)

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Dr. Marcia Lowe is a lifetime member, a past president of the Birmingham Black Nurses Association (BBNA) and is currently serving a second term as the 2nd Vice-President of the National Black Nurses Association. She is chair of the Membership, Brain Health, and End-of-Life Ad-hoc Committees. Dr. Lowe is a nurse educator in staff development at the Birmingham VA Health Care System, Birmingham, Alabama. Dr. Lowe believes nursing is not just a profession, but a passion.

Coalition Letter to Senate on Menthol Cigarettes and Flavored Cigars

February 21, 2023
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

WE WRITE TO EXPRESS our strong support for proposed rules that the Food and Drug Administration has issued to prohibit the manufacture and sale of menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars. FDA's proposals will substantially improve public health by reducing youth tobacco use, preventing tobacco-caused disease, and saving lives. We urge you to support FDA's proposed rules and oppose any effort to prevent or delay FDA from finalizing and implementing them. It is time to put an end to the tobacco industry's targeted efforts to use flavored products to lure youth into a lifetime of deadly addiction.

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the U.S., responsible for nearly one in five deaths and more than \$241 billion in health care costs each year. While smoking rates have declined, many communities continue to experience high rates of smoking and smoking-caused disease, including people with lower levels of income and education, individuals living in rural areas, Native Americans, people with a behavioral health condition, and the LGBTQ+ community. Congress gave FDA tools to reduce the number of people who die of cancer, heart disease, respiratory disease, and other tobacco- 33 Coalition Letter to Senate on Menthol Cigs and Flavored Cigars caused diseases. FDA is now proposing to use one of those tools—the ability to set tobacco product standards—to reduce the public health harms caused by menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars.

Menthol cools and numbs the throat, which helps mask the harshness of tobacco smoke and makes it easier for young people to start smoking. Menthol cigarettes are also more addictive and harder to quit than non-menthol cigarettes. As a result, menthol cigarettes have increased the number of youths who smoke and the number of people who die prematurely from smoking. Black communities, which have

been the target of menthol cigarette marketing for decades, have been especially harmed by menthol cigarettes. Removing these products from the market would reduce the number of youths who become addicted to tobacco, save hundreds of thousands of lives, and advance health equity. Researchers estimate that removing menthol cigarettes from the market would prevent up to 654,000 smoking-related deaths over time, including over 255,000 smoking-related deaths among Black Americans.

Cigars, which come in hundreds of kid-friendly flavors like Cherry Dynamite and Tropical Fusion, are the second most popular tobacco product among youth. In 2022, half a million youth were current cigar smokers. Every day that passes, more than 800 kids try cigar smoking for the first time, and there is extensive evidence about the role flavors play in attracting youth to cigars. We need to protect kids from flavored cigars because cigar smoke is composed of the same toxic and carcinogenic constituents found in cigarette smoke. According to the National Cancer Institute, cigar smoking can cause cancer of the oral cavity, larynx, esophagus, and lung.

FDA should finalize these proposed rules quickly. All flavors except menthol are already prohibited in cigarettes. Removing other flavored tobacco products from the market, including menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars, is supported by strong scientific evidence and is long overdue. We urge you to discourage any delays in the rulemaking process and reject any legislative efforts to restrict the ability of FDA to move forward with these rules or other efforts to reduce tobacco-caused disease and death. Strong FDA action to reduce tobacco use is critical, as tobacco use continues to claim the lives of nearly half a million Americans every year.

Coalition Members





VITAS® Healthcare Celebrates NBNA's 35 Years of Advocacy on Capitol Hill

Diane Deese • Erika Gaudio • Mark Slobodien

I T WAS AN HONOR for VITAS Healthcare to have leadership represent the organization at the 35th Anniversary of NBNA Day on Capitol Hill! It was 35 years ago that the fifth president of NBNA, Dr. Alicia Georges, worked with Congressman Louis Stokes of Ohio to get a proclamation passed recognizing the first Friday in February as National Black Nurses Day on Capitol Hill.

On February 2, 2023, 11 Senators and Representatives of the US Congress attended this year's event on Capitol Hill to speak to all in attendance. We were energized as Dr. Alicia Georges spoke to the history of this day and the many NBNA accomplishments.

Multiple Issues Were Presented That Day for NBNA's Renewed Call to Action:

- Supporting the Nursing Workforce
- Suicide: A Mental Health Catastrophe
- Obesity: America's Health Calamity
- Time to Reckon with Black Maternal Health

VITAS had the opportunity to present the Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act (PCHETA) to all attendees before heading to the Hill to speak to respective state officials. This gave VITAS leadership an opportunity to bring hospice matters to the attention of political representatives, as well as acknowledge the significance of National Black Nurses Day on Capitol Hill.

After 20 years of partnership, we were extremely humbled and honored to be recognized by the NBNA as an inaugural corporate roundtable member during the 10-year Anniversary of the Corporate Roundtable Partners Meeting on

Wednesday, February 1, during the 35th Annual National Black Nurses Day on Capitol Hill.

Addressing Challenges in Our Communities

Erika Gaudio, SVP of Sales with VITAS, attended this year's Capitol Hill event. "As a partner of the National Black Nurses Association," she explains, "VITAS has an opportunity to work closely with our NBNA chapters to address some of the challenges in our communities that we can present to the board for consideration."

Bringing Hospice Care to Academics

Mark Slobodien, VP of Government Affairs at VITAS, spoke at the event on behalf of PCHETA, to gain approval from Congress to include programs that support the hospice and palliative care workforce in the educational curriculum for nursing students and medical residents.

He says, "VITAS also plays a role in public policy and supports issues that bolster and develop the workforce. By attending the meeting, we were able to learn about the priorities from NBNA, what is impacting their members, and how VITAS can play a role in supporting them."

Diane shared the stage with Mark, and Dr. Marcia Lowe, 2nd VP of NBNA, and spoke on the importance of PCHETA. "We were able to recount how educating NBNA members on hospice and palliative care has helped them better serve and take care of their patients. Our plea to Congress is to work with us and work with this act so the opportunity to receive formal education about hospice care is afforded to all students in nursing."

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The Value of Connecting With Underserved Communities

Bringing hospice care to the forefront of Black nursing students is an important way to connect with the underserved communities.

“As a provider, we should be very proud that we deliver care in areas where other providers won’t go,” Erika says, adding, “We hire within the communities, and a lot of times it’s the staff who live there who know it’s underserved, and they want to give back.”

A Partnership for Today and a Better Tomorrow

At VITAS, we are proud to partner with NBNA to provide educational resources and support to nurses in the Black community.

“It allows us to get back to grassroots efforts in working closely with local chapters in our service areas,” says Erika.

“They know we’re ready to serve their community, and we can educate their community on all things around end-of-life. It gives us the reach to get to those chapters and make

sure that hospice is a component of the care continuum that each of the chapters served.”

Mark is quick to add, “Policymakers in Washington, as well as state capitals, need to be cognizant of the fact that there are robust and needed workforce initiatives that must be brought over the finish line.”

“We can’t do this alone,” stresses Diane. “If you are going on the Hill, talk to your representative about it.”

Diane Deese, MCLSS-GB, CDEI-HC, CACPFI, EMT, is the vice president of community affairs for VITAS. She has been working with NBNA nationally and with local chapters since 2003 and was inducted as an honorary member in 2018.

Erika Gaudio is the senior vice president of sales for VITAS.

Mark Slobodien is the vice president of government affairs for VITAS.

Celebrating 20 Years of Opportunity with NBNA



“Meeting with other influential, successful Black nurse leaders encouraged me to pursue higher education and to seek opportunities for career advancement at VITAS.”

Donna Borland recalls her early days in nursing. As a member of the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) and a VITAS employee, the partnership between the two organi-

zations provided her with the mentorships and continuing education needed to grow her career in healthcare.

<https://www.vitas.com/careers/vitas-hospice-career-insights/2023/february/celebrating-20-years-of-opportunity-with-nbna>

The Epilepsy Foundation and NBNA in Partnership to Address Epilepsy Disparities Among African Americans

Kaitlyn Gallagher, Jackie Aker, and Thometta Cozart

THE EPILEPSY FOUNDATION IS pleased to continue its partnership with the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA). We invite NBNA members to learn more about seizure disorders, including epilepsy, especially how it may impact African Americans. According to the U.S. Census Bureau and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 578,000 African Americans have epilepsy or a seizure disorder. African Americans with epilepsy are more likely to face discrimination and lack access to specialty care compared to other individuals living with epilepsy.

More than 25,000 African Americans are diagnosed with seizures or epilepsy each year. In fact, as they age, African Americans are more likely than White Americans to be diagnosed with epilepsy. African Americans are also more likely to experience a seizure which continues for five minutes or longer without stopping (status epilepticus.) Sadly, Black Americans also have a higher rate of Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP).

Many Black Americans do not have access to an epilepsy center. As a result, diagnosis and treatment often happen in emergency rooms. While emergency room care can be successful, it is better for people with frequent seizures to have access to a specialist that can better serve their needs. However, since Black Americans are also underrepresented in neurological care, and only around 5% of neurologists are Black, the Foundation understands the difficulty Black Americans may feel identifying providers who share their culture or understanding their unique challenges. Lack of representation in the neurological field may also contribute to hesitation when looking for treatment answers, such as brain surgery.

In addition to traumatic head injuries, strokes are a major contributor to African Americans developing seizure disorders. Many African Americans develop post-stroke seizures (PSS) as a common complication of strokes.

The Foundation, in collaboration with the American Stroke Association and American Heart Association, created infographics to help individuals learn the warning signs of a stroke, as well as the steps of seizure first aid. A person

who has a stroke and then begins having seizures months or even years after may later develop epilepsy. Distributing this infographic to stroke patients should become a standard of care practice.

However, African Americans are more likely to have seizures that are controlled by anti-seizure medication. By improving access to care and education about seizures, we can help more members of the Black community have better control of their seizures and experience seizure freedom.

The Epilepsy Foundation's Multicultural Outreach Program has established partnerships with not only NBNA, but also Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), the National Medical Association (NMA), the National Association of State Offices of Minority Health (NASOHM), and more to increase awareness of epilepsy disparities among African Americans. Health communication campaigns have been included in several Black media outlets, such as ESSENCE magazine and Black Press newspapers.

There are ways for you to get involved and educate others about the importance of seizure safety in the Black community. The Foundation's Training Program has a several CNE-worthy trainings available in its Epilepsy Learning Portal, including Seizure First Aid and School Nurse trainings.

Nurses are needed as allies to the epilepsy community. So, please consider serving as a health resource and distributing our Epilepsy in the African American Community brochure and promote our 24/7 Helpline (1-800-332-1000) to address myths and provide facts about epilepsy, seizure first aid, and more. Finally, connect with one of the Epilepsy Foundation's local office to receive additional resources, to volunteer and/or serve as a Board member to help advocate for legislation such as the Seizure Safe School Act.


The Foundation looks forward to offering NBNA members another opportunity to become certified in Seizure First Aid at your annual conference in Atlanta, GA! For more information about our partnership or Seizure First Aid, contact Thometta Cozart or Cheryl Houston at programs@efa.org or visit epilepsy.com.

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Epilepsy & Seizures 24/7 Helpline
epilepsy.com/Helpline

Providing HELP, HOPE, and SUPPORT to people living with epilepsy & seizures and their families nationwide.



Call **1-800-332-1000**
en Español 1-866-748-8008
Interpreters available for over 200 languages



LINKS:

- <https://www.epilepsy.com/specific-populations/african-americans>
- <https://www.epilepsy.com/complications-risks/emergencies/status-epilepticus>
- <https://www.epilepsy.com/complications-risks/early-death-sudep>
- <https://www.epilepsy.com/find-epilepsy-center>
- https://www.epilepsy.com/sites/default/files/2022-08/Strokes_SFA_Ad.pdf
- <https://www.epilepsy.com/tools-resources/seizure-medication-list>
- <https://www.epilepsy.com/specific-populations/african-americans#Multicultural-Outreach-Program>
- <https://learn.epilepsy.com/collections/catalog>
- <https://www.epilepsy.com/sites/default/files/2022-08/EpilepsyInTheAfricanAmericanCommunityBrochure.pdf>
- <https://www.epilepsy.com/247-helpline>
- <https://www.epilepsy.com/advocacy/priorities/seizure-safe-schools>



“This Above All: To Thine Own Self Be True.”

William Shakespeare

Tracy Wilson

ALTHOUGH NURSING WAS NOT my first choice, I knew I would become a caregiver. Healthcare was always a passion of mine. I knew I would be a caregiver. I was always the mommy or the teacher growing up. So, it was not a surprise when I told my mom at a very young age that I wanted to be a pediatrician. I loved children, specifically babies. I wanted to save them all and make them better. I had an innate sense to make even the most inconsolable baby stop crying and make their pain go away. I spent my formative years aspiring to meet that goal.

In Louisville, Kentucky, I didn't grow up with a silver spoon in my mouth. I spent my formative years in the West End of Louisville, with my mother and older sister. I came from a very large extended family and was surrounded by the love of aunts and uncles. I had the great fortune of being inducted into the inaugural cohort of the Whitney M. Young Scholars Program WYSP – Lincoln Foundation (lincolnfdn.org) in the sixth grade. This program enriched me the college preparatory skills that proved life-altering and changed me forever.

Upon going to college, I knew I would become a Pediatrician. However, I didn't know that my plans would change. I met with a Pre-Med/Biology Advisor prior to my second semester, and we discussed my courses for the next semester and beyond. I was absolutely opposed to taking Organic & Inorganic Chemistry. He told me that I would not have any choice if I wanted to go to medical school. I felt like it was such a defining decision – so I said, “I don't want to take those courses.” He stated, “well what else do you see yourself doing?” I replied, “I went to a magnet high school, and we were allowed to pick a major at the end of our freshman year to study for the rest of our 3 years. I chose nursing.” He stated, “I think nursing might be a better fit.” As I reflect on this pivotal moment in my life, I wish I had an advisor who fought for the potential within me and not for what he saw.

During my last semester and one month prior to what we now know as 9/11, I was selected by my university to attend the National Black Nurses Association's (NBNA) Annual Conference in L.A. This was my first time flying and first

time attending a conference. I was not affiliated with any organizations at the time, but I loved student government. When I arrived, the energy of the NBNA conference excited me. Meeting new people and networking with people from all career paths gave me an energy that I didn't quite understand. Being a nursing student and seeing nursing leaders that looked like excelling in their careers gave me a hope that could not get from any other organization. Thank you NBNA! I cannot thank my university (University of Louisville) for affording me with that opportunity.

My first job out of nursing school was my dream job as a NICU nurse. I stayed in the Stepdown NICU for almost 4 years. I wanted to move up in management but there weren't any opportunities. I was ready to return to school and decided to pursue my Master's in Nursing Education. About six months into my program, an opportunity presented itself to teach at the community college. I had never taught formally. I was very unsure if qualified. Not just unsure, I was afraid. How could I offer something of value to these students? Was I smart enough? taught at this community college for almost 4 years. After completing my MSN, I immediately applied and was accepted into a PhD/FNP program. I wasn't sure if I was ready for the responsibility to be a Nurse Practitioner (NP). The program showed me how to change my thinking from being a bedside nurse to a provider, which meant instead of taking orders, I was now the prescriber. In both programs, I noticed that I was either the only or one of two minorities in the program. These factors never bothered me, but it was noticeable. I was always asked about my background or educational pedigree. It always shocked them when I stated I already had my MSN. Many of the students only had their bachelor's and were skipping their master's to get the next degree. I met my husband during this time, and he got a position in Virginia. I was able to graduate with a Post-Master Family NP certificate.

We lived in VA Beach for almost seven years, and I practiced as a FNP in a private pediatric office. I also had my first exposure to an industry position, as a Nurse educator

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for a pharmaceutical company. I loved being a part of this industry and was able to provide education to fellow nurses and staff. The only downside was the 100% travel time being gone most every week that was not conducive to work-life-balance. When my daughter was 1.5 years old, we moved to Nashville, TN where I begin work in an urgent care facility. I gained skills in triage, active listening, and teaching. Administration wasn't always happy with my productivity numbers, but my patient satisfaction scores were always in the top tier.

Two years later I go back to school and finished my doctorate. I was in Nashville and had some of the greatest schools around me. I applied to Vanderbilt and Belmont University. I was denied admission to Vanderbilt. This was a new experience; I had been admitted to every single school I had ever applied to. I received an interview with Belmont. During the interview, the head of the DNP program asked me about my teaching background and if would I consider a faculty position. She said they were hiring for a position and felt I would be a great candidate. In the fall, I became a student and faculty member, and maintained a prn status at the Urgent care. After completing my doctorate, I worked at a diagnostic lab for three years. We never stop growing. At this company, I learned that company fit, and culture is just as important as one's salary and the management team.

Currently, I work for a global biopharmaceutical company impacting patients' lives and health equity globally. Be patient, it took a long time to hear back from them. My intuition told me to "just wait" and it proved to be right. I started this role just before COVID-19 transformed our industry. It changed how we do business, how we interact with health coverage programs and how they want to interact with us.

Our Company offered more on-demand engagements and allowed HCPs to be determine how they wanted to engage with us.

May 2020, the death of George Floyd stunned our nation and the world to see the senseless killing of one black man under the knee of the police. Watching the video and every moment after that shook me to my very core. That could have been my husband, my brothers-in-law, uncles, cousins, my son – one day. I knew in that moment that between what COVID was doing to our community and seeing the death of this innocent black man I needed to be doing more, I had to contribute more--but how?

One day on LinkedIn, I read a post from a woman. She was the first African American woman from University of Texas Medical Branch that graduated with PhD in Medical Humanities. It made me curious about Medical Humanities? So, I reached out to her, and we talked for hours about our backgrounds, careers, and why she decided on this path. She told me they need my nursing voice because medical humanities come from medical discipline and therefore, there are not many nurses that study or know about it. She began to mentor me and through our discussions she introduced me to bioethics. I took Medical Ethics in undergraduate but wasn't aware of the study of bioethics. she suggested a dual degree program was better suited for me because she saw my natural curiosity for both subjects and believed I would not be satisfied for one or the other. So, I found a program and started a journey.

Being a part of this program of study has forever changed how I address health disparities and health inequity This degree is just for me.



Support the CROWN Act to Help End Race-Based Hair Discrimination

Vivienne Pierce McDaniel, DNP, MSN, RN

Loretta Lee, PhD, CRNP, FNP-BC, CNE, RN

Claudia Kregg-Byers, PhD, MPH, RN

BLACK PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY WOMEN, who choose to wear their natural hair (braids, twists, afro), weaves, or even shaven heads are more likely to be racially targeted in their personal lives, in schools, and in the workplace (Norwood, 2021). Race-based hair discrimination has been a racial justice issue for decades, but there has recently been more activism and advocacy. Empirical data from research conducted at Duke University suggest that Black women with natural hair are evaluated less favorably than Black women with straightened hair (Koval & Rosette, 2021). The authors' findings demonstrated hair bias toward participants noting that while natural hairstyles were celebrated in the media and popular culture, stigma was associated with Black women who wore natural hairstyles in the professional work setting.

The CROWN Coalition – comprised of Dove, the National Urban League, the Color of Change, and the Western Center on Law and Poverty – believes natural hairstyles should be celebrated, not discouraged. The National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) Health Policy Committee's beliefs align with the CROWN Coalition. It is a Black professional's prerogative to wear their hair in any style that suits them. The CROWN Act affords that privilege.

The CROWN Act (Senate Bill 188) was first introduced in California by Senator Holly J. Mitchell. Since then, several states have enacted it as law (California, New York, New Jersey, Virginia, Colorado, Washington, Maryland, Connecticut, Delaware, New Mexico, Nebraska, Nevada, Oregon, Illinois, Maine, Tennessee, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Alaska, and

Minnesota). In March 2021, the federal bill H.R. 2116 was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ) and introduced in the U.S. Senate as federal bill S.888 by Senator Cory Booker (CROWN Coalition, 2022). While the CROWN Act bill passed in the House of Representatives in March 2022, it has yet to receive votes in the Senate despite being brought to the Senate floor for passage by unanimous consent.

Black women or men should no longer experience negative outcomes within the workplace, nor should they be met with discrimination due to race-based hair bias during the interview process. Though there are multiple social and professional organizations and allies throughout our communities, they sometimes engage in unconscious bias and micro-aggressions related to hair bias. In contrast, others overtly avoid or deny this very personal issue impacts Black people. NBNA's organizational goal should be to actively encourage our membership of healthcare professionals to communicate with their local, state, and federal government representatives (use this link to contact your U.S. Senator now), making them aware of this discriminatory issue. Members of local chapters must become actively involved and encourage their representatives to introduce legislation that aims to ban inequitable and racially targeted hair bias.

As staunch advocates of hair equity for Black women, Dove has launched a new partnership with LinkedIn in support of the CROWN Act. The partnership aims to garner support and raise awareness of the CROWN Act through resources, the

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latest research, and free LinkedIn Learning Courses. NBNA members are asked to sign the CROWN Coalition petition using this link <https://campaigns.organizefor.org/petitions/help-make-hair-discrimination-illegal> and post pictures on social media to help end hair discrimination in the workplace, schools, and pools using the hashtags:

- #BlackHairIsProfessional
- #NBNASupportsCROWNAct
- #PassTheCROWN

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Dr. Vivienne Pierce McDaniel is a registered nurse with over 17 years of leadership and academic experience. She became President of the Central Virginia Chapter Black Nurses Association in 2022. Under her presidency, the chapter created five scholarships for students enrolled in LPN and RN programs with \$10,000 being awarded by December 2022. Dr. McDaniel is a member of NBNA's Health Policy Committee. She serves on the Board of Trustees of three hospitals and chairs several committees. Dr. McDaniel is an advocate and ambassador for equity and inclusion in nursing.

Dr. Loretta T. Lee is a board-certified family nurse practitioner and associate professor at the University of Alabama in Birmingham (UAB). Lee has over 30 years of nursing experience and serves as the department vice chair for family, community, and health systems at the UAB School of Nursing. She is co-chair of the National Black Nurses Association health policy committee and is engaged in national policy advocacy and initiatives affecting health equity among racially marginalized populations. Lee is an associate editor for the peer-reviewed journal *Ethnicity and Health*, and a member of the Birmingham Black Nurses Association.

Claudia Kregg-Byers is the NBNA Health Policy Committee Member.

CROWN 2023 Workplace Research Study

Race-based hair bias and discrimination remains a systemic problem in the workplace, disproportionately impacting Black women. Legislation like the CROWN Act provides legal protection against discrimination based on hair texture and protective styles such as braids, locs, twists, and knots. While legal protection exists in some states, there is still work to be done.

Black women's hair is 2.5x more likely to be perceived as unprofessional

Bias against natural hair and protective styles can impact how Black women navigate the hiring process...

- 2/3 of Black women change their hair for a job interview.
- Among them, 41% changed their hair from curly to straight.
- 54% Black women are 54% more likely to feel like they have to wear their hair straight to a job interview to be successful.

And has led Black women to have a negative experience or outcomes within the workplace...

- Black women with curly/textured hair are... 2x as likely to experience microaggressions in the workplace... than Black women with straighter hair.
- Over 20% of Black women 25-34 have been sent home from work because of their hair.

With young Black professionals feeling the pressure from hair discrimination the most.

- Nearly half (44%) of Black women under age 34 feel pressured to have a headshot with straight hair.
- 25% of Black women believe they have been denied a job interview because of their hair. Even higher (1/3) for Black women aged 25-34.
- No one should feel they must change their hair to access employment opportunities or professional advancement.

Visit [Dove.com/LinkedIn](https://www.dove.com/us/en/stories/campaigns/contact-your-senator.html) to sign the CROWN Act petition and access free learning courses that support a more equitable work environment. #BlackHairIsProfessional

The 2023 CROWN Research Study surveyed 2,995 female identifying respondents in the US ages 25-64 (1,019 Black, 1,028 Hispanic, 1,064 White) between December 2022 and January 2023. All respondents were employed part or full time at the time of the study. The research was conducted on behalf of Dove by JCV Collective and Modulus, both specializing in marketing, data and analytics for multicultural communities.

LINKS:

<https://www.dove.com/us/en/stories/campaigns/contact-your-senator.html>

<https://campaigns.organizefor.org/petitions/help-make-hair-discrimination-illegal>



Take Your Seat at the Table: Engaging in Health Policy and Advocacy

Vivienne Pierce McDaniel, DNP, MSN, RN

I BELIEVE ONE OF THE most honorable roles in nursing is advocacy and the ability to effect societal change. Nurses are well positioned to effect health policy through their advocacy efforts (Anders, 2021). Health policy has a major impact on illness, health and well-being and it is incumbent upon nurses to engage in activities that focus on keeping people safe and healthy through laws and policies at the local, state, territorial, and federal levels (Healthy People 2030, n.d.). For example, nurse engagement in support of autonomy for advanced practice registered nurses has resulted in more access to healthcare for patients as well as positive outcomes in care. Members of the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) started the year fully engaged in health policy and advocacy.

Healthcare Policy And Advocacy At The Local, State And Federal Level

Virginia Senator, Tim Kaine, and Robert Otto Valdez, director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), invited me to participate in the inaugural, in-person, Best Practices to Treat Long COVID summit. The event was held on January 27, 2023 in Richmond, VA. Attendees included Virginians experiencing long COVID and providers treating the complex condition. Dr. Sherri Wilson, Virginia Nurses Association president, and member of the Black Nurses Association of Greater Washington DC, served as the moderator for the summit panel that included Senator Kaine. In 2022 Senator Kaine introduced a bill, the CARE for Long COVID Act, to address research on long COVID and the importance of direct services for individuals experiencing long COVID.

35th Annual Black Nurses Capitol Hill Day

More than 300 members of the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) convened at the Hilton Washington DC Capitol Hilton for their 35th Annual National Black Nurses Day on Capitol Hill on February 2, 2023. This year's theme was Health Equity, Reckoning and Wellness: NBNA's Renewed Call to Action. The morning began with Representatives Benny Thompson (MS-2) and James "Jim" Clyburn (SC-6) speaking to nurses about the importance of them using their



voices. NBNA members and invited guests made their way to Capitol Hill around 11:15 am to present seven legislative priorities to their congressional representatives:

1. Ensuring Health Equity: Supporting the Nursing Workforce
2. Gun Violence: America's Continued Crisis
3. Obesity: America's Health Calamity
4. Suicide: A Mental Health Catastrophe
5. Equity and Wellness: Climate and Environmental Justice
6. Criminal Justice Reform and Health Inequities
7. Time to Reckon with Black Maternity Health

During the afternoon session, NBNA members could hardly contain themselves as members of the Congressional Black Caucus converged in the conference room, one after the

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other. They touched on all seven legislative priorities. The eight representatives who spoke in the afternoon were: Lauren Underwood, RN (IL-14), Donald Payne, Jr (NJ-10), Terri Sewell (AL-7), Lisa Blunt Rochester (DE), Robin Kelly (IL-2), and freshman Representatives Jasmine Crockett (TX-30), Summer Lee (PA-12), and Jonathan Jackson (IL-1). Videos were provided by Reps Jamaal Bowman, and Cori Bush, RN.

NBNA 1st Vice President, chair of the NBNA Health Policy Committee and Penn State College of Nursing's inaugural Associate Dean for Equity & Inclusion, Dr. Sheldon Fields, made history when he invited students from Penn State University's Multicultural Student Nurses Association to meet freshman Congresswoman Summer Lee, a Penn State College alum (pictured below). Generally, freshman legislators are too busy acclimating to their new roles a month after being sworn in but Rep Summer Lee was one of three freshman legislators who spoke during Hill Day. Rep Jasmine Crockett was elected to Texas District-30 in 2023 which had been held by the first Black RN elected to Congress, Rep Eddie Bernice Johnson. Congresswoman Johnson served for 30 years before retiring in 2022. Rep Jonathan Jackson, the son of Reverend Jesse Jackson, now serves Illinois District-1 replacing Congressman Bobby Rush who also retired in 2022 after 30 years of service.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge Dr. C. Alicia Georges who initiated the first Annual Black Nurses Capitol Hill Day 34 years ago when she was NBNA President. We are so grateful for her leadership, and support.

Health And Human Services Black Health Matters: Advancing Health Equity

On February 22, 2023, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) hosted its inaugural Black Health Matters Summit in Washington, DC. Attendees came from near and far and were welcomed by HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra who started the discussion by applauding the work of the Biden Administration for progressively boosting Affordable Care Act enrollment and vaccine uptake among communities of color. Speakers consisted of leaders from many HHS agencies. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure and Rep. Lauren Underwood (IL-14) discussed efforts to reduce Black maternal mortality and morbidity. Miriam Delphin-Rittman, administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and Keisha Lance Bottoms, senior advisor to the president for public engagement, emphasized the importance of eradicating stigma and improving access to mental health treatment. There were many other speakers including Dr. Ala Stanford, a Philadelphia physician who said she is "actively engaged in providing genuine patient-centered care in the heart of the city's most vulnerable communities."

President Martha Dawson, First Vice President Dr. Sheldon Fields, Health Policy Committee Chair, Drs. Pier Broadnax, Kathy Tucker, and Vivienne Pierce McDaniel, Health Policy Committee member attended the event. At the end of the program the NBNA nurses attended various grant workshops that included representatives from eight HHS agencies including the National Institutes of Health, and Health Resources and Services Administration. To access the Summit in its totality please use this link <https://youtu.be/iTfrKz-Dxo8c>.

It is only March, and NBNA members have engaged in health policy and advocacy at the local, state, and federal levels. I want to encourage all nurses who are interested in a career in policy and advocacy to strongly consider serving in your state or in the U. S. Congress. It is important that you make yourself known to your legislators so they can contact you when they need the presence or voices of nurses. Please be mindful that we do not endorse candidates, but we are a resource for our legislators. After all, nurses are the most trusted healthcare professionals and should always make their place at the table. If you're not invited, invite yourself. If a seat is not provided, stand at the door, but always be present.

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Dr. Lovene Knight, President Martha Dawson, and HHS Secretary, Dr. Xavier Becerra



President Martha Dawson, Congressman Benny Thompson, January 6 Committee Chair, and Dr. C. Alicia Georges



Dr. Sherri Wilson, Senator Tim Kaine, Dr. Vivienne Pierce McDaniel on Wednesday, February 1, 2023, while in Washington, DC for NBNA Capitol Hill Day, President Martha Dawson, along with members of the NBNA Executive Board and the Health Policy Committee were invited to meet with Department of Health and Human Services Secretary, Dr. Xavier Becerra and Congresswoman Cori Bush, a registered nurse representing Missouri's District 1



Drs. Sheldon Fields, Kathy Tucker, Vivienne Pierce McDaniel, and Martha Dawson are seen here standing with CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure holding her birthing friendly designation sign. For more information about the birthing friendly designation

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Dr. Robert Otto Valdez, Director of AHRQ, Dr. Vivienne Pierce McDaniel, CVCNBNA President, Admiral Rachel L. Levine, M.D., Assistant Secretary for Health at HHS, Dr. Sherri Wilson, VNA President, & Alison Barkoff, J.D., Acting Administrator and Assistant Secretary for Aging at the Administration for Community Living



Past President Dr. Eric Williams, Dr. Lovene Knight, NBNA President Dr. Martha Dawson, HHS Secretary Dr. Xavier Becerra, Second Vice President Dr. Marcia Lowe, Congresswoman Cori Bush, Dr. Loretta Lee Health Policy Committee Co-Chair, Dr. Evelyn Collier, and NBNA 1st Vice President Dr. Sheldon Fields, Health Policy Committee Chair.



Drs. Vivienne Pierce McDaniel, Martha Dawson, Katherine Tucker, Congresswoman Lauren Underwood, RN, and Dr. Sheldon Fields



Assistant Secretary, Dr. Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, SAMHSA, Drs. Sheldon Fields, Vivienne Pierce McDaniel, Martha Dawson, Pier Broadnax, Katherine Tucker and Ms. Roslyn Holliday Moore, Deputy Director for Programs Office of Minority Health



The President of the United States Invites Virginia Nurses

Mesha Jones, MSN, RN, CCRN, CWON

Vivienne Pierce McDaniel, DNP, MSN, RN

WHEN YOU RECEIVE AN invitation from your Central Virginia Chapter Black Nurses Association President (CVCNBNA) asking you if you want to attend an event to hear the President of the United States speak, you rearrange your schedule immediately. That is exactly what happened when Dr. Vivienne Pierce McDaniel contacted me to be a part of something I felt was a once in a lifetime opportunity. Late on a Sunday night, Dr. Pierce McDaniel received a message stating the White House needed her assistance in convening 50 nurses and other healthcare professionals for a scheduled event in Virginia Beach, VA on Tuesday morning. There were no details provided about the event except the attendees needed to RSVP by 6pm Monday. Dr. Pierce McDaniel got busy calling chapter members to help her spread the word. By Monday evening 31 nurses and healthcare workers were confirmed.

Twenty-seven healthcare workers and allies including 24 nurses, one occupational therapist, one physician, and two healthcare community advocates were invited to sit in reserved seating on the riser. Before launching into his speech about Medicare, Social Security, and his plan to continue to provide and improve affordable healthcare, President Biden noticed the nurses and healthcare workers and turned to address them directly. He said, “And, by the way, you docs are good, but if there’s any angels in Heaven, they’re all nurses—male and female. You know why? You guys let us—you guys make us—allow us to live. Nurses make you want to live.”

President Biden shared a story about a military nurse, Pearl Nelson, who took care of him at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. He finished his story saying, “You’re so underestimated. You really are. And in no way does this diminish doctors, but I want to tell you something, nurses are the single most underestimated profession in the world.” Access President Biden’s speech in its entirety [here](#).

The Affordable Care Act’s (ACA) Medicaid expansion has helped narrow longstanding disparities in health coverage and access to care for underserved people. Preliminary evidence suggests it improves health outcomes (Cross-Call, 2020). Americans, especially those from historically marginalized communities, will be significantly impacted without

access to affordable healthcare. Identifying the problems and issues is not enough. As nurses and leaders, we have a commitment to make a difference, which is done through advocacy. Nurses need to lead with health policy changes that transform how health care is delivered and how it is improved in their communities (Grossman & Valiga, 2021).

At the end of the event some of the nurses were able to meet President Biden. University of Virginia nursing student, Morgan Allen, was given an opportunity to meet the first U. S. President she voted for. It was a surreal but exciting experience for Morgan. She was thankful that Dr. Pierce McDaniel gave us the opportunity of a lifetime.

Being in the room with the President of the United States and hearing his passion when he discussed the significance of affordable care for all, and how underserved populations are impacted the most was an incredible experience. He encouraged all nurses to advocate for and take the lead in eradicating disparities and inequities.

Mesha Jones, MSN, RN, CCRN, CWON, as seven years of nursing experience. She is the current Nursing Governance President at UVA Health, where she has worked for almost 20 years, starting her career as a certified nursing assistant. She is the current Virginia Nurses Association Piedmont Chapter President, Commissioner on Nursing Practice, and the Central Virginia Chapter National Black Nurses Association Health Equity and Community Outreach Co-Chair.

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First row 2nd from right (r), CVCNBNA Equity and Community Outreach Co-Chair Mesha Jones, 4th from (r) CVCNBNA Membership Chair Karen Faison, 6th from (r) CVCNBNA President Vivienne Pierce McDaniel, 8th from (r), CVCNBNA Legislative Liaison Beverly Ross, CVCNBNA Vice President Frances Montague & third row 4th from (r) CVCNBNA Nominations Chair Thelma Roach Serry



University of Virginia School of Nursing student, Morgan Allen, had the opportunity to meet President Joseph Biden, along with CVCNBNA President Vivienne Pierce McDaniel, and CVCNBNA Membership Chair Dr. Karen Faison



CVCNBNA Membership Chair, Dr. Karen Faison listens intently while President Biden shares an intimate conversation about his experience with nurses

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Keeping The Momentum Going: A Call to Action After NBNA Day on Capitol Hill

Dr. Stephanie A. Patterson, DNP, JD, MBA, MPA, MSN, RN, PMHNP-BC, FNP-BC

ON FEBRUARY 2, 2023, NBNA held its 35th National Black Nurses Day on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. Dr. Patterson, NBNA board member, was in attendance engaging in networking activities with Black nurses from various chapters, and helping to inform congressional representatives and their staff on laws, regulations, policies, and court decisions that impact the lives of African Americans across the country. Upon returning home, Dr. Patterson was invited to attend U.S. Congresswoman Sydney Kamlager-Dove's Inaugural Address & Community Resource Fair on February 26, 2023. Congresswoman Sydney Kamlager-Dove represents California's 37th District that includes communities of South Los Angeles and Culver City. Dr. Patterson graduated from California distinguished school Culver City High and earned her associate's degree in Spanish at 18 years old from West Los Angeles College in Culver City. After completing nursing school, Dr. Patterson worked as a staff RN at Southern California Hospital-Culver City, which is in California's 37th District. After Congresswoman Kamager-Dove's Inaugural Address, Dr. Patterson shared her thoughts on proactive mental health strategies with Los Angeles County Board of Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, who was also in attendance. Supervisor Mitchell represents 2 million residents of Los Angeles County's Second District. Dr. Patterson resides within this region, an area which includes communities with traditionally higher African American representation.

Prior to joining the Board of Supervisors, Mitchell served for a decade in the California Legislature as a representative for the 54th Assembly District and 30th Senate District, both in Los Angeles County. During her tenure, she authored over 90 bills – including the landmark anti-hair discrimination law (The CROWN Act), a bill also supported by U.S. Congresswoman Sydney Kamlager-Dove, making California the first in the nation to pass a law ending hair discrimination. Mitchell was the first African American to serve as chair of the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee, and Supervisor Mitchell has strengthened the County's ability to quickly respond to mental health crises among unhoused residents.

As a practicing primary care provider, Dr. Patterson is supporting her community by taking action and continuing to advocate for health equity, including the advancement of social justice policies throughout

California geared toward improving population outcomes among our Black communities. Dr. Patterson shared that she looks forward to continuing to make a positive impact in the lives of those who are from underserved and vulnerable communities.

As a board member Dr. Patterson's call to action is for each NBNA member to continue to take action at the local, state, and national levels, so that we can keep the movement going, now, and in the future to end health inequity and to promote healthy lives.



Meet NBNA'S Student Representative JoLisa Bumpers

Hello everyone,

I am JoLisa Bumpers your National Black Nurses Association's (NBNA) Student Representative for 2022–2023. I was installed at the National Conference on Sunday, July 31st during the closing session. I am an active member of the Birmingham Black Nurses Association (BBNA), where I participate in the mentorship program. I volunteer at health fairs, which demonstrates how involved I am in the community. Currently I attend Herzing University, which is in Birmingham, Alabama. I am from Mobile, Alabama, and in my spare time, I enjoy dancing. I am a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc, and Tau Beta Sigma National Honorary Band Sorority. I am so excited to be in this role as I represent and support NBNA student members and use my leadership skills to advance NBNA's mission and vision. My desire is to keep all student members inspired and provide them with activities that will allow them to relax their minds when times become stressful. Please feel free to contact me at jolisabumpers13@gmail.com with questions or just to connect. Have a safe holiday season and a successful rest of the school year!

NBNA Day at Capitol, an Experience to Remember!

THE 35TH ANNUAL NATIONAL Black Nurses (NBNA) Day on Capitol Hill took place on February 2, 2023, and was a fantastic experience for a student. I had no idea of what to expect when I arrived in Washington, DC. I had a great time getting to know some fantastic people. I met and networked with nursing students from Howard University and Penn State University. I took part in a virtual conference call on February 2nd with members from the Birmingham Black Nurses Association. We had the opportunity to chat with officials from the offices of Senators Britt and Tuberville on issues concerning the Black Community. Those issues included the nursing workforce, obesity, maternal health, and gun violence.

I enjoyed getting to know Dr. Earnest Grant, immediate past president of the American Nurses Association (ANA), and Dr. Jennifer Mensik Kennedy, the current president, during the NBNA board meeting on Friday, February 3rd. I'm happy to say that the event didn't feel overwhelming, and I learned a lot about health equity, policy, and the ANA's position on racism in nursing. All nursing students are urged to participate in the NBNA Black Nurses Day on Capitol Hill next year. It is always held on the first Thursday of February.

From your NBNA National Student Representative, Jolisa.



JoLisa Bumpers is the National Black Nurses Association's (NBNA) Student Representative for 2022–2023. She is an active member of the Birmingham Black Nurses Association (BBNA), where she participates in the mentorship program. She currently attends Herzing University in Birmingham, Alabama where she plans to graduate August 2023. JoLisa desires to keep all student members inspired and provide them with activities that will allow them to relax their minds when times become stressful.



Just Get Involved

Tanisha Leonard, MSN, RN

A S A PROFESSIONAL NURSE, I consider getting involved in health policy as my duty both to the profession I love and as a patient myself. The National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) has dedicated time and resources to be the voice for its members and those in underserved communities. I will be honest; I initially did not think I could make an impact because I had no clear understanding or perhaps, I had no interest in health policy. When I was working on my master's degree in nursing, one hurdle I had to pass was health policy. I was faced with no choice but to learn and understand how I might make an impact. One of my assignments was to contact my representative in Congress and introduce a piece of legislation I would like them to consider. I was nervous and a bit anxious because this was a road I had never traveled. While I knew what I wanted to talk about, I was unclear on how to reach out to a busy legislator. Therefore, I presented my piece to an aide for my representative. The interview was well received, and I left empowered knowing if I had the chance to do it again, I would. Fortunately, my opportunity materialized on February 2, 2023. I found myself in Washington, DC in a room filled with some phenomenal men and women

For 35 years, the NBNA has sponsored NBNA Day on Capitol Hill; this year was my first time attending. The theme for this year's event was "Health Equity, Reckoning & Wellness: NBNA's Renewed Call to Action" with a focus on seven legislative priorities:

1. Ensuring Health Equity: Supporting the Nursing Workforce;
2. Gun Violence: America's Continued Crisis;
3. Obesity: America's Health Calamity;
4. Suicide: A Mental Health Catastrophe;
5. Equity and Wellness: Climate and Environmental Justice;
6. Criminal Justice Reform and Health Inequities; and
7. Time to Reckon with Black Maternity Health.

My goal as a first-time attendee was to network and learn as much as I could in this one day. My original plans did not include presenting to my state's representatives of the 118th Congress. However, as a member of a professional nursing organization, there are often unexpected opportunities to participate in important health-related projects and tasks. While in the nation's capital, members of my local NBNA chapter caucused and decided I would be one of the members to articulate the health policies and issues that are in urgent need of attention in Alabama. It was my honor, and I now know to expect the unexpected. I, along with two of my colleagues, presented information on several of the NBNA's legislative priorities to representatives of Senator Katie Britt (R-Alabama) and Senator Tommy Tuberville (R-Alabama). I made it known that nurses have the esteemed honor of being recognized as the most trusted professionals for the last 20 years. With such an honor, the nursing shortage must be addressed, and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) bring a wealth of knowledge and skills to help make access to healthcare affordable and a reality for underserved communities. A recent report revealed that a higher percentage of Alabama's population was uninsured compared to the national average (Access to Care, 2022).

In addition, Alabamians between the ages of 18-24 constitute the highest percentage of the underinsured population at 24.3% (Access to Care, 2022). The senators' representatives were encouraged to support H.R.8812/S.512-Improving Care and Access to Nurses (ICAN) Act, which would improve healthcare access for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries by removing practice barriers for APRNs. We also pushed for support of the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Reauthorization Act through fiscal year 2024. This act has important components including, but not limited to, loan repayment and scholarships, grants to increase workforce diversity, nurse education, and retention grants (H.R.728 - Title VIII Nursing Workforce Reauthorization Act of 2019, 2019). We provided statistics and rationales and left Capitol Hill energized and hopeful that the relationship between us and our Alabama

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Supplemental Health Care Creates NBNA Scholarships To Address The Nursing Shortage

SUPPLEMENTAL HEALTH CARE (SHC) is honored to continue its philanthropic partnership with the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) by announcing \$25,000 in scholarship opportunities for NBNA members pursuing Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degrees.

Through the creation of NBNA scholarships, SHC hopes to combat the ongoing nursing shortage, support culturally congruent care in communities across the U.S., and provide better, higher-paying career options for nurses. The current focus of these scholarships will be to support licensed practical/vocational nurses (LPNs/LVNs) and individuals with an Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) continuing their education toward a BSN.

According to the 2020 National Nursing Workforce Survey conducted by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN), only 6.7% of RNs identified as Black/African-American despite representing over 13% of the total U.S.

population in the 2020 census. This underrepresentation presents an opportunity to welcome new nurses to help address the national nursing shortage and improve patient outcomes in their communities.

NBNA is one of the most enduring nursing associations in the country, and SHC is proud to support its mission of promoting greater diversity and inclusion in the nursing profession through professional and educational development. SHC hopes to encourage more nurses to successfully enter and stay in the nursing field with these NBNA scholarship opportunities.

Supplemental Health Care is committed to creating a positive impact for the many professionals, healthcare facilities, and communities that it serves. Through its continued partnership with NBNA and the creation of these new scholarship opportunities, SHC hopes to create a more inclusive and accessible healthcare community for all.

legislators will lead to favorable outcomes. We have no plans to stop speaking and adding needed pressure to see changes for the benefit of the citizens of Alabama.

When each of us enters the wonderful world of nursing and takes advantage of opportunities to align with great organizations like NBNA, we learn that the unexpected can be beneficial and a win-win for everyone. Unlike my class assignment where I had time to prepare, my preparation time on Capitol Hill was not as affordable, but I would not change it. I am often asked why I am a member of professional nursing organizations. I encounter questions such as “Why do you spend money to be a member and why are you spending money to travel with them?” My answer is simple. I joined for professional development and there is no price tag on that. I believe in investing in myself because in doing so I invest in my family, friends, and community. I encourage my colleagues who are not involved in health policy, and most importantly NBNA, to do so as soon as possible. It is an investment that is well worth it.

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Tanisha Leonard, MSN, RN is a member of the Birmingham Black Nurses Association where she serves as chapter secretary. She is a Value Based Care Nurse Care Manager with U.S. Renal Care.



NBNA Mini Nurse Academy

Jennifer J. Coleman, PhD, RN, CNE, COI

THE NBNA MINI NURSE Academy is an experiential nursing program for elementary school children. The program targets students in 3rd through 6th grades who attend schools in traditionally underrepresented communities. The major goal of the initiative is to expand/transform the nursing workforce in the areas of racial, ethnic, and gender diversity.

The Academy curriculum includes three interactive content modules to introduce students to the profession of nursing and nursing activities. After completion of the modules, participants will enter the follow-up period and interact with members of the local NBNA chapter in chapter and community activities. Local chapter nurses will act as role models and mentors and will maintain frequent contact as students continue to junior high and high school.

The NBNA Mini Nurse Academy Committee includes NBNA members from chapters across the country. The Committee began meeting in January 2021 with the goal of organizing Mini Nurse Academies in many NBNA chapters. Currently, chapters in Alabama, California, Florida, and Oregon have implemented a Mini Nurse Academy in their local areas. Each of the chapters has operationalized the program with elements specific to their geographical location.

Council of Black Nurses Los Angeles

The Mini Nurse Academy team from the Council of Black Nurses Los Angeles (CBNLA) selected a school and attended “Back to School Day” in September. The team set up a display table with information on CBNLA and free items for students. The school principal introduced the Mini Nurse Academy team, and parents and students visited the table, exhibiting interest and excitement, and asked questions in relation to how they might participate. The first class was held on October 13 and included the history of nursing from Module 1 in the Academy curriculum. Students were excited and fully engaged in the content with relevant questions. Students were especially interested in the figures from nursing’s history, and some in the group immediately recognized the photo of Harriet Tubman. The CBNLA team is scheduled to be at the school for a 1-hour session one to two times a month.

The chapter is investigating strategies to keeping its membership involved, and information is available to the chapter membership to encourage participation. Several area nursing schools are working on collaborating with CBNLA to have their nursing students be a part of the Mini Nurse Academy. Overall, chapter ambassadors report that implementing the Mini Nurse Academy is a great experience and a joy to encourage young children to become nurses. CBNLA Ambassadors are Barbara Collier, Emogene Joiner, and Angela Wilson.

Birmingham Black Nurses Association

Birmingham Black Nurses Association (BBNA) conducted a pop-up Mini Nurse Academy at the Birmingham Parks & Recreation Center during Summer 2022. BBNA ambassadors, Cecilia Sims and Tarsha Wynn-Scott, met with the director and stakeholders of the Parks and Recreation Board to arrange logistics for implementation at one of the city’s summer camps. After arrangements were finalized, BBNA’s Mini Nurse Academy team met multiple times to discuss the actual process of administering the program. Chapter team members were at the summer camp twice a week for 1 hour over a span of 7 weeks during June and July. Fifteen students of varying ages participated, and the students were always eager and excited to see the team arrive. To keep the students engaged during the sessions, BBNA team members included creative games that aligned with the content. Small prizes were awarded when students answered a question or volunteered information on a topic. Snacks were provided at the end of each session. BBNA’s team is looking forward to administering the pop-up program again in the summer of 2023. A full Mini Nurse Academy program is being planned at an elementary school for Spring 2023.

Central Florida Black Nurses Association

Ambassadors for the Central Florida Black Nurses Association (CFBNA) are Judith Clark and Constance Brown. CFBNA started its Mini Nurse Academy program on October 20 at Ivey Lane Elementary School in Orlando. The students were

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Members of the National Black Nurses Association help young students construct heart models during a Mini Nurse Academy aimed at elementary school students. (Emma Lee/WHYY)

excited and engaged as they learned about our nursing history. The theme on the first day was “Nursing past, present, and future” and several members from the CFBNA chapter wore their nursing uniforms and nursing caps. Eleven students are enrolled, and represent third, fourth, and fifth grades. Module 1 has been completed, and chapter team members are looking forward to the next two modules.

Alliance of Black Nurses Association of Oregon

The Alliance of Black Nurses Association of Oregon (ABNAO) had an excellent experience hosting a pop-up Mini Nurse Academy on November 5 and November 12. ABNAO partnered with a local church’s community center and offered 15 children two weekends of interactive 35 healthcare training. We had an amazing group of brilliant and curious children. The curriculum included the children drawing their own torsos and labeling their organs using our Black anatomical mannequin. Using the Know- Wonder-Learn chart students expanded their knowledge of human anatomy and the nursing profession. The children had a great time and expressed interest in doing the course again! From the history of nursing and what nurses do, to hands-only

CPR training and first aid—ABNAO nurses made a special impact in this community by offering the pop-up version of the Mini Nurse Academy. ABNAO is looking forward to starting our full Mini Nurse Academy program in January in the after-school program for a local elementary school! Ambassadors are Danaya Hall and Rashida Quinn.

The ultimate aim of the NBNA Mini Nurse Academy initiative is to change the face of nursing to a diverse nursing workforce with a resultant decrease in care disparities. Culturally sensitive health care for all Americans is the goal.

Mini Nurse Academy debuts at Philly school to introduce Black and Brown students to the field of nursing:

<https://why.org/articles/philadelphia-school-national-black-nurses-association-mini-nurse-academy/>

Dr. Jennifer J.Coleman is the NBNA Mini Nurse Academy Regional Coordinator and Co-editor of the NBNA News



The Power of Collaboration

Marsha D. Thomas, BSHA, RN; Immediate Past President

UNDER MY TENURE AS President of our local chapter, we instituted a formal scholarship gala. The year Dr. Eric Williams became President of NBNA, we had him as our “keynote speaker” for the gala. We were able to listen to his vision at the helm of our organization.

Two nursing students from Ghana attended one of our local outreach activities. They connected with our then Vice-President, Dr. Regina Hutchins. They told her of an opportunity to host a fundraiser for the UN Ambassador for Hepatitis, Okyeame Kawame, who lives in Accra, Ghana, West Africa. Dr. Hutchins brought this opportunity to our chapter, and we decided to do it. We enjoyed this young man’s performance and promised to do what we could to help. He told us of his outreach in his county every year on July 28th, “World Hepatitis Day.” He invited us to Accra, Ghana to help with this outreach. All types of hepatitis are very prevalent in low resourced countries such as Ghana.

Now came the hard part – finding the funds to go and participate. I was familiar with this sort of fundraising since I have done several mission trips to the continent of Africa. Then I got the “brilliant” idea to call Dr. Eric Williams to see if NBNA could help. He listened patiently and he said he could help. And he was true to his word.

We had a tremendous outreach the day of the event. We were able to administer the first dose of the hepatitis vaccine right there at the outreach. The remaining doses would go to the countries’ primary, secondary and tertiary health facilities to be administered on schedule. Before the outreach, we were able to accompany Mr. Kwame and speak on the importance of attending this event. We were even listed on the banner thanking all his sponsors.

Mr. Kawme took us to the US Embassy. We met our US Ambassador and took pictures. There was an inaugural conference going on right there in Ghana called “AFREhealth.” This was a consortium or all the medical schools, nursing schools, pharmacy schools, dental schools, and allied health schools on the continent of Africa. They were coming together to see how they could work together to raise the health status of Africans on the entire continent. Our ambassador paid for

us to attend all days. We decided to join this consortium. We felt we could make a significant contribution to this group. And of course, we wanted to visit nursing schools in Ghana and find out about their healthcare systems.

We visited several schools of nursing. One school was owned by Chief Kwadwo Ateffani. He built it from the ground along with a hospital. The school had 450 students of which about 5 students paid tuition. The remainder were “carried” by him. We got to interact with the students and teachers. We promised to help with student mentoring and staff development. So, every year we go over for a weeklong intensive. We also communicate during the year.

One year, “Chief” came to our city of Cincinnati, OH and we filled up a tractor trailer with supplies, textbooks, and anything else we thought would help his students. We have working relationships with many schools of nursing in our area. They typically change textbooks every three years so they were thrilled their discontinued books and supplies would help to educate those students in Ghana.

Next year, 2023, NBNA’s “Global Health – Ad Hoc” committee will take a team over to continue to work with the students from this school. The school has since been given to The Methodist Church of Ghana, who has the day-to-day responsibilities, but Chief is still on their board of directors. They are delighted to still have our involvement.

Dr. Regina Hutchins and I, Marsha D. Thomas, then President of Black Nurses Association Of Greater Cincinnati, got the opportunity to do a poster presentation at the 2nd Annual “AFREhealth Conference,” which was held in Durban, South Africa. Our topic was called: “The Power of Collaboration.” After that COVID struck so we have not been back. But we are still members and look forward to resuming our formal and informal engagements in Africa.

We believe we exemplify the power of collaboration. And we sincerely thank Dr. Eric Williams, NBNA’s Global Health committee, our local chapter and all those who have assisted and still assist us to make an appreciable difference with our colleagues and students in Africa.

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Marsha D Thomas is a RN with over 30 years' experience. She is the Immediate Past President of Black Nurses Assn. of Greater Cincinnati. Under her Presidency, this chapter mentors a school of nursing in Ghana. Mrs. Thomas is a member of NBNA's Global Health Ad Hoc Committee and is the Project Mgr. for a clinic being built in Benin Republic, West Africa.





Black Patients Under-diagnosed with POTS

Natasha Graves, MPH, MBA, CHES

MY SYMPTOMS BEGAN WITH a cold right after my first homecoming during my freshman year at Howard University, but I was told that I was only sick because I was “probably dressed provocatively at homecoming events” by the emergency room nurse. The cardiologist that I was referred to, told me that my symptoms were all in my head and that I could just “feel my heartbeat stronger than most people”, when my heart rate was in the 180s when I was just brushing my teeth.

In reality, I had been battling multiple chronic illnesses including postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS), a common form of dysautonomia. Thought to affect more than 70 million people worldwide, dysautonomia is a medical term that represents a malfunction of the autonomic nervous system. This system controls the “automatic” functions of the body that we do not consciously think about, such as heart rate, blood pressure, digestion, dilation and constriction of the pupils of the eye, kidney function and temperature control. People living with various forms of dysautonomia have trouble regulating these systems, which can result in lightheadedness, fainting, unstable blood pressure, abnormal heart rates and malnutrition.

There are several forms of dysautonomia, including POTS, as well as Neurocardiogenic Syncope (Vasovagal Syncope), Inappropriate Sinus Tachycardia (IST) and Multiple System Atrophy.

Dysautonomia can have multiple causes, but viral infection is a known trigger. Now, a newer problem, although many people quickly recover from COVID-19, others may experience residual symptoms months after contracting the virus. While researchers are still determining the cause of these long-term symptoms (patients dubbed “long haulers”), some of these Long COVID symptoms may actually be caused by autonomic nervous system disorders, or dysautonomia.

My diagnostic journey had been complicated, as it took two years to receive a diagnosis after my symptoms began at eighteen years old and have been impacted by multiple underlying conditions.

I feel like I have been fortunate however, as the average POTS patient takes over four years to get diagnosed and sees seven doctors prior to being diagnosed with POTS. Due to a lack of awareness amongst medical professionals, about 75% of POTS patients are misdiagnosed with a psychological condition or told they are “crazy” prior to finding out they have POTS, just like my own personal journey. Over ten years later, I am still attempting to find the best treatment to manage my symptoms, and as of right now, there is no cure for POTS.

What contributes to this? According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, only about 36% of active physicians are female. Only about 5% of physicians identify as Black or African-American, despite this group making up 13% of the U.S. population, and fewer than 6% of physicians identify as Hispanic, despite Hispanics making up about 19% of the U.S. population.

The lack of diversity and representation in healthcare that leads to not only implicit bias, but other factors including a lack of trustworthiness of providers (which leads to discomfort in disclosing potentially crucial health information) and a lack of education and cultural competency towards treating people of color. Some conditions present differently in people of color, especially as much education and clinical research focuses on presentation in white patients.

If you or a patient experiences ongoing symptoms including changes in your heart rate or feeling lightheaded when standing up, discuss dysautonomia and performing orthostatic vitals (laying, sitting and standing blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen levels) as the first steps to a diagnosis.

There is no cure for POTS. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to dysautonomia treatment; however, providers recommend significantly increasing salt through items like Vitassium and fluid intake. There are also other non-pharmacological adaptations, and medications that can be taken to help reduce symptoms.

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Day at Capitol Hill Montgomery, Alabama

Marcia Lowe, PhD, MSB, BSN, RN, GERO-BC

SEVERAL BIRMINGHAM BLACK NURSES Association (BBNA) members attended the Nurses Day at the Capitol on Wednesday, April 5, 2023. The event was organized by the Alabama State Nurses Association (ASNA). Many of BBNA members also belong to ASNA. Other attendees included students from all over the state of Alabama. Opportunities to attend the Ways and Means Committee Meeting opened the event very early in the morning. I had the privilege of being present when the House Health Committee heard and approved numerous healthcare bills. The group gathered on the Capitol steps for presentations follow-

ing lunch. Dr. Theresa Rodgers, president-elect of BBNA presented in the absence of President Patricia Curry. Dr. Rodgers discussed the mission and vision of BBNA and NBNA. Senator April Weaver, the only RN serving in the Alabama State Senate, spoke about the nursing profession and the difficulties facing nurses and how important their votes are. Other participants talked about burnout and the work environment, advanced practice nursing and prescriptive authority, and James Hardin, the ASNA president, also spoke to the group.

Nurses Votes Count! From Right to left are Dr. Theresa Rodgers, Dr. Tedra Smith, Dr. Marcia Lowe (NBNA 2nd VP), James Hardin Alabama State Nurses Association (ASNA) president., Kina Phillips, Dr. Loretta Lee, and Dr. Shawona Daniel.



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Natasha Graves, MPH, MBA, CHES is a chronic illness and disability advocate, writer, and Vitassium consultant.



Nurse Coach Fellowship Program

The Nurse Coach Fellowship program is an **American Holistic Nurses Credentialing Corporation (AHNCC)** initiative. Through this initiative **AHNCC** is collaborating with other nursing organizations to increase inclusivity and diversity among our Nurse Coach certificants. We are committed to uplift the contributions of nurse coaches from a wide range of backgrounds and identities, through knowledge sharing, that honors diverse healing traditions and perspectives. We serve to strengthen the nurse coaching role by broadening sociocultural awareness, in order to enhance our ability to provide optimal holistic care that is inclusive to all. This mission drives us to offer ourselves as instruments of healing, while also committing to equity, diversity, inclusion, belonging, and social justice as unifying forces of equality.



In this two-year Fellowship, recipients are offered a packet that is valued at over \$2500.00 and includes the following:

- Mentorship from an **AHNCC** certified Nurse Coach for the duration of the application and testing period.
- Free tuition from a recognized Nurse Coach Educational program that covers both the required 60 contact hours and the 60 supervision hours.
- Practice test fee
- Examination Registration cost
- Re-sitting fee if needed
- Free 2nd edition of the Art and Competencies of Nurse Coaching

At the beginning of the Fellowship, fellows are provided with a board-certified nurse coach mentor who will facilitate them in preparing for the national Nurse Coach certification examination and help them navigate through the application process.

The Fellow will have two years to complete the Fellowship program and take the certification

examination. A certificate will be provided to participants upon completion of the Fellowship program. Upon completion, participants can also include the Fellowship completion in their CVs.

If you are interested in this opportunity please respond to info@ahncc.org within a week. Names will be entered in a lottery for a chance to receive an **AHNCC Nurse Coach Fellowship**. The best of luck to you.

AHNCC | 811 Linden Loop | Cedar Park, TX 78613 | 785-267-0943 | info@ahncc.org | www.ahncc.org

CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

Alabama

Birmingham BNA (11)	Patricia Curry.....	Birmingham, AL
Montgomery BNA (125)	Marilyn Whiting.....	Montgomery, AL
Tuskegee/East Alabama NBNA (177)	Dr. Cordelia Nnedu.....	Tuskegee Institute, AL
West Alabama Chapter of the NBNA (184)	Dr. Betty Key	Tuscaloosa, AL

Arizona

BNA Greater Phoenix Area (77).....	Rosa Norris.....	Phoenix, AZ
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Arkansas

Little Rock BNA of Arkansas (126)	Jason Williams.....	Little Rock, AR
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California

Bay Area BNA (02).....	Norma Faris-Taylor	Oakland, CA
Capitol City BNA (162)	Carter Todd	Sacramento, CA
Central Valley BNA (150)	Joy Alexander.....	Fresno, CA
Council of Black Nurses, Los Angeles (01)	Barbara Collier	Los Angeles, CA
Greater Inland Empire BNA (188)	Amanda Jean Madrid.....	Corona, CA
San Diego BNA (03).....	Dr. Sharon Smith.....	San Diego, CA
Stanford Medicine National Black Nurses Association (190)	Dr. Michelle Williams.....	Stanford, CA

Connecticut

Northern Connecticut BNA (84)	Marlene D. Harris	Hartford, CT
Southern Connecticut BNA (36)	Andrea Murrell	West Haven, CT

District of Columbia

BNA of Greater Washington, DC Area (04)	Dr. Pier Broadnax	Washington, DC
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Florida

Big Bend BNA (Tallahassee) (86)	Katrina Rivers	Tallahassee, FL
BNA, Tampa Bay (106)	Rosa Cambridge	Tampa, FL
Central Florida BNA of Orlando (35).....	Jennifer Sankey.....	Orlando, FL
First Coast BNA (Jacksonville) (103)	Chelsa Fore	Jacksonville, FL
Greater Ft Lauderdale Broward Chapter of the NBNA (145)	Cynthia Eugene-Joseph	Plantation, FL
Greater Gainesville BNA (85)	Rachael Drayton.....	Ocala, FL
Miami Chapter - BNA (07)	Sharon Rogers.....	Miami, FL
Palm Beach County BNA (114).....	Rochun McCray	West Palm Beach, FL
St. Petersburg BNA (28).....	Bonita Clark	St. Petersburg, FL
Treasure Coast Council of BN (161)	Ruth Davis	Port Saint Lucie, FL
Volusia Flagler Chapter of the NBNA (187).....	Dr. Alma Dixon	Palm Coast, FL

Georgia

Atlanta BNA (08).....	Arkeelaua Henderson	College Park, GA
Columbus Metro BNA (51)	Gwendolyn McIntosh	Columbus, GA
Concerned NBN of Central Savannah River Area (123)	Casandra Rainge	Martinez, GA
Middle Georgia BNA (153)	Dr. Debra Mann	Dublin, GA
Okefenokee BNA (148).....	Connie Bussey	Waycross, GA
Savannah BNA (64)	Pam Cummings	Savannah, GA

Hawaii

Honolulu BNA (80)	Dr. Patricia Burrell.....	Aiea, HI
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Illinois

Alliance of BNA of Illinois (178)	Beatrice Mbaocha	Chicago, IL
BNA of Central Illinois (143)	Dr. Elaine Hardy	Bloomington, IL
Chicago Chapter NBNA (09).....	Ethel Walton.....	Chicago, IL
Greater Illinois BNA (147)	Patricia Roberts	Bolingbrook IL
Illinois South Suburban NBNA (168)	Dr. Carol Alexander	Matteson, IL
North Shore BNA (172).....	Susan Bailey.....	Waukegan, IL

Indiana

BNA of Indianapolis (46).....	Katherine Bates	Indianapolis, IN
Lake County Indiana BNA (169)	Michelle Moore.....	Merrillville, IN
Northwest Indiana BNA (110)	Mona Steele.....	Gary, IN

Kansas

Wichita BNA (104)	Peggy Jones-Foxx.....	Wichita, KS
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Kentucky

KYANNA BNA, Louisville (33).....	Cynetha Bethel-Jaiteh	Louisville, KY
Lexington Chapter of the NBNA (134)	Dr. Lovoria Williams.....	Lexington, KY

Louisiana

Acadiana BNA (131)	Lucille Woodard	Lafayette, LA
Bayou Region BNA (140).....	Salina James	Thibodaux, LA
New Orleans BNA (52)	Dr. Mary Kelly	New Orleans, LA
Shreveport BNA (22).....	Bertreseva Evans.....	Shreveport, LA
Southeastern Louisiana BNA (174)	Rachel Weary.....	Abita Springs, LA

Maryland

BNA of Baltimore (05).....	Dr. Vaple Robinson.....	Baltimore, MD
BN of Southern Maryland (137)	Beverly Dandridge	Clinton, MD
Greater Bowie Maryland NBNA (166)	Dr. Jacqueline Newsome-Williams. .	Chevy Chase, MD

Massachusetts

New England Regional BNA (45)	Sasha DuBois	Roxbury, MA
Western Massachusetts BNA (40)	Dr. Khadijah Tuitt.....	Springfield, MA

Michigan

Ann Arbor NBNA (193)	LaToya Freeman	Ann Arbor, MI
Detroit BNA (13).....	Nettie Riddick.....	Detroit MI
Grand Rapids BNA (93).....	Aundrea Robinson	Grand Rapids, MI
Greater Flint BNA (70).....	Dr. Juanita Wells.....	Flint, MI
Kalamazoo-Muskegon BNA (96).....	Dr. Birthale Archie	Kentwood, MI
Lansing Area BNA (149).....	Meseret Hailu.....	Lansing, MI
Southwest Michigan BNA (175).....	Deborah Spates	Berrien Springs, MI

Minnesota

Minnesota BNA (111)	Dr. Sara Wiggins	St. Paul, MN
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Missouri

BNA of Greater St. Louis (144).....	Mia Glover	St. Louis, MO
Greater Kansas City BNA (74).....	Iris Culbert.....	Kansas City, MO
Mid-Missouri BNA (171)	Leana Mahaney	Jefferson City, MO

Nevada

Southern Nevada BNA (81).....	Angela Brock	Las Vegas, NV
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New Jersey

Concerned BN of Central New Jersey (61).....	Terri Ivory	Neptune, NJ
Concerned Black Nurses of Newark (24).....	Banita Herndon	Newark, NJ
Mid State BNA of New Jersey (90).....	Tracy Smith-Tinson.....	Somerset, NJ
Middlesex Regional BNA (136)	Marchelle Boyd.....	New Brunswick, NJ
New Jersey Integrated BNA (157).....	Marilyn McCall	Lyons, NJ
South Jersey Chapter of NBNA (62)	Cheryl Harris.....	Mount Holly, NJ

New York

Greater New York City BNA (167)	Dr. Dewi Brown-DeVeaux.....	Brooklyn, NY
New York BNA (14)	Dr. Rose Ellington-Murray.....	New York, NY
Rochester BNA (182)	Dr. Celia McIntosh	Rochester, NY
Suffolk County BNA (183)	Jacqueline Winston.....	Ridge, NY

North Carolina

Central Carolina BN Council (53)	Angeline D. Baker.....	Durham, NC
Piedmont BNA - Charlotte (181)	Tammy Woods.....	Charlotte, NC
Queen City NBNA (189).....	Dareni Lowe.....	Charlotte, NC

Ohio

Akron BNA (16).....	Deandrea Mayes-Bell	Akron, OH
BNA of Greater Cincinnati (18).....	Dr. Regina Hutchins	Cincinnati, OH
Central Ohio BNA (185)	LaToya Gibson	Columbus, OH
Cleveland Council BNA (17).....	Dr. LaTonya Martin	Cleveland, OH
Columbus BNA (82).....	Janice Smith.....	Columbus, OH
Stark County BNA (191).....	Lisa Johnson	Canton, OH
Youngstown Warren BNA (67)	Carol Smith	Youngstown, OH

Oklahoma

Eastern Oklahoma BNA (129) Tonya Cannady.....Tulsa, OK
Oklahoma City BNA (173) Dr. Simone Guthrie.....Jones, OK

Oregon

Alliance of BNA of Oregon (186) Danaya HallPortland, OR

Pennsylvania

Pittsburgh BN in Action (31)..... Christin Durham.....Pittsburgh, PA
Southeastern Pennsylvania Area BNA (56) Monica HarmonPhiladelphia, PA

South Carolina

Midlands of South Carolina BNA (179)..... Lisa DavisColumbia, SC
Tri-County BNA of Charleston (27) Fharen Grant.....Charleston, SC

Tennessee

Chattanooga BNA (192)..... Alexia TeagueChattanooga, TN
Memphis-Riverbluff BNA (49) Augustene Weston.....Memphis, TN
Nashville BNA (113) Lisa Humphreys.....Nashville, TN

Texas

BNA of Austin (151)..... Janet Van Brakle.....Austin, TX
BNA of Greater Houston (19)..... Cynthia BrownHouston, TX
Central Texas BNA (163) Mack ParkerTemple, TX
Fort Bend County BNA (107) Janice Sanders.....Missouri City, TX
Galveston County Gulf Coast BNA (91) Donna AlfredGalveston, TX
Greater East Texas BNA (34) Melody HopkinsTyler, TX
Metroplex BNA (Dallas) (102) Natalie Kelley.....Dallas, TX
Southeast Texas BNA (109)..... Bernadine Julun-Jacobs.....Port Arthur, TX

Virginia

BNA of Charlottesville (29) David Simmons, Jr.Charlottesville, VA
Central Virginia Chapter of the NBNA (130) Vivienne Pierce McDaniel.....Richmond, VA
NBNA: Northern Virginia Chapter (115) Mary Vanessa McCain Johnson.... Woodbridge, VA

Wisconsin

Milwaukee BNA (21) Edna Hudson-KinseyMilwaukee, WI
Racine-Kenosha BNA (50) Joyce WadlingtonRacine, WI

Direct Member (55) *

*Only if there is no Chapter in your area.

Save the Date!

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2024

BLACK NURSES:
A CALL FOR
TRANSFORMATIVE
HEALTH EQUITY
GLOBALLY

NBNA

36TH ANNUAL BLACK NURSES DAY ON CAPITOL HILL

Hilton Washington DC Capitol Hill • 525 New Jersey Avenue, NW • Washington, DC 20001

A woman with dark curly hair pulled back, wearing glasses and a red top, is smiling. She has a blue and white star-patterned scarf around her neck with a red and white striped section. The background is blurred, showing other people in a room.

NBNA

*Together We Are
Better!*