

# Hotline

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NSNA Annual Convention  
Updates: Volunteers Needed!!!  
Hello Florida! The annual convention is April 7-11 in Orlando, FL where over 3,000 students from around the country attend. Managing a convention of this size requires significant coordination and support of volunteers from around our state. Volunteer as much time as you can have! There are several different Volunteer Convention Themes with positions available. Please visit our website for more details. If you or your chapter would like to contribute to the success of this event please email me at [FNSAPresident@yahoo.com](mailto:FNSAPresident@yahoo.com)

WE'RE ON FACEBOOK!  
Find FNSA's group on Facebook under "FNSA!!" and join the group! Receive updates and information about upcoming events and meetings and even links to our Hotline. See your whole executive board as well!

## Professionalism

Some of us are now faced with graduating and some of us have already faced the task of finding a job (any job). Professionalism is a big deal in the clinical setting and in the real world. At the last meeting in Orlando, the board members discussed what professionalism means to them, whether it was an attitude or the way one presents oneself outwardly. Think about what it means to be a professional and then think about what it means to be a professional nurse. I think you will come to find that being a professional nurse is a great responsibility that we all need to be prepared to bear. Professionalism does not stop after you get the job – it continues throughout every day of your career and should not be taken lightly.

In this issue of Hotline, enjoy your board members discussing what, to them, makes a professional nurse. Also, check out the new highlights!

## What is a Professional Nurse?

Professionalism starts as an attitude on the inside that is displayed on the outside.

Professionalism is a commitment and a choice. Nurses have a huge responsibility to act professionally both on and off the job. Nurses are looked at in their community as a resource person and an example for others. They are viewed and

judged by their peers in the work place. The field of nursing is more than a vocation – it is a profession and those in this field should display it as such. Respect is not automatically given, it is earned. If a professional nurse behaves in a way that they are able to respect themselves, then others will respect them.



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There will be many new graduates in the next couple of months looking for a job and it is important to remember a couple of things when sending out your professional resume:

1. Keep your resume to one page which focuses on your accomplishments.
2. Make sure your e-mail address is professional. Sexy29 or hotchik1 are not appropriate e-mail addresses for a resume.
3. Check your voicemail or answering machine for what others will hear when they attempt to contact you. Partying music with obscenities is not what Human Resources want to hear when they call.
4. Don't forget that employers have access to social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace.

Half-naked or intoxicated pictures of you and your friends do not speak highly of you when an employer is looking at how reliable you may be.

5. Have someone other than yourself, proofread your resume for spelling and grammatical errors. Employers are looking for someone who can produce professional reports and documentation with correct spelling and grammar.

We all want to have fun and should; however it is extremely important in today's economy to put the best professional "you" forward. If you are not close to graduation remember these suggestions will assist you in obtaining a nurse tech or nurse intern position as well.

I think professionalism is a question many students need to ponder. I think the one thing that still amazes me is when asked to dress professionally, some still show up in jeans. My first word of advice is that professionalism is not JEANS.

I know that professionalism is not limited to what we are wearing; it includes our communication with others,

how we present ourselves through body language, and demeanor. It involves business ethics and manners, which encompass things like, being punctual, using respect when addressing others, presenting ourselves with our best foot forward, and the proper use of language. It means being sincere, respectful and truthful. These are just some of the small things that add to professionalism.



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Being a professional is about being mature in the way you appear and the way you handle yourself. It's about being a good representative for your profession and your work place. Think about it – if you showed up to work without a proper uniform, how do you think your patients would perceive you? Probably as being unprepared or not taking your job as seriously as you might. Whether this is true or

not, the opinions of your patients' perceptions of who you are should be important to you. I know I think the same thing of other professionals when they look like they aren't taking their job seriously – it makes me less trusting. Do you want people to trust you less? Be it your employers or your patients or the patients' families? How do you want others to perceive you? How much trust do you deserve?

**Call to chapter presidents!** Chapter presidents, FNSA needs you to select a member of your chapter to attend FNSA meetings in Orlando. It is in the by-laws and must be fulfilled! Email Jessica Springer, Region 2 Director and Membership Chair with any questions!

Individuals likely to succeed or be promoted have something in common: they are good communicators. Professional communication is important and simple. Properly conveying information and ideas is an immediate way to show that one is competent and sincere.

As nursing students, we have been made aware of these facts many times with the result of most students striving to correspond as professionals. However, in our increasingly hurried and abbreviated world, many nursing students are far more accustomed to communicating in an informal and individualized way than in professional manner.

Below are some tips to remember when sending an email, writing a letter, or making a phone call in a professional setting:

- 1) Keep your message short and understandable.
- 2) Mind your manners. This means addressing others by their

appropriate title, using "please" and "thank you", and signing letters and emails with your full name and title.

3) Check your spelling and grammar in writing. On the phone and in person, avoid using colloquialisms such as "y'all," "gonna," "wanna," or "ain't."

4) DON'T USE ALL CAPS. It is the equivalent of shouting and is considered rude.

5) Never use common text message abbreviations like "LOL." If you need to use an abbreviation, be sure to explain it the first time it appears in your message. For example, "I contacted the American Diabetes Association (ADA) yesterday."

6) Never send an email while angry or upset. Once you click send, you cannot take the message back.

7) Respond in a timely fashion.

8) Make sure your voicemail message and email addresses are professional. A future employer

doesn't want to hear you sing a song on your voicemail.

Likewise, CutiePie21@email.com will be taken less seriously than J.Smith@email.com.

9) When leaving a voicemail, be brief. Include only the essentials; identify yourself, give your contact information twice, and provide a short, clear message.

10) Be mindful of your tone. If you are not communicating with a person face to face, they cannot use your body language to interpret your intended tone.

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I define the professional nurse as someone who aspires to be all that they can be as a nurse. They take pride in their work without reservation, because we all know that nursing is not for everyone. With that in mind, the professional nurse finds ways to better themselves through education, adhering to the code of ethics, organizational participation, and having compassion for others. They carry themselves with a sense

of confidence that is unwavering despite the obstacles they encounter. They do not allow personal matters to interfere with their care of patients. The professional nurse demands respect from their health care constituents and the public, but only if the nurse respects others. The professional nurse is always ready and willing to serve.

The word "professional" is defined as "a member of a vocation founded upon specialized educational training." As a society, we have the tendency to view professionals as uncompassionate, uncaring, and sometimes rushed. Nurses take the word "professional" in a different direction. A very intelligent woman named Florence Nightingale took Nursing beyond the word "professional". This woman took nursing that was once done by lay people to a field of caring compassionate teachers within the

health profession. Nursing is not just a profession, it is an art. There is no other career available to society that takes all aspects of life lessons, personal lessons, and academics to make a professional nurse. As nurses we are not only role models, support, and health professionals, we are also teachers. Also, as nurses, we are able to communicate and interact with our patients effectively and accordingly to their specific needs and wants. At the end of the day, we are nurses. We are special.



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Merriam-Webster defines profession "a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation." Well, that certainly sounds familiar; I graduate in April, more than four years after starting to focus on nursing school. Nurses also certainly have specialized knowledge: of the medication we give, of the procedures we complete, delegate or assist with, of the disease patterns we understand, and of the communication skills we master. There is more to it than time and knowledge though. A profession should follow a shared philosophy, conduct research, and members

should be accountable to a governing board. In the nursing profession, where there are so many specialties, there are also special interest professional organizations - everything from critical care nurses to nurse anesthetists, each with the similar foundation, but focusing on unique interests. FNSA is one way to get exposed to those different professional organizations. While we all have different interests and specialties, we all work together for the good of nursing as a whole. That work combined to make nursing the most trusted profession according to the Gallop Pole in 2007.

I believe that true professionalism speaks for itself. When one is acting in a professional manner, they are well-respected and admired for their proper dress and demeanor. It involves all aspects of the outer attire, as well as the inner mind-set. Professional dress consists of a modest, clean, and modern appearance. For example, a dress suit including long pants and a long-sleeve matching jacket. This is easily made unprofessional by showing too much bust or having a suit that is extremely tight on the

body. Now, when it comes to the professional state of mind, it is the realization that you are representing yourself and/or an organization and should do so with tact and respect. Whether it is a one-on-one conversation or a presentation in front of hundreds, your professional behavior should be noted as reverential and positively representative.



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### NOTICE!!

Anyone who still wants to run for a committee may do so. Please contact your region director or Sarah Lindley for more information.

Don't forget! If you want your own issue of Hotline, just email Becca Slone and she will add you to the Hotline mailing list! And find us on Facebook at FNSA!!

### PENNIES PRN!

You and your school don't just have to donate pennies at convention – start today at your own school! Remember, they go towards a scholarship YOU may win!



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they make during clinicals can have long term effects. Employers are looking for those who are positive, hard working, and seek learning opportunities.

Keep in mind that public domains such as MySpace or Facebook are just that: public, and can be viewed by anyone. As professionals we need to display ourselves and the schools we represent in a positive light. Inappropriate pictures and negative comments should be avoided while on these sites. Employers and educators are checking, so when in doubt about posting something, don't post it. Cell phones should not be used in the clinical setting, not only because it takes the attention and focus off the patient and tasks at

hand, but also because they can interfere greatly with the medical equipment being used in the hospital.

It is important for us all to take a moment and consider the professional image we project. After graduation, we all want to be able to go into the medical world as respected graduate nurses who are now embarking on professional careers. Our professional image begins as we enter the clinical field and will continue long after we have retired from the field. The way we present ourselves says just as much about our clinical abilities as do the skills we perform. Just a few thoughts for us all to stop and ponder as we continue to learn and grow as professional nurses!

As we immerse ourselves into this semester, let us take a moment to consider how we present ourselves professionally. First impressions are very important and students need to remember that the impressions

When I think of what being a “professional” nurse means to me, I cannot help but refer back to Sister M. Simone Roach’s six ways of caring. Her “Six C’s” have helped to guide me through my nursing program by teaching me to focus on ways that I should come to know myself and others in clinical practice. Three of the six ways of caring most encompass a professional nurse to me; comportment, competence, and conscience.

Comportment is one of the six C’s that can be displayed most externally. A nurse can show comportment through arriving on time, maintaining professional appearance and behaviors, adapting appropriately to changing circumstance, and demonstrating the scope of nursing practice, case management, and delegation. Showing comportment allows others to understand that you respect yourself as well as the patients, peers, and staff around you.

Competence is explained by Roach as “the state of having knowledge, judgment, skills, energy, experience and motivation required to respond adequately to the demands of one’s professional responsibilities.” One can show competence through communicating appropriately through writing, identifying and

anticipating priorities for care, demonstrating the rationale for care, safely administering medications and procedures, and applying professional nursing judgment while showing use of critical thinking and appropriate standards of practice. Although competence is based on having knowledge, I also believe that one can show competence in asking questions and looking to others for their knowledge. Documentation is very important in health care and although a nurse might have the competence to complete a skill or assessment they also need to be able to properly document in order to be fully competent.

Conscience is very important to professional nursing because it shows that one is morally sensitive and aware of one’s own values. To show conscience in the clinical setting we learn that we must plan in partnership with our patients, honor human dignity and patient rights, analyze ethical and legal issues, support fairness and non-discrimination, demonstrate the role of a patient’s advocate, and by planning for continuity of care while effectively teaching patients and families. One key component of conscience is to “consider how to influence systems and policies impacting health care” (Roach) and as active FNSA members we are all accomplishing conscience in our



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nursing practice. With our concern for the inner workings of the health care systems, we demonstrate that our conscience carries over into our lives outside of the clinical setting. Roach’s three C’s mentioned above are those that I identify with most as a professional nurse, but those that I have not mentioned (compassion, confidence, commitment) are equally as important to nursing. I take pride in my nursing care and I hope that I will continue to grow in understanding the ideals that exemplify what a “professional” nurse is.

**Nurstoons**



www.nurstoons.com



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As nursing students, we have all chosen a career surrounded by prestige and honor. To keep up the high standard of nursing we all strive to obtain, it is essential that we remain professional throughout our schooling and our practice. It's important to sit down and take inventory on what you believe makes a professional and then carry it out through your career. Professionalism is not just

how you dress or act when in the hospital, it is maintaining integrity and responsibility everywhere you go. I have always believed that your true character is determined by what you do and how you act when no one is around. Nurses have consistently been the number one most trusted profession in the Gallup Poll in the last nine years with the exception being after 9/11 when they fell to second behind firefighters. It is important to be someone that your patients and coworkers feel they can trust and to maintain the reputation of nursing. Being true is also on the top of the list of professionalism; being true to yourself, your patients, and your coworkers. Professionals should not let their personal feelings or beliefs influence the way they treat and counsel their patients. Although looks should not determine the level of professionalism, I believe you should take the time to take care of yourself and be presentable when walking into your patients'

room. From my interaction with patients, I've learned they feel more favorably towards a nurse that walks into their room with their uniform pressed and hair pulled up than with one that walks in with their hair still wet and scrubs wrinkled. Since one of the number one jobs of nurses is to be the patient advocate, it is important to practice what you preach. It's hard to give a lesson to a COPD patient regarding smoking cessation when all you can think about is your next smoke break. It's important to respect yourself and to be a role model for those around you. Remember that you're not just a nurse when at work, you're a nurse every second of everyday and you never know when you may run into a patient, coworker, or future employer. With National Convention approaching, it is important to remember to maintain our professionalism while networking.

## What it's like...

### ... to be a male nurse.

This is the start of a new feature for Hotline. Every month we will be adding a new topic of "what it's like to be" something. This month, we asked what it was like to be a male nurse. Most of us have realized by now that the overwhelming majority of nurses are female. Even in the movie "Meet the Fockers", Ben Stiller's character was made fun of for being a male nurse. If this is the unfortunate common idea of a

male nurse, then the rest of us have some work to do.

Dudley Deshommes, the FNSA treasurer, commented about what it is like for him as a male nurse:

"I feel as though people have expectations of me as a male. For example, I always have to explain why I am not becoming a medical doctor. Most people assume that I will become a doctor just because I am a male and nursing is just a stepping stone to something greater. Being a nurse is just as great as a doctor."

Recently, at South Florida

Community College, also had the same idea and had Steve, a male nurse, come in and speak to the students about how great it is to be a male nurse! Thanks Amy R. Wuthrich, a first year nursing student at South Florida Community College for letting us know about this awesome event.

I have grown up in a household with a male nurse and I have to say that my father looks not less manly than a construction worker. Nursing is hard! Spread the word and encourage any and all who want to go in to nursing, no matter the gender.

## Scholarships Offered Through FNF

By Leah Nash, Florida Nurses Association

The Florida Nurses Foundation (FNF) is pleased to announce that the 2010 research grant and scholarship applications are now available online. Please visit [floridanurse.org/foundationGrants](http://floridanurse.org/foundationGrants) for the applications and upload instructions. Only applications uploaded through the FNA website will be considered. ***The deadline to upload completed applications is June 1, 2010.***

FNF exists to promote nursing and delivery of healthcare through the advancement of research, education and practice. Each year, funds are provided to registered nurses and students for research grants and scholarships. Funding for FNF initiatives comes from FNA member donations, entrusted FNA member funds, and FNF fundraising efforts.

*To apply for a FNF scholarship, you must:*

- Be enrolled in a nationally accredited nursing program;

- Have completed at least one (1) semester of a nursing program in Florida (must be completed by June 1st application deadline);
- Must reside in Florida throughout the term of the scholarship; and
- Be a resident of Florida for at least one (1) year.

### *Selection criteria include:*

- Unless otherwise designated by an individual fund, GPA requirements are: 2.5 minimum for undergraduate and 3.0 minimum for graduate.
- Potential for contribution to the nursing profession and society.

### *Eligibility criteria to apply for a FNF research grant:*

- The principal investigator must be a registered nurse and be licensed to practice nursing in Florida;
- The principal investigator must not



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have received more than a cumulative of \$5,000 in research funding during the past three years;

- The principal investigator must not have received an FNF Research Grant award in the past 3 years; and;
- Priority for research grants are based upon the scientific merits of the proposal.

## POWERFOOD SUGGESTION

Eating high fat foods in the middle of the afternoon increase the craving of high fat foods later in the day. Instead of cheese on a salad, for example, try to add a healthy fat – avocado. Avocados can decrease high serum cholesterol levels and have the creamy texture you may crave in the middle of the day.

Source: Lopez Ledesma, R, "Monounsaturated fatty acid (avocado) rich diet for mild hypercholesterolemia". *Arch-Med-Res.* 27 (4): 519-523.

## SAVE THE DATES

April 7-11<sup>th</sup>: National Convention

May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – Board meeting at 11am

July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – Board meeting at 11am

Aug 21<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – Board meeting at 11am

September 23-25 – Preconvention

FNA Member Assembly - September 23-25, 2010

Convention - October 27-30, 2010

2010 MidYear Conference November 4 -7, 2010

# Job Hunting

Article by Josephine Schreder-Guhl, RN, BSN  
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Former FNSA President, 2008-2009

I guess you all are wondering how exactly I went from living in Miami to now living and working in Little Rock. I often ask myself the same question. The answer is that I moved to where the job was. After having applied at upward of 50 hospitals across the nation and interviewing in Miami, Texas, and Arkansas...off to Arkansas I went. I'm going to give you all a few tips to keep in mind when searching for jobs straight out of school as a new grad. I hope they help.

1. **Be honest with yourself.** Figure out what is important to you in a job and figure out which of these things are must haves and which you would be flexible with.
2. **Be flexible and adaptable.** If you wanted Cardiac ICU, also look for jobs in other ICUs or cardiac step down, or telemetry. And instead of PICU, look for any pediatric positions.
3. **Expand your horizons.** Whether it is in different parts of the country, different types of jobs, or different units.
4. **Start your search early.** Start searching for jobs even as early as February for those graduating in May.
5. **Prepare your resume.** Have your school's career services center (if they have one) review your resume and help

you get it in tip-top shape for the health care industry. If your school doesn't have one, see if one of your professors will look it over for you.

- Always include involvement in pre-professional organizations, such as FNSA.
6. **Obtain letters of recommendation.** Ask instructors for letters of recommendation to give to potential employers.
7. **Ace the Interview.** Once you get the interview, the ball is in your court to do as best you can at the interview. Research the hospital and unit you are applying for, know their mission and any other data, or have they been awarded any special awards. There are plenty of websites that have sample questions that interviewers will ask you and questions you can ask them. [http://www.nurseuniverse.com/articles/Interview\\_Questions.htm](http://www.nurseuniverse.com/articles/Interview_Questions.htm) Practice answering questions. Talk about things that make you memorable. Practice will make you better. Take the rejections as a learning experience.
8. **Dress to Impress.** When going to an interview dress professionally. You never know who you will meet that particular day and, remember, first impressions always are lasting impressions.
9. **Keep an Open Mind.** You will learn many new things along the way. Keep your mind open so that you will be able to soak up as much

knowledge as you can. Use your orientation to your advantage; try new things and step out of your comfort zone.

10. **Be Excited!** This is the beginning of a new life as a nurse! Be proud of your profession. When you go to your new job, leave all your troubles at the door and concentrate on giving the care, love, and hope to your patients. Try on a smile. Your happiness and excitement as a new grad will be infectious.
11. **DON'T GIVE UP!!!!**

I hope these tips will help you in the future and even though I'm no longer in Florida and no longer one of your FNSA officers, I am still happy to offer any assistance to anyone. Feel free to email me at [Josephine.schreder-guhl@mymail.barry.edu](mailto:Josephine.schreder-guhl@mymail.barry.edu) with any questions about getting a new job, what it's like to be a new nurse, or anything. You can also find me on Facebook! I strongly encourage attendance at this year's NSNA Annual Convention in Orlando. It's close to home and there are plenty of networking opportunities! Lastly, I encourage everyone to become a member of FNA upon graduation as it is free for the first year for FNSA members. Hope to see you all at future FNA/ANA activities!

## DID YOU KNOW...

If you are not able to have all of the delegates present for your school, a FNSA executive board member can sit as one of your alternates!