

The background of the cover features several tulips in shades of pink, purple, and red, with green leaves, arranged in a diagonal pattern from the top left towards the bottom right. The text is overlaid on this background.

THE WISCONSIN LEAGUE FOR NURSING COMMUNIQUE

WINTER | SPRING 2026



**Wisconsin
League for Nursing**

THE COMMUNIQUE

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OUR MISSION

Impacting the lifelong learning of nurses in diverse healthcare environments.

WHO WE ARE

We are nurses, nursing students, agencies and individuals interested in fostering the development and improvement in nursing care in a variety of collaborative healthcare environments.

WHAT WE DO

Provide collaborative educational opportunities. Promote professional development. Support writing and research. Disburse scholarship funds for nursing education.

WHO WE SERVE

Diverse populations in the state of Wisconsin.

HOW WE DO IT

Conferences, Workshops, Networking, Scholarships, Mentoring, “Communique”, the WLN Professional Nursing Journal, & Community Alliances.

Caring

Promoting health, healing, and hope through the process of supporting nurse educators in the education of nurses



Integrity

Mutual respect, acknowledgment of different viewpoints, and a focus on excellence in nursing education to promote a just culture



Diversity

Affirming the uniqueness of and differences among persons, ideas, values, and ethnicities



Excellence

Fostering high standards in nursing education reflective of evidenced-based teaching/learning strategies; promoting a spirit of equity to assure quality and safety in patient-centered care



CARROLL UNIVERSITY

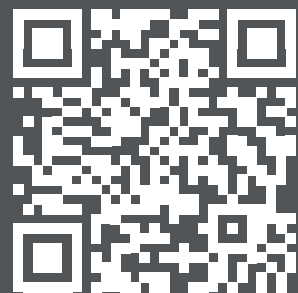


NURSING



PROGRAMS IN NURSING

- Associate Degree
- Bachelors Degree
- Master's - Direct Entry, RN-MSN,
- Nurse Educator



carrollu.edu/nursing

2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Marijo Rommelfaenger
Retired, UW–Milwaukee

President Elect

Erika Janssen
UW-Oshkosh

Treasurer/Secretary

Katie Weis
UW-Milwaukee

Nominations Director

Karen Roberts
Retired, Marian University

Director of Membership

Lisa Brennan
UW-Milwaukee

Director at Large

April Folgert
Carroll University

Director at Large & ANEW Liason

Teresa Kaul, PhD, APRN-BC
Carroll University

**Director at Large & Daisy Award
Coordinator**

Mary McMahon Bullis
UW-Eau Claire

Director of Scholarships & Grants

Christine Laurent
Retired, Marian University

Programs Director I

Marijo Rommelfaenger
Retired, UW–Milwaukee

**Programs Director II - Poster
Presentations**

Catherine Schmitt
UW-Oshkosh

Administrative Staff

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Wisconsin Association Management
11801 W. Silver Spring Dr., Ste. 200
Milwaukee, WI 53225
kristin@wamllc.net

Grace Kelley, Marketing Manager
Wisconsin Association Management
11801 W. Silver Spring Dr., Ste. 200
Milwaukee, WI 53225

WLN COMMITTEES

Executive Committee

Marijo Rommelfaenger, President
Erika Janssen, President-Elect
Katie Weis, Treasurer/Secretary

Nominations Committee

Karen Roberts, Chair
Vicky Rundle
Marie Walsh

Daisy Committee

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Katie Weis
Marijo Rommelfaenger
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Jennifer Labs
Evelyn Marshall-King
Catherine Schmitt
Kari Steinbeck

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Marijo Rommelfaenger, Co-Chair
Erika Janssen, Co-Chair
Teri Kaul, ANEW Liaison
Lynn Murphy, Marketing Director

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Marijo Rommelfaenger (interim chair)
Megan Holz
Katie Weis
Catherine Schmitt
Karen Roberts
LaRee Savlan
Nancy Noble
Susan Poppele
Vicki Swaney
Lynn Murphy
Terri Kaul
Lisa Schmidt
April Folgert
Virginia Riggs
Mary McMahon Bullis

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NEWSLETTER CREDIT:

Editors: Marijo Rommelfaenger, Kristin Houte & Grace Kelley

Questions and comments for the next newsletter can be submitted [HERE!](#)



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Marijo Rommelfaenger, PhD, RN, CNE

Welcome to the 2026 Winter/Spring edition of The Communique. This newsletter provides an opportunity to connect with our members and share the important work of the Wisconsin League for Nursing. Grounded in our mission—*impacting the lifelong learning of nurses in diverse healthcare environments*—we remain committed to advancing nursing education and practice across our state and beyond.

As we welcome the renewal and energy of spring, WLN continues to move forward with purpose and progress. Our 2026 professional development theme, **“Supporting Nurse Educators in an Evolving World,”** reflects our dedication to strengthening those who prepare the next generation of nurses.

A key priority for WLN is fostering connection across the nursing continuum—from academic preparation to professional practice. Through ongoing collaboration, we support nurse educators, healthcare partners, and new graduates as they transition into increasingly complex care environments. Our focus this year is on integrating the NCSBN Clinical Judgment Model into educational practices ensuring that graduates are equipped with the critical thinking and decision-making skills needed for today's healthcare settings.

We also remain committed to supporting new nursing graduates as they enter the workforce. WLN proudly offers free NCLEX preparation sessions twice each year and is exploring opportunities to expand access both in person and virtually through our partnership with Higher Learning Technologies and NCLEX RN Mastery.

Our organization continues to grow stronger through the engagement of our members. Many thanks to Karen Roberts, WLN board member and Nominations Committee director. Karen and her team contacted our members and discussed opportunities for joining in leadership or joining one of our WLN committee. I encourage you to consider becoming more involved—whether by serving on a committee or in a leadership role. We are always seeking individuals to help advance our mission and strengthen our impact. We always enjoy working together with our nursing community.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to our dedicated board members, committee participants, and support partners who contribute their time, expertise, and energy to WLN. Your commitment ensures that we remain a responsive, effective, and forward-thinking organization. I am especially thankful for the organizational support provided by the team at Wisconsin Association Management (WAM), guided with expertise for us by Kristin Houte, account executive. The entire WAM team helps keep our work aligned and impactful.

Thank you for your continued involvement with WLN. I hope you enjoy this issue of The Communique, and I look forward to connecting with you throughout the year.

Warm regards,



President, Wisconsin League for Nursing



TAKE YOUR NURSING CAREER TO THE NEXT LEVEL

With a graduate or post-graduate program from Bellin College



Full and part-time options available

☑ MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

- Family Nurse Practitioner (*Hybrid*)
- Nurse Educator (*Online*)
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (*Online*)

☑ DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE

- BSN to DNP
 - Family Nurse Practitioner (*Hybrid*)
 - Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (*Online*)
- MSN to DNP (*Online*)

☑ POST-GRADUATE CERTIFICATES

- Family Nurse Practitioner (*Hybrid*)
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (*Online*)
- Nurse Educator (*Online*)

SCAN THE
CODE TO
learn more





WISCONSIN LEAGUE for NURSING

UPDATES



FINANCIAL REPORT

Katie Weis, DNP, RN, AGCNS-BC

TREASURER'S REPORT

	<u>Mar 31, 26</u>	<u>Mar 31, 25</u>
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Checking/Savings		
Associated Bank - Operations	29,739.49	36,352.43
DWS Investment Account	95,123.81	84,405.87
Landmark Checking	20,379.07	67.48
Landmark Savings	5.13	5.13
Total Checking/Savings	<u>145,247.50</u>	<u>120,830.91</u>
Other Current Assets		
Prepaid Expenses	284.10	0.00
Total Other Current Assets	<u>284.10</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>145,531.60</u>	<u>120,830.91</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>145,531.60</u>	<u>120,830.91</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Current Liabilities		
Bader Scholarship Funds	20,000.00	0.00
Total Current Liabilities	<u>20,000.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Equity		
Retained Earnings	131,239.12	123,034.34
Net Income	-5,707.52	-2,203.43
Total Equity	<u>125,531.60</u>	<u>120,830.91</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>145,531.60</u>	<u>120,830.91</u>

The Wisconsin League for Nursing ending its 2025 fiscal year with total net income (surplus) of about \$8,200. The organization had an “operations” deficit of about \$4,700 and the value of its investment portfolio increased by about \$12,900 giving the organization its overall total surplus for the year.

To start 2026 the organization has total net assets of just over \$131,000 (about \$25,000 in its bank account with the value of its investment portfolio also over \$100,000). With an approved 2026 expense budget of about \$47,000...the organization holds over 2 full years of its expense budget in net assets/reserves...and is thus in a very strong overall financial position relative to its budget size.

Respectfully,
Katie Weis, DNP, RN, AGCNS-BC



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Lisa Brennan, DNP, MBA, RN, FNP-BC, CNE

MEMBERSHIP SNAPSHOT

<p>137</p> <p>Total Members</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Joined <i>(within 30 days)</i></p>	<p>10</p> <p>Expiring <i>(within 30 days)</i></p>	<p>48</p> <p>Expired</p>
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At the June Board Meeting, we will be discussing a plan to establish more consistent membership renewal windows. Our goal is to create a clearer, more streamlined process for all members moving forward.

Thank you for your continued support and involvement.



Wisconsin
League for Nursing

THANK YOU

TO OUR 2026 INSTITUTIONAL SPONSORS

SILVER



CARROLL
UNIVERSITY

BRONZE



University of Wisconsin
Stevens Point

SAVE *the* DATE



Wisconsin
League for Nursing

Fall

CONFERENCE

Saturday, November 7, 2026

Milwaukee, WI

More Information Coming Soon...





THANK YOU

TO OUR 2025 FALL CONFERENCE SPONSORS!

PLATINUM SPONSOR



**CARROLL
UNIVERSITY**

GOLD SPONSOR



SILVER SPONSOR



WLN PARTNERS



HERZING
UNIVERSITY



**INTELLIGENT
VIDEO SOLUTIONS**



**WAUKESHA
COUNTY TECHNICAL
COLLEGE**



**University of Wisconsin
Stevens Point**



**Wolters Kluwer
Health**

 WISCONSIN LEAGUE for NURSING
UPDATES CONTINUED...


Scholarships and Grants



The Scholarship and Grants Committee supports the mission of the Wisconsin League for Nursing by supporting the lifelong learning of nurses in diverse environments. The dedicated team achieves this by seeking grants which support our scholarship programs.

The Scholarship and Grants Committee determines eligibility criteria and online application requirements for each scholarship offered, determined in part by the sponsoring organization. The WLN offers clear articulation of each specific scholarship's requirements on its website. A section is devoted to scholarships, featuring details about eligibility requirements, recent updates, and available opportunities. To begin with, the applicant must be a nursing student currently enrolled in a Wisconsin school of nursing. The Scholarship and Grants Committee screens the applications to be sure the requirements have been met for each individual scholarship. Online applications are made directly through a link on the WLN website.

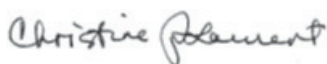
Currently we offer seven scholarships of \$1,500 each provided by the very generous and long-time support of the Deaconess Alumni Association. The criteria vary by scholarship and are available for all levels of nursing education. The scholarship applications are posted in August to be disbursed in November at the WLN Fall Conference.

In addition, we are pleased to offer two additional scholarships each year. One is entitled "The Ruth Seris Gresley Scholarship." It honors the life of Ruth Seris Gresley who was a beloved and influential nurse educator for over 45 years. This \$500 scholarship is sponsored by the Gresley family and others who loved and respected Ruth. That fund is managed by the Waukesha County Community Foundation (WCCF) and has a current balance of \$15,271.43. The other scholarship is sponsored by the WLN entitled the "Nursing Heroes Scholarship" and honors Wisconsin Nurses who died in the COVID-19 pandemic. This fund is also managed by the WCCF, and its current balance is \$5,090.62. The WLN is actively seeking donations to this scholarship fund to help it become self-sustaining.

The WLN is pleased to partner with Bader Philanthropies, Inc. to help meet the needs of the elderly population in Wisconsin. Through their generous financial support, the WLN offers four \$5,000 scholarships to support the successful completion of an advanced nursing degree or certification program from qualified applicants. The applicants will be nurses who serve the special needs of the elderly population, with a focus on strategies that help older adults and Alzheimer patients improve and maintain a good quality of life. Four scholarships of \$5,000 each will be disbursed in June 2026, and four more will be disbursed the following year.

Details about all these scholarships will be available on the WLN website. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the email below. Thanks!

Respectfully submitted,



Christine P. Laurent, PhD, RNC-OB
WLN Scholarships and Grants Director



2025 Scholarship Recipients

Deaconess Joyce Ball Memorial

Scholarship awarded to a rural student or single mother.

Ayla Olson

Waukesha County Technical College

Deaconess LaVerne Foster Memorial

LaVerne Foster Memorial Scholarship for a high school graduate or first-semester nursing student.

Sierra Aline Berg

Bellin College

Deaconess Russell Seager Memorial

In memory of Captain Russell Seager, NP, MSN, RN, APRN-BC (Seager memorial information) for an enrolled graduate program nurse focus on Mental Health Nursing.

Rebecca Augustine

Marquette University

Deaconess Pre Licensure ADN

Scholarships awarded to ADN students.

Dennis Jean P. Mahon

Lakeshore College

Deaconess Pre Licensure BSN

Two scholarships awarded for BSN students.

Elias Matiash

Wisconsin Lutheran College

Taryn Smits

University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

Ruth Seris Gresley

Scholarship awarded to a nurse enrolled in or accepted into a graduate nursing program. Eligible applicants must plan to practice as a nurse educator in Wisconsin for at least 1 year after graduation.

Maria Waleed Raja Alsaheim

UW-Milwaukee

Deaconess Karen Vuillemin Memorial

In memory of Karen Vuillemin, class of 1964. Karen was editor of Deaconess School of Nursing's Alumni Association's newsletter for many years. Scholarship awarded to pre-ADN student.

Brooklyn Connelly

Southwestern Technical College

WLN Nursing Heroes

Scholarship awarded to a pre-licensure ADN or BSN nursing student or graduate level nurse currently enrolled in an accredited school of nursing.

Nicholas Sablich

UW-Madison



WISCONSIN LEAGUE for NURSING **CONTINUED...**



DAISY UPDATES

We are pleased to share that the Wisconsin League for Nursing will open nominations for the DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurse Educators in the Clinical Setting in early May. Please watch for announcements from the WLN as we open the nomination cycle in the first week of May through the first week of September. We encourage nominators to begin identifying and preparing submissions to recognize outstanding nurse educators in the clinical setting.

When submitting a nomination, please take time to tell the story of your nominee, highlighting meaningful moments that reflect their impact on students, colleagues, or the profession. Strong nominations align with the DAISY Foundation's focus on compassionate nursing and the human connection at the heart of care and education.

All nominations will be reviewed in October, and selected Honorees will be announced at the WLN Fall Conference in November 2026. We are excited to continue this award and appreciate your participation in recognizing excellence in nursing education.

Mary McMahon Bullis, PhD, RN, CCRN

Chair WLN DAISY Committee

2025 DAISY HONOREES



Shelley Hart, MSN, RN, ACNS-BC, OCN
Froedtert Community Hospitals
(Menomonee Falls & West Bend, WI)



Nicole Rauls, BSN, RN, ED RN
Clement J Zablocki Veterans Affairs
Medical Center (Milwaukee, WI)



Gean M. Swiatko-Klee, DNP, ACRN, RDH, I-MHE®
Herzing University
(Milwaukee, WI)



Misty L. Garcia-Borst, MSN, RN
Milwaukee Area Technical College
(Milwaukee, WI)



Tiffany T. Johnson, BSN, RN, CCRN, CES-A, E-AEC
Froedtert Health
(Milwaukee, WI)



HONORING NURSES INTERNATIONALLY
IN MEMORY OF J. PATRICK BARNES



**Wisconsin
League for Nursing**



HONORING NURSES INTERNATIONALLY
IN MEMORY OF J. PATRICK BARNES



2025 NOMINEES

Erica Benitez

MSN, RN, CCRN

*Clement J. Zablocki VA
Medical Center*

Kelsey Cao

MSN, RN, NP-D-BC

*Clement J. Zablocki VA
Medical Center*

Laura Conrad

BSN

SSM Health, Radiation Oncology

Elizabeth Dougherty

MSN, CEN

*Clement J. Zablocki VA
Medical Center*

Jamie Frost

BSN

*Clement J. Zablocki VA
Medical Center*

Shannon Grace

RN

*Aurora St. Luke's Medical Center,
Children's Hospital of WI &
Marquette University*

Kaitlin Graham

BSN

*Clement J. Zablocki VA
Medical Center*

Megan Haigh

MHNP-BC

*Clement J. Zablocki VA
Medical Center*

Benjamin Holstine

BSN, RN, CCRN, CEN

*Clement J. Zablocki
Medical Center*

Ian Howland

BSN, RN, CEN

*Clement J. Zablocki
Medical Center*

Jonathan Karlen

BSN, RN

*William S. Middleton VA
Memorial Hospital*

Dale Lakomiak

RN

Clement J. Zablocki VA

Mikayla Landowski

MSN, RN, NP-D-BC, PMH-BC

Zablocki VA Healthcare System

Amy Lange

RN, MSN

Gateway Technical College

Katilin Lorge

MSN, RN, PCCN

Zablocki VA Healthcare System

Meredith McGuffey

MSN, RN, NPDA-BC, CNOR(E)

Zablocki VA Healthcare System

Heidi Monroe

PhD, RN, CAPA, CNE

Bellin College

Sarah Oleson

DNP, RN, CPN

Advocate Aurora and HSHS

Lindsay Pederson

BSN, RN

ZVAHCS

Kristen Peterson

MSN, RN, NP-D-BC

*Clement J. Zablocki VA
Medical Center*

Tiffany Pilliow,

MSN, RN, NP-D-BC

Zablocki VA Healthcare System

Lisa Schmidt

MSN, RN, CHSE, CCRN-K Froedtert

Hospital Simulation Center

Tina Smith

MS, BSN, RN-BS, CHSE

*Clement J. Zablocki VA
Medical Center*

Stephanie Strauss

BSN, RN

*Clement J. Zablocki
Medical Center*

Brenda Ulmen

PhD, RN

*Froedtert Hospital, Wauwatosa Carroll
University*

Tanya Walenta

BSN, RN

*Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital
Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin*

Tess Weinkauff

RN (BSN)

Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center

Brook Weiss

MSN, RN

ZVAHCS



WISCONSIN LEAGUE *for* NURSING

UPDATES

CONTINUED...



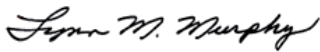
MARKETING UPDATE

The marketing efforts for the WLN have been progressing well. We continue to utilize our contract with Constant Contact, which enables us to effectively manage and communicate with over 3,500 email contacts, including partners, registered nurses, and nursing students across the region. Through this platform, we distributed 12 registration reminder emails for the Spring Conference, sent 19 outreach messages to partners inviting them to exhibit at the conference, and delivered 10 targeted communications to nursing students promoting the free Virtual NCLEX-RN Prep Session scheduled to take place during the Spring Conference in Stevens Point.

We have continued to expand our social media presence, growing our Facebook community to 499 followers. In addition, we have launched an Instagram account, where we are building a smaller—but steadily growing—audience of 49 individuals and organizations.

If you are not already following us, we encourage you to join us on these platforms and help spread the word within your networks.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lynn Murphy DNP, APRN, CPNP-PC
Marketing Director

**FOLLOW
US!**



@WLeagueforNursing



@wisconsinleaguefornursing



2026 WLN Elections

OPEN APRIL 14 THROUGH 12PM (NOON - CST) ON APRIL 24, 2026

This ballot includes election of:

- 2 Officer position (President, President-Elect)
- 4 Director positions (Director at Large, Programs 1 Conference Director, DAISY Director, Membership)

Only members with paid dues are entitled to vote as provided in Article V, Sections 5 and 6, of the by-laws.

Cast Your Vote!





WISCONSIN LEAGUE for NURSING
UPDATES CONTINUED...

PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

The WLN Programs Committee is pleased to highlight our upcoming Spring Conference on April 25, 2026, hosted by the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point. We are grateful for the opportunity to gather in the mid-state region, supporting our goal of making WLN events accessible to nurses and educators across Wisconsin.

This year's conference, aligned with our theme "Supporting Nurse Educators in an Evolving World," will bring together academic and healthcare leaders to explore evidence-informed strategies for preparing practice-ready nurses. Grounded in the NCSBN Clinical Judgment Model, sessions will focus on developing clinical judgment, aligning educational outcomes with healthcare expectations, and strengthening academic-practice partnerships.

Participants can expect engaging dialogue and practical exemplars that support a seamless transition from classroom and clinical education into confident professional practice. The conference is designed to provide actionable strategies that enhance curriculum design, strengthen residency alignment, and ultimately support graduate readiness.

We have something for everyone at this conference. Our closing session specifically addresses the needs of developing the expertise needed as a new or seasoned nurse educator. Practical tips and strategies to enhance a "toolkit for nurse educators" will be provided by expert nurse educators that worked in collaboration with the WNA on a nurse educator toolkit project.

In addition to the conference, the Programs Committee is excited to continue the conversation throughout the year with a series of webinars. These sessions will further explore key topics introduced at the conference, with a particular focus on supporting nurse educators and easing the transition of new nurses into practice. These ongoing learning opportunities are designed to foster collaboration, share best practices, and equip participants with tools they can immediately apply in their settings.

Be sure to review the conference and poster presentation details elsewhere in this newsletter or visit the WLN website for more information. We look forward to your participation and to continuing this important work together.



Register Today!

Wisconsin
League for Nursing

Spring
CONFERENCE

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2026
7:30am-4:00pm | Stevens Point, WI

NCLEX-RN® Prep Session

Nov 7, 2026 | 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Cost: Free!

Instructor: Catherine Cantrell, MSN, RN, brings over two decades of experience to her role as a nursing content strategist and educator. Her background spans diverse specialized areas, including oncology, pulmonology, progressive care, intensive care, medical-surgical nursing, and hospice.

Join us in-person or virtual and elevate your NCLEX journey with NCLEX-RN® Mastery, where we redefine exam preparation tailored to empower your success.

HOSTED BY:



Wisconsin
League for Nursing



Register Today!



NCLEX Mastery™

Prepare for the NCLEX Confidently

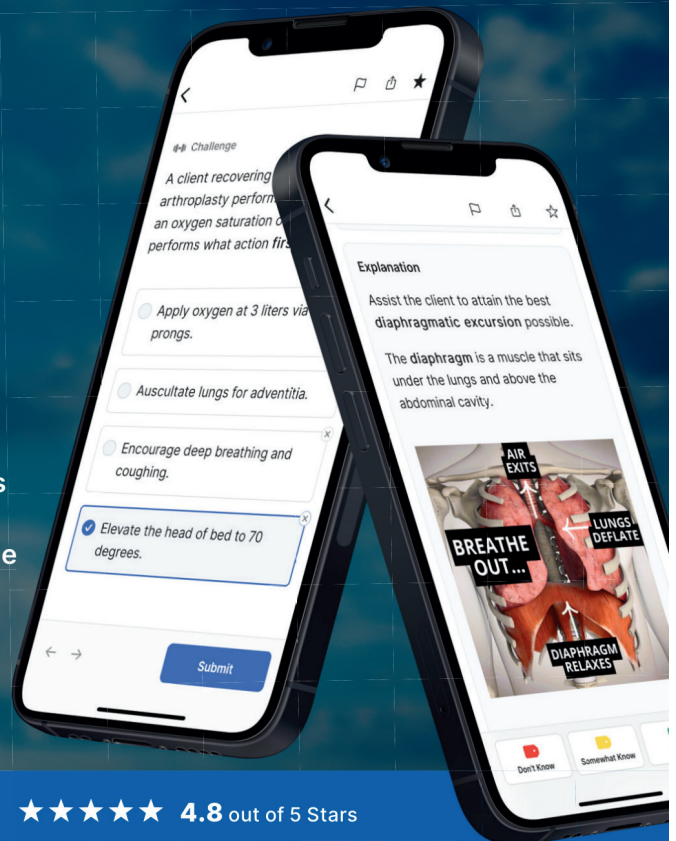
Maximize student outcomes with NCLEX Mastery - the modern tool they'll love to use.

- ✔ 3,000+ NCLEX Questions
- ✔ High-Yield Rationales
- ✔ NextGen Questions
- ✔ In-Depth Performance
- ✔ Full NCLEX Simulation
- ✔ Pass Guarantee

#1 Choice in NCLEX Prep

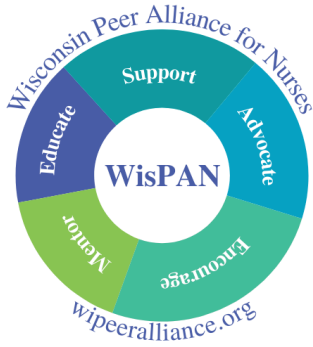


Ready to learn more?
Scan the QR code or email us at
partners@hltcorp.com



★★★★★ 4.8 out of 5 Stars





WisPAN Update

Our Impact by the Numbers

Transparency and growth go hand-in-hand, and I am proud to share our most recent statistics which reflect the expanding reach of our mission by providing a consistent lifeline for nurses navigating recovery and mental health challenges.

In the first quarter of 2026:

1. We held 32 peer support groups focused on substance use recovery.
 - a. We supported 150 nurses in these groups.
2. We held 12 peer support groups focused on nurse mental wellness.
 - a. We supported 63 nurses in these groups.
3. We held 3 educational presentations and exhibited at 3 nursing conferences.
4. We reached 1411 healthcare professionals and students through our exhibits and presentations, continuing our work to dismantle stigma within the Wisconsin nursing community.

These aren't just data points—they represent connections made, reminding us that for every statistic, there is a nurse who no longer has to struggle in silence.

Breaking the Stigma Together

We know that the road to advocacy is long. Whether we are discussing the Board of Nursing requirements or simply sharing our stories in a safe space, our goal remains the same: Support over Silence.

To our peer facilitators, our volunteers, and most importantly, our members—thank you. Your courage to be vulnerable is what makes this alliance strong. If you are reading this and feeling overwhelmed, please know that WisPAN is here. You've spent your career caring for Wisconsin; let us care for you.

Healing Tapestry Podcast

The Collective Stories of Nurses: New Podcast Episode

Stitched in Courage: Mental Health, Boxers, and the New Grad Life

Listen Now:

[Healing Tapestry: Sammie Jo's Story](#)



WisPAN
Wisconsin Peer Alliance
for Nurses

Spring into Nurse Wellness
Benefit Gala

Emcee Bryan Polcyn Fox6 News Investigative Reporter

THURSDAY | 7
MAY | 5:30-8:30 PM CST
2026

Heavy hors d'oeuvres | Music | Speakers | Silent Auction

Kristin Waite-Labott | Dennise Lavrenz
Liesette Rendell | Julie Lepianka | Olivia Zaleski

Marquette University
Lunda Room/Henke Lounge, Alumni Memorial Union
1442 W. Wisconsin Ave, Milwaukee

For tickets scan the QR code
or visit wiperalliance.org/gala

For sponsorship or questions:
wispan2021@gmail.com or (414) 376-7002



WisPAN is a 501c3 non-profit
all proceeds go to support our peer support programs
and education presentations.



EXPLORE & ENGAGE:

WLN POSTER PRESENTATIONS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW



The Wisconsin League for Nursing (WLN) invites nurses, educators, and students to explore the wealth of knowledge shared through past poster presentation abstracts, available online for ongoing review and inspiration.

These poster presentations represent the innovative work of nursing professionals and students from across Wisconsin and beyond. Topics span evidence-based practice, quality improvement initiatives, research findings, and creative approaches to nursing education—offering valuable insights that can be applied in both academic and clinical settings.

Taking time to review these abstracts provides an opportunity to:

- Stay current with emerging trends and best practices in nursing
- Gain ideas to enhance teaching, practice, and patient outcomes
- Discover new approaches to research and quality improvement
- Support and celebrate the scholarly work of colleagues

Whether you are seeking inspiration for your own project, looking to integrate new ideas into your curriculum or practice, or simply interested in the breadth of work being done across the profession, these posters serve as a rich and accessible resource.

WLN encourages you to engage with this collection and consider how these contributions can inform your own professional journey.

View the poster abstracts here: https://wisconsinwln.com/2023_Conference_Posters

By exploring and reflecting on the work of others, we strengthen our shared commitment to advancing nursing education and practice throughout Wisconsin.



Honoring Nurses, Celebrating Impact

In a constantly evolving healthcare landscape, nurses remain a steady force of knowledge, compassion, and advocacy. Your work reaches far beyond the classroom and the bedside—touching families, strengthening communities, and inspiring the next generation.

Congratulations on the countless lives you impact each day.

— Wisconsin League for Nursing (WLN)

DIGGING INTO WELLNESS: HOW GARDENING CAN HELP REDUCE BURNOUT IN NURSES AND EDUCATORS



Burnout continues to be a significant challenge for both nurses and educators, affecting well-being, job satisfaction, and retention across our professions. As the search for meaningful, accessible strategies to support resilience grows, an unexpected yet evidence-based solution is gaining attention: gardening.

Emerging research highlights the powerful role that time in green spaces—and specifically gardening—can play in reducing stress and supporting mental health. A growing body of literature, including systematic reviews and meta-analyses, demonstrates that gardening activities are associated with improved overall well-being, reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety, and enhanced quality of life.

For nurses in particular, the impact is especially compelling. A study published in the *American Journal of Critical Care* examined the effects of taking daily work breaks in a hospital garden. Nurses who spent time in an outdoor garden during their shifts experienced significantly lower levels of emotional exhaustion and stress compared to those who took indoor breaks. These findings suggest that even brief, intentional exposure to nature during the workday may help mitigate key components of burnout.

Why gardening? Research points to several interconnected benefits:

- **Stress reduction:** Gardening has been shown to lower psychological stress and promote relaxation through engagement with natural environments.
- **Mental restoration:** Time in nature helps reduce mental fatigue and restore attention, which is critical for professionals in high-demand roles.
- **Physical activity:** Activities such as planting, weeding, and watering contribute to overall physical health, which is closely linked to mental well-being.
- **Cognitive engagement:** Gardening requires planning, problem-solving, and memory—supporting cognitive function and resilience over time.

For educators, including nurse faculty, similar benefits apply. The combination of physical movement, creative engagement, and connection to nature offers a restorative counterbalance to the cognitive and emotional demands of teaching and academic work. Importantly, gardening does not require extensive space or expertise. Container gardening, community gardens, or even brief time spent in a landscaped outdoor area can provide meaningful benefits. Institutions are also beginning to recognize the value of incorporating healing gardens and green spaces into healthcare and academic environments as part of broader well-being initiatives.

As we continue to address burnout within nursing and education, simple, evidence-informed strategies like gardening remind us that solutions do not always need to be complex. Sometimes, stepping outside, connecting with nature, and tending to something living can help restore balance—both personally and professionally.

WLN EXCELLENCE IN ACTION: EVELYN MARSHALL-KING, RN, AND, MSN-NE

We are proud to recognize one of our members who was recently honored with a Distinguished Alumni Award from her master's program in nursing education at Carroll University. We invited her to share a few reflections on her journey, inspiration, and impact in nursing education.

Evelyn Marshall-King's path in nursing is a story of growth, purpose and persistence. A self-described "late bloomer," she began her career as a certified nursing assistant and steadily advanced through roles in bedside care, behavioral health and leadership—never letting expectations about timing define her path.

While earning her master's in nursing education at Carroll University, Evelyn leaned into innovation. She created engaging, real-world learning experiences for students, including a flipped-classroom approach and case-based activities that helped bring complex concepts to life. Her passion for education also extended beyond the classroom. As part of a graduate project, she helped launch a Narcan access and education initiative that connected campus partners with the local health department and expanded awareness around overdose prevention.

Now serving as Director of Nursing at St. Camillus in Wauwatosa, Evelyn focuses on building strong teams and supporting nurses as they grow into confident, compassionate professionals. Her work is grounded in a deep commitment to mental health, equity and whole-person care.

An active member of the Wisconsin League for Nursing, Marshall-King serves on both the Scholarship and Grants Committee and the Daisy Award Selection Committee, reflecting her dedication to giving back to the profession.

For Evelyn, this recognition is meaningful—but her focus remains on what comes next: creating opportunities, strengthening systems and supporting the nurses who will follow.

Read her full recognition bio for the Carroll University 2026 Distinguished Alumni Award for Professional Achievement: College of Health Sciences by accessing this link:

<https://www.carrollu.edu/alumni/awards/distinguished/2026-recipients/evelyn-marshall-king>

We congratulate Evelyn on this well-deserved recognition and thank her for her continued contributions to nursing education and the WLN community.



In a profession defined by compassion, growth, and resilience, these voices remind us of the lasting impact nurses make—on individuals, communities, and one another.

"Live life when you have it. Life is a splendid gift—there is nothing small about it."

— Florence Nightingale

"Let us never consider ourselves finished nurses... we must be learning all of our lives."

— Florence Nightingale

"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

— Maya Angelou

SPRING WELLNESS RECIPE:

LEMON CHICKPEA & ASPARAGUS POWER SALAD

As the days grow longer and gardens begin to bloom, this light, nutrient-packed salad is a perfect way to nourish your body while keeping meal prep simple. It's rich in fiber, plant-based protein, and bright spring flavors—ideal for busy nurse educators looking for quick, energizing meals.

Ingredients (Serves 2–3):

- 1 bunch fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 cup canned chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1/2 cup cucumber, diced
- 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese (optional)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley or basil
- 2 tablespoons toasted almonds or walnuts

For the Lemon Dressing:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon honey
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. Lightly steam or sauté asparagus for 3–4 minutes until tender-crisp, then cool.
2. In a large bowl, combine chickpeas, asparagus, tomatoes, cucumber, and herbs.
3. Whisk together dressing ingredients and pour over the salad.
4. Toss gently and top with feta and nuts.
5. Serve immediately or chill for a refreshing grab-and-go lunch.

Why You'll Love It:

- **Quick & easy:** Ready in under 20 minutes
- **Energy boosting:** Balanced protein, healthy fats, and fiber
- **Spring fresh:** Highlights seasonal produce
- **Meal-prep friendly:** Holds well for lunches throughout the week

Whether enjoyed between lectures, after clinicals, or during a well-deserved break outdoors, this vibrant dish is a simple way to support your health and well-being this spring.

