



Charity Hospital School of Nursing & Charity School of Nursing

Alumni News

January 2024

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From the President

By Patrick Brady, Class of 1983

A new year! Always a good time to ponder the past and look toward the future! I'm pondering the 40 years it's been since I graduated from Charity School of Nursing. I'm older, a bit greyer – and I hope a lot wiser! One thing I do know is how fortunate I am. To have chosen nursing as my profession. To have graduated from Charity.

The pride I feel as a nurse is unbounded; the colleagues I have worked alongside have been phenomenal; the friends I have made – including through the Alumni Association – will last all my lifetime.

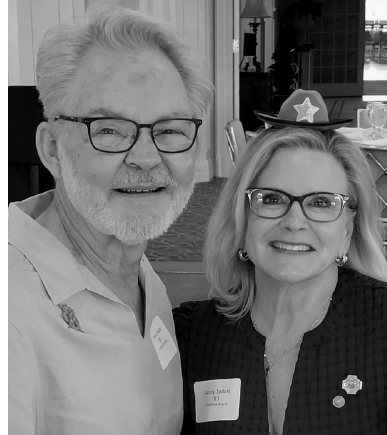
Things are not the same as when I graduated. Changes to the school – and changes to nursing! Students in the class that graduated in December 2023 probably never set foot in Big Charity in their lives. They started school in the old building but graduated from the new one. They are the bridge between the old and the new, starting their jobs as Registered Nurses as I write. Their experience could not be more different from many of ours, but I know Charity School of Nursing is in their hearts – just as it is in ours – and they will carry it forward into the world!

Strong, Proud Charity Nurses

In 2023, we held two alumni gatherings, with graduates from 1949 to 2023! A 74-year span – that's incredible! We said goodbye to some dear friends but we welcomed 336 new alumni – who will lead us into the future! Because, while we cherish and celebrate our past, our goal as an Alumni Association must always be to help our school continue to produce strong, proud Charity Nurses!

To our latest graduates, we welcome you, as our colleagues and our friends. We wish you the challenge and satisfaction that nursing can bring you! We are very proud of you, and we look forward to getting to know you better as Charity Alumni!

Patrick



Photos from the September Alumni Luncheon, top to bottom, left to right: Patrick Brady and Board member Sandy Spitale, Class of '83; Chrishana Jenkins-Agee, Emily Ovalle and Erica Preatto, Class of 2013.

From the Executive Director

By Lista Hank, Class of 1997

My message for 2024 is short and

sweet: Pay your membership dues! If you want us to continue keeping in touch with you and the thousands of other Charity graduates over generations, if you want to continue receiving our newsletters twice a year, if you like that we have alumni



events and Homecoming Celebrations, if you want students to receive scholarships and emergency assistance and all of the things we do to help current Charity students – then help us! The thing that makes the engine run is membership dues from every alumni! Go to the form on page 19 or our website, **CharityAlumni.org**, and pay your dues! YOU make everything we do possible!

And to those of you who support us generously year after year, WE THANK YOU!!!

Lista

Dean's Report

By Joan Ellis, PhD, RN, CNE

Dean of Nursing, Charity School of Nursing

As we reflect back on 2023, there is no doubt that it was a very exciting, challenging, and productive year. It's hard to imagine that, in only twelve months, our team managed to completely transition from our historic Charity School of Nursing building on South Claiborne Avenue to our spectacular, state-of-the-art, new Ochsner Center for



Photo: Dr. Joan Ellis

Nursing and Allied Health at 615 City Park Avenue. Without question, this was no small feat!

Most importantly, our students were able to navigate this journey seamlessly without losing sight of their goals, and while successfully reaching monumental milestones.

The Class of Spring 2023 was actually a history maker! It was the largest class to ever graduate from Charity School of Nursing, with 191 members. The Fall Class of 2023 also made history: they were the first students to begin their studies at the original campus, and then graduate from our new City Park site.

Despite encountering multiple challenges and hurdles during the past year, our students consistently personified professionalism, excellence, and grace at every step.

Commencement Highlights

There were 145 graduates from the Associate Degree Nursing Program and 33 graduates from the Practical Nursing Program in Fall 2023. Without question, we are extremely proud of our graduates! Congratulations to all of them for a job well done!

Additional applause go to the following students whose achievements were recognized with graduation awards:

Associate Degree Awards

Honor Pin – Justin Gesler

Award of Distinction – Marquita Canatella

Highest GPA – Kailey Tavaréz

Sr. Stanislaus Malone Award – Darrien Degrusha

Sr. Blanche McDonnell Award – Kayla Champagne

Margaret Palmisano Alumni Award – Caleb Baumgartner

New Orleans District Nurses Association

Leadership Award – Marquita Canatella

Practical Nursing Program Awards

Florence Nightingale Award – Charis Davis

Award of Distinction – Kaley Corcoran

Award of Service – Perla Pinot

Clinical Excellence – India Davis

Most Spirited – Richeeta Dean

Highest GPA – Charis Davis

Faculty Accomplishments

Wendy Garretson and **Elizabeth “Betty” Wolff** were both nominated for the 2023 Seymour Weiss Excellence in Teaching Award at Delgado Community College. This is the most prestigious award that a faculty member at the College can receive. They are both outstanding educators and the nominations are well-deserved.

Assistant Dean **Jennifer Fernandez** was recognized in the 125th Anniversary Edition of *Marquis Who’s Who in*

America, recognizing professional integrity, outstanding achievement in the field and contributions to society.

Andrea Duplechain was recognized as one of the New Orleans “Great 100 Nurses” in 2023.

Dr. Cheree Wiggins earned an Ed.D. in Instructional Leadership for Nurse Educators from the University of Alabama. She also received the University of Alabama Capstone School of Nursing Donna R. Packa Excellence in Writing Award. Additionally, she published “Nursing Ethics and Failure to Fail in Clinical in Clinical Nursing Education” in *ProQuest Dissertations* for Fall 2023.

Andrea Murdock completed her Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree from Chamberlain University in Educational Leadership (Graduated with Distinction).

Melinda Castro received a Doctorate in Health Administration with a Concentration in Education from Virginia University at Lynchburg.

Mary Trosclair and **Kim Uddo** presented “Using Scripts in a Classroom Simulation to Combat Bullying in the Workplace” at the NISOD Conference in Fall 2023.

Kim Uddo and **Wendy Garretson** presented “Combating Stress to Prevent Burnout” at LSU Alexandria in Fall 2023.

And I was very proud to be named “Expert Nurse of the Year” for 2023 from the Southern University Alumni Association.

Simulation Hospital Update

At this time, the new Ochsner Center for Nursing and Allied Health Virtual Hospital is up and running! The anticipation was high, and the Center has exceeded our expectations. Not only is it beautiful, but also exceptional in terms of technology, high fidelity simulation, student learning labs, learning resources, and well-appointed classrooms. Every detail was considered to ensure that student learning needs were effectively addressed in a safe and realistic setting.

Most recently, an entire collection of state-of-the-art interdisciplinary simulators were added to the virtual hospital environment through a Carl Perkins grant, which will allow for unlimited learning opportunities for nursing and allied health students for years to come.

Continuing to Thrive and Grow

I feel truly blessed for having the opportunity to work with such an amazing group of faculty, students, and staff. As the new year commences, Charity School of Nursing will continue to ‘set the bar’ in terms of providing an exceptional educational experience for our current and future students. We are definitely trailblazers in the nursing education arena and will continue to thrive and explore innovative growth opportunities as we move forward in 2024!

Wishing you a joyous and peaceful new year!

Joan



Alumni Show Off Chic Chapeaus at the Hat-Tastic Luncheon!

By Joycelyn Jeansonne, Class of 1978

The Charity Alumni Fall 2023 gathering saw a festive procession of elegant and jaunty headgear for the Hat-Tastic Luncheon at the Chateau Country Club on September 30.

Coy fascinators nodded to towering assemblages as a parade of alumni reconnected with classmates and friends.

President **Patrick Brady '83** welcomed alumni and guests to the luncheon. He was thrilled to see so many of his own classmates at the event to celebrate their 40-year anniversary. "This time I'm not alone," he laughed!

Jenn Garnand '11 was unable to attend but provided us once again with her always inspiring blessing. *(Read it on page 7.)*

Mary's Still Kicking – Just Not So High

Patrick noted the absence of **Mary Singletary '49**. Mary attends every event and has been the oldest alumni here for a few years. She fell and broke her hip a couple of weeks before the lunch, had surgery and was in rehab. Patrick reported that Mary says, "This sucks!" but she's doing okay, and wants everyone to know she wishes she was here with us!

Roll Call and Anniversaries

We conducted the roll call of classes which is always such a joyous exercise as classmates stand together and receive applause. We are so proud of our many generations of Charity!

The **Class of 2013** was out in front with ten alumni celebrating their ten-year



Top photo, left, Gail Viator '68, who won the Best Hat Contest, with Amanda Babin '68, right, and seated, Doris Burvant '60. Middle photo, Valerie Luker, Julie Joyce and Janis Ducote, Class of 1975. Bottom photo, left to right, Adrienne Thomas-Poret '92, Valencia Jones '92, Sharon Burel '80, Jo Ann Toval '80, Carol Way Smith '80, and Avis Gray '80.

reunion! How wonderful to see so many recent graduates in attendance! They were followed closely by the always enthusiastic **Class of 1968** with nine members, and the **Class of 1983** with eight in attendance!

Certificates were awarded to the **Class of 1958** for 65 years, **1963** for 60 years, **1983** for 40 years, **1993** for 30 years and **2013** for 10 years.

Class of '56 members **Saundra Owens Robert** and **Virgis Boudreaux** were recognized as the oldest class in attendance, but there was no doubt that they are still young at heart! Students sitting at their table told us how much fun they had with Saundra and Virgis! They really enjoyed their stories of the old days at Charity!

Pins for students

The **Class of '68** marked their 55-year anniversary by collecting \$400 to be used for graduation pins for students who can't afford them. What a wonderful way to celebrate their reunion by helping current students participate in the very special tradition of the Pinning Ceremony!

Best Hat Contest

The Best Hat Contest was practically a riot! Everyone was so proud of their topping habiliments, they swarmed to the lectern to compete! Each participant got their moment in the sun to show off their crowning sartorial splendor, and audience applause ruled the day. It was very difficult! But the ultimate award went to **Gail Viator '68**, who received a beautiful necklace with a Big Charity marble charm created by **Renee Oncale** of Rennaize Creations. Every contest participant got a prize, selecting a totebag or from a charming variety of nursing memorabilia donated by **Cindy Caron '76**.



Above, left to right, Suzy Andry '59 and Ginger Andry '58, Cynthia Sartin '77 and Carol Leefe '92. Left, students Antoinette Crain and Darrien Degrusha. Below, the Class of 1983 celebrate their Forty-Year Anniversary: Cynthia Edwards, A'Drain Bocage, Giselle Murphy, Patrick Brady, Cathy Elstner, Gertrude McKinney, Sandy Spitale, Lisa DiGiorgio, Donna Forsberg.





Above, left to right, Elise Vincent '13, Roberta Bartee '66 and Peggy Johns '63; Patty Dufrene '85, Joycelyn Jeansonne '78 and Judy Ross '68; Charlotte Arras '71, Stevie McLaughlin '71 and Donna Forsberg '83; Lizette Boudreaux, Lista Hank '97 and Virgis Boudreaux '56.

Bottom right, standing: Diane Cammatte '65, Ursula Allain '65, Vivian Manes '70; seated, Dianne Howell '65, Susan Grace '65 and Donna Cooper '65.



Drawings and Door Prizes

The 50/50 drawing netted \$143 for winner **Emily**

Ovalle '13. The raffle of a Charity Nursing Cape was won by **Sandy Spitale '83**. Special thanks to physician and author **Martha Boone** for donating a number of her books for door prizes!

Cindy Beniger '68 was gracious in leading us in the singing of the Alma Mater. As our voices rose, we looked around at each other, the many generations of Charity. Still together, still singing, still strutting our stuff with heads held high. Still proud to be Charity Nurses!

We hope to see many more of you at our next event in April 2024! ☸



Top photo, the Class of 2013 celebrates their Ten-Year Anniversary! Back row: Michelle Quiggle, Amber Stokes, Stephanie Rehmann, Emily Ovalle, Chrishana Jenkins-Agee. Front row: Nicole Price, Erica Preatto, Estelle Mariano, Elise Vincent, Elgier Coleman.

Below, Donna Earles '78.



Above, the Class of 1968 celebrates 55 years! Standing: Judy Ross, Amanda Babin, Lorraine Fearheilry, Gail Viator, Susan Belloat, Marianne McCrory, Sandra Hintz, Cindy Beniger. Seated: Karen Moise, Dale Eppling, Cathy Holland.

Right, Gerard Oncale '93 rocks a coronet with his cousin Renee Oncale.



Blessing: On Hats

By Jenn Garnand, Class of 2011

We gather here together in the spirit of Charity and begin with a moment of silence for our friends and colleagues who have gone before us. We promise they will never be forgotten.

“Some hats can only be worn if you're willing to be jaunty, to set them at an angle and to walk beneath them with a spring in your stride as if you're only a step away from dancing. They demand a lot of you.” –Neil Gaiman

Hats can symbolize many things... comfort, protection, identity and self-expression, representation, celebration, honor, tradition. They can be transformational... embracing the idea that when someone puts on a hat, they take on a more significant role... or become an extraordinary persona greater than themselves.

Sometimes hats become a legacy.

The nurses cap symbolizes this legacy – a longstanding commitment of service to those in need. In true legacy fashion, it serves as a reminder of all of the great nurses that have come before us and paved the way for the current state of our profession – the privilege which is ours to carry forward and share with patients and future nurses alike.

“Hang on to your hat. Hang on to your hope. And wind the clock, for tomorrow is another day.”

– E.B. White

Make tomorrow better than today. Share love. Remember fondly. Embrace hope. And wear the hat – that legacy of nursing – so that others may be seen, valued, heard, healed, and inspired.

Amen. ☘



It's a Small World

By Gail Whitney Viator,
Class of 1968

I was born on August 1, 1942. **Chantell LaCava '22** was born on August 1, 1984. We were born on the same day, forty-two years apart, totally unknown to each other.

I started at Charity Hospital School of Nursing in 1963, left for a time, then returned in 1965, graduating in June 1968. Chantell started at Charity School of Nursing in 2006, left for a time, then returned in 2019 and graduated in May 2022.

In 2018, Chantell's godchild Gianna Gendusa met my grandson Chandler Whitney. They were married in

January 2022. I was introduced to Chantell at the wedding – and we discovered our ‘birthday twin’ and all the wonderful parallels in our lives!

How Can This Be?

I can't help but wonder how it can be that a girl born in Port Arthur, Texas, in 1942, raised in Louisville, then Louisiana, and living in Theriot, came to have so much in common with a girl from Harahan born in 1984? How can it be that her godchild and my grandson met up and married?

We graduated from Charity 54 years apart and we both agree that it is the greatest nursing school ever!

Doris Burvant '60 was the school's Health Nurse when I was a student. As a senior at Charity, Chantell was awarded the **Doris Burvant Scholarship** – which I only realized while re-reading an old *Alumni News*! It was so cool to see that my ‘twin’ had been honored in that way!

How can all this be?
My answer is simple! “It's a small world!” ☘

Below left, Gail Whitney Viator in 1968.

To left, Chantell LaCava '22 with Doris Burvant '60.



Dedicated to the Nurses

Below is the dedication at the beginning of the book *The Unfettered Urologist: What I Never Had Time to Tell You in a Fifteen Minute Office Visit* by physician and author Martha Boone, MD. Dr. Boone's other books include the novels *Big Free* and *Mother Charity* based on her experiences at Charity Hospital.

If you have a great hospital,
it's because you have great nurses.

This book is dedicated to the unsung heroes: the amazing nurses and technicians at Charity Hospital in New Orleans, Tulane Medical Center, Ochsner Clinic, University of California-Davis, the Veterans Administration, the Medical College of Georgia, and the nurses of Northside Hospital networks in Atlanta, Alpharetta, and Cumming, who helped me and my patients for my entire career.

You know who you are.

I could never have been successful without great nurses assisting me every step of the way. ☘

Scholarships and Awards

On October 23, 2023, the Charity Hospital School of Nursing Alumni Association presented over \$12,000 in scholarships and awards to twenty-seven 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, faculty and friends.

The recipients of the scholarships and awards for the Fall 2023 semester are *(left to right)*:

Level 2



Stacy King, Dorothy "Dot" Aull Nugent Barkley '57 Scholarship, \$500

Charlette Simmons, Sister Blanche McDonnell Scholarship, \$500

Level 3



Michael Davidson, Sheila Ann Sorrell '78 Scholarship, \$500

Kya Hunter, Georga Helmer '79 Scholarship, \$500

Rachel Luttrell, Tabitha Hingle Duvernay '06 Scholarship, \$500

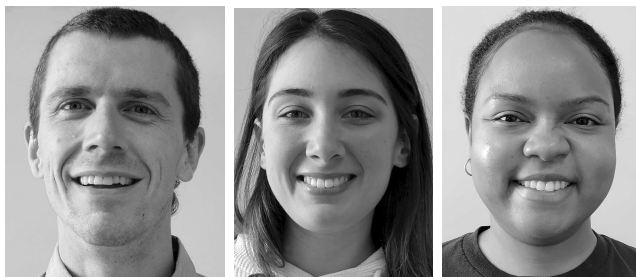
Lawrence McClure, Rose Ella Chenevert Miller '58 Scholarship, \$1,000



Erica Simms, Rita Bares Raphael '65 Scholarship, \$500
Alyssa Thibodeaux, Madeline Tolson Markwood '57 Scholarship, \$500

Rachel Ward, Sister Camilla Gaudin DC Scholarship, \$500

Level 4



Jack Connors-Kellgren, Doris Tucker Burvant '60 Scholarship, \$500

Darrien Degrusha, Sally Cooper '59 Scholarship, \$1,000

Brittani Francois, Hugh and Maria Garcia Roach '38 Scholarship, \$1,000



Joseph Hart, Leah Valerie Boudreaux '93 Scholarship, \$500

Monica Kyzar, Joyce Bonaventure '57 and James Leissner Scholarship in memory of their children Nathan and Laura, \$500

Latoya Morris, Bernice Bonds Scholarship, \$500

Johanne Rozavien, Christine Hurley Carbon '71 Scholarship, \$1,000





Destiny Sandolph-Milsap, Joycelyn Gondolfo Jeansonne '78 Scholarship, \$500
Kailey Tavarez, Leona Kruebbe Hilbert '46 Scholarship, \$750

Level 4 Graduation Pin Awards



Alisha Amaya, David Skevington Pin Award
Natalia Alexander, Angela Ramon Pin Award
Caleb Baumgartner, Marquise Buckner Pin Award



Josephine Cloud, Thomas Ray Bush Pin Award
Megan Edwards, Derrick Miguel Albert, Jr. Pin Award
Paulina Rodia, Teresa Hebert Dias '67 Pin Award

Lindsey White, Justin Ledet Pin Award

Federation of Registered Professional and Licensed Practical Nurses of Charity Hospital Awards \$500 each
 (Not pictured)

Curriel Sabatier – LPN program
Lakeisha Duplessis – RN Program
 ☸



Above, the faculty pin promotion bars on Level 3 students

Promotion and Honors Ceremony Steeped in Tradition

During the days of the diploma program, students initially trained in the classroom, then were promoted into clinical training – and the ability to care for patients – at a ‘Capping’ ceremony. In this ceremony, a white cap would be placed on each student’s head by the faculty. The white nursing cap was traditionally worn by nurses, and was symbolic of their professionalism. Each school had its own identifiable cap, and it would be worn by the graduates throughout their careers.

Nurses have retired their white caps, so today Charity celebrates the one-year milestone achieved by the students, and recognizes their advancement to the second year in the program, by awarding a gold promotion bar. The bar features the caduceus flanked by the initials CSN for Charity School of Nursing and DCC for Delgado Community College. The students wear these bars as part of their school uniform.



Scholarships and Pin Awards

The Alumni Association presents our scholarships and pin awards to the student recipients at the Promotion and Honors Ceremony each semester. As we announce each award, we tell the students about the person that each scholarship and pin is honoring.

It is important to us that students know them as individuals and not just names, because each of our scholarships was established in remembrance of one of our alumni or other member of the Charity community. It has also become a bit of a tradition, when family members of faculty pass away, for their colleagues to fund pin



Left, a group of Level 3 students after receiving their promotion bars at the October ceremony.

awards in memory of their loved one.

We are privileged to be partnering with so many graduates, family, colleagues and friends to provide scholarships and pin awards in memory of amazing individuals who have meant so much to the Charity community. ☿

A Life of Learning and Teaching

By Jenifer Ducoing, Class of 1998

Tabitha Hingle Duvernay '06 was my dear friend and, honestly, one of the finest Labor & Delivery nurses I have ever known. She was a wonderful leader! Tabitha was so cool in an emergency. She loved the excitement of taking the lead, assigning tasks, and anticipating the next moves. Not surprisingly, Tabitha had the respect of all the physicians. If Tabitha said, "Doctor, I'm worried about fetal distress," the OB ran to the bedside!



Tabitha was also an engaging teacher. For several years, Tabitha and I taught fetal monitoring classes to L&D nurses. She used funny stories and intriguing real-life patient examples to capture the nurses' attention. I was always impressed by her ability to keep up with the latest OB research so our unit would be up to date with the latest best practice.

And Tabitha was devoted! We could teach an 8-hour class and if the OB unit sent out a text because they were short on nurses, Tabitha would ask me to wrap up the class so she could go work the night shift! I don't know how she did it!

Making a Difference

As a nurse, leader and educator, Tabitha made a difference in thousands of patients' lives. If Tabitha were speaking to students today, she would encourage you to

always strive to become the best nurse you can be. Join the professional organization of your specialty, get certified, attend conferences and workshops, watch webinars, and read journals. Learning your profession never ends. A patient's experiences, memories – and frankly their life – depends on you being the best nurse you can be.

It is a great honor that we continue this amazing nurse's memory with the Tabitha Hingle Duvernay Scholarship.

Tabitha passed away in December 2021. A scholarship in her memory was created by generous donations from Rachel Giammolv '16 and family and friends. ☿

A Life of Adventure and Service

By Sue Galliano, Pat Hawkins, and Joe Sorrell



Our sister **Sheila Ann Sorrell '78** passed away in May 2022. After graduating she worked in hospitals from the Gulf of Mexico area, the North Slope of Alaska and the American Midwest. She received her BSN from the University of South Alabama and two master's degrees in Hospital Administration from Phoenix University.

Sheila retired as a nurse supervisor in 2019, just before the Covid epidemic. Concerned about all her friends still on duty, she made and distributed over 300 masks to nurses tending patients.

Sheila was very proud of her education at Charity and of the lifelong friends she made there. Her family thanks those nurse friends who visited her in New Orleans before she passed away. We have enclosed a donation of \$1,000 for scholarships in memory of Sheila. ☿



Believing in Me: Lessons from Sister Camilla

By Kathy Norris Romero,
Class of 1969

I am sending a contribution to the **Sister Camilla Gaudin** Scholarship Fund. She was my Supervisor when I worked on the Orthopedic floor and she was my first leadership mentor!

My memories of this wonderful lady are many. Sister promoted me to the evening supervisor position, knowing that I was going to need a lot of mentorship. I was so naïve, but I was fearless!

Seemed like a good idea...

Looking back, I think one of the most embarrassing things I've ever done warranted her to be waiting for me to get off the 4th floor elevator to report to my shift.

Oh buddy, I thought, what did I do wrong? Turns out – plenty!

I had admitted a patient to W413, a five-bed ward. He was a very sweet street person who came in with liver problems and was yellow and had terrible lice! Those lice were jumping, and after I donned full protective gear, I gave him a thorough treatment with Kwell. But I didn't know if I had killed them all, so I placed my isolation patient in the hopper room OVERNIGHT! He was so sick and I thought the hopper room would be like a private area for him to quietly rest and be isolated. I was so green! Well, Sister Camilla sternly advised me that was totally unacceptable. (I think **Mary Singletary '49** was in on that meeting.) Sister always guided me back on path!

It's Not Easy Being Green

I used to send her write-ups about 'happenings' on my evening shift. Sister told me that she looked forward to reading my "epistles," which were sometimes 2-3 pages long! I'll always remember the look of disbelief on her face when I said to her, "Sister, what's an epistle?" I mean here I was talking to an esteemed Daughter of Charity nun, about my lack of basic bible knowledge!

Her Way

Sister stood about 4 foot and 11 inches but could be quite formidable! She had everyone's respect. When she made ward rounds, she wanted to see all the curtains pulled back in a certain way for all the patients, and she didn't want to see bedpans, or patients without gowns. This was challenging and sometimes really difficult, because the Orthopedic patients were there a long time, and they were hot – Charity had no AC.

We had an elaborate method of calling our fellow RNs

on the other wards.....**SISTER IS COMING!!** We would fly through our wards hiding their bedpans under the sheets, and making sure they were gownned up. Yelling out... *Sister's coming, Sister's coming.*

We loved her, respected her and wanted our wards to pass her inspection and look perfect when she made her rounds.

Strong & Sweet

Sister provided the best coffee in the hospital... sugar and evaporated milk made it stiff, and people came from everywhere to drink it! I bet many still remember her coffee and chicory.

Another naïve thing I did! I got caught by Sister Angela, the House Supervisor, reading a movie magazine at the desk on my weekend shift (only professional publications were allowed). Sister Camilla later 'busted' me... and my smart mouth asked her, "How did you find out?" Looking back, it's comical! She said, "Well, we all live in the same Sisters home." I thought to myself that was pretty dumb of me not to realize that!!

Always a Mentor

Although she was stern, I learned many lessons from Sister, and she contributed to my professional development. I have loved Orthopedics throughout my career. It started with her believing in me. She taught me another life lesson: always mentor and guide the less experienced nurses.

Sister Camilla was always understanding and insightful, funny and kind. I'm happy the recipients of her scholarship get to know about her! ☘

Dedication to Service

By Sandra Owens Robert, Class of 1956

Sister Camilla was born in 1915, in Bayou Goula, Louisiana to a plantation sugar boiler and his wife. She entered the Daughters of Charity in 1935. She served as supervisor of the Orthopedic Department at Charity Hospital for 32 years, then spent another 18 years at Charity Hospital serving as patient liaison.

Sister Camilla was very supportive of the student nurses, and was named an Honorary Member of the Alumni Association. She celebrated 75 years as a Daughter of Charity just before she died in November 2010.

Because of this Sister's dedication to serving others, **Mary Smith Singletary '49** made a very generous donation to the Alumni Association to establish the **Sister Camilla Gaudin Scholarship** to benefit Charity nursing students. I have been honored to join with Mary in funding this scholarship each year, and we are delighted to have been able to award over twenty \$500 scholarships to Charity students since 2012. ☘

Alumni Notes

Marion Thibodaux Gatti '54 (*Metairie, LA*): "I love receiving the newsletters! It is great to read that the Nursing School will continue and be the BEST Nursing program possible!"

Marilyn Massey Carter '54 (*San Antonio, TX*) writes: "Thank you for sending me all the Class of 1954 addresses! I'm looking forward to contacting the friends I lost touch with when I contracted polio in my senior year. I may have written before about my experience as a student nurse diagnosed with polio in the summer of 1954. I had wonderful care in the big polio center at Charity, sharing a hospital room with an affiliate nurse from Crenshaw, MS. We enjoyed being together with only a curtain between us for three months. After recovering, I had to pay back Charity Hospital for the nursing time I owed them, so I was sent to work at the TB Building for three months. Only then could I leave Charity, even though I had graduated! I enjoyed reading my classmate **Marion Gatti's** note in the last newsletter. She was my neighbor for three years. I have so many happy memories of Charity. I have advised my family to send you all my Charity things when I'm gone, to use or give away. **Joycelyn Jeansonne '78** already has my cape!"

Saundra Owens Robert '56 (*Gonzales, LA*): "I wanted to send you the picture of our table at the Alumni Luncheon. **Virgis Boudreaux '56** and I saw a group of students looking for a place to sit down to eat, and we waved them over to our table. Virgis and I told stories of our early student nursing days and they were like, *No kidding?, Really?!, That is just unbelievable!* When we told them that this year marks 70 years since we walked in the front door of the dorm to begin our student nursing studies, they were so cute with those big eyes and dropped jaws. Our table was kind of like the alpha and the omega of the Alumni luncheon. It was so much fun sitting with the students!" (Photo above)

Roberta Purvis Bartee '66 (*New Orleans*) attended the Delgado *Building Futures* Fundraising Luncheon in September at the Galerie de Galatoire. The luncheon



Above, students with the Class of '56: standing left to right, Cindy Chu, Marquita Canatella, Darrien Degrusha; seated, Kay Harris, Saundra Owens Robert '56, Virgis Boudreaux '56, Antoinette Crain

benefitted several of Delgado's academic programs including nursing. (Photo below)

Ellen Inguagiato Olivier '67 (*Lafayette, LA*) writes: "I so enjoyed reading all the news about Charity in the last *White Cap*! What a wonderful experience to have been a part of such a special nursing program! I am so grateful to our dedicated instructors and my fellow students! I will never forget how our class would gather to sing uplifting

songs, like *Let There Be Peace on Earth*. And of course, it was during my years at Charity that I met my precious husband of 55 years! (He was a freshman at LSU Med School and I was a freshman at Charity – we married in 1968! We have been blessed with four wonderful children and now 7 grandchildren. The family lives all over the states, but we have a reunion every year!) My heart is so grateful



for all Charity has done for me and I am enclosing a donation to the Student Emergency Assistance Fund!

"Did you know that the plaque to the left of the dorm front door (that says *Charity Hospital School of Nursing*) was donated by the Class of 1967? I hope it will be preserved into the future! Thank you – and Blessings!"

The Class of 1968 celebrated Fifty-Five years at the Alumni Hat-Tastic luncheon in September. They collectively donated \$400 to assist students who can't afford to purchase graduation pins, so that they can participate in their Pinning Ceremony. The '68 classmates say, "May our Alumni Association remain as strong and relevant to all our graduates as it has been to the members of the Class of 1968!"



Above, Charity friendships are forever, and in this case nearly 50 years! **Lynn McMurray Goodman '78** (Nolensville, TN) and **Warren Hebert '79** (Lafayette, LA) love to reminisce about classmates, faculty, clinical rotations, and the Big Free C. "Our youthful lives were transformed in the buildings on Claiborne and Tulane Avenues," says Warren.

Sandy Spitale '83 (Metairie, LA) is now the Chief Clinical Operating Officer for Ochsner Health Plan.

Joell Ackermann '84 (Okemos, MI) writes, "I always appreciate the *White Cap*! Has always been excellent! Thank you!"

Cynthia Wild-Mendoza D'Elia '88 (Pearl River, LA) is a Sustaining Member and has lived in the same house for 27 years, so it was strange that her copy of the *White Cap* was returned to us as undeliverable this summer. We emailed her to confirm her address, saying that considering how crazy the Post Office is these days, nothing surprises us anymore. Cynthia replied: "Yes, that address is correct. I smiled when you wrote that the Post Office is crazy these days, as everything is crazy these

days. Yes, and I agree nothing surprises me, either. But one thing is still true:

The strongest things in the world often seem the weakest. For instance:

*gentleness is stronger than cruelty,
patience is stronger than impatience,
mercy is stronger than revenge,
and Love is stronger than hate.*

A friend gave me this, over 43 years ago, And years later, Charity always taught me these words in action. Knowledgeable and supportive instructors, hard-working smart students, who were wonderful role models, and patients that taught us so much about ourselves and what really was and is important in this crazy world."

Tonia Chiasson Chauvin '92 (Schriever, LA): "I was kinda sad, when paying my dues, not addressing my envelope to 450 S. Claiborne Ave, NOLA 70112. That address and those memories will forever be engraved in my heart and mind!"

Katherine Molligan '09 (Norfolk, VA): "Ms. Bonds was the most amazing instructor. She was a beautiful and delightful introduction to clinicals and I learned so much from her. I'm honored to donate to her scholarship."

Congratulations to these Charity alumni who were named as 2023 Nurse Excellence Award recipients by the Louisiana State Nurses Association in September: **Marcus Bateman '06**, **Donna Doyle '10**, **Kristi Lamarque '13**, **Beau Fournier '19**, and **Julianna Maricelli '20**.

Amy Fawcett '23 (Terrytown, LA) writes, "I am a proud Charity RN Alumni! This is lovely to see the first class in the new building! I pray for all the students to have a great learning experience – and I'm looking forward to meeting all you Charity students in clinicals at our hospitals!" ☘



Above, Graduation Ceremony, December 12, 2023

Goodbyes

Irma Ray Mosby '49: "Irma was a treasured mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and nurse. She was hard-working, creative, intelligent, and stubborn as a mule. She passed away in December 2022 at the age of 95. She is reunited in heaven with her daughter and husband at long last. We all hope to hear her *yoo-hooing* from inside the gates of heaven when we get there."



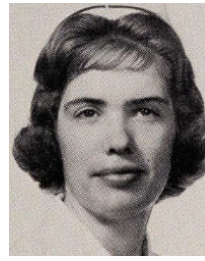
My mother **Nedra Hooper Ely '50** was born in 1930 in Baton Rouge and was raised in Algiers, LA. She trained at Charity Hospital School of Nursing with her friend **Janice Pederson '50**. Janice introduced Mom to Frank Ely (my dad) on a double date. After Mom graduated from Charity and my dad from the Mississippi

State Highway Patrol School, they were married. Mom worked at the Jackson County Hospital in Moss Point, MS, in private practice for a physician in Pascagoula, MS, and then at the Mississippi Health Department in Jackson County, MS where she retired. She passed away at 92 years old in August 2023 after a long battle with Alzheimer's. Mom loved nursing and caring for others. She was so proud of Charity School of Nursing and always loved reading the *White Cap* newsletter.
– Billy Ely

"I am writing to inform you of the passing of my mother **Kathryn Roberson McNutt '56** in June 2023 after battling complications from a stroke in 2020. She had many stories she would tell her children and grandchildren of her time at Charity. She worked in many hospitals across the State of Florida, including serving as Director of Nursing at Hardee Memorial in Wauchula. Her husband was a Florida State trooper, then an insurance agent and they raised three sons. In 1977 they moved to Dothan, Alabama where Mom was an administrator with Flowers Hospital until her retirement in 1990. Mom was well-loved, and served as a mentor for many young nurses during her distinguished career." – Steven McNutt



Sybil Monroe Joseph '57 had a distinguished career as a Psychiatric Nurse at East Jefferson General Hospital for 32 years. After retirement she worked with Alzheimer's patients at an East Jefferson outpatient clinic and volunteered in service of others. She passed away in December at the age of 87.



Jannie Virginia Fewell Fountain '62 lived in Calvert City, Kentucky and worked at Lourdes Hospital in Paducah for more than 40 years. She passed away in October 2021 at the age of 79.

Mary Chasson Theriot '62: Early in her career, Mary worked at Lakewood Hospital as a RN and for many years served as Head Nurse for Daniels, Metz, Cheramie, and Askew. Later she moved to Lafayette and worked as Nurse Surveyor for the State of Louisiana. Mary passed away in November 2022.



Margaret Mellon DeCorte Montaldo Lobenstein '65 went on from Charity to earn her BSN from LSU. She worked in a variety of healthcare settings including Touro Hospital in New Orleans, and at Park Plaza Hospital in Houston as the Employee Health Director. She was living in Metairie when she passed away in October 2023 at 78.

Analyn Hartman Cummings '02: "My daughter Analyn was born in New Orleans in 1966 and lived in Metairie until moving to Luling with her late husband, Bill Cummings, Jr. After working several types of jobs, Analyn finally found her true calling: to be a RN. She loved life, people, and being a nurse in the OR. She worked at Mercy-Baptist before settling in at Ochsner's main campus, and eventually at Ochsner Westbank. Analyn was a friend to all and was the most kind, generous, loving person who anyone ever met. She always had a smile on her face, even in her last few months. She passed away in November 2010 at the age of 43. We miss her every day, but she is in our hearts forever."



– Janet Hartmon

Carah Howell '13 was a soccer player, and loved to travel, spent a semester in Mexico, and toured Spain one summer. She loved the outdoors and her adventures included snorkeling with manatees, skiing in Vermont, and hiking in the Great Smoky Mountains. After earning a BA in Spanish from

Auburn University, she became a Certified Surgical Technologist, moved to Louisiana, enrolled at Charity and graduated in 2013. She worked primarily in Telemetry for Ochsner Health Systems as well as in other areas, and then as an agency nurse with RN Network where she was nominated for a Daisy Award. Carah passed away in 2022 at age 34.



“My aunt **Camille Barnes** always spoke fondly of teaching at Charity and I am sending you her 1949 and 1950 yearbooks. She also spent some time teaching in Japan before opening her own advertising agency in San Francisco.” – *Jo Anne Mitchell*

Marie Manich was Assistant Director of CHSN, and retired in 1972. She was made an Honorary Member of the Alumni Association. She passed away in 2013. ☘

In Memoriam

Olive Holmes Godoy '45 (3/4/13)

Hazel Tegre Haydel '46 (11/18/08)

Irma Ray Mosby '49 (12/5/22)

Nedra Hooper Ely '50 (8/18/23)

Emma Frances Underwood Louque '54 (1/14/23)

Alma Harris Hodge '55 (10/21/18)

Kathryn Roberson McNutt '56 (6/17/23)

Sybil Monroe Joseph '57 (12/19/23)

Elizabeth “Betsey” Lauve Maxwell '59 (1/3/24)

Jannie Virginia Fewell Fountain '62 (10/13/21)

Mary Chasson Theriot '62 (11/17/22)

Sue Ellen Ketchum '65 (1/14/24)

Margaret Mellon Montaldo Lobenstein '65 (10/16/23)

Lisa Morgan Renfree '85 (1/2/2024)

Analyn Hartman Cummings '02 (11/28/10)

Carah Howell '13 (2/7/22)

Faculty/Staff

Camille Barnes (12/2015)

Marie Manich (8/11/13)

☘



*Robert Carbon, husband of the late **Christine Hurley Carbon** '71, visited the new building, and brought a small urn with some of Christine's ashes so she could visit, too! Robert established a scholarship in Christine's memory after she passed away in 2020.*

An Essay Found: A Dream Postponed But Not Forgotten

These days we know many ‘non-traditional’ Charity students who had postponed their dreams of becoming nurses for years, but this story is from a half century ago. We thought this essay was sweet and universal, and we were so touched that she had kept her Charity cape and cap all these years!

*Tim Smith wrote to say, “My mother **Martha Jan Stanton Smith** was a student at Charity back in the early 1950s, but she did not graduate. She passed away in 2013, and my father more recently in 2021. Going through their things, my sister and I came across her Charity nursing school cape and cap. We also discovered this draft of an essay, initially typed but extensively edited in her own handwriting. It must have been written in the mid 1970s, and it is probably her application essay to enroll in nursing school in Texas. Mom did go back to nursing school, and she did become a nurse!”*

I turned eighteen three days before I graduated from Pensacola High School. That entire week was filled with mixed emotions. I was delighted because I was finally ‘grown up,’ but I was sad to leave my high school. I was anxiously anticipating the coming year. I had been accepted at Charity Hospital School of Nursing in New Orleans.

For graduation, my dad gave me the watch I would need for nurse training and my mother gave me the luggage I would need to move to school. That summer was the longest of my life and I thought it would never pass.

On September 5, 1950, I began training with the secure feeling that five years later, after graduating from Charity, I would earn a BA in Surgical Nursing from Louisiana State University. At that time in my life, I planned never to marry or have children. I was definitely on track to be a career nurse. (Strange how the best laid plans and dreams do change or get delayed!)

The summer of 1951 was my summer of love, and the winter of my downfall. I was dating a Tulane medical student and, of course, we were very much in love. When he asked me to marry him, I accepted. Charity students at that time were not allowed to be married except in the last three months of senior year, so I decided to quit school and make preparations for the wedding. Everything went beautifully until I decided he was not the one and, since I was no longer in school, my dad came to New Orleans and brought me home to Pensacola.

During the next few months, I went to work with every intention of returning to Charity, only a year behind my

original class. I was earning good money and feeling very independent.

Before I realized what hit me, I met a dashing young Naval Cadet and married him within two weeks! Friends and relatives were confident it would never last. Somewhere along the line I must have decided to stick with at least this one undertaking because here I am, twenty years and three children later, still married to the same guy!

We have moved twenty-seven times, and seen a lot of the world. We have had our share of ups and downs. We have managed to keep abreast of the world through continued involvement in Marine Corps life.

During our lives together, much of the family matters of budget, decision-making, and discipline have rested on my shoulders (as is true in military life) and I found maturity thrust heavily upon me. My joys varied with the times and my professional pursuits have ranged from cosmetology to real estate. I am now directing all my efforts to entering your nursing program in August. The desire to be in nursing never died; it was only postponed until this time.

— Martha Jan Stanton Smith ☘

Below, Tim Smith and his wife visited the old School of Nursing earlier this year to donate his mother Martha's cape to the Alumni Association.



Professional Issues Day Focuses on Career Challenges

Seniors met together for Professional Issues Day in October to look ahead and explore challenges and issues that will face them in their new careers.

Guest speakers included **Kristian Dijamco**, Peer Support Specialist with LCMC Health; **C.J. Marbley**, CEO/COO of New Orleans East Hospital; and **Jarvis Darensburg**, Nurse Manager of Telehealth with the Veterans Administration.

Dr. Joan Ellis, Executive Dean of the School of Nursing, was also on hand to discuss preparing for the NCLEX.

Between speakers, students rotated among tables to hear ten-minute poster presentations prepared by each clinical group on a variety of topics, from ageism, to staffing ratios, to alarm fatigue.

The Alumni Association provided lunch for everyone, and at the end of the day, the seniors were invited to become active members of the organization once they graduate. Each student was given a free first year of membership. We hope to see all of them at our next alumni event! ☘



2024 Election Candidate Biographies

SECRETARY CANDIDATE - Unopposed



Joycelyn Gondolfo Jeansonne '78: Active in the Alumni Association since the 1980s, Joycelyn has served on the Board, as President, and currently as Secretary, a position she has held since 2012. She is on the Scholarship Committee, and she and her husband Kevin sponsor the Jeansonne Scholarship every semester. She has a BSN from Northwestern, a MN from LSUMC, and a post-graduate NNP certification from LSUMC. She was Supervisor of PICU at Big Charity before moving to Alexandria where she taught Pediatric Nursing at LSU Alexandria. Joycelyn guest lectures at Louisiana College, volunteers at the Alexandria Museum of Art, and has been Secretary, President and Captain of the Krewe of Medea, an Alexandria Mardi Gras krewe.

BOARD MEMBER CANDIDATES - Two positions



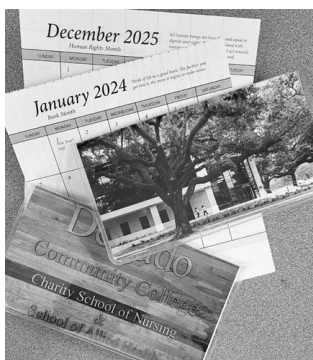
Judy LaFleur Ross '68: Judy worked full time for thirty-four years at Charity Hospital in the Medical ICU, Infectious Disease unit, and in Nursing Education and Staff Development. After retiring she worked as a pool nurse two to three days a week for thirteen years in Charity's various outpatient clinics. Judy has been an active member of the Alumni Association for many years, was on the Alumni Association's Advisory Committee, and currently serves as a Board Member.



Vivian Larkin Manes '70: Vivian is a board certified nurse case manager with twenty-plus years of experience, currently working for a private rehab company. She has been a board member of the Case Management Society of America and a member of the American Society of Pain Management Nursing. She has been an active member of the Alumni Association for many years, serving on the Nominating Committee, Advisory Committee, and currently as a Board Member. "I remain committed to a strong and dynamic alumni, focusing on support and encouragement of Charity students."



Jenn Garnand '11: Jenn earned a BA in Sociology, Theology and Criminology before being drawn to nursing. 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. Jenn was named the 2020 Louisiana Nurse of the Year by the Louisiana State Nurses Association. She holds a PhD in Nursing Leadership from the University of Southern Mississippi, professional certifications in emergency, critical care and executive nursing, and is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives. Jenn is currently the Medical Training Officer for Jefferson Parish Third District Volunteer Fire Department, and has served on the CHSNAA Advisory Board for many years. ☘



Renew Your Membership!

Your membership dues enable us to publish our newsletters twice a year, stay in touch with you and thousands of other Charity graduates, and help keep the spirit of Charity alive across the many generations of alumni. And, as a paid member, you are entitled to vote in elections for new Board members and officers. All that for only \$15 in annual dues!

Renew your Alumni Association membership at the \$25 level or above and you will be listed in the 2024 *White Cap* as a 'Member of Note,' plus you'll receive your choice of gifts: a 2024-25 pocket planner, a blue pelican coaster, a handy 3" x 5" Charity Alumni notepad, or a vintage postcard of the dorm.

Use the form on page 19, or pay securely online at our website:

www.CharityAlumni.org





We get them as gifts, we collect them ourselves – we all have those crazy nurse figurines! Some are delightful, some are just strange! Angels and kittens and bears – Oh, my!

Little girl nurses clutching bandaged up dolls, caps with red crosses, skirts in a hoop, armed with thermometers, syringes or soup!
Completely unlikely images of nursing – but we can't look away! Too much, and never enough!!
So join us for breakfast and take home a few!!

Spring 2024 Alumni Breakfast!

Charity Alumni are celebrating weird and wonderful nursing figurines!

Alice Brady '64 has downsized – and donated a lifetime's collection of nurse figurines!

They're looking for new homes – you could get lucky!

So come and have breakfast with some of nursing's wildest characters – in resin, ceramic, stuffing and wood – and quite a few live ones, too! (Prizes for Funniest Nursing T-shirts!!)

Saturday, April 20th

At The Ridgeway of Old Metairie, 2431 Metairie Road at Ridgeway Drive

(Plenty of free parking around the building and across Ridgeway Drive)

Buffet Menu: Eggs Benedict, Shrimp and Grits, Grilled Veggies, Fruit Salad, Pastries, Coffee, Tea, Juice

Registration and Cash Bar open at 9:30am, Buffet opens at 10am, Program at 10:30am

Spring 2024 Alumni Breakfast Reservation Form

Use this form and mail to: CHSN Alumni Association, PO Box 19103, New Orleans, LA 70179

Or purchase tickets at www.CharityAlumni.org

Deadline to purchase tickets: April 12, 2024

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY!

Name _____ Clas of: _____ Phone: _____
First name Graduating name (if different from Last) Last name Cell or Home?

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Email: _____ Total number of people _____ @ \$45 each.....\$ _____

Bringing a Guest? Please give us the name for their 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 Graduation name Last name

Address: _____

Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Home

Email: _____

I Want to Contribute to:

Alumni Scholarship Fund.....\$ _____
Student Activities Fund.....\$ _____
Student Emergency Assistance Fund.....\$ _____
Art & Archives Preservation Fund.....\$ _____
Bernice Bonds Scholarship Fund.....\$ _____
White Cap/Alumni News Fund\$ _____
Other: _____

Annual Membership Dues:

- ☐ \$15 Regular Membership
☐ \$25 Blue Ribbon Member
☐ \$50 Silver Star Member
☐ \$100 Sister Stanislaus Member
☐ Sustaining Member: a one-time gift of \$500
(and never pay dues again).

Memberships and/or donations at the \$25 level or above, please select your gift:

- ☐ No gift, please.
☐ 2024-25 Alumni pocket calendar
☐ Alumni notepad ☐ Pelican Coaster
☐ Vintage postcard of the old Charity Dorm

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

You can write one check for your membership dues, any donations and the breakfast. 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 17. 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 **March 31, 2024** to be counted.

CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL

Only alumni who are current on their **paid dues** are eligible to vote. Check your mailing label for your membership status. The *four-digit number right after your name* on your mailing label indicates **the year your paid membership expires**. If you see "2023" beside your name, it means your membership expired at the end of 2023. You can vote in this election, but please consider renewing your membership now for 2024.

If your label has a year earlier than 2023, you are overdue to pay your membership, and you should send a check along with your ballot. If you have a "0" after your name, you have *never* paid membership dues!!

If the number on your label is 2024 or greater, or if it is 9999 (Lifetime Member), or 8888 (Sustaining Member), then you do NOT need to renew your membership and you can go ahead and vote. If the number is 7777 (Friend), you are not eligible to vote.

2024 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.

SECRETARY

JOYCELYN JEANSONNE '78

BOARD MEMBERS - Select Two

JUDY ROSS '68

VIVIAN MANES '70

JENN GARNAND '11

Check one:

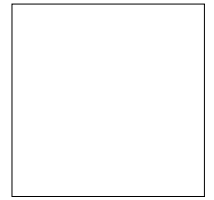
- ☐ I am current on my membership dues.
☐ I am renewing my membership today.

Mail your ballot to: **CHSN Alumni Association**
PO Box 19103
New Orleans, LA 70179

Charity Hospital School of Nursing ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

PO Box 19103
New Orleans, Louisiana 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 is that number after my name?

The four-digit number following your name on your mailing label indicates the year your membership expires. For example, "2023" next to your name means your membership expired at the end of 2023. You can renew your membership now for 2024 on page 19 or on our website:

CharityAlumni.org



The Charity Class of December 2023



The Alumni News is a publication of

Charity Hospital School of Nursing Alumni Association

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