



Fall/Winter Issue

November 2010

*Message from the President*

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Dear Massachusetts Nursing Students,

Thank you for taking time to read the Massachusetts Student Nurses' Association's (MASNA) biannual newsletter the Nightingale. MASNA is the constituent state chapter of the National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA) and consists of over 1000 nursing students in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We are a pre-professional organization that advocates for nursing students across the state and country, and we strive to aide student nurses in their transition to the professional field of nursing through leadership development and community involvement.

MASNA is comprised of a ten member board of directors and committee chairs, a faculty adviser, and all the NSNA members throughout the state of Massachusetts. We participate in official NSNA events such as the Mid-year and Annual Conferences, participate in community services events throughout the state, and more importantly foster the development of new and existing SNA chapters throughout the state.

This year the board of directors wants to become more directly involved with Student Nurses' Association chapters in Massachusetts. To do so we plan to host a conference themed "Making a Difference in the Community" as well as leadership workshops for all SNA chapter leaders this fall. It is geared towards the idea of reaching out to every community that a nursing student is a part of such as the school community, the immediate neighborhood and the broader nursing community.

Throughout this newsletter you will find information about how to start a SNA chapter or ideas that your existing chapter can use, including some NCLEX practice questions. You will also find reflections from nursing students just like you. So take a moment to read and reflect, and send us your experiences of being a nursing student.

Feel free to leave us a message directly on our website at <http://www.mastudentnurses.org>. Enjoy this newsletter and go make a difference in your community!

Warmly,

Jessica P. Pires, MASNA President 2010-2011

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**Disclaimer:** The content of guest submissions does not reflect the opinions or beliefs of MASNA. The guest submission section of the publication is intended solely to provide opportunities for our members to share their voices.



# Why Join MASNA?

## *Benefits of Membership*

The Massachusetts Student Nurse's Association is for nursing students in Massachusetts, but is the Massachusetts Branch of the National Student Nurses Association, which is considered a professional organization. The NSNA mentors the professional development of approximately 53,000 future registered nurses nationwide and facilitates their entrance into the profession by providing educational resources, leadership opportunities, and career guidance.

There are many benefits to being part of a professional organization, but the greatest benefit is achieved when a member is active in the organization. Being active could range from attending the MASNA conference on November 13th, to starting a new state chapter at your school. However much or little you'd like to be involved, MASNA is here to help.

We're also here to help you be successful in your career as a nursing student and in your future career as a nurse. We help to provide guidance and support to nursing students and new graduates across the state. This support is provided in many forms; this newsletter is one means of keeping you connected to fellow nursing students and the nursing community; keeping you informed on current news and upcoming events; and helping the voices of nursing students in Massachusetts be heard.

Other ways in which MASNA can help are through the website, that also keeps you up-to-date on current news and events; help you create your own student chapter; offer volunteering opportunities; provide scholarship and grant information; and assist you in your job search and possibly help you into a career with greater ease.

We are also active in the student nurse community through Facebook and through email. If you are a current MASNA member, or decided to become one, you will be receiving updates through email and on Facebook...just one additional benefit of being a member.

So, if you haven't already, sign up to be a member of MASNA today. The benefits far outweigh the cost, and you will be amazed at how inspired and successful you can become as a student nurse and throughout your nursing career!

**In addition to having an excellent resource for your resume' and looking great to potential employers, MASNA provides the following benefits:**

- ◆ Partnership program with other professional nursing organizations
  - ◆ Scholarship program
- ◆ Discounted professional liability insurance
  - ◆ Health and accident insurance
- ◆ Nursing journal subscription discounts
  - ◆ Nursing apparel discount
  - ◆ Barnes & Noble discount
  - ◆ Publication discounts
- ◆ Critical Portfolio –A comprehensive online professional portfolio
  - ◆ Online member services
  - ◆ Calendar of events
  - ◆ NSNA's magazine, "Imprint"
- ◆ MASNA's newsletter, "The Nightingale"
  - ◆ Ability to start or join a chapter
    - ◆ Ability to run for the 2011 MASNA board of directors

## How To Start Your Own MASNA Chapter

To start a MASNA chapter at your nursing school you need

A minimum of **10 NSNA member students + 1 faculty advisor**

NSNA application deadline for constituency status is **Feb. 9, 2011**. NSNA votes to grant constituency status to new chapters once per year at the annual spring conference.

You can join MASNA/NSNA online: go to [www.nsnamembership.org](http://www.nsnamembership.org) to register and pay dues (\$32 new member)

**Tip:** When you register check the box that allows NSNA to share your e-address with MASNA to get the Mass. Chapter updates and announcements!

### Next Steps

Before you submit your application to NSNA

Have at least 10 students join NSNA [www.nsnamembership.org](http://www.nsnamembership.org)

1. Elect officers from your NSNA members and select a faculty adviser
2. Send your application documentation to NSNA before Feb. 9, 2011

Full details at [www.nsna.org](http://www.nsna.org)

**Tip:** Assign one of your officers the task of submitting the NSNA application.

**Tip:** Many schools support their MASNA chapter by automatically including the NSNA dues in each student's tuition. See the NSNA website for details.

### For more Help and Resources:

Visit the NSNA website  
The 2010-2011 Guidelines for Planning: Shared Governance, Bylaws, and Policies PDF is extremely helpful

Also [Visit us on the web at www.mastudentnurses.org](http://www.mastudentnurses.org)  
[Or find us on Facebook](#)



## Upcoming Events

### MASNA's 2010 Fall Conference

#### Making a Difference in Our Communities

Saturday, November 13th at 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Boston College - Higgins 300 Auditorium

Several [guest speakers](#) and topics ranging from nursing healthcare and legislation to relaxation techniques

Worried about [life after graduation](#) and the NCLEX? Talk with new graduate nurses or join our NCLEX review

Get information about [career and education opportunities](#) from Mass Senior Care Associates and BC's Graduate Program

[Certificate](#) of participation provided! Looks great on a resume

Enter into our FREE raffle to win [great prizes!](#)



### MASNA FALL CONFERENCE 2010

#### Making a Difference in Our Communities

Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>  
10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Boston College  
Higgins 300 Auditorium



**Key Speakers**

Nancy Shendell-Falik, RN, M.A.  
Chief Nursing Officer and Sr. Vice President for Patient Care Services - Tufts Medical Center, Boston, MA

Gino Chisari, RN, MSN  
Director, Massachusetts Association of Registered Nurses

Mahmoud Kaddoura, Ph.D, R.N.,  
Professor Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences

**Topics**

- New Graduate Nurse Panel
- Different Paths of Nursing
- Healthcare and Legislation
- Forum/Panel Discussion
- NCLEX Review
- Leadership Workshop

Registration and Breakfast will be at 9:30 am  
A light breakfast and lunch will be served  
Business casual attire required

[RSVP to masna.president1@gmail.com](mailto:masna.president1@gmail.com)

MASNA is a constituent member of the National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA)



BOSTON COLLEGE

Find out more at <http://www.mastudentnurses.org/events/2010-fall-conference>

## *Upcoming Events*

**NSNA's 59th Annual Convention**

**April 6-10, 2011**

**Salt Palace Convention Center**

**Salt Lake City, Utah**



**Visit Salt Lake City, UT!**

**Salt Palace Convention Center**

**Keynote Speaker: Patrick Hickey, PhD, RN, CNOR**

**Endnote Speaker: Rumay Alexander, EDD, RN**

**For more National and Local NSNA events visit:  
<http://www.nsna.org/Portals/0/Skins/NSNA/pdf/Calendar%2010-11.pdf>**

## *Summer University 2010 Lausanne, Switzerland*

*Allison Sandler*

This July, I joined five other nursing students from Boston College on a trip of a lifetime to Lausanne, Switzerland. We were selected to be a part of the Summer University initiative launched in 2006 by the Board of Higher Education in the State of Vaud in Switzerland. Its goal is to bring together students from all over the world to discuss important topics related to their chosen field. This year the topic for the nursing portion was, "Limits: Constraints and/or opportunities in nursing care". Looking back, what I gained from this experience extended way beyond the classroom, but into the cultural activities and leisure time I shared with nursing students from all over the world.

The trip we made to the capital of Bern highlighted the cultural communication and nursing knowledge I gained on this amazing trip. The day began bright and early with most of us grabbing some bread and tea from the hospital cafeteria next door to our dorm. After taking the metro to the train station and boarding the train, one of the professors from Switzerland passed around a Swiss cookie called Basler Leckerli. After arriving in Bern we broke up into groups and got to tour the city for a little while. My group almost immediately said we wanted to see the bears of Bern. During our walk to see the bears we stopped to take pictures and refill our water bottles in the ornately decorated public water fountains, which line the cobblestone streets ever few yards. When we arrived at the bears we were amazed to see two cubs, a mom, and dad right in the middle of the city next to the Rhine River.

Later on in the day, after going through the equivalent of airport security, the sixty of us from the Summer University were given a guided tour of the Parliament. At the end of the tour we were privileged to meet with National Councillor Mrs. Josiane Aubert who is known for her support of nursing issues. Although she did not speak English, some Swiss students translated for us as we learned about hot topic issues currently being presented in Parliament this year.

After recalling the basic structure of the day, to the untrained eye it seems like a great sightseeing trip. Looking closer, one sees throughout the day different cultural and nursing learning opportunities. Bread and tea are very typical breakfast food in Switzerland. One is not going to see eggs and bacon because the largest meal of the day is usually lunch. The cookie on the train we were given is from the northern portion of Switzerland and almost tastes like a gingerbread cookie. While I was walking the streets of Bern, I was able to speak with some students from Singapore and learn about some of their crazy laws. For example, if you eat or drink any food in

the train station or on the train, you could be fined 500 Singapore dollars. Also, one cannot buy any gum in Singapore. These rules contribute to how clean it is in the streets of Singapore.

During the tour of the Parliament, I was able to learn about the unique structure of the government where each individual state holds the majority of the power. Through the discussion with Mrs. Aubert, I feel like I gained the most interesting information. To begin with, three students from Switzerland highlighted their multicultural upbringing by so effortlessly translating from French into English. Furthermore, the topic that Mrs. Aubert discussed was one that touches the students in the whole program very deeply. She highlighted the importance of bachelor prepared nurses and the struggle for that in Switzerland. All of the students at the Summer University are enrolled in bachelor programs. The students from Singapore come from a school that is the first bachelor program in Singapore who graduated their first students last year. The students from Switzerland are from the French speaking section of Switzerland, which promotes the bachelor prepared nurse, where as the German section which is the majority in Switzerland, is still struggling with that notion. Here in the United States, the bachelor prepared nurse is much more developed, but still budget cuts are affecting everyone. Some students from California had to protest to keep their program going for a little while more. What I gained from the day in Bern goes beyond the structural aspects, but delves deep into the aim of the program.

The things I saw and got to experience in Switzerland were truly amazing. I went on an alpine coaster on top of a mountain, hiked a mountain in Grindelwald, tried fondue in Gruyere, and went to the Montreux Jazz Festival. More importantly I learned about assisted suicide in Switzerland, immersed myself in the Swiss healthcare system through hospital visits, and learned about the cultures of Singapore, India, and Switzerland. I will take this experience with me into my nursing profession and I hope that it has made me a more well-rounded and culturally prepared nurse.

## *Why Choose a Three Year Program to Become a Nurse*

Jessica Goncalves, MCPHS Boston Student Class 2011

Nursing is a career dedicated to serving and helping others. It is a field that must be contemplated extensively before being actually pursued. Now, once we have decided this is the field we want to delve ourselves into, the next step is choosing a University or College. There are many different ways of achieving a nursing degree, which include: four -year BSN programs, three-year BSN programs, associate level programs, and diploma programs. I personally chose a three-year accelerated BSN program.

There are many benefits to an accelerated program; one of which is immersing oneself into the field faster than most entry-level nursing students. As with any accelerated program, it is very fast paced. One must be able to learn quickly and dedicate all of your spare time to studying. On the other hand, with all of this hard work, a person is able to assimilate and learn in clinical settings much more rapidly. Lastly, one is able to form partnerships with their professors, and force themselves to become motivated in order to succeed.

A person who decides to enroll in a three-year accelerated BSN program must be dedicated and self-disciplined. There are no long summer vacations and no time for idling. As hard as this last sentence may seem, it is the reality. One must be self-disciplined and must be willing to sacrifice a little more of their time to learning nursing skills .

Self-discipline is something that I had to learn once I enrolled in the three-year program. Just like many first year students, in my prior schooling, I needed my parents to give me an extra push to study. In a three-year BSN, I had to learn to do this quickly and on my own. When my friends would call to hang out on the weekends, I had to turn them down most of the times. I know this sounds harsh, but it is feasible and everyone has the dedication to do it.

This is where dedication plays a significant role. One has to be dedicated to their schoolwork, which may mean sacrificing their weekends to study. A person must think of the rewards that will come in the future, such as: graduating earlier than friends, being able to become a nurse faster, and changing the lives of others much sooner.

Balancing a job and schoolwork is quiet difficult, in a nursing program, but especially in a three year program. It is hard work but with hard work comes reward. Juggling nursing school and work was a task I myself had to learn to deal with it. There were many sleepless weekends I endured in order to go to work and still be able to do school work at the same time. Everything in life is possible and that is what you have to keep reminding your-self about. I had to give up my part-time job and switch to a per-diem job where I could for the most part make my own schedule. This was not an easy thing to come by, it took me about three months after applying and interviewing until I finally was granted the position. I was granted a nurse

intern position at a local hospital, which allowed me to work per-diem. Many months I could only afford to work two weekends a month. But, what is great about finding a hospital job is that you can work doubles on the weekends that you find you may have a little more leeway allowing you to catch up and pay your bills. Another great reason for getting a hospital job is that you're also working toward your ultimate goal, which is becoming a nurse.

In my opinion, four-year BSN programs are a little different than three-year programs. A four-year program allows one to spread out their classes over a greater time period. A person has the option of having a long summer off and he or she is granted a fundamentals clinical. In a three-year BSN program, the courses are the same as four-year programs; the only major difference is that there is not a fundamental clinical, three-year programs start med-surge immediately. This may seem overwhelming, but in reality, the student is practicing most of the same skills. Professors of three-year programs also realize that this may be our first patient experience and start us off slow; only once we have grasped the basics do we quickly progress to patient care.

I had mentioned that in a four-year BSN program you have the summers off, but in reality, many of my fellow nursing students in other four-year programs end up taking summer classes to ease off their workload in the fall or spring semesters. In talking to nursing students in other Universities, I have noticed that their classroom sizes are much larger, and the option of forming a relationship with their professors is minimal. A small class size allows an intimate bond between a professor and a student to form over the course of their scholarly career. Many times, this bond evolves to become a special partnership.

Some of you may be wondering if I would choose a three -year BSN program again versus a four-year BSN program. Of course my answer would have to be a resounding, yes! I enjoy everything that I have learned and the challenge that a three-year program presents. It has taught me better time management, I have lost the fear to approach professors for help, and it has introduced me to a fast paced environment. These three components are all present in a nursing career. We, as nurses, must be able to manage our time with patients, we must be comfortable with a fast paced environment, and we must not be afraid to speak out when we see the opportunity arises. A three-year program has taught me all of these components, which a four-year program may not have offered. All in all, a three-year program was definitely the correct decision for me to make regarding my collegiate career.

## *What Does it Mean to be a Student Nurse?*

**Dr. Mahmoud Kaddoura, PhD, CAGS, MSN, MED, BSN, RN**

Nursing is one of the noblest professions that offer nursing students a privilege to work with people from all walks of life and provide them with care. As a nursing student, one carries out things for clients that impact them in ways that they remember for a lifetime. When patients are admitted to a healthcare facility, they are not always at their best. Here comes the responsibility of nursing students who observe patients at their worst. Nursing students play an exceptional role in taking care of people during their most challenging and frightening moments in life.

Nursing students deserve to be highly appreciated for their choice of an incredible dignified profession, which presents them various opportunities. In addition to providing the big bucks, it offers flexibility in scheduling and abundant opportunities for different types of employment and promotions. Nursing also enables them to learn essential knowledge and psychomotor skills that enable them to function intelligently on the cutting edge of technology with brilliant people. It builds their professional attitude that offers them the opportunity to serve other people to make a difference in their lives through kind-hearted care, prevention of diseases and complications, and promotion of health, healing, and wellness. I applaud student nurses for their hard work and devotion to their care and making meaningful differences in the lives of other people.

I have been teaching nursing students for about twenty years. Based on my experience, I believe that enrolment in a nursing school per se means willingness to have a unique identity and to accept an enormous responsibility for the care for others to make a difference in the community. Choosing to be a nursing student means that a person owns specific characteristics of the angels; one should possess the qualities of a nurse regardless of what they are doing. Nursing students possess an inimitable identity, which means that they are viewed not only to be resource persons due to their vast knowledge related to the structure and functions of the human body systems, organs, and cells. They are not only well versed about disease processes, their pathophysiology, signs and symptoms, treatment regimens and medical and surgical nursing care. Nursing is part of who they are and they should be proud of themselves for what they are and the potentials they have to change the healthcare world.

Personally, I am proud of all my nursing students, including those who are now not only nurses, but nursing leaders, educators, and major change agents in various countries to make healthcare superior. I give a round of applause to all nursing students for possessing values that are distinctive of their kind. I believe nursing students signify purity, love, endurance, courage, compassion and care. Nursing students may cry a lot, but they also laugh a lot, especially after

graduation. Besides being caring with both heart and head endeavoring to heal the whole person, I bear witness that nursing students are hard working, ethical, and trustworthy. They own all incredible attributes to be known for as part of their identity as the nurses of the future.

I hold dear to me nursing students who have power over their professionalism, integrity, excellence in academic performance, mastery of clinical skills, intimate connection to their clients, peer students and nurses, and commitment to their lifelong learning to change not only the nursing community, but the healthcare world as well. To be a student nurse shouldn't be only about grades although maintaining a GPA over 3 is crucial for graduate school. It should be about being who you are. No professor can teach you how to self sacrifice, how to cry with a patient, how to tell a family member that their significant others have died or are dying. It's not only about administering medications, performing CPR, or providing ACLS. It's also about being able to empathize with people, love them, and put yourself in their shoes when they encounter weak challenging moments, and being able to make a considerable difference in their lives for them to remember you as a nursing student or a nurse for the rest of their lives.

Recently, I have conducted a qualitative research study to investigate the perceptions of college students about their own meaning of Student Nurse. The study strived to answer the question "What does it mean to be a Student Nurse?" The following are some quotes by nursing students:

"Being a student nurse is the greatest and most humbling endeavour I have taken. It's rewarding and scary; rewarding as I have the opportunity to give myself to people to help them holistically. Yet, it's scary because I will be responsible for the well being of other people" (Greg).

"Being a nursing student is a challenge, but worth it, once you learn the fundamentals of nursing care and start putting things together, you can work in a patient care settings to perform your duties confidently in order to make a difference in patients' lives" (Nicole).

"Being a student nurse is challenging, frightening, but so exciting. It's challenging as we learn loads of theoretical knowledge and practical skills to apply in clinical practice. It's frightening as I will be accountable for patients' lives. It's exciting as a lot of the skills we learn are invaluable when transferred into other careers; once a nurse, I can handle just about anything!" (Paul)

## *What Does it Mean to be a Student Nurse?*

### Continued

“Being a student nurse means so much more than being prepared to be a bedside nurse. Being a student nurse means who you are as a person. It prepares me for anything I want to pursue as I have a lot of plans to improve the future of healthcare in the country” (Charlotte).

“Being a nursing student teaches me hard work and responsibility as a lot of people will be relying on me with their live and death issues as I step into their lives” (Katelyn).

“Being a student nurse means my opportunity to learn how to advocate for my patients because I have the potential to change the culture of how healthcare professional communicate with patients to meet their needs” (Alyssa).

“Being a nursing student prepares me to give back to the community what my family and I have received from other marvellous nurses who made memorable differences in our lives” (Sapna).

“Being a nurse used to mean the one who takes orders, but not anymore. Student nurse to me means learning the essential steps to make a difference through making the nursing care more effective and less costly for patients. We, nursing students, are learning the tools to change federal and local healthcare policies to make patients’ lives much better” (Mary).

“Being a student nurse means taking an immense responsibility of taking care of patients. I have been acquiring handling this through learning real life scenarios and clinical simulation to prevent medical and nursing errors in clinical practice” (Alan).

“Being a student nurse means being able to prepare myself for a better future through working with professionals who have a lot of experience to learn from. As a nursing student, I have been learning effective communication, intensive nursing knowledge and clinical skills to apply them in real practice and be a successful person as a professional nurse” (Hannah)

“As a student nurse, I have been on a road to learn appropriate skills to help people and teach them about their healthcare issues, to prevent illnesses and promote their healing” (Nakita).

“As a student nurse, I am working on being a long-life learner to understand how to deal with various patients’ illnesses and how to deal effectively with their various challenges

and health problems. I have been learning how to use the nursing process to make a difference” (Katie).

Based on the students’ responses, I feel compelled as a professor to be grateful for the entirety of nursing students and to teach them how to become trained observers, critical thinkers, problem solvers, and highly creative to be patient advocates and remarkable decision makers to provide high quality nursing care that is cost effective, safe, and patient-oriented. Whether nursing students are enrolled in a diploma, associate, bachelor, masters, certificate, or doctoral program, they have the potentials to be the best, most effective and knowledgeable nurses to provide compassionate and skilful nursing care, founded on evidence based practice and recent research findings to make a difference not only in the lives of people, but to improve the future of the healthcare system in our states.

To achieve these noble goals, I would like to encourage all nursing students to join the National Student Nurse Association, and if in MA to join the Massachusetts Student Nurses Association (MASNA), and to be actively involved in student activities and/or student government. Engagement in nursing associations would sharpen students’ leadership skills, enhance their work ethics, and promote their academic and clinical performance. MASNA and other nursing associations help students grow both personally and professionally to be the best healthcare professionals. They offer golden opportunities for student’s contributions to their school, community, nursing profession, and to make remarkable advancements in the healthcare system.



**Massachusetts Student Nurses' Association  
2010 – 2011 Board of Directors & Committee Chairs**

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