



American
Red Cross

Nursing Matters Past and Present

American Red Cross National Nursing Committee

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Free CE Credits Now Available for Red Cross Volunteers

Linda L. Fahey, DNP, RN, CENP

The American Red Cross Joint Accreditation program has expanded to include accredited continuing education (CE) activities developed within the Humanitarian Services division, including the Office of the Chief Nurse, Disaster Relief Services, and Service to the Armed Forces. Through this expansion, the Red Cross Office of Continuing Education now provides accreditation support across all divisions, including Biomedical Services, Training Services and Humanitarian Services.

This growth means more opportunities for Red Cross volunteers, including nurses, to earn **free CE credits** needed to maintain professional licenses and certifications. New accredited CE topics will cover a wide range of subjects such as disaster services, mental health, and other clinical areas that support the vital work of Red Cross volunteers and employees.

Free CE credits are available to volunteers and

staff in the following professions: Nurses, Physicians, Physician Associates, Social Workers and EMS Personnel, with plans to add Psychologists and Pharmacists in the future.

By expanding access to high-quality continuing education, the Red Cross is helping health professionals strengthen their professional skills, stay current in their fields and continue delivering exceptional care and support to communities in need.

The first activity to be launched through the Red Cross Office of CE will be part of the Humanitarian Services monthly Grand Rounds, taking place **September 9, 2026**, at 4:00 p.m. ET on TEAMS. September's session will be **Worker Wellness in Disaster Operations: A Clinical Services Approach**. Watch for information about creating an account for completing continuing education requirements. We look forward to having you join us.



JOINTLY ACCREDITED PROVIDER™
INTERPROFESSIONAL CONTINUING EDUCATION

In support of improving patient care, the American Red Cross is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

Hundreds of Red Cross Volunteers Helping Victims of Western Wildfires

Airik Myers, Northwest Region, and Molly Dalton, National Headquarters

The American Red Cross has been responding across several states for weeks as devastating wildfires claimed millions of acres across the West.

Hundreds of Red Cross disaster workers are working with partners to make sure people get the help they need. They are providing safe shelter, meals and snacks, health and mental health support and distributing relief items where it is safe to do so. Disaster Health Services volunteers are replacing things like medications, medical

equipment and eyeglasses that people lost while evacuating. Comfort kits are available with things like toothbrushes and personal toiletries. In areas where evacuation orders have been lifted, disaster teams are distributing wildfire kits that include safety equipment including eye drops, work gloves, Tyvek suits, safety goggles, shoe covers, N95 masks, hand sanitizer – all of which can be stored and disposed of in the plastic containers after they have been used and contaminated with burn residue. The kits also include shelf-stable self-

heating meals, waters and snacks.

Over the past several months, more than 1,000 Red Cross disaster responders have been supporting people impacted by the fires. They have served more than 12,400 meals and almost 23,000 snacks; opened as many as 59 shelters, provided as many as 4,000 overnight stays and distributed almost 20,000 relief items.

‘I’M A HELPER’ One of these volunteers is Kathleen Thompson, a registered nurse from



Kathleen Thompson has been working as a Spokane-area nurse while also taking shifts to volunteer at Red Cross shelters.

Spokane, who stepped forward to serve with Disaster Health Services. For Kathleen, this was her first shelter experience, and it quickly became clear that the fires had created extraordinary needs.

Meeting the needs of a large and diverse group of people required attention, compassion and creative solutions. Walking through the shelter, Kathleen identified needs one by one. She helped a gentleman who could only eat while sitting upright by

securing proper seating. She found two new mothers and arranged pack and plays and cots so they could rest safely. “That felt great,” she said, reflecting on the small but meaningful changes she was able to make.

Kathleen’s role extended beyond individual fixes. “Honestly, I’ve been doing everything,” she said, underscoring the wide range of responsibilities she carried in the shelter. Her presence highlighted the importance of Red Cross nurses in disaster response, ensuring evacuees receive the care they

need in the midst of crisis.

For Kathleen, the fires were not just a distant disaster. They were happening in her own backyard. “It’s impacting the whole community,” she said.

She worked with her employer to stay at the shelter where she was needed most, even as colleagues and neighbors faced evacuation themselves. Having lived through wildfire evacuations in the past, she understood fear and trauma firsthand. “It’s terrifying and it brings back a lot of horrible memories too,” she shared.

When asked why it was important for her to be there, Kathleen’s answer was simple. “Because I’m a helper. That’s why I’m a registered nurse. If we don’t help each other, then who’s going to help us? Our community needs to help each other.”

Kathleen introduced herself plainly: “Hi, my name’s Kathleen Thompson, registered nurse with the American Red Cross Disaster Health Services, and I am manning the Disaster Health Services at the Spokane Convention Center Shelter.”

Behind that introduction is a story of resilience, compassion and service. In the midst of chaos, Kathleen brought care and dignity to those who needed it most.

YOU CAN ALSO HELP by becoming a volunteer. Volunteers make it possible every year for us to respond to an average of about 60,000 disasters in the U.S. — most of which are home fires. After large disasters, the Red Cross first depends on pre-trained volunteers to travel to the disaster zone to help people in need. Those who are interested in getting trained to volunteer should [contact their local chapter](#) or visit redcross.org/volunteer.

The Weight a Mother Carries Between Every Transfusion

Tiffany Taylor

Vesha Jamison spends her workdays at the American Red Cross making sure hospitals have blood and that patients with sickle cell disease receive closely matched units when they need them. At her son Dreylan’s last transfusion appointment, his doctor asked whether he could accept a good match now or wait for the closest match.

“Dreylan has previously received molecularly matched units due to having antibodies in the past,” Vesha said. “This time, his doctor asked if I would be comfortable with him receiving phenotypically matched units because they had two of those in-house, but only one molecularly matched unit. They had conducted a national inventory search and would have had to continue

looking for the second unit, which would have delayed his transfusion."

Dreylan, 16, has lived with sickle cell disease since



Dreylan is 16 now, and Vesha said he understands his disease well enough to be told the truth about the blood supply. "Every few weeks, we are back in a space where someone else's decision to donate blood becomes directly connected to Dreylan's care."

birth and was diagnosed through newborn screening before he was 2 months old. He received his first blood transfusion at 9 months old and has relied on the generosity of blood donors ever since.

Dreylan's blood type, A positive, is only the starting point. Red cells carry more than 300 known antigens, and some are unique to specific racial and

ethnic groups. Patients with sickle cell disease who receive transfusions over time are most likely to develop antibodies to three of them, called C, E and K. Donors whose blood lacks those three proteins are known at the Red Cross as Sickle Cell Fighters or CEK negative donors, and their donations do not carry the antigens that trigger those immune reactions.

Both units in Dreylan's case were a C, E and K match. The difference was how each match was confirmed. Two were checked by blood testing, and one by genetic testing, which can find rare variants that blood testing alone can miss. For a patient who has already formed antibodies, that added precision matters.

The genetic profile that leaves red cells without C and E antigens is more than 10 times as common in blood donors who are Black compared to blood donors who are White. Additionally, blood donors who are Black are almost three times more likely to be a match for the blood most commonly needed by patients with sickle cell disease.

For families of sickle cell warriors, cancer patients and those battling beta thalassemia, the question is not only whether a blood donation exists. It is

whether the blood is a close enough match, and how long patients are willing and able to wait while lab professionals keep searching.

"Working here, I have a little relief knowing the specialized work we do," Vesha said. "I am usually pretty calm at transfusion time because I know that we're out here every day, boots on the ground, making sure that we collect for our hospitals. His doctors know the work we do, so sometimes they even ask me questions."

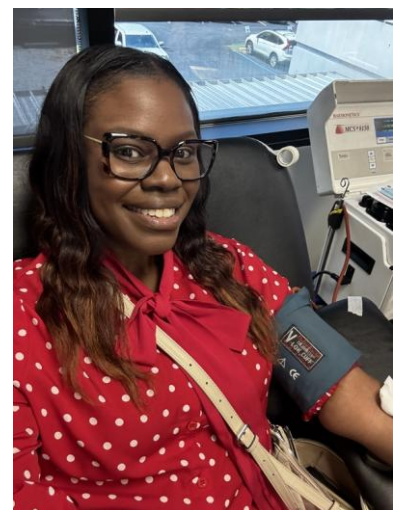


Dreylan had a pain crisis at the end of July and could not start his junior year on the first day of school. "While others were taking first day photos, we were taking meds hoping to ease some of the pain."

But as a mother first, Dreylan's doctor's questions have sometimes left Vesha with more questions than answers. "Even if the units are available, are they the best suited for individual patients, and what does that look like when it's not?" she said. "So overall, it adds a little anxiety for me. It makes me even re-evaluate my work, knowing that what we do directly impacts my own household."

Like other families, Vesha and Dreylan have had to wait before. In November 2021, weeks before the Red Cross declared the first national blood crisis in its history, Dreylan waited two days for blood.

The Red Cross had declared only the second national blood supply crisis in its history after blood donations fell to a four-year summer low, deepening an emergency



Donors cannot always wait for a convenient moment, Vesha said, because patients cannot. "Sickle cell does not check our calendar before a pain crisis."

shortage that threatened the availability of lifesaving blood for patients across the country.

Since issuing the blood crisis in late July, thousands of generous donors have stepped up to help save lives. At the same time, the blood supply remains under severe pressure, just as many communities transition to back-to-school schedules and people enjoy final summer plans. When fewer donors are available to give, the

impact on available lifesaving blood products can be significant — especially when the blood supply is already facing a four-year summer low.

Eligible blood donors of all blood types, including Sick Cell Fighters or CEK negative donors are urged to make an appointment to give blood by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org) or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Major Disaster Now Happens Almost Every Two Weeks; Critical Need for More Red Cross Volunteers

Molly Dalton

Our American Red Cross volunteers are the heartbeat of our organization. Making up 90% of our workforce, there are more than 325,000 individuals who come together to transform moments of crisis into moments of hope.

Whether responding to disasters at home or around the country, teaching lifesaving skills, supporting military families, or helping patients in need of blood, they offer their time and skills to help someone in need when hope is hard to find.

Today, volunteers are more critical than ever as the Red Cross responds to a new major disaster about every two weeks. The human toll from these disasters is nearly impossible to imagine. More disasters translates to more victims, more people looking to the Red Cross for help.

It is key that we enroll more volunteers today. We have a wide range of opportunities available that satisfy a wide range of interests and time commitment. [You can learn more here.](#) Right now, it is critical that we find people interested in these roles:

Blood Donor Ambassador: As a Volunteer Blood Donor Ambassador, you'll make every blood donor feel welcomed and appreciated from start to finish. Greet donors with warmth, guide them through check-in, and express sincere thanks for their generous gift. You'll be an essential part of the team—each shift you take helps deliver hope and save lives. [Hear firsthand](#) from Bouziane, one of our Blood Donor Ambassadors, to learn more about what inspires him to support blood drives in his community. Join the American Red Cross and

help provide lifesaving blood to those in need. [Learn more here.](#)

Blood Transportation Specialist: As a Blood Volunteer Driver, deliver lifesaving blood products to local hospitals, assist our blood collections teams with supplies, and return blood products from various locations in the region, directly helping patients in need. Whether you prefer more flexible, on-demand opportunities or regularly scheduled shifts, our user-friendly mobile app makes it easy to pick up shifts that fit your schedule. This makes it perfect for those seeking a flexible volunteering experience. [Hear firsthand](#) how you can experience the Red Cross' lifesaving mission. Deliver blood to those in need through either scheduled shifts or on-demand driving opportunities. To learn more, visit: redcross.org/drivehope (On-Demand) or redcross.org/deliver (Scheduled).

National Disaster Responder: When hurricanes, wildfires and other disasters strike, families are left without the basics - food, shelter and comfort. You can be the one who helps them begin to recover. Deploy across the country to deliver shelter, supplies and support when it's needed most. Explore redcross.org/deploy to find the role that is right for you.

Local Disaster Responder: Did you know the American Red Cross responds to more than 60,000 disasters a year? Most of these disasters are home fires that don't make headlines. Be a part of the volunteer team that is there when our neighbors need them the most. From offering comfort and care during disasters to educating

communities on disaster preparedness, there are many ways to get involved. Explore [redcross.org/local response](https://www.redcross.org/local-response) for current opportunities in your area.

Join our team and make an impact. Every contribution matters. Be part of the solution — [sign up here today](#).

A Year of Learning, Nursing, and Partnership: The U.S. Army Nurse Corps Training with Industry American Red Cross Fellowship

Giang Martinez, DNP, MPA, APRN, AGCNS

I'm LTC Giang Martinez, an Army nurse originally from Philadelphia, and this year I have the privilege of serving as the U.S. Army Nurse Corps Training with Industry American Red Cross Fellow. The fellowship allows Army leaders to learn from civilian organizations and bring new ideas, practices and partnerships back to Army Medicine. For me, that means spending a year immersed in the American Red Cross under Dr.

Linda Fahey, Chief Nursing Officer, and learning how the organization supports communities, responds to disasters, and prepares its healthcare workforce.



A highlight of my fellowship LTC Giang Martinez (far left), American Red Cross Fellow, joined members of the MCOT Disaster Team in Spokane, Washington, supporting disaster relief efforts in the community.

has been experiencing the Red Cross mission in many different ways- from my first deployment supporting wildfire-affected communities in Washington State to working with Service to the Armed Forces teams. I've also had the opportunity

to explore how Red Cross capabilities, including prehospital blood administration, can support military treatment facilities and strengthen medical readiness.

One of the best parts of this experience has been connecting with fellow nurses across the organization, including many with military ties. I've been especially impressed by how so many

continue to serve through engagement with the Red Cross after the military, bringing their experience and passion for nursing into a new mission.

I'm grateful for how welcoming everyone has been, and I'm excited to keep learning from this incredible nursing community. If our paths cross, please say hello- I'd love to hear your story!

2026 Jane Delano Nursing Student Scholarship Awarded to Meilani Abraham

Laurie Willshire, MPH, BSN, RN

American Red Cross volunteer Meilani Abraham has been chosen to receive the 2026 Jane Delano Nursing Student Scholarship. This scholarship was established to promote nursing as a career and the involvement of new nurses in the American Red Cross. Each recipient receives \$3,000 towards their tuition.

Meilani Abraham is a full-time BSN student at Pepperdine University in Calabasas, California. She

plans to graduate in May 2029, with a goal of eventually becoming a nurse practitioner. She is currently a volunteer with the Blood Volunteer Workforce Engagement program (BVWE) within the American Red Cross Los Angeles Region.

Meilani first became interested in helping others at a young age when she assisted her mother in providing care for a family member with a chronic illness. This inspired her love of science and led

her to many volunteer activities, which in turn caused her to pursue nursing as a career. She continues to actively volunteer in many areas of service, including the Red Cross.

While interning on a medical oncology unit, she observed patients with leukemia and lymphoma receiving platelets, red blood cells and plasma, which inspired her to become a blood donor. Her donor experience was so positive that she began volunteering with Red Cross as a blood donor ambassador, traveling



Melani Abraham

to donation sites across Los Angeles County, including her own college campus. As Melani describes her role: “As an ambassador, I greet donors, assist with the check-in process, provide education about the importance of blood donation, and promote a wonderful experience. I love this role because it allows me to engage with the community while strengthening my leadership and communication skills. More importantly, it has allowed me to contribute to the life-saving mission of the Red Cross.”

It's That Time of Year: Consider Nominating Nurses for Nursing Awards

Laurie Willshire, MPH, BSN, RN

National Awards has now released FY26 awards cycle information, including nomination deadlines. There will be a formal six-week nomination window from September 1 to October 9, 2026 for the Presidential and Leadership Awards, including the Ann Magnussen Award and Susan Hassmiller Nursing Award. These award recipients will be selected in mid-December 2026, and notified in early January 2027. Detailed application forms and information are now available on [OneSource](#).

The Ann Magnussen Award is presented annually to a volunteer or employed registered nurse with three or more years of Red Cross service who has made an outstanding contribution to strengthening or improving American Red Cross programs and services. It is the highest honor of nursing achievement in the American Red Cross.

The Susan Hassmiller Nursing Award provides \$5,000 in grant support for a Red Cross proposal that promotes nurse and nursing student involvement across Red Cross lines of business, and/or in policy and leadership roles. Submissions are invited from chapters, regions and stations, and *external collaboration is encouraged*. The proposal must be replicable and sustainable.

In September the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will be sending a call for nominations for the **Florence Nightingale Medal**, the highest international award a nurse can receive. This medal is awarded every two years to nurses and voluntary nursing aides around the world who have shown exceptional courage and devotion to the wounded, sick or disabled or to civilian victims of a conflict or disaster; and/or exemplary services or creativity in public health or nursing education. Once this nomination information has been received from the ICRC, it will be communicated broadly throughout the American Red Cross, and pertinent information and documents will be posted on OneSource.

Individuals and Red Cross units are asked to think seriously about nominating qualified individuals for the Ann Magnussen Award or Florence Nightingale Medal, and/or submitting a proposal for the Susan Hassmiller Nursing Award. While previous winners cannot be nominated again, past non-recipients can certainly be renominated.

Effective nominations and proposals take some time to write, so planning ahead will be very helpful in getting a quick start. Please reach out with any questions: RedCrossNurse@redcross.org.

American Red Cross and Philippine Nurses Association of America Sign National Partnership Agreement to Strengthen Disaster Response and Community Resilience

Linda L. Fahey, DNP, RN, CENP

The American Red Cross and the Philippine Nurses Association of America (PNAA) have formally

entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), establishing a national partnership designed to strengthen disaster preparedness, volunteer engagement, emergency response and community resilience across the United States.

The newly signed agreement reflects a shared commitment to alleviating human suffering through the power of volunteerism and service. Through the partnership, the organizations will work together to connect PNAA's nationwide network of nurse leaders and healthcare professionals with Red Cross preparedness, response and recovery efforts.

Founded in 1881, the American Red Cross prevents and alleviates human suffering in emergencies by mobilizing volunteers and donors. PNAA, founded in 1979, represents 62 chapters and more than 7,000 Filipino-American members nationwide. PNAA advances nursing leadership, education, research, advocacy and community service while promoting the health and well-being of diverse communities.

Under the agreement, the Red Cross will provide PNAA members with pathways to volunteer service, onboarding support, training opportunities, professional development resources and disaster deployment opportunities. PNAA will promote Red Cross volunteer opportunities through its communication channels and encourage member participation in preparedness and response activities.

A Nurse's Journey with the Red Cross: "Pursue What Sets Your Soul on Fire."

Stephanie Wesseling & Dariana Molina, South Florida Region

For Carol Van Arsdale, a registered nurse and Red Cross Disaster Health Services volunteer, helping others has always been part of her profession. But it wasn't until she joined the American Red Cross in 2023 that she discovered a deeper calling – one that continues to guide her with every deployment.

Carol has deployed ten times, serving communities across the country impacted by disasters. From flooding in Kentucky to devastating river floods in Texas, she has been on the front lines, providing care, comfort and support to families navigating some of the most difficult moments of their lives.

The partnership also creates opportunities for joint educational programs, coordinated volunteer engagement and stronger collaboration between local Red Cross chapters and PNAA affiliates. In addition, PNAA will support efforts to increase awareness about the need for a diverse blood supply and encourage blood donor education and recruitment.

The MOU builds on a longstanding record of service by PNAA nurses during times of crisis. Following the 2023 Maui wildfires, PNAA nurses mobilized triage centers, provided clinical care and partnered closely with the American Red Cross to assist survivors. During the 2025 Los Angeles wildfires, PNAA chapters organized relief efforts, donated to Red Cross disaster operations and supported emergency sheltering, food distribution, relief supplies and medical assistance.

By formalizing their collaboration, the American Red Cross and PNAA will be better positioned to leverage their complementary strengths in healthcare, disaster response and volunteer leadership. The partnership is expected to expand disaster readiness training, volunteer credentialing, emergency response capacity and public health preparedness initiatives nationwide.

Together, the organizations will continue advancing their shared mission of serving vulnerable communities, strengthening resilience and ensuring that compassionate, skilled volunteers are prepared to respond whenever and wherever disasters occur.

Most recently, Carol deployed to Houston, Texas, where an unexpected cold weather event left many families without heat. As an on-site nurse in a Red Cross shelter, she helped care for individuals seeking a warm place away from the freezing temperatures. "We had families come in who didn't have heat in their homes," Carol shared. "Others were able to come in, get a hot meal, and we identified any medical needs they may have had while they were in our care."

In addition to providing medical support, Carol worked alongside local partners to help connect

people with longer-term resources, including housing assistance. It's a holistic approach that defines the work of Red Cross Disaster Health Services – meeting immediate needs while helping individuals take steps toward recovery.

But for Carol, the impact of this work goes far beyond logistics or medical care. “I have a saying: pursue what sets your soul on fire,” she said. “And I didn't really find that until I did my first deployment.”

That first deployment came in August 2023, ahead of Hurricane Idalia. What began as preparation quickly turned into a life-changing experience. Stationed at a shelter in an elementary school, Carol cared for a wide range of individuals, including those with complex medical needs. One man in particular left a lasting impression. After losing his home to flooding, he arrived at the shelter with very few belongings. A double amputee, he had also lost access to the support systems he depended on. Carol and her team stepped in, helping him get cleaned up, securing clothing and ensuring he had the medications he needed.

Amid the uncertainty and disruption, something unexpected happened. During a visit to the shelter, the President of the United States stopped to speak with him, thanking him for his military service and presenting him with a challenge coin. “You could just see him beaming,” Carol recalled. “He said it was one of the greatest moments of his life. Seeing that...that's what made it so worthwhile for me.”



Carol Van Arsdale

Moments like these continue to shape Carol's experience with the Red Cross. During her most recent deployment, she encountered another individual – a man in a wheelchair found outside in

freezing rain. A police officer brought him to the shelter, unsure of what to do. Carol and her team acted quickly, bringing him inside, wrapping him in blankets and offering a warm meal and hot tea. “It was just that moment of kindness,” she said. “Meeting people where they're at, not caring where they came from and just being there for them.” For Carol, these moments are what define her service.

As a Disaster Health Services volunteer, her role is different from traditional bedside nursing. Instead, it's about meaningful conversations and connecting people to the care they need in moments of crisis. “It's not your traditional bedside nursing,” she explained. “It's more like community health. You have a minute or two to talk to someone, to understand what's important to them and what they need.”

And it's a role she encourages others to explore. “If anyone is wondering whether they can join the Red Cross or if they have something to offer – I'm telling you, you do,” she said. “There is something for everybody here.”

Driven by compassion and fueled by purpose, Carol continues to answer the call, deployment after deployment, bringing care, dignity and humanity to those who need it most. “I have moments like that every time I deploy,” she said. “And that's what keeps me coming back.”

When Seconds Matter: How the Red Cross First Aid App Helped Save a Child After a Copperhead Snakebite

Saskia Lindsay-Smith

On what began as a typical summer evening, a frightening medical emergency unfolded when 6-year-old Adeline was bitten by a venomous copperhead snake.

On June 21, 2025, Cory Nelson and his family returned to their Airbnb in Millfield, Ohio, after a fun-filled day at a music festival. As the sun set, Adeline went outside to catch fireflies — a simple moment that quickly turned urgent.



When 6-year-old Adeline was bitten by a copperhead snake while playing outside, her father turned to the American Red Cross First Aid App for guidance before rushing her to the hospital. Today, she has fully recovered.

Then Cory heard the words no parent ever wants to hear. “Dad, a snake bit me!”

He rushed to her side. Unsure what kind of snake had bitten her but knowing that time was critical, Cory needed reliable guidance from a trusted tool already

in his phone: [The American Red Cross First Aid App](#). He quickly entered Adeline’s symptoms and details about the bite. The app immediately provided clear, step-by-step guidance — including a critical instruction: **call 911 right away**.

“The app gave us information right away and helped us understand how serious the situation was,” Cory said. With a 911 dispatcher on the line, Cory followed instructions while staying by Adeline’s side, keeping her calm as help arrived.

Snakebites are more common during summer months

Snakebites require **fast, informed decisions**, especially when venomous species like copperheads are involved. Their bites can cause severe pain, swelling and tissue damage, making immediate medical attention critical.

The Red Cross First Aid App is designed to deliver instant access to lifesaving first aid information for a wide range of everyday emergencies — from

burns and allergic reactions to severe weather and animal/insect/reptile bites. Available for free, the app provides step-by-step instructions, interactive guidance and quick links to emergency services, helping users stay calm and take the right actions when seconds matter most.

The updated First Aid App provides first aid guidance informed by the latest science, along with features that can help users locate the nearest hospital if someone is injured or becomes ill.



Severe swelling from a copperhead snakebite sent 6-year-old Adeline to the hospital, where she was treated after her father used the American Red Cross First Aid App to quickly find care and follow first aid steps.

One of the most useful updates for outdoor emergencies is the addition of audible, hands-free emergency steps. This feature allows users to listen to calm, step-by-step guidance while keeping both hands free — whether stopping a bleed, performing CPR until help arrives or caring for a snakebite. In Adeline’s case, having critical information readily available made all the difference. Instead of second-guessing what to do, Cory was able to focus on keeping his daughter still and calm — essential steps to help slow the spread of venom — while waiting for emergency responders.

Thanks to Cory’s quick thinking and the immediate support provided by the Red Cross First Aid App, Adeline received prompt medical care. She was treated at a nearby hospital and is now recovering well.

Be prepared this summer

For families spending time outdoors — whether in their own backyard or traveling — preparedness can be lifesaving. Downloading tools like the Red Cross First Aid App, knowing the risks in your environment and understanding basic first aid steps can empower anyone to respond confidently in an emergency. Download the First Aid App

searching for ‘American Red Cross’ in your app store or at [redcross.org/apps](https://www.redcross.org/apps) — because when the unexpected happens, having trusted information at

your fingertips can help turn a frightening moment into a story of survival.

Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune's Portrait Made History at Red Cross Headquarters

Tiffany Taylor

As the nation honored the centennial of Black history and the nation's semiquincentennial this year, the words of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune ring with inspiration: "Without faith, nothing is possible. With faith, nothing is impossible." Those words resonated at the American Red Cross national headquarters in

Washington, D.C., during an unveiling in September of her portrait hosted by the Red Cross, the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. — three organizations with deep ties to Dr. Bethune, the first African American woman honored through portraiture at the headquarters.

Through the vision of Biomedical Partnership Officer Wendy Tabron, her portrait now hangs in the Folger Boardroom alongside the organization's founder, Clara Barton, former president Mabel Boardman and former chairman John Clifford Folger — making her the second African American



From left: Red Cross General Counsel Dawn Clarke-Doccuvi and artist Anita Easterwood stand with the newly unveiled portrait of Dr. Bethune. "As we honor Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, we also honor the truth that leadership, courage, and service come from every corner of our American story," said Clarke-Doccuvi.

honored in portraiture at headquarters, after Dr. Charles R. Drew.

"We made history tonight," said Tabron. "Dr. Bethune's legacy now lives on our walls, and I feel her presence in this room. It took a while to get here, but the timing was perfect."

Chosen from over

60 artists, Anita Easterwood was commissioned to paint Dr. Bethune, reviving her communal spirit in the very room where her advocacy helped shape a more inclusive Red Cross.

"She was not a woman who heard all the yeses," Easterwood explained. "She was a woman that pushed through in spite of all the nos."

Dr. A. Lois Keith, NCNW board chair, added: "Dr. Bethune was more than an educator. She was a strategist and a visionary. She believed in building institutions that would outlive her."

Read Tiffany Taylor's full article from February about the unveiling of Dr. Bethune's portrait on [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org).

Watch a Red Cross video, "The First Lady of the Struggle," about the portrait of Dr. Bethune and the artist Anita Easterwood on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com).

Remembering Barbara Nichols

Linda MacIntyre, PhD, RN, PHN, FAAN

Barbara Nichols was remarkable. She had many achievements personally and professionally. Barbara was serving on the National Nursing Committee in 2013 when I accepted the chief nurse position at the American Red Cross. Over the years, Barbara was a great mentor for me. The first community partner event that I needed to support was the National Black Nurses Association. I asked Barbara to attend their national conference and assist in strengthening our collaboration. Barbara facilitated introductions and gave me excellent advice. (The partnership remains strong today).



Barbara Nichols

A couple of years later, I sought Barbara's assistance to increase the commitment of Red Cross health professionals in welcoming and engaging individuals from various backgrounds and locations. Her advice was straightforward, practical and valuable. She helped me manage expectations and set achievable goals. Barbara was supportive of the Measles and Rubella Initiative. We met at one of their international meetings in Washington, D.C. to discuss ways

Red Cross health professionals could support this humanitarian work. We raised funds and increased awareness of the devastating impact of Measles.

I enjoyed Barbara's sense of humor. She was self-deprecating about being the first black nurse to be president of the American Nurses Association. She told me, "There's nothing as passé as a past president of ANA." She joked that she was one of a few black women in Maine and that while she didn't make grits, she could cook lobster. She advised me when eating out never to select an entree I could prepare at home.

I learned a great deal from Barbara over the years about leadership. I felt very privileged that she was one of my sponsors for the National Academy of Nursing. She respected my desire to recognize all who helped surpass our goals and she encouraged me to acknowledge my part as well. When I think of Barbara Nichols, I smile. Barbara lived life fully and encouraged others to join her. Barbara continues to inspire me.

Editor's note: Don't miss these additional online tributes to Barbara Nichols:

American Nurses Association: "**American Nurses Association Statement on the Passing of Barbara Nichols, Trailblazing Nurse Leader Who Broke Racial Barriers in the Profession**"

<https://www.nursingworld.org/news/news-releases/2026-news-releases/american-nurses-association-statement-on-the-passing-of-barbara-nichols-trailblazing-nurse-leader-who-broke-racial-barriers-in-the-profession/>

International Council of Nurses: "**Remembering the life and legacy of Dr Barbara L. Nichols**"

<https://www.icn.ch/news/remembering-life-and-legacy-dr-barbara-l-nichols>

August is National Make-A-Will Month

Corie Story

Being prepared is a key focus of the American Red Cross. So, throughout the month of August, National Make-A-Will month, we are encouraging folks to plan ahead and organize their financial affairs. Have you been putting off preparing or updating your will because, like so many of us, you found the process complicated? We have several resources to help you get started.

Download our NEW free “Touching the Future” will planning guide and workbook to help make the process simpler at redcrosslegacy.org/workbook. This electronic booklet provides a convenient place to gather all your important documents and information about your assets and wishes. The digital workbook allows you to fill out, edit, save and print as the need arises. It is a powerful tool for planning a will that reflects your values, supports the well-being of family and friends and honors the causes that have been important in your life. It also serves as a handy reference for making sure an existing will is complete and up to date.

Once you are ready to take the next step, the Red Cross has partnered with FreeWill to provide a secure, online tool that will take you through the will preparation process step by step at freewill.com/redcross. Whether you have a simple or more complex estate, the tool can assist in documenting your wishes. The site also allows you to set up a Revocable Living Trust, an Advance Healthcare Directive, a Durable Financial Power of Attorney and if necessary, can help find a qualified attorney near you to finalize your plans that will blossom into a lasting legacy.

Many Red Cross supporters are making the choice to get financially prepared, and also make a gift by will; we hope you will too. Our mission is to help you be prepared for all situations you may face. We hope these resources will empower you to be ready for the unexpected.

For questions or further conversation on strengthening your readiness, contact Corie Story at 314-239-2524 or by email at corie.story@redcross.org.

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Thank you!