



Charity Hospital School of Nursing & Charity School of Nursing

Alumni News

January 2025

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From the President



By Patricia Dufrene,
Class of 1985

Happy New Year! How odd and fraught those words seem now.

2025 began with a terrorist attack in New Orleans, devastating wildfires in California, a blizzard and bitter freeze in the southern states, and a deep mistrust in the institutions of our country. And we're only one month in.

I often reflect on Mr. Rogers' famous advice to children dealing with disasters of all kinds: "Look for the helpers." Helpers like firefighters, teachers, police... and nurses.

Fellow nurses, we are the helpers. That may seem like an overwhelming responsibility at times like this, when we are dealing with our own stress and hardships. But it is really just a reminder of what we do every day.

We help.

Florence Nightingale pledges us to do nothing harmful, but she goes on from there. "I will devote myself to the welfare of those committed to my care." To help.

Doing What We Can

Do your job, yes, but in your life as well. Help. Don't add to the stress, angst or terror with criticism, anger or questionable information. Maybe we can do little to rebuild devastated lives or homes, but in some small way we can help with clothes, food, a donation. Maybe we can't heal the hearts of the heartbroken, but we can give them a hand, a word, a hug.

Maybe we can't solve any of the world's problems, but we can do no harm. And we can help.

Doing Our Mission

The Alumni Association is dedicated to helping Charity nursing students. We can't solve the difficult problems of

every student, but we can help put food on the table when a student is struggling financially due to an illness or emergency. We can't give a scholarship to every student, but we can recognize the students who not only are high achievers in school, but who have demonstrated a commitment to service in their community. We can do what we can to enrich their time at the School of Nursing with resources, experiences and support.

For her Salutation speech (*page 11*), Fall 2024 graduate **Anie Melissa Buffinet** looked up the definition of *charity*." Reading her words, I thought that *Charity* is not a name to be taken lightly – it is at the heart of our school's traditions and its legacy. It is at the heart of the Alumni Association's mission.

Doing Our Best

Abraham Lincoln, in the close of his second inaugural address, said, "With malice toward none; with charity for all... let us strive to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle." Lincoln dreamed of peace for our people, as we all do, to this day.

So let us now strive... to help. To do our best. To make whatever situation we confront easier, fairer, better.

We are the helpers. We are Charity Nurses. ☘



Left to right, Lillian Samardzija '60, Carol Way Smith '80, Suzy Andry '59, and Francine Simms-Thomas '80 rock their cool shades at the Alumni Luncheon (see *page 4*)..



Dean's Report

By Jennifer Fernandez
Dean of Nursing
Charity School of Nursing
Delgado Community College

As we embark on a new year, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible work that has been done and the remarkable progress we

continue to make here at the Charity School of Nursing.

It is both an honor and a privilege to serve as your Dean, following in the footsteps of those who have contributed so much to the growth and legacy of this institution. Together, we have cultivated a culture of excellence, one that prepares our students to make meaningful contributions to the field of nursing and to the communities they serve.

Building a Legacy of Excellence

Our journey this past semester has been one of innovation and collaboration. We are excited to announce the expansion of our **interprofessional simulation programs**, which provide our students with hands-on experiences that are crucial in today's dynamic healthcare landscape. This is just one example of how we are ensuring that the next generation of nurses is equipped with the most advanced skills and knowledge.

Additionally, we are in the process of launching a **Virtual Reality and Artificial Intelligence lab**, which will bring even greater depth to our students' training, allowing them to engage in immersive, real-world scenarios. It's a testament to our commitment to staying at the forefront of nursing education and offering our students the tools they need to succeed.

ACEN Reaccreditation:

A Shared Responsibility

The Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) re-accreditation visit to Charity is rapidly approaching, and we are grateful for your ongoing support in this important process. I encourage you to participate in our **Public Forum Meeting on February 11 at 3:15 pm** in the Ochsner Center for Nursing and Allied Health, Room 1007. You can also submit your comments directly to ACEN via email at public-comment@acenursing.org.

Your input will be invaluable as we work to ensure that the standards of excellence you helped establish remain at the heart of our program. Together, we can continue to strengthen the foundation on which this school was built.

Welcoming New Faculty

We are proud to welcome several new faculty members to the RN program this semester. These distinguished

educators bring with them a wealth of knowledge, experience, and a shared passion for nursing education.

Among them are **Melissa Miner**, who has transitioned from adjunct faculty to a full-time role in Level I, **Amanda Weinberger '19** (Level I), **Dr. Willa Thompson** (Level II), **Lakesha Favis-Spencer** (Level III), **Dr. Stephanie Hansell** (Level IV, previously an adjunct), **Dr. Francisca Asamoa-Bonsu** (Level IV), and **Devin Vernor** (Level IV). Their dedication to advancing the education of our nursing students will undoubtedly continue to build upon the legacy of excellence that you, our alumni, have helped establish.

Recognizing Faculty Achievements

The dedication of our faculty and staff remains a cornerstone of our success. I am thrilled to recognize **Beth Prather** for her selection as an **NCLEX exam development volunteer**, a role that underscores her expertise and commitment to advancing nursing education.

We also celebrate the accomplishments of **Dr. Tracy Harris**, **Angela Shoemake**, **Deidre Cloud**, and **Beth Prather**, who have earned their **Certified Nurse Educator (CNE)** credentials.

Beth Prather and **Wendy Garretson** were honored with Delgado's **Excellence in Teaching** award for their outstanding contributions to our students' success.

I would also like to extend congratulations to **Sharon Celestine**, who was named one of **Louisiana's Great 100 Nurses**, a recognition of her exceptional work and dedication to the nursing profession.

Spectrum: Service and Leadership

Our Spectrum Student Organization has demonstrated incredible leadership and service this semester. On October 10, they organized a Blood Drive, helping to save lives while fostering a spirit of community service.

On October 12, Spectrum participated in the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Walk to raise awareness for mental health issues. Spectrum members took part in the Susan G. Komen Walk on October 26 and contributed to the Black Men's Wellness event hosted by New Orleans East Hospital (NOEH). Through these activities, our students continue to make a meaningful impact in the community, while also engaging in professional development and advocacy.

Additionally, Spectrum organized a Friendsgiving event on November 25 in the 4th floor lounge area,



providing students an opportunity to gather and celebrate the spirit of gratitude and community.

CASN: Community Engagement

The Charity Association of Student Nurses (CASN) has shown tremendous dedication to community service this semester. CASN members played a vital role in the Level III Promotion Ceremony, helping to ensure its success. They also volunteered for the Trunk-or-Treat event for Autism, creating a safe, inclusive environment for children and families.

CASN has been actively engaged in several other initiatives, including the New Orleans Walk, the New Orleans Mission Gala, and the Love Your Neighbor NOLA Thanksgiving event, where they helped distribute



food and clothing to families in need. Their participation in the AHA Heart Walk on November 16 and their collaboration with the National Coalition of 100 Black Nurses, INC National Health Committee to demonstrate proper chest compression techniques

during the event highlights their commitment to health education and wellness. CASN continues to play a critical role in fostering both leadership and service within our school and the wider community.

Honoring Lifetime SAC Members

It is with great pride that we recognize five graduates for achieving Lifetime Membership status in the Student Alumni Council (SAC). **Contessa Alexander, Emily Barron, Kechelle Hull, Haylee McKnight, and Joanne McPherson** have exemplified the values of leadership, service, and dedication that define this prestigious honor. Their contributions to our school have been invaluable, and they were formally recognized at the Pinning

Below, SAC Lifetime Members honored at Pinning.



*Above, Charity's Asst Dean Harris, alumni **Marquita Canatella '23** and Dean Fernandez at the Delgado College Building Futures Luncheon in September at Galerie de Galatoire. Proceeds from the Luncheon fundraiser support student scholarships and programs, including Nursing. While a student, Marquita was the recipient of a Building Futures scholarship and she spoke at the luncheon about how important it was to her success.*

Ceremony. SAC members play an important role in the success of all our students by providing tutoring.

Celebrating Our Graduates

At the **December Pinning Ceremony**, we celebrated the remarkable achievements of 82 graduates from the Associate Degree RN program. We are so proud of the Class of December 2024 and welcome them into our profession! *(Read more on page 10.)*

Moving Forward Together

As we look ahead to the future, I am inspired by the commitment, passion, and resilience of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni. It is your dedication that has allowed us to build such a vibrant and thriving nursing program, and together, we will continue to lead the way in nursing education. Your contributions, both in the classroom and in the community, will continue to resonate in the work of future nurses who follow in your footsteps.

Thank you for your unwavering support and for being an integral part of our school's history. I look forward to all we will continue to accomplish together in the year ahead.

Jennifer

Alumni roll into Fall with September Wild Ride

On September 28, the Charity Alumni were rollin' with our homies at the Fall 2024 Luncheon *Wild Ride!* We got our motors running with toy cars and nurse figurines tearing across the tables, and the alums in attendance looked rarin' to go – and so very cool – in all variety of creative sunglasses!

After cocktails and greetings of classmates and friends, our President **Patricia Dufrene '85** introduced herself and welcomed everyone on that crisp fall morning. **Jennifer Garnand '11** gave us the blessing in her usual thoughtful and spot-on style! (*Read it on page 6*). We sat down to a scrumptious buffet of Fish Amandine and Artichoke Chicken with luscious White Chocolate Bread Pudding for dessert!

We're Still Here!

Patricia mused that we have gone through a lot of changes in the history of the school and especially in the last couple of years. But we are still here, going strong because Charity is unstoppable! The Year 2025 is going to be especially exciting because we will be celebrating Homecoming in the Fall. Patty encouraged the grads to get in touch with their classmates, to get involved, and to run for office!

School of Nursing Report

Jennifer Fernandez, Dean of Nursing, and **Dr. Tracy Harris**, Assistant Dean, were introduced to deliver the CSN report. Dean Fernandez thanked alumni for donations toward the Dry-Erase Boards (*see story on page 13*), announced that Tracy has just earned her doctorate, and talked about the new energy of the nursing program.

Dr. Harris reiterated that the alumni's generosity changes lives. The funding we provide is used for the good and growth of Charity. She also stressed that the school is working to increase enrollment.

Roll Call of Classes

Patty and I conducted the roll call – a highlight of our meetings marked by good-natured competition! The **Class of 1964** marked 60 years with six classmates on hand to



Left to right, above, Marie McGregor '69, Jane Duggan '69, Myra Porche '69 and Betty Youngberg '69. At left, Joycelyn Jeanson '78 and Jenn Garnand '11. Below, Andrea Tanner '86, Glenda Veal '89, Jo Ann Toval '80, Francine Simms-Thomas '80, and Sharon Burel '80.



celebrate. They were each awarded Charity Alumni **Diamond Anniversary Certificates** and pocket calendars.

The Classes of 1968 and 1978 also boasted six attendees, with 1969 and 1980 close behind with five each! We were delighted to have **Brandi Serio '23** and her mom, too – so great to welcome recent graduates to our events!

"Coolest Shades" Contest

It was so difficult to select the coolest shades with all the fabulous specimens adorning alumni members, but the



Left to right, top to bottom: Penny Tuberville '64, Jo Ann Grisamore '64, and Kay Schmuellen '64; Charlene Berger '79 behind students Charlette Simmons and Carrie Brown; Kay Kenney '76 and sister Robin Beaulieu; Mary Jo Johnson and Mary Jean Southerland, Class of '74; Lillian Samerdjiza '60 and Maureen McDonald '62; students Tamu Jack and Chanika Brashears; Lori Bethelot '08 and Debra Bergeron '97; Cheryl Crouse '78 and Honorary Alumni Rick Crouse; Brandi Serio '23 (right) with her mom.

ultimate award went to **Mary Jo Johnson '74** for her winking Big Charity spectacles!

Raffles & Drawings

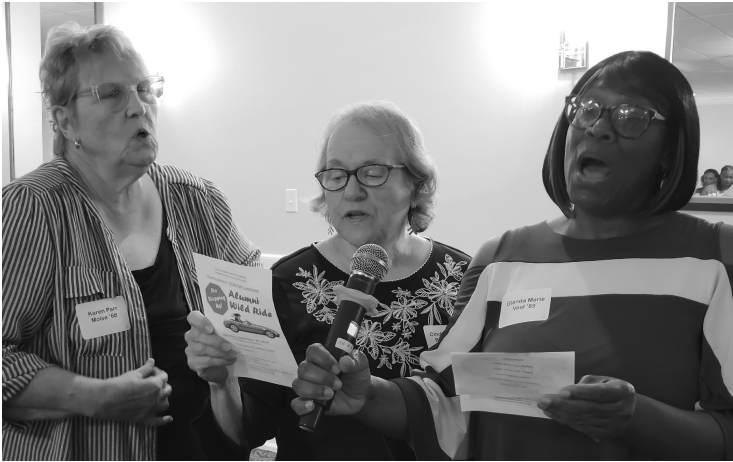
The 50/50 drawing netted \$117 for winner **Jenn Garnand '11**. The raffle of the antique Charity Nurse Cape was won by **Maureen Pensiero**, daughter of **Judith Quigley '64**. She was thrilled! "The cape is so meaningful to me because Charity is so important to my mom!" said Maureen. A set of two ceramic plaques of the dorm and Big Charity was won by **Mary Jean Southerland '74**. A Daughter of Charity statuette went to **Michelle Bauer '01**, and I was delighted to see a playful pelican sculpture I donated won by CSN faculty **Carol Leefe '92**.

Students in the House

CASN Members were on hand selling t-shirts and sweatshirts, and Spectrum members assisted with raffle sales. The Class of 1964 was delighted to meet

Alexa Williams who received the **Class of 9/11/64 Scholarship** in September, and **Vivian Manes '70** got a chance to meet senior **Haylee McKnight** who received the Rita Bares Scholarship which Vivian helped establish.





Our Alma Mater

Cindy Beniger '68, Karen Moise '68 and Glenda Veal '89 led in a rousing chorus of the Alma Mater! Patty closed the meeting by saying that she has big shoes to fill and misses **Patrick Brady '83** every day! She bid us farewell with "Stay safe!" We look forward to seeing all of you at the 2025 Spring Breakfast on March 29!

Blessing

By Jenn Garnand, Class of 2011

Let us begin our time together today in the Spirit of Charity.

"Get your motor runnin', Head out on the highway.
Looking for adventure...
In whatever comes our way." – *Steppenwolf*

Wow, what an adventure we are on!
And, "the adventure you're ready for is
the one you get." – *Jeff Probst*

Listen to those words one more time *The adventure
you're ready for is the one you get.*

None of where you are today has happened by accident,
by chance. Each of our paths have brought us here in this
moment for a very specific purpose. That purpose is
different for each of us. What we gain from today is
entirely unique to where we find ourselves in our lives and
on our journey.

Maybe today you needed to get out of the house.
Maybe you needed a good, warm meal. Maybe you needed
to sit next to an old friend. Maybe you needed to
remember the faces, feelings and memories of friends and
times passed. Maybe it was to find a new perspective.
Maybe it was to reconnect with where you've been so that
you can identify on the roadmap where you're going.

All of the days line up together pushing you forward
into this, the present moment. The days can sometimes



Left to right,
Karen Moise '68,



Cindy Beniger '68 and
Glenda Veal '89; Mary
Singletary '49 and Virgis
Boudreaux '56; Marianne
McCrory '68 and Sandra
Robert '56.

feel mundane, long,
rushed, short, too few...
We know that each new
day is not promised. But
we take each day as it
comes.

"Then one day, when
you least expect it,
the great adventure finds you." – *Ewan McGregor*

The adventure – YOUR adventure – the one you didn't
know you were ready for. That one day when we say:

"Today, I will do what others won't, so that
tomorrow I can do what others can't. – *Jerry Rice*

That's the thing that distinguishes us. *It makes us Charity.*
But, "the future is not something we merely enter.

The future is something we *create*." – *Leonard Sweet*

We know this firsthand through the history of Charity
School of Nursing. Two years ago, we celebrated
Homecoming – now a new building, a new chapter.
And before that, *so many other* milestones. Each one
surrounded by its own fears and doubts.

But each experience *created* and welcomed as a new
beginning and opportunity for good... for more... for
better.

Charity, go forth on this adventure. Buckle up for the
wild ride. Embrace the future.

Continue to be the living legacy of our school, our
profession and our community.

"Take the world in a love embrace...

We can climb so high...

Yeah, darlin' – Go make it happen." – *Steppenwolf*
Amen. ☘

Charity's Spectrum Honored with LCTCS "I am the Future" Impact Award

Delgado College nominated the Charity School of Nursing student organization **Spectrum** for the LCTCS *I am Louisiana's Future* award for outstanding student organizations, and Spectrum won! It is a great honor for the School of Nursing.

The Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) is a network of Louisiana's twelve community and technical colleges (totaling 65 campuses) that provides advocacy, management and support for associate degree and technical education. Our last Delgado Chancellor went on to become the President of LCTCS.

Campus and Community

Spectrum was recognized for its contributions to student development and community engagement. Spectrum fosters academic and social support for students, creating a welcoming space for all.

The organization has led multiple initiatives, including blood drives, career fairs, and volunteer activities. Spectrum's members also organize educational sessions and community events, helping students build leadership and professional skills. Their dedication to service and learning makes them true ambassadors for the future of Louisiana's healthcare workforce.

October Event

Spectrum was honored at the LCTCS gala in October. The Alumni Association sponsored a table so that Spectrum students and their faculty coordinators could attend the gala.

Spectrum President **Charlette Simmons** writes, "On behalf of the Spectrum, I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Charity Alumni Association for sponsoring a table for our members at the LCTCS Impact Award ceremony. We are thrilled to be recognized for our positive contributions at Charity School of Nursing through the *I Am Louisiana's Future* Award.



Top, left to right, LCTCS Impact Awards winners, Joe Scheuermann, DCC grad and Athletic Director, Spectrum president Charlette Simmons (December 2024 graduate), DCC Chancellor Dr. Larissa Littleton-Steib, and Todd Trosclair, DCC grad and Board Member.

Below, Spectrum members and faculty coordinators on stage with LCTCS President Dr. Monty Sullivan.



"The generous support from the alumni not only allows us to celebrate this achievement but also underscores the significance of our efforts to elevate the standards of nursing. We are honored to represent Spectrum and Charity School of Nursing by showcasing the impactful work we are doing to not only advance in nursing school but also in our future nursing profession.

"Thank you once again for your kindness and for believing in our mission. We look forward to making a lasting impact in the field of nursing." ❧

Scholarships Celebrate Achievement at the Promotion Ceremony

On September 16, 2024, the Charity Hospital School of Nursing Alumni Association presented \$10,750 in scholarships and awards to eighteen outstanding students of Delgado Community College's Charity School of Nursing.

All scholarships and awards are made possible through generous donations from Charity nursing alumni, their families and friends.

The recipients of the scholarships and awards for the Fall 2024 semester were (*left to right*):

Level 2

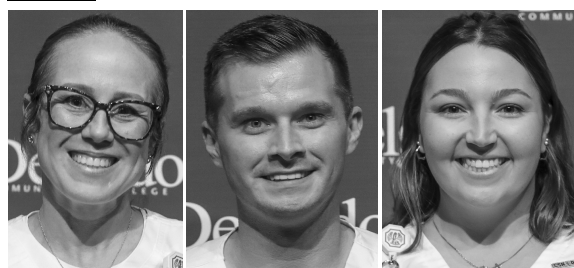


Amber Dawson, Sister Blanche McDonnell Scholarship, \$500

LaTasha Simmons, Sister Camilla Gaudin Scholarship, \$500

Raisa Telleria, Christine Hurley Carbon '71 Scholarship, \$1,000

Level 3



Deneille Bealer, Madeline Tolson Markwood '52 Scholarship, \$500

Cody Effler, Jeanne Colligan Juneau '74 Scholarship, \$500

Avarie Hymel, Carolyn Schwarz and Charles William Myers Scholarship, \$500

Janae Madison,
Peggy Begnaud Johns '63 Scholarship,
\$500



Diego Mencia, Leona Kruebbe Hilbert '46 Scholarship, \$1,000

Melanie Menendez, Georga Helmer '79 Scholarship, \$500

Sara Moran, Joanne Delaune '78 Scholarship, \$750

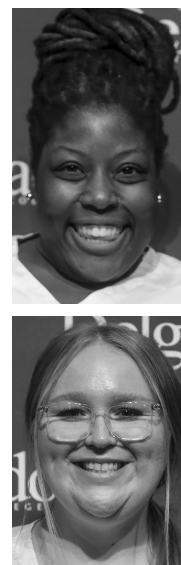


Joselyn Ortiz, Dorothy Aull Nugent Barkley '57 Scholarship, \$500

Richard Redmann III,
Dr. Patrick Brady Jr. '83 Scholarship, \$1,000

Lacy Binafegha Ritch,
Sheila Ann Sorrell '78 Scholarship, \$500

Alexa Williams,
Class of 9/11/64 Scholarship, \$500



Level 4



Julian Aquino, Jan Carrio '76 Scholarship, \$500

Haylee McKnight, Rita Bares Raphael '65 Scholarship, \$500



Federation of Registered Professional and Licensed Practical Nurses of Charity Hospital Awards \$500 each

Quinton Burd – RN Program

Not pictured:

Leroy Quinn – PN Program
⌘

Promotion and Honors Ceremony Salutes Level 3 and more

The Promotion Ceremony and Honors Ceremony in September was a joyous occasion marking the transition of students who had completed one year of the nursing program into Level III. Students received gold Promotion Bars, that read CSN/DCC (instead of the traditional nursing caps). The bars become part of their official uniform.

The Ceremony also recognized the Level III students welcomed into the Sigma Alpha Chi (SAC) Honor Society, as well as students at all levels who received Clinical Excellence Awards and the Alumni scholarships.

The ceremony also became an impromptu celebration of faculty achievements as Asst. Dean **Tracy Harris** was given flowers in recognition of receiving her doctorate, and other faculty were recognized for earning Certified Nurse Educator (CNE) credentials.

Congratulations to all!! ☘



Above, Level III students, faculty and alumni guests at the Promotion Ceremony in the Delgado Theater; Assistant Dean Harris receives flowers celebrating her new doctorate degree.



Reaching Me

Please note, since I do most of my work remotely, the Alumni Office does not have a phone. Please do NOT call the old Alumni phone number and leave a message. I won't get it.

The absolute BEST way to reach me is by email at **chsnaaoffice@gmail.com**. Also, I check the Post Office Box regularly so a letter is great! Texts also work well, but be sure to include your name in the text! You can text my cellphone at 504-237-5161. You can call me on my cellphone too, but I won't always pick up, so please leave a message about what you need, and say your name clearly!

Get Involved

If you are interested in being more involved in the Alumni Association, let me know. Anyone is welcome to attend Board Meetings, volunteer to help with our events, and run for office!

Pay Your Dues

Finally, please pay your Alumni Membership dues! Check your mailing label on the back page to see if you are up to date. We appreciate additional donations as well! Remember, membership dues make it possible for us to send out these newsletters, and all the wonderful and exciting things we do. You make the engine run!

I look forward to seeing you all at the Alumni Breakfast on Saturday, March 29! ☘



From the Executive Director

By Lista Hank, Class of 1997

There is so much to look forward to in 2025! The **Spring Alumni Breakfast** is **March 29**, so order your tickets today!

(See the form on page 22.) It's going to be a fun event with a *Cherry Ames* theme! Many of you recent grads may have no idea who *Cherry Ames* is, but this is your chance to find out! Think *Nancy Drew* in a hospital! Does that help? Probably not – but that just adds to the *mystery*...

Homecoming in October

Can you believe it's Homecoming time again? Our **2025 Homecoming Celebration** will be in October! We will put the details on our website as soon as they are set, but it's not too soon to start making plans with your classmates! If you would like a class list with contact information, email me at **chsnaaoffice@gmail.com**.

Homecoming 2025 is your chance to tour the new building, including the Virtual Hospital! And the Homecoming Sunday Brunch will be at the Lakefront Airport Terminal – a truly magical venue!

December 2024 Pinning Ceremony & Graduation Awards

On December 16, Charity School of Nursing held its Fall 2024 Pinning Ceremony at the Pontchartrain Center, honoring 82 new graduates.

Dr. Tracy Harris, Assistant Dean, served as Mistress of Ceremonies. Senior **Charlette Simmons** led the Pledge of Allegiance. Delgado's Chancellor, **Dr. Larissa Littleton-Steib**, welcomed the new graduates and their guests.

Anie Melissa Buffinet gave the Salutation (*read it on page 11*). The names of each graduate were read as they crossed the stage to be pinned by faculty members in a ceremony that is an important milestone for every Charity graduate!

Special Recognition

Dean of Nursing **Jennifer Fernandez** presented the honors and awards. **Contessa Alexander** was awarded the **Honor Pin**, the highest award from the School of Nursing, given to the student who most exemplifies character, nursing ability, scholarship, leadership, school participation and positive influence on the student body. Contessa also received the **Highest GPA Award**.

Charlette Simmons, President of Spectrum, received the **Award of Distinction** for her exceptional leadership and contributions to the student body. The **Sister Stanislaus Malone Award** for character, professionalism, and potential was presented to **Anie Melissa Buffinet**, President of CASN, who also received the NODNA Award. **Cindy Chu** received the **Sister Blanche McDonnell Award** for her outstanding scholarship and community involvement. **Latrice Morris** was awarded the **Margaret Palmisano Alumni Award**.

Sigma Alpha Chi (SAC) Honor Society members were recognized and received their gold cords to be worn with their graduation gowns at Commencement. SAC inducted five new Lifetime Members: **Contessa Alexander, Emily Barron, Kechelle Hull, Haylee McKnight** and **Joanne McPherson**. Joanne McPherson received the SAC Award.

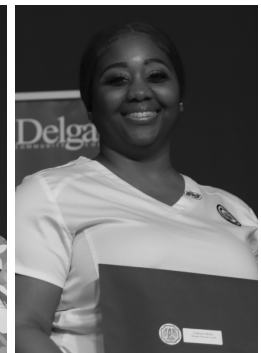
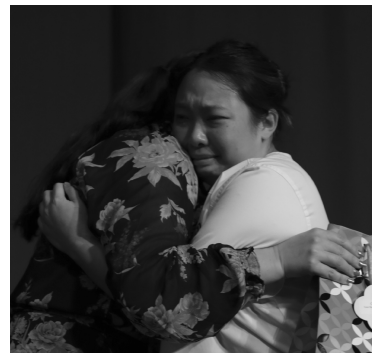
Senior **LaShea Kent** led her classmates in reciting the Nightingale Pledge.

We are delighted to welcome these graduates into our profession as proud Charity Nurses! ☘



Left to right, top to bottom: Dean Fernandez presents the Honor Pin to Contessa Alexander; Asst. Dean Harris with Charlette Simmons who received the Award of Distinction; Dean Fernandez presents the SAC

Award to Joanne McPherson; Cindy Chu cries on receiving the Sister Blanche McDonnell Award; Latrice Morris was awarded the Margaret Palmisano Alumni Award; Charity seniors recite the Nightingale Pledge.



Salutation

by Anie Melissa Buffinet,
Class of December 2024

Good afternoon esteemed faculty, proud family, friends, and fellow graduates. I am honored to stand before you today as we celebrate this significant milestone.

Three years ago, if someone had told me I would be standing here today, I would've laughed!

I remember in Level 1, one of our teachers said, "If you can get through Charity, you can get through anything." I have taken those words with me every semester.

Now, there have been times when I was studying, that those words rearranged themselves in my head and I would say to myself, "If I wasn't at Charity, I could be doing anything else right now."

Believing in Ourselves

But seriously, making the decision – at the age of 42 – to go back to nursing school, wasn't an easy one. Which makes me believe that it wasn't even my decision – it was all God. I don't think I've ever had to believe in myself and put my trust in God the way I've had to throughout this journey.

But it was that first decision – to come back to school – that set up every decision I've had to make since then. Every time we sat down to study, every time we attended a lecture, every time we cried and kept going and every time we went to clinical – whatever we had to do to get us here – we decided to work hard and not to give up on ourselves.

Answering Why

All of us here have our *why*. Why are we here? Why did we choose this path? For me, my why is my family.

I've said that I never had to believe in myself the way I've had to through this journey, but I also have to say, I've never had anyone believe in me the way my family did through nursing school. The decision to study ALL OF THE TIME, to go to every lecture, to wipe my tears when it was hard, and to get up at 4am to go to clinical – those decisions were easy, because my family was watching. I believe God allowed me to wait until now to go to nursing school, because He knew I needed my family to love me through this journey. They loved me through the hard and they celebrated with me through the good.

Lifelong Friendships

Another thing I know is, if I went to nursing school at any other time of my life, I would not have made the



Left, Anie Melissa Buffinet (center) with Dean Fernandez and Asst. Dean Harris at the Pinning Ceremony in December.

Below, seniors in procession after the ceremony.

lifelong friendships I've made these past two years. I wouldn't trade any of you, because God knew I needed you now!

We know the reputation that the words *Charity Nurse* brings to the table. I don't think I went one clinical day without hearing, "Oh, she's a Charity student, she knows what she's doing."

I looked up the word *charity*, and the definition reads, "generosity and helpfulness, especially toward the needy or suffering." We should strive to keep *charity* in our own hearts, to continue to work hard and not give up on ourselves. Do not forget your why, and most importantly bring your heart to every patient you help.

Your Heart Brought You Here

Our calling is extraordinary, but our calling is also fragile. Your heart brought you here: let it get you through the hard days and nights. Continue your journey, wherever that may take you, as the nurse you wanted to be on Day One of Level 1. Be who they expect us to be. Decide every day to be a *Charity Nurse*.

Congratulations, December Nursing Class of 2024!
We did it!! ☸



Collaboration Creates New Learning Opportunities

By Patricia Smart,
MN, RN, CNE, FAADN
Professor of Nursing
Educational Coordinator for
Level 2



Left to right, Pat Smart and Janine Lemoine '03.

I would like to share some of the exciting things we are doing in Level 2 to assist our students' learning.

This semester, we did several collaboration activities with other disciplines. Having nursing and allied health programs in the same building has really allowed for interprofessional collaboration.

Dr. Beatrice Eweni teaches Oxygenation, which covers nursing care for patients with COPD and Asthma. During her classes, she has the patient develop problems with breathing. She calls respiratory therapy for assistance. Two respiratory therapy faculty, **Rene Randall** or **Mavis Larrimer**, come from the back of the classroom and assist the patient. They explain to the students the numerous respiratory treatments that can be used to improve their lung function. The students are engaged and see the way different disciplines work together to improve patient outcomes.

Ms. Leigh Hanhart teaches nursing care for patients with cellular regulation (cancer) problems. Faculty **Anne LaVance**, Pharmacy, and **Robin Wegener**, Radiation Therapy, join her in class to share their expertise with students. Ms. LaVance talks about safety concerns when nurses are administering chemotherapy and the procedure for handling chemotherapy spills. Ms. Wegener discusses patient care associated with receiving radiation for cancer treatment. Hearing from experts in other healthcare disciplines benefits the students so much! ☘



Above, Ms. LaVance, Pharmacy faculty, demonstrates PPEs used in chemotherapy to RN students.

It Takes a Village

By Janine Lemoine,
MSN, APRN, FNP-C, CSN
Class of 2003

As a new employee at Charity School of Nursing, I was required to

attend New Faculty Orientation (NFO) over several weeks throughout my first year. One day I expressed to my Level 2 coordinator, Ms. Smart, how pleased I was with the process and topic selection used in the orientation program. This conversation led us to thinking about sharing these ideas as a presentation at a national conference.

In November, I had the privilege of attending my first Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (OADN) annual convention in Tampa, FL. Ms. Smart and I gave a 50-minute podium presentation entitled *SMP (Structured Mentoring Program): Your Way to Faculty Retention!*

The attendees were pleasantly surprised to receive Mardi Gras beads while walking into the room and listening to Mardi Gras music! By sharing our New Orleans culture, we hoped to create some excitement and engagement.

The topics we discussed included exam question writing, advising students, ways to address unsatisfactory student clinical performance, and the development of the faculty portfolio. We also shared information from a faculty survey showing the success of the faculty orientation program.

We hope our presentation will influence others to enrich their own mentoring programs and focus on retaining the staff they have. ☘



Pat and Janine at the OADN conference.

Alumni lead the way with Dry-Erase Boards



In the *White Cap* this summer, we asked alumni to make donations toward dry-erase boards for the small instructional rooms on the 4th floor of the Nursing and Allied Health building. We received many generous donations and, in short order, several dry-erase boards were installed.

Special thanks to these donors of \$500 or more. A brass plate will be mounted on boards in their honor:

Saundra Owens Robert '56 for the Class of 1956

James Philipps in memory of

Barbara Pitre Philipps '61 (three boards)

Linda Sue Grimme Fontenot '65

Dennis Trosclair in memory of

Brenda Crump Trosclair '68

Jan Carrio '76

Other donors will be listed in the *White Cap* this summer.

A Clear Need

The response from students was overwhelming! They LOVE the dry-erase Boards! The boards are constantly in use and there was a lot of competition to reserve those rooms for study groups. Clearly there was a need for these boards!

It was Level 2 Coordinator **Pat Smart** who initially reported to us that students were requesting that dry-erase boards be installed – but that it was low on the list of priorities for the college. Once those first boards were installed, Pat told us, “My office is on the 4th floor and, when I pass these rooms, the dry-erase boards are always being used by the students! I have talked to several and they expressed how much they appreciate having the boards to help them learn. I would like to extend a big thank you for your contributions!”

Tactile Learning

The boards are really helpful in clinical group meetings and study groups and, in an increasingly digital world, dry-erase boards provide a tactile learning process that adds another dimension to students’ study toolbox. The high-quality magnetic porcelain boards will last forever and won’t scratch or stain like cheap melamine ones.

But most exciting of all, our leadership in providing the boards showed how useful the boards are and led to support for the project from the “CSN Fund.” What a wonderful success story! ☘

CSN Fund finishes the job with more Dry-Erase Boards

By Shena Sanders, MSN, RN
Associate Professor,
Spectrum Faculty Advisor

After the School of Nursing moved to the City Park campus, the Charity Student Government Association and its responsibilities were subsumed by the greater Delgado SGA. However, student fees collected from Charity students were retained in a “CSN Fund,” and in the Fall of 2023, Spectrum faculty and its members were tasked with managing the financial reserve.

These funds traditionally facilitated student activities, including covering the cost of catering various student events, purchasing senior class t-shirts, or purchasing class banners. Our goals were to continue traditions from South Claiborne while finding new ways to serve nursing students on the City Park campus.

Hearing the students and faculty

In the Fall of 2024, during a Spectrum meeting, it was suggested that the student activity fees be used to continue the project begun by the Alumni Association, and help purchase the additional Dry-Erase Boards needed to complete the 4th floor. That would require the purchase of five boards.

During the meeting, Dr. Murdock mentioned that the third floor conference rooms could also use dry-erase boards. The student members agreed and shared how helpful the boards are for studying. As a result, ten dry-erase boards were ordered at that time!

Where we are today!

This continues to evolve with the collaboration of student representatives, Spectrum Faculty, and the Alumni. After doing a walk-through with Lista, we realized we needed four more dry-erase boards to complete the 3rd and 4th floors in Building 14 (the Nursing and Allied Health building) and we also wanted to place four additional boards in Building 2 in the classrooms dedicated to nursing classes.

Markers, erasers and cleaning spray for each room have also been ordered. Like the boards provided by Alumni donations, brass plates will be mounted on each board, and these plates will read “Thanks to Delgado Charity School of Nursing RN students!”

We all have a common goal at Charity School of Nursing! That goal is to see our nursing students succeed both academically and personally! ☘

Remembering the School Flag

By William “Mr. Bill” K. Evans,
Class of 1982

Before entering nursing school, I spent six years on active duty in the USAF Medical Corps, working in the Flight Surgeon’s Office and Emergency Room. When I arrived at CHSN, I was still in the Reserves, married and had a 2-year-old daughter. I was older than some of my instructors – hence my school nickname “Mr. Bill.”

My young family lived in a trailer in LaPlace, Louisiana, and I rode a motorcycle to class every day. Some of my classes were at what was then LSUNO. I sold ladies shoes in Lakeside Mall and worked as a janitor at a local bank when I was not at school.

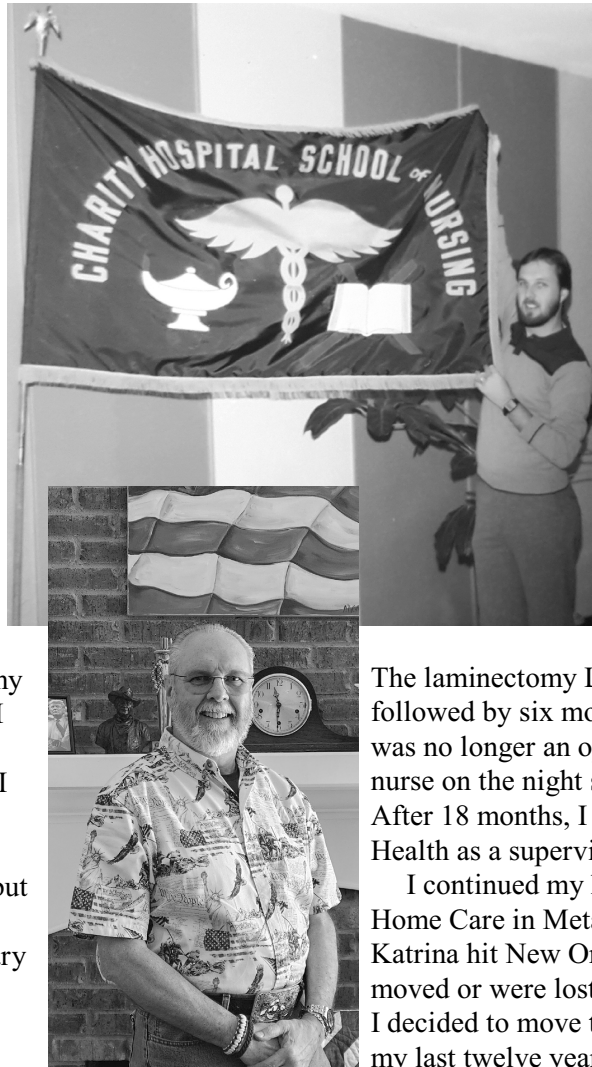
I sometimes regret not having time to participate in social activities at school, but I had a family to care for. I was often too tired to read the volumes of texts necessary for class, so my dear wife would read to me while I rested on the sofa in the evening. As I took my tests, I could still hear her reading to me while I answered the questions.

During clinicals, my classmates would often seek me out to help them with technical skills, like Foley or NG tube placements, blood draws or starting IV – things I had been doing for years in the Air Force. Those who were afraid to talk to patients would ask me to start conversations with a patient to break the ice. In return, they would help me with those dreaded care plans!

Starting with a Sketch

During my Senior Med-Surg semester, the students had a school flag design contest. I thought about what the school flag should include, and sketched it on a piece of paper. My design was centered around a gold Caduceus with a shadowed red cross. A Bible, or Book of Knowledge, was laid over the cross. I added a Florence Nightingale Lamp (to navigate the dark wards of the hospital) to balance the visuals. Of course, *Charity Hospital School of Nursing* had to be across the top.

I showed my design to Sister Genevieve Sullivan. She encouraged me to enter it in the contest. My design was selected, and the school arranged to have the flag made. In 1981 it was hung in the lobby of the School of Nursing.



Left, Bill with the flag in 1981; below, Bill today.

I had hoped the flag would stay there in the lobby forever, but that was not to be. A few years later, I took my wife and daughter to the CHSN building to show them the finished flag, but it no longer hung in the lobby.

Going Forward

My nursing career proceeded. For ten years I worked in local emergency rooms, at EJGH, Westpark in Hammond, and River Parishes in LaPlace.

Then I injured my back.

The laminectomy L4-L5-S1 was successful, followed by six months of rehab. An ER position was no longer an option, so I worked as a charge nurse on the night shift in a Med-Surg Unit. After 18 months, I pivoted to Capitol Home Health as a supervisor until it closed down.

I continued my home health career with R+R Home Care in Metairie. After 4 years there, Katrina hit New Orleans and all of my patients moved or were lost to the storm. My wife and I decided to move to Jackson, MS. I finished my last twelve years doing home health with Sta-Home Health of Madison.

Wondering about the Flag

Over the years, I learned that the school joined Delgado and became Charity School of Nursing and, more recently, had moved to the City Park campus. Thinking back over the past 42 years since my graduation, I often wondered what happened to the flag.

As I was reading the last *White Cap* newsletter, I decided to just randomly email the Alumni Office. I was so pleased to find out that not only was my flag safely in the new Alumni Office, but Lista just had it dry cleaned and was wondering about its history!

Nursing school at Charity was one of the toughest times in my life, but I’m glad I did it. Even though I never got an advanced degree, I was able to do what I loved – caring for the sick and injured, and teaching patients and caregivers how to manage their illnesses. I came home each night tired, but satisfied that what I did that day was worth the effort. I thank Charity for providing me with the skills I needed, and for a career that allowed me to take care of my wife and two daughters.

I am proud to be called a Charity RN. ☸

Alumni Notes

“Just a thank you on behalf of **Gloria Armagnac Asprion '45** (Franklinton, LA) for continuing her subscription to the *White Cap*. Gloria is currently 102 years old; she enjoys the *White Cap* and reads it cover to cover many times. She was featured in the Spring/Winter 2016 edition and also re-reads the past issues many times. After the newsletters come, she regales the family with stories of her time at Charity. It gives us all great pleasure. February 2017 was the last long car trip we were able to make to attend the Alumni Luncheon. Thank you for keeping her on your mailing list. I'm sure many of the older nurses enjoy the newsletters as much as she does.

“Gloria was born in El Paso, Texas in 1922. She entered CSN in 1943 – during the war years – and graduated in 1945. She tells stories of living in the dorm. Every time it rained, they'd get soaked running over to Big Charity. She remembers the excitement of waiting for the catwalk connecting the dorm to the hospital to be built. When it finally opened, every time they used the catwalk they felt like queens and giggled as they ran across – especially if it was raining! Gloria's roommate introduced her to a sailor who was home on leave. She married that sailor (George Asprion) and they had 3 daughters.

“Gloria worked Med-Surg at Charity Hospital, at Ochsner, and at Baptist Hospital. Then she moved back to El Paso to work in the Health Department, as a Clinical RN at a factory, and as a Home Health RN (at the time, it was called Quality Care). In the early 1990s she was honored in Washington D.C. for her work by President George H. Bush. Gloria retired in 1998 at the age of 76, and developed a Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) in Santa Fe. In 2004, she moved to Franklinton. Thank you for the opportunity to tell some of Gloria's story.” – *Helena Asprion, Class of 1998*

S. Joanne Philbrook Newton '56 (Cameron Park, CA): “I enjoy so much receiving the newsletters to keep me up on the activities of Charity! I have had an eventful two years – sold our home after 42 wonderful years, and moved to an independent Senior Citizens Residence. It's a two-bedroom apartment with all our needs met. It was a rough two years for my husband Bill and in April he went home to our Heavenly Father to be with our daughter Barbara. It's been a hard adjustment for me after over 64 years together. My oldest daughter has moved to Dayton,



Gloria Armagnac Asprion '45 at 102 years old

Nevada and now I have to decide if I should stay here, or move to be with her. Need prayer to make the right decision. I still have wonderful memories of my three years at Charity! God bless you!”

Diane Ducote Rachal '57 (Jacksonville, FL): “I look forward to receiving the *White Cap* – especially to keeping up with fellow nurses! My career has been mostly in Public

Health – beginning in Florida and ending in my home state of Louisiana. At present, I have retired to be with my son here in Jacksonville. I keep busy with my retirement hobby: quilting!”

Rosemary Hathorn Holmes '62 (Zephyr, TX): “Too many years have gone by since 1959-1962, the years I attended and graduated from the great CHSN. My, have times changed! I retired from active and Reserve Air Force NC after 22 years. I worked in Texas and Louisiana hospitals. Now I belong to the American Legion in Brownwood, TX. We visit veterans at nursing homes monthly. I keep in touch with my classmate **Patsy Hebert McLendon '62** – she's in Dallas now. I think I could write a book about Charity and my school days – riding the train back and forth from Alexandria, Joe's Bar, the Charity ER, the beach and Pat O'Brien's! Love the newsletters – and looking forward to the next one! God bless all of you!”

Catherine Blackwell Holland '68 (Walker, LA) was recognized as one of sixty Outstanding Alumni at the 60th Anniversary Gala at Southeastern Louisiana University School of Nursing. Cathy graduated with a BS in 1974 from SLU, Univ of Mississippi in 1976 with a MN, LSU in 1990 with a MS, and in 1992 with a PhD in Research and Vocational Education. Her nursing foundation was forged at CHNO in ICU with awesome nurses and an amazing supervisor **Saundra Robert '56**. Cathy continued working at Earl K Long (EKL) and Lallie Kemp Hospitals. She started teaching at SLU in 1975 and retired in 2007. After a year, she returned to work as an Adult Nurse Practitioner for six years for LSU-HSC in a Baton Rouge Clinic which served EKL patients. Her mentor was **Dr. Janice Hudson '66**. She loved taking care of patients and teaching students. Although inactive as a nurse,

Cathy is still a member of ANA. Her pastime now is spending time with grandchildren.



Ecoee Rooney '99 (*Folsom, LA*) has been named the new Chief Nursing Officer at Indicator Sciences. The company uses analytics to enhance nurse job satisfaction, improve patient care and safety, and encourage continuous improvement. A Nurse Practitioner with over twenty years of leadership in professional development, Ecoee

blogs on the Indicator Sciences website, **indisci.com**, about empowering nurses through analytics, including addressing burnout through targeted support and workload balancing, recognizing nursing excellence with data, and bridging the knowledge-practice gap in nursing. "I am filled with excitement about the potential to transform nursing practice through innovative analytics. I look forward to connecting with nurses through my blogs, at conferences, and in person at healthcare facilities."

Janine Lemoine '03 (*New Orleans, LA*): "As a Charity Alum, I was molded into a bedside nurse with a strong skillset and began my career at Touro Infirmary on the Telemetry Unit. In 2005, I relocated to Hammond, LA due to Hurricane Katrina. After settling in Hammond, I worked as a float nurse, a home health nurse, and an ADON. In 2012, I became a LPN instructor and have taught hundreds of medical assistant, CNA, phlebotomy, and nursing students. While teaching fulltime, I continued my own studies and became a Family Nurse Practitioner in 2022. Despite the love that came from caring for patients as their provider, I missed teaching. In Fall 2023, I had my last first day as an instructor for the RN program at Charity School of Nursing. What a dream come true!"

Charity Brown '22 (*New Orleans, LA*): "I have been working and taking classes for my BSN. Just went PRN at East Jefferson Hospital and at Ochsner in the ICU. Hoping to be at the Alumni Spring Breakfast!"

Rudesia Fletcher '24 (*Harvey, LA*): "I am currently working in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit. I love it so far! It is still very surreal to me – it feels like a dream sometimes because I remember when this was just an aspiration. Truly a blessing! I am definitely planning to get my BSN – hopefully starting in 2025 – and maybe a MSN just in case I want to go further into NP and open my own practice or educate. Who knows? The options are limitless! In the future, I would love to help others in their

journey and train new nurses coming into the field."

Great 100 Nurses of Louisiana honors exemplary RNs for their commitment to excellence, their concern for humanity, their dedication to the profession, and their mentoring of others.

Sixteen Charity alumni were among the **2024 Great 100**

Nurse honorees:

Sharon Trahan '67	Erin Goodrow '09
Rosalie Gonzales '78	Anneke Matthews '11
Chevelle Parker '88	Bianca Brooks-Curtis '13
Sally Malone '00	Brandi Dufrene '17
Tanya Solly '05	Jamie Grayson '19
Brian Baudoin '06	Lauren Meyer '19
Tracy Bynum '06	Denise Campbell '20
Nicole Laborde '08	Kimberly Sanders '20

Because we missed printing this in 2023, here are the **2023 Great 100 Nurse** honorees:

Andrea Duplechain '87	Stephanie Sauvinet '08
Danielle Magri '97	Amber Hebert '13
Kimberly Reed '00	Rebekah Hoffacker '16
Ruth Sagastume '00	Misty Dufrene '18
Nella Morvant '01	Brandi Borden '19
Elizabeth Caffery '02	Nina Boutte '20
Gabriela Powell '06	⌘



Charity Alumni shine at 2024 Nightingale Awards



Trilby Barnes, Charity Class of

1986 was inducted into the **Louisiana Nurses**

Foundation Hall of Fame at the Nightingale Gala in August 2024. Trilby has been a nurse for 46 years starting as a LPN in 1978. After graduating from Charity, she earned a BSN from Chamberlain School of Nursing. She is certified by AWHONN (Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses) as a Labor and Delivery Nurse and as a Critical Nurse LD. For the past 12 years, Trilby has served as a Telephonic Triage Nurse with Ochsner Health Network.

Trilby was the founder of Medi-Lend Nursing Services and Pro-Lend Staffing LLP, where she significantly

impacted nurse staffing and healthcare standards. Her contributions to professional organizations, and her leadership in community health initiatives have earned her numerous accolades, including the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) Nurse Entrepreneur of the Year and the 2023 NBNA Trailblazer Award. "Trilby's enduring achievements and dedication to nursing have left a lasting legacy, influencing countless nurses and improving patient care across multiple states."

Congratulations to Trilby and to the following Charity Alumni who were nominees for the 2024 Louisiana Nurses Foundation Annual Nightingale Awards, recognizing excellence in nursing:

Clinical Nurse Educator of the Year

Tanya Sordelet-Jordan '15

Contribution to Quality Award

Tracy Bynum '06 Anthony Jackson '11

Registered Nurse Mentor of the Year

Sharon Trahan '67 Tanya Sordelet-Jordan '15
Mitzi Lonergan '96

Clinical Practice Nurse of the Year

Toni Rougeou '90 Kristi Lamarque '13

Nursing Administrator of the Year

Scott Hunter '98 Paula Songy '08
Laura Tassin '07

Outstanding Community Achievement
by a Registered Nurse

Keri Skeins '07 Michelle Boudreaux '19

Registered Nurse of the Year

Leslie Ricalde '88	Donna Doyle '10
Celeste Arceneaux '89	Kristi Lamarque '13
Karen Babesh '94	Pamela Weaver '13
Roxanne McNally '97	Brandi Elghorayeby '19
Tessa Ayme '06	Ana Flores '21
Rochelle Johnson '07	David Lewis '21
Donna Domingo '09	Thomas Bauer '22 ☿

Charity Faculty leads NAMI Walk Team



On October 12, some Charity faculty, students and staff participated in NAMI Walk 2024 as part of Team "Stay Golden-You Matter," organized by **Shannon Taplin-Albert**, CSN faculty and Skills Lab Coordinator.

Shannon created the team in memory of her son Derrick Miguel Albert, Jr. who passed away in 2023. The team also included her family, friends and supporters.

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) provides funding, empowerment and support for those dealing with mental health challenges. The NAMI Walk is an inclusive event welcoming those with mental health issues, friends, family and supporters. It is also an important fundraising event for NAMI.

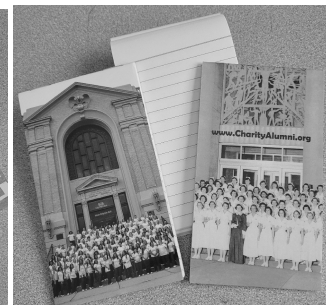
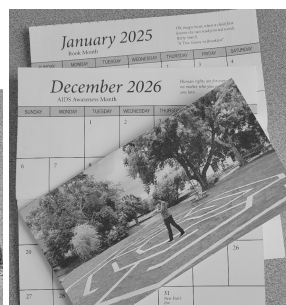
Team "Stay Golden-You Matter" was one of the top fundraisers in the 2024 New Orleans walk. ☿

Above, Shannon tells the crowd at the NAMI Walk about her son Derrick; below, Team Stay Golden-You Matter at the walk in Audubon Park.



Renew your membership: Feel great - and get a fun gift!

Renew at \$25 or above, and choose a fun gift: a vintage postcard of the old dorm, a pocket calendar, a 3" x 5" notepad, or a pelican coaster. See page 23.



Goodbyes



“My mother **Marilyn Landry Roccaforte '46** passed away in March 2024 at the age of 98. She leaves behind a legacy of love, laughter, and cherished memories that will forever be etched into the hearts of those who had the privilege of knowing her. She was a woman of remarkable strength, compassion, and boundless zeal for knowledge. While dutifully raising six

active children, she also dedicated her career to nursing, where her unwavering commitment to care touched the lives of countless patients. Her sharp mind, coupled with her nurturing spirit, made her a beacon of hope and comfort in times of need. She loved Charity Hospital and spoke of her early days there often.” – *Julie Roccaforte*

Marvell Idella Martin Cantrell '47

came into the world in Mobile, AL on September 18, 1926 as a hurricane was bearing down on the city. She left peacefully in February 2020 at the age of 93. She lived a full life in Mobile, graduating from high school in 1944 before enlisting in the US Army Nurse Corps for the war effort. The war ended while she was training at Charity Hospital School of Nursing, and she continued to work as a nurse for over 40 years at local hospitals, for private practices, and at The Little Sisters of the Poor Sacred Heart Residence. She retired from her Night Supervisor position after working at Little Sisters' for 24 years. – *Nona Cantrell Stokes*



Henrietta Stanga Nesom '47 grew up in New Orleans and was a longtime resident of Baton Rouge. She was married to the late Maj. John W. Nesom, retired from Louisiana State Police. After a long career at Stanocola Medical Clinic in Baton Rouge, she retired in 1989. She was dedicated to her patients and spent many hours doing private duty nursing. She was a force of nature that could hardly be contained. Growing up during the Depression, she learned to be frugal and knew the value of hard work. She was known in her family to fix anything with her inventive and imaginative style. Henrietta served in Masonic-related organizations as Past Matron of the Order of the Eastern Star and Past President of the Daughters of the Oasis. She passed away in November 2023 at the age of 97.



Leola Agnes “Lee” Peters Berning

'50 grew up in Abita Springs, Louisiana, and never forgot her Southern charm, graciousness and helpful heart. She began her nursing career in San Francisco, accompanied by her sister and fellow nurse Alma Doris. There, she met her future husband Mel - they married in 1952 and had five children. A woman ahead

of her time, Lee Berning was a model for what came to be known as a working mother. “Our mom was a treasure to us, a model of selflessness and caring support. She was officially recognized as Eureka's Mother of the Year in 1969. Her children knew it all along! Lee worked for many years as a nurse at St. Joseph's Hospital as well as in convalescent care homes in the area. In her later years at the hospital, Lee used her natural gift of communication to serve as a Patient Education coordinator. She was a gifted speaker, served as a Eucharistic minister to the sick and homebound, was a member of the RCIA and Marriage Encounter programs and the Legion of Mary. She was truly a prayer warrior – the first to step up and lead the rosary in difficult times.”



Evelyn “Gerry” Stanfield Stern

'51 was born in Alabama. Her family was poor, and she lost her mother to mental illness at an early age, leading her to become quietly determined and stubbornly stoical. While in nursing school, she met her future husband, Charles Stern, a medical student at LSU. They married in 1955, after Charles had

returned from service in Korea, and lived in California until Charles was discharged from the Navy in 1956. After a three-year stay once again in New Orleans while Charles completed his ophthalmology residency, Gerry and her growing family moved to Natchez, MS in 1959. In Natchez she was a founder of Professional Optical Co. and, as a nurse, assisted Charles with office surgeries. She served as president of Temple B'nai Israel; president of the Temple B'nai Israel Sisterhood twice; a volunteer and board member at the Natchez Children's Home; long-time member of the Natchez Medical Auxiliary (now the Medical Alliance) and twice its president; board member of the Natchez City Cemetery; advisor to the Temple B'nai Israel youth group; a long-serving volunteer and board member at the Natchez Adams County Humane Society which named her an “Unsung Hero” in 1995. In 1984 Gerry was diagnosed with stage IV breast cancer but, characteristically, she confronted the prognosis with steely

resolve and lived a full and, mostly well, life for the next 35 years. Gerry passed away in November 2020, at the age of 90. The family suggested donations in her memory go to Natchez Adams County Humane Society or Delgado Charity School of Nursing.



Jean Saint Graves '52 was born in Hammond, and played clarinet in her high school marching band. She attended Southeastern Louisiana State University and after graduating from Charity, began her nursing career at Freeport Nickel Company, where she met her husband, James. Jean returned to school and received her

Bachelor's of Science in Education with a specialty in E.D.L.D. from the University of New Orleans in 1974. She started her teaching career as a special education teacher at Strehle Elementary in Jefferson Parish. When Jim was transferred to Indonesia with Mobil Oil in 1980, Jean taught at the Jakarta International School for 3 years before returning to the US. After retirement, Jean and Jim made their home at Hide-A-Way Lake in Lindale, Texas. Jean coordinated worship and singing at various nursing homes in Lindale. She worked regularly at WeCare, which benefited the Lindale Food Pantry. She belonged to the Jokers and Pegs nurses group at Hideaway and helped facilitate immunizations in the community. Jean passed away in June 2024 at 92.



Marie Boyle Segrave '58: Born in New Orleans, Marie entered Charity right out of high school. After becoming a registered nurse, she worked with infants for her entire career, in the nursery and NICU for over 40 years. Marie was an avid, medal-winning swimmer. Her husband said she'd swim anywhere, "like a fish in water." After retiring, Marie and her

husband traveled extensively in their recreation vehicles, crisscrossing the United States dozens of times, with their beloved dog Tasha, visiting every state including Alaska, every province in Canada, the Yukon Territory, and even the Arctic Circle. She passed away in July 2024.

"Marie was a delight to work with."

– Linda Rizzuto Angelo, Class of '77

Roselyn Zimmerman Arceneaux '60, known affectionately as Rosie, dedicated her early career to nursing before deciding to focus full-time on her family as a devoted wife, mother, and homemaker. She passed away in August 2024, at the age of 84. "My mother's last

hospital stay was in July at UMC New Orleans where she was taken care of by wonderful doctors and nurses who followed in her footsteps. She was always proud of her time serving as a nurse."

– Nanette Arceneaux



Marilyn Margot Rome '64:

Marilyn's life was one of service. After a 40-year career in nursing, she retired and volunteered in various community service organizations. "My mother loved being a Charity graduate and she was an incredible nurse and caregiver. She passed on in

July 2024. My daughter will be graduating from nursing school this December, and it's heartbreaking that my mom will not be here to see her walk across the stage."

– Allison Roux



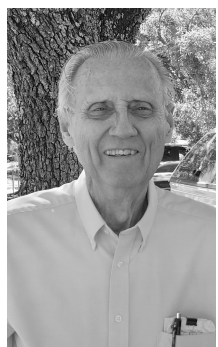
Dorothy Ball Robertson '66: After graduating from Charity, Dorothy earned her BSN from Victoria College, and a Masters from Texas A&M. Dorothy devoted five decades to the nursing profession as a RN and Nurse Practitioner. She died in April 2023 at 82.

Brenda Patricia Crump Trosclair '68: "My wife Brenda moved to Rome, GA in the fall of 1971 and resided there for the next 53 years. She worked as a nurse in two hospitals, a psychiatric hospital, a textile mill and nursing homes, ultimately retiring in 1992 because of a disability. She passed away in July 2024, at the age of 79, fighting liver cancer to the end. We were married for 55 years. Brenda loved nature, flowers, butterflies, and her dogs. She would make and decorate holiday greeting cards to send for every occasion. We loved to visit zoos all over the country and botanical gardens to see the beautiful butterfly exhibits." – Dennis Trosclair



In October, Dennis Trosclair visited the School of Nursing to deliver a very generous donation of \$10,000

in Brenda's memory. The donation will be used for Brenda's scholarship, for Student Emergency Assistance, to purchase a Dry-Erase Board and to assist with CASN Convention Travel.



Says Dennis (*left*), "I appreciated the tour of the school, because it brought me closer to Brenda. She, too, attended the National Student Nurse Convention with CASN in Dallas, TX and enjoyed it very much. I know the monies will be put to good use. I intend on continuing to pay Brenda's membership in the alumni association and fund the

scholarship and emergency fund as we did in the past. We also wrote in our wills to make an additional large bequest to the School of Nursing, which will come to the school after my death."



Donald Gerald Hymel, Jr. '92

was a US Army medic before he graduated from Charity. He retired from Lane Regional Medical Center and enjoyed hunting and fishing and taking care of his rescue dogs until his death in August 2024 at the age of 64.

"Donald was a longtime coworker and dear friend. He was an awesome nurse who was very knowledgeable

about nursing and medicine. He was a wonderful resource for everyone he worked with. He was renowned for his 'magic fanny pack' from which he could produce unbelievable instruments and supplies. All who knew him well will miss his contributions to their lives. I am one of those people. Rest in peace my friend." – *Rhonda Martin*

Marilyn Hammett Gentry '78 wrote to say she had been honored to be part of the Nurse Honor Guard at Donald's funeral. They were joined by the Louisiana Patriot Guard Riders, who attend funerals of veterans. "They were impressed by what the Nurse Honor Guard does for nurses," says Marilyn.

Right, Marilyn Gentry with the Patriot Guard Riders at Donald Hymel's funeral.



"My wife, **Kelly Campos '04** was originally from New Orleans. We both worked at Pendleton Memorial Methodist Hospital in New Orleans East (now called New Orleans East Hospital) up until and during Hurricane Katrina in 2005. We then moved to Grayson, GA where we have lived since then. Kelly continued to

work as a Registered Nurse, and loved what she did, until she became ill. She passed away in August at 55 years old." – *Juan Campos, Class of 1999* ☿

In Memoriam

Marilyn Landry Roccaforte '46 (3/14/24)

Marvell Martin Cantrell '47 (2/13/20)

Henrietta Stanga Nesom '47 (11/20/23)

Orfa May Palko Akerman '50 (4/5/24)

Leola A. Peters Berning '50 (9/1/23)

Evelyn "Gerry" Stanfield Stern '51 (11/19/20)

Jean Elizabeth Saint Graves '52 (6/11/24)

Marie Boyle Segrave '58 (7/7/24)

Roselyn Zimmerman Arceneaux '60 (8/1/24)

Marilyn Margot Rome '64 (7/18/24)

Dorothy Ball Robertson '66 (4/20/23)

Brenda Crump Trosclair '68 (7/30/24)

Constance Gough Catanese Ricketts '69 (1/2025)

Marie Annette Fisher Wogan '69 (8/12/24)

Donald Gerald Hymel, Jr. '92 (8/15/24)

Kelly Price Campos '04 (8/28/24)

☿

The Nurse Honor Guard performs ceremonies at funerals

for nurses. Dressed in traditional white uniforms, caps and blue capes, they review the deceased's career, bestow white roses, and give the family a Nightingale Lamp. They recite the Nurse's Prayer and the Nightingale Tribute and ring a bell which "releases the nurse from their earthly duties." The tributes are provided by volunteer nurses, free of charge.

If you would like to learn more, or volunteer for the Louisiana Nurse Honor Guard, please email
lanursehonorguard@outlook.com.

2025 Election Candidate Biographies

PRESIDENT-ELECT CANDIDATE - Unopposed

PATRICIA DUFRENE, Class of 1985: Patty earned a BSN, MSN as a Clinical Nurse Specialist in Pediatric Critical Care, and a PhD in Nursing Education and Administration. She has served in a variety of roles from nurse, nursing faculty, simulation lab director, in faculty development and regulation. She was Director of Education and Examination at the Louisiana State Board of Nursing for twelve years. Since 2021, she has been the RN Practice Consultant at the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners. She is active in local and national nursing organizations, including two terms on the Leadership Succession Committee of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, and the Charity Alumni Board of Directors and Advisory Committee. Patty is currently serving as Interim President of the Alumni Association.



TREASURER CANDIDATE - Unopposed



CHARLENE BERGER, Class of 1979: Charlene began her career as an Oncology Nurse at Tulane Medical School from 1980 to 1989. Then she became the Research Director of a Private Research Center for four years. She recently retired from the Pharmaceutical Research area after 25 years as Site Manager of Clinical Research sites throughout the US. Working in many different therapeutic areas has broadened Charlene's nursing experience but Oncology and Rheumatology have always been her foremost interests. She is a very active volunteer for the Susan G. Komen Foundation. Charlene has served on the Alumni Association Board of Directors for a decade. She is also on the Alumni Scholarship Committee.

NOMINATIONS CHAIR CANDIDATE - Unopposed

JENN GARNAND, Class of 2011: Jenn earned a BA in Sociology, Theology and Criminology before entering nursing, and has a PhD in Nursing Leadership from the University of Southern Mississippi. She has held positions in executive leadership, operations, emergency management, flight



medicine, pediatrics and critical care; was the Chief Flight Nurse for Ochsner Health, Director of Nursing and Oncology at University Medical Center, and Associate Chief Nursing Officer at Missouri Baptist Medical Center. She was named the 2020 Louisiana Nurse of the Year by the Louisiana State Nurses Association. She holds professional certifications in emergency, critical care and executive nursing, and is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives. Jenn is the Medical Training Officer for Jefferson Parish Third District Volunteer Fire Department, and has served on the Alumni Advisory Committee and is a current Alumni Board Member.

BOARD MEMBER CANDIDATES

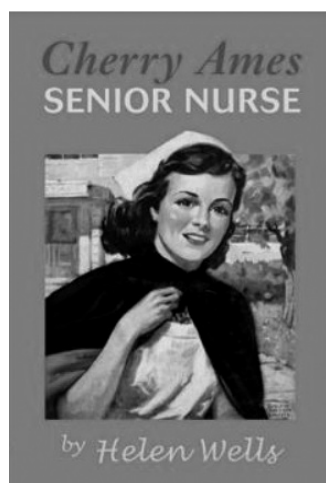
Two positions - Unopposed



DEBORAH SKEVINGTON, Class of 1979: Debbie's experience encompasses many hospitals in the Greater New Orleans area and in many clinical units and levels of management, including medical-surgical, PACU, MICU, SICU, and house supervisor. At Methodist Hospital she was the Director of Education. After Hurricane Katrina, she returned to Charity School of Nursing as an ICU instructor, and has served as Level IV Coordinator, and the Assistant Dean. She retired in April 2022. Says Debbie, "I hope being on the Board will allow me to continue to serve students and the community by providing support to students, faculty, and the School of Nursing."

SANDY BRETT SPITALE, Class of 1983: Sandy was the Honor Pin recipient of her class at Charity and went on to earn a BSN and MBA. She led the School of Nursing's Admissions and Recruitment Department in the 1980s and worked on Charity Hospital's 4th floor for many years. She was the Director of Strategy Advancement for Humana Home Solutions, and the Senior Vice-President of the *onehome* Utilization Management and Quality teams. She is currently the Chief Clinical Officer at Ochsner Health Plan coordinating Medicare Advantage benefits, assuring quality of care and driving innovation to support health and well-being. "I am grateful for my training at Charity, and want to give back," says Sandy. She has been on the Alumni Board since 2023. ☘



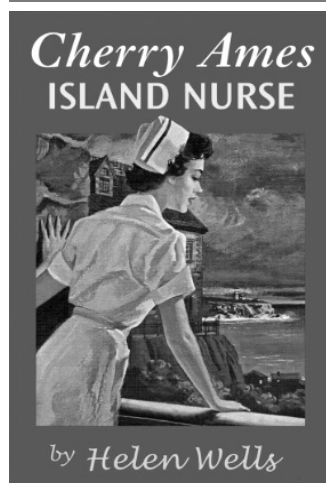
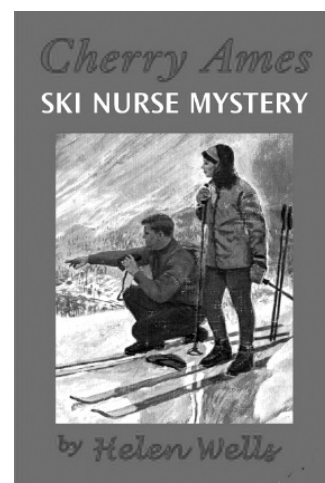


Charity Alumni Spring 2025

Cherry Ames

Mystery Brunch

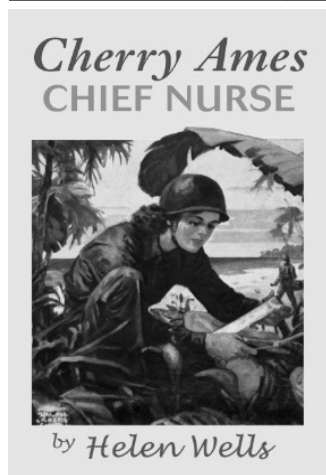
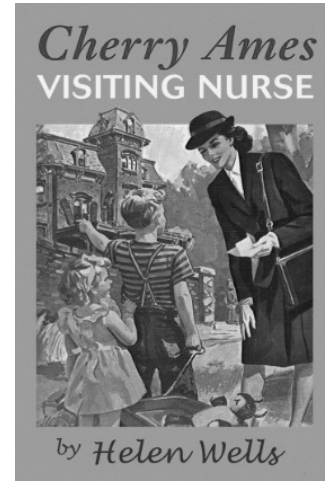
Saturday, March 29



At the Ridgeway of Old Metairie
2431 Metairie Road at Ridgeway Drive

Cherry Ames was a job-hopping nurse with a knack for solving mysteries in a series of Young Adult novels published from the 1940s to the 60s. Many of us were inspired by Cherry's adventurous spirit, critical thinking, and intrepid insistence on protecting her patients from scams, blackmail and all sorts of nefarious threats (rarely anything as unsavory as murder!)

Starting in World War II as an anxious nursing student, Cherry grew to a confident, adaptable nurse who traveled the world – and was devoted to her glamorous career. There were other nurse detectives in literature, but Cherry captured our imaginations like no other! Did you know? *Cherry* was a nickname – her real name was *Charity*!



Join us for a morning of mystery –
With clues to discover and puzzles to solve!

Dress up like Cherry – or your favorite detective of any genre – or come as you are!
Souvenirs, raffles, door prizes and more!

*Enjoy a delicious breakfast buffet of Eggs Benedict, Shrimp and Grits,
Grilled Veggies, Fruit Salad, Pastries, Coffee and Tea*

**Registration and Cash Bar open at 9:30am, Buffet opens at 10am,
Program starts at 10:30am. \$55 per person.**

Spring 2025 Alumni Breakfast Registration Form

Use this form and mail to: CHSN Alumni Association, PO Box 19103, New Orleans, LA 70179
Or purchase tickets online at www.CharityAlumni.org Deadline to purchase tickets: **March 21**

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY!

Name _____ Class of _____ Phone _____ Cell Home _____
First name Graduation name (if different from last) Last name

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Total number of people _____ @ \$55 each \$ _____

Bringing a guest? Please give us their name for the Name Tag: _____

CHSNAA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Check your mailing label for the year your membership expires. Use this form to renew, or to make a donation.

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY!

Class of: _____

Name _____
First name Maiden/graduating name Last name

Address: _____

Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Home

Email: _____

I Want to Contribute to:

Alumni Scholarship Fund.....\$ _____
 Student Convention Travel Fund.....\$ _____
 Student Emergency Assistance Fund.....\$ _____
 White Cap/Alumni News Fund.....\$ _____
 Other: _____ \$ _____

Annual Membership Dues:

- ☐ \$15 Regular Membership
☐ \$25 Blue Ribbon Member*
☐ \$50 Silver Star Member*
☐ \$100 Sr. Stanislaus Member*

- ☐ Sustaining Member: a one-time gift of \$500
 (and never pay dues again).*

*Members at these levels, please select your choice of:

- ☐ 2025-26 Alumni pocket calendar
☐ Alumni notepad ☐ Pelican coaster
☐ Vintage postcard of the old Charity Dorm
☐ No gift, please.

Mail to: **CHSN Alumni Association**
P.O. Box 19103, New Orleans, LA 70179

You can write one check for your membership dues and any donations. You can mail your ballot in the same envelope as well. You can also do everything (except vote) online at
www.CharityAlumni.org

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VOTING

Candidate bios are on page 21. Circle your selections on the Ballot at right, cut it out along the dotted lines, and fold it in half to protect the privacy of your vote. Place it in an envelope and mail to the CHSN Alumni Association.

You may include the membership form and your dues in the same mailing envelope. Your Ballot will be placed in a secure ballot box immediately upon receipt.

Ballots must be received in the Alumni Office no later than February 28, 2025, to be counted.

CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL

Only current members are eligible to vote. Check your mailing label for your membership status. The four-digit number adjacent to your name on your mailing label indicates the year your membership expires. If you see "2024" beside your name, it means your membership expired at the end of 2024. You can vote in this election, but may want to consider renewing your membership now for 2025.

If your label has a "0" or a year earlier than 2024, you are overdue to pay your membership, and you should send a check along with your ballot.

If the number on your label is 2025 or greater, or if it is 9999, 8888 or 7777 (special membership categories like Lifetime or Sustaining), then you do NOT need to renew your membership and you can go ahead and vote. But we appreciate any donations! ❖

2025 ELECTION BALLOT

DIRECTIONS: Circle the names of the candidates of your choice. Cut out the ballot, fold and mail. You can include in the same envelope with your dues.

PRESIDENT-ELECT CANDIDATE

Patricia Dufrene '85

TREASURER CANDIDATE

Charlene Berger '79

NOMINATIONS CHAIR CANDIDATE

Jenn Garnand '11

BOARD MEMBER CANDIDATES

Vote for Two

Deborah Skevington '79

Sandy Spitale '83

Check one:

- ☐ I am current on my membership dues.
☐ I am renewing my membership today.

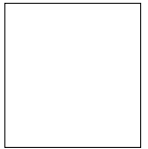
Mail your ballot to:

CHSN Alumni Association,
P.O. Box 19103
New Orleans, LA 70179

Charity Hospital School of Nursing ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

PO Box 19103
New Orleans, LA 70179

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



If you received this newsletter in error, or need to change your address, please let us know at chsnaaoffice@gmail.com

What's that number after my name?

The four-digit number following your name on the mailing label indicates the year your membership expires. For example, "2024" next to your name means your membership expired at the end of 2024. You can renew your membership now for 2025 on page 23, or on our website: CharityAlumni.org



The Charity Class of December 2024



The Alumni News is a publication of the ALUMNI ASSOCIATION of
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PO Box 19103, New Orleans, LA 70179
Email: chsnaaoffice@gmail.com Website: CharityAlumni.org Facebook: [Charity Alumni NOLA](https://www.facebook.com/CharityAlumniNOLA)