



**American  
Red Cross**

# Nursing Matters Past and Present

American Red Cross National Nursing Committee

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## A Legacy of Extraordinary Excellence

Tiffany Taylor

Standing on her mother's legacy, Kenya Buckley is blazing a trail for other families enduring the unexpected twist and turns of sickle cell disease. As the founder of Carol's Promise Sickle Cell Foundation – an organization named in honor of her mother, Buckley is driven to increase the quality of life for those living with sickle cell disease despite it being a chronic illness with limited resources and awareness. Engaging members of the Black community, Carol's Promise partners with the American Red Cross to host blood drives to help ensure patients with sickle cell and other conditions have the blood products they need.



Kenya Buckley

supporting breast cancer. She wondered why similar resources weren't available for sickle cell disease. It was then the idea was birthed to start her own foundation to support those living with sickle cell.

"When I shared the idea with my mother, she told me I was going to find a [widely-available] cure for sickle cell," said Buckley.

In 2005, two weeks after her college graduation, Buckley's mother passed away from complications of sickle cell disease. Buckley was devastated.

## Advocate of Change

Growing up, Buckley did not understand the blood disease that plagued her mother, Carol. She did not know the words 'sickle cell disease,' but she knew her mother was always sick and there was no widely available cure.

"I was ashamed that I didn't do more research to help my mom," said Buckley. "I didn't fully understand the disease to support her better. A lot of people have heard about it [sickle cell], but don't really know what it is. If people knew about it, they would definitely give more [blood donations]."



Buckley at her graduation with her mother, Carol.

Sickle cell disease is the most common genetic blood disorder in the U.S., and regular blood transfusions are critical to manage extreme pain and life-threatening complications.

Buckley, a first-generation college student, volunteered during her time in school with an organization

## Keeper of the Promise

Amid her grief, Buckley began research into sickle cell disease, nonprofits, and organizations that could help her learn more about the genetic blood disorder. She was laser focused on starting an organization and launched Carol's Promise Sickle Cell Foundation in 2017 to uphold the promise she made to her mother to advocate on her behalf. In addition, Buckley also honors her mother as a dedicated blood donor— already achieving her gallon donation milestone.

In November 2017, her foundation hosted its first blood drive and has continued to ever since, hosting drives twice a year. Recently, the organization hosted a blood drive during Sickle Cell Awareness Month and collected nearly two dozen units. The effort was part of Joined by Blood, a fall-focused component of the Red Cross Sickle Cell Initiative to help increase the number of blood donors who are Black to support the blood transfusion needs of patients with sickle cell.

"My mom always encouraged me to donate blood and to be an organ donor," said Buckley. "She would always say 'don't take for granted what others hold so dear.' I'm proud that I donate blood regularly . . .

to me, I'm just living out her dreams for me and living her legacy."

Annually, patients with sickle cell can need as many as 100 units of blood. Frequent transfusions can make finding compatible blood types more difficult when patients develop an immune response against blood from donors that is not closely matched to the blood of the recipient. However, 1 in 3 African American blood donors are a match for people with sickle cell disease.

"One of the things that I love about the Red Cross [is] anytime you give blood [for the first time] at one of our blood drives, you're automatically tested for sickle cell trait," said Buckley.

It's estimated 1 in 13 Black or African American babies in the U.S. is born with sickle cell trait, but many individuals are unaware if they carry this trait because they were never tested - newborn screening for sickle cell trait was not widely performed until 2006. As part of its Sickle Cell Initiative, the Red Cross is providing sickle cell trait screening on all blood donations from self-identified African American donors.

### **Blazer of Trails**

In addition to hosting blood drives and providing first-time African Americans donors with free sickle cell trait screening through the Red Cross, Carol's Promise also partners with local hospitals and organizations in Fort Worth, TX to provide advocacy and support services. Often, Buckley and her foundation are the first point of contact for parents in need of support when finding out their

child has sickle cell disease.

"If the screening comes back that they have sickle cell, most of the time the parents are distraught, and we come in and provide them with the facts," said Buckley. "We tell them what to expect while assuring them that sickle cell is not a death sentence.

There are folks who are thriving and living their life."

As someone who stands firmly on the shoulders of a mother who turned her pain into purpose, Buckley is continuing this legacy of excellence by spearheading community initiatives that engage others in empowering the sickle cell community and ensuring blood is readily available to help those fighting to prosper through the pain.

Join Kenya Buckley in the fight to help patients who have sickle cell disease and other needs by rolling up a sleeve to give blood. To those who may be hesitant to give blood, Buckley offers, "Let me hold your hand and let's go save some lives together!" Use the [Red Cross Blood DonorApp](#), visit [RedCrossBlood.org/OurBlood](https://www.redcrossblood.org/OurBlood) or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) to schedule an appointment today.



Kenya Buckley, advocate of change, keeper of the promise, blazer of trails, blood donor.

## **We Celebrate our Supporters during Red Cross Month**

**Molly Dalton**

March is Red Cross Month and we at the American Red Cross honor the commitment of our volunteers, financial donors and blood donors who step up every day to support individuals and families in need. Our mission wouldn't be possible without these community heroes.

The tradition of Red Cross Month began 80 years ago when President Franklin Roosevelt issued the first national proclamation declaring March as Red Cross Month — and each American president has followed ever since.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Every eight minutes, Red Cross volunteers respond to a disaster in the U.S. Their support is critical — as climate disasters grow in frequency and intensity, and home fires continue to upend lives each day.

The need for blood is constant — 1 in 7 patients entering a hospital will need a blood transfusion. Every day, volunteer donors roll up a sleeve at Red Cross blood drives to help save the lives of people battling life-threatening injuries, complicated childbirths, cancer and sickle cell disease.

In addition, Red Cross volunteers provide 24/7, global support to help military families — including many who have experienced multiple deployments over the last decade.

And as part of the world's largest humanitarian network, Red Cross workers respond to international crises like the earthquake in Türkiye and Syria and the conflict in Ukraine, provide aid for disasters like the hunger crisis in Africa, and help communities prepare for emergencies around the globe.

Plus, millions of Red Cross-trained individuals stand ready every day to use CPR, first aid and other lifesaving skills during an emergency.

**YOU CAN HELP** Today, 90% of our workforce is powered by volunteers, along with generous financial and blood donors, community partners, and people trained in vital health and safety skills. During the last several years, the country has experienced more and more major disasters, leading to a critical need for volunteers.

## Be Ready When Minutes Matter – Take CPR and AED Training

Molly Dalton

Did you know that sudden cardiac arrest claims the lives of thousands of people in this country every year? However, rapid treatment can increase someone's chance of survival — people can save lives by knowing how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED).

A cardiac emergency can happen anywhere. Performing bystander CPR in a cardiac arrest can have the greatest impact on survival. Be prepared and learn the check, call, care steps to administer compression-only CPR from an American Red Cross Instructor to help save a life. [Learn more in](#)



During Red Cross Month we celebrate our volunteers, donors and blood donors who make our mission possible. Red Cross photo by Marko Kokic.

**DONATE:** Join us to turn your compassion into action. Donate to support our Disaster Relief efforts at [redcross.org/GivingDay](https://www.redcross.org/GivingDay). A gift of any size makes a difference to provide shelter, food, relief items, emotional support and other assistance. Your donation will be part of our annual Giving Day on March 22 to aid families in need across the

country.

**GIVE BLOOD:** Help ensure people receive the critical care they need. Make an appointment to give blood [or platelets] by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org).

**VOLUNTEER:** Volunteer by visiting [redcross.org/VolunteerToday](https://www.redcross.org/VolunteerToday) to review our most-needed positions in your community.

**TAKE A CLASS:** Sign up at [redcross.org/TakeAClass](https://www.redcross.org/TakeAClass) to learn lifesaving skills like first aid, CPR and how to use an AED, so you can help in the moments that matter.



Photo by Dennis Drenner/American Red Cross.

[this video.](#)

**SIGNS OF CARDIAC ARREST** include the person being unresponsive, even if you shake or shout at them, or if the person isn't breathing or is only gasping. If you see someone collapse without warning, know your 'Cardiac Arrest 1-2-3.' **Call 911. Start CPR. Use an AED.**

**CPR AND AED** CPR should be used when someone stops breathing and their heart isn't beating. CPR keeps oxygenated blood flowing to the brain and heart when the heart stops. While CPR is essential to maintain blood flow through the heart, an AED will get the heart started again when it stops which is imperative for maintaining a

natural heart rhythm that can help prevent not only death, but brain damage as well.

The American Red Cross recommends that all household members and places of business receive training in CPR and proper use of an AED. This training can give people the knowledge and confidence to respond during an emergency situation with skills that can help save a life.

**IT'S CRITICAL TO GET TRAINED** so you can help if an emergency occurs. During cardiac arrest, every second counts. It can take emergency personnel valuable minutes to arrive on the scene. For every minute without defibrillation, a sudden cardiac arrest victim's chance of surviving drops. CPR can double or triple someone's chance of surviving when bystanders take action.

Whether you want to help your loved ones, assist someone at work, or use your training professionally, the Red Cross can give you the knowledge and skills to be able to help. And there are different ways you can become trained — classes led by instructors, online courses, and classes that offer a mix of both online content and in-class skills sessions.

Red Cross training and certification meets the

requirements of those that need to respond in the workplace, professional rescuers, healthcare providers as well as the public. Classes include Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Life Support (ALS) and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS). Several of the Red Cross courses meet workplace compliance requirements including OSHA requirements. Check with your employer to determine what classes are required to fulfill a specific job requirement.

If you are with a business or organization, the Red Cross can provide what you need to get your employees trained. In addition, the Red Cross can help you or your organization by facilitating the purchase of an AED, AED accessories and AED service and maintenance plans.

Every community is safer, thanks to the nearly 2.2 million people who train each year in Red Cross CPR and AED classes. Whether you're at work, school, on vacation or staying at home, knowing how to respond in an emergency can make a difference. Be ready when minutes matter: get trained. Information on Red Cross classes is available [here](#).

*Ed. note: Consider sharing this information with family and friends. Those of us who have maintained BLS certification throughout our careers might need saving ourselves one day!*

## 35<sup>th</sup> Annual National Black Nurses Day on Capitol Hill: Partnership Award

Allison Spearman, Director, Volunteer Engagement and Diversity & Inclusion

Last month, I had the honor and absolute pleasure to attend the National Black Nurses Association's Day on Capitol Hill event and accept a partnership award on behalf of the American Red Cross. It was an amazing event that left me inspired and encouraged to continue driving diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in Volunteer Services. To be surrounded by these professional women and men of all ages with varying skin tones like mine made me feel so proud of the amazing work of this organization and proud to be a partner to them. I was moved by hearing about the mentorship and fellowship among the retired and active nurses and how they are collectively working to improve and provide community-based health



Allison Spearman, right, with NBNA President Dr. Martha Dawson, DNP, RN, FACHE, FAAN.

care services while also ensuring equal access to professional and educational opportunities.

To hear about the phenomenal work these Black nurses are doing truly left me with a sense of pride not only as a Red Cross partner but as a Black woman. While I accepted the award on behalf of the Red Cross, the following Red Crossers and these examples of their amazing work are the reasons for this partnership award:

- Dr. Rebecca Harris-Smith facilitated Red Cross presentations and helped organize a blood drive at the NBNA Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois, July 26-31, 2022

- Dr. Linda MacIntyre and Dr. Yvette Miller presented “Using HeartMath® Techniques to Build Resilience Capacity” (both are certified HeartMath Trainers)
- Dr. Yvette Miller provided an update on sickle cell disease
- There were over 100 in attendance and several attendees shared their stories

- The annual blood drive resulted in 32 units donated

American Red Cross has collaborated with the National Black Nurses Association since 1993 and the partnership continues to grow stronger. The Red Cross has been invited to present at the NBNA Annual Conference since 2014.

## Honoring Aileen Bertha Cole Stewart: Nurse in the American Red Cross and Army Nurse Corps

April D. Matthias, PhD, RN, CNE

In 1917, the year the United States entered World War I, Aileen Bertha Cole (1893-1997) graduated from Freedmen’s Hospital Training School for Nurses in Washington, D.C., a three-year diploma school for Black nurses. Like many other nurses who were volunteering to support the war efforts, Cole applied to serve as a nurse for the American Red Cross. The Red Cross was responsible for recruiting reserve nurses for the Army Nurse Corps and Navy Nurse Corps. Cole hoped she could serve her country as a nurse with an assignment in the Corps. Cole and her fellow graduates from Freedmen’s who also applied were enrolled in the Red Cross and placed on a reserve list.



Aileen Bertha Cole. Photo: U.S. Army.

Delano, chairman of the National Committee of the Red Cross Nursing Service. Delano expressed to Thoms that she was “most anxious to have the papers of the [Black] nurses willing to accept service on file in [her] office, so that if needed, arrangements for their assignment to duty can be made without delay.” So, Cole waited to be needed.

Black nurses had been excluded from enrollment in the Red Cross (and, by extension, from receiving an assignment in the Army Nurse Corps) by a vote at a meeting of the National Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service in 1911, based on the Surgeon General having advised the Red Cross that the Army was unable to provide segregated quarters for the nurses and therefore had never considered appointing Black nurses [to active duty assignment]. Although the National Committee’s policy was reversed on June 16, 1917, with plans to assign Black nurses to the base hospitals that only cared for Black soldiers, no assignments to such hospitals were made. Days later on June 20, 1917, it was redetermined that assignment of Black nurses would only occur for special service. In her 1929 book, “Pathfinders: A History of the Progress of Colored Graduate Nurses,” Adah Belle Thoms, president of the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses in 1917, provided detail from a letter she received in the fall of 1917 from Jane

By the fall of 1918, the widespread, deadly influenza pandemic provided opportunity for Black Red Cross nurses to be assigned for special service. It is estimated that about 500 million people became infected with the influenza virus; it was responsible for 675,000 deaths in the United States. Skilled nursing care proved to be effective in alleviating influenza symptoms and preventing pneumonia, an often fatal, secondary infection. In late October 1918, 24-year-old Cole and her fellow graduates, Clara Rollins and Sue Boulding, were sent by the Red Cross for civilian service in Charleston, West Virginia to care for influenza patients. Upon their arrival to the makeshift hospital within a high school building on November 3, 1918, they observed an entire unit of dead patients. By November 6 the severity of cases waned, so the nurses awaited a new assignment. The medical director, Major Maxwell, shared with the nurses a map indicating with red and white pins the areas experiencing intense need of nursing care (white pins) and the current locations of Red Cross nurses (red pins). In her 1963 article published in *The American Journal of Nursing*, Cole recalled thinking about the unit full of dead patients as she observed the numerous white pins across the map indicating the widespread need for nurses and how nurses could prevent further deaths. Cole and

Boulding were sent to Bretz, West Virginia and Rollins was sent to Quick, West Virginia to care for miners who were “dying like flies” from influenza. As he moved their red-headed pins to their new assigned areas on the map, Major Maxwell explained the critical role of the miners to maintain transport for the war and how the outcome of the war was dependent on the miners and the Red Cross nurses. As Cole packed to leave early the next day, she began to understand that the miners were just as important as the soldiers.

Upon their arrival to Bretz after more than 24 hours of travel, Cole and Boulding went straight to work. Cole made home visits with Dr. Watts, the Red Cross doctor, while Boulding assisted with organizing the field hospital. After a full day of work, Cole was sent with Dr. Watts in his car to Cascade, West Virginia “on the other side of the mountain.” Cole cared for numerous miners infected with influenza. By armistice on November 11, 1918, a field hospital had been set up above the commissary of the mining camp for the sickest miners. Cole recalled being glad the war was over, but sorry Black nurses were not called to serve. Cole reported that the only casualty in Cascade was one infant. Her service as a Red Cross nurse had a positive impact.

Two days later on November 13, 1918, Cole received



Camp Sherman: Aileen Cole is far left. With her: Front, 2<sup>nd</sup> L to R: Susan Boulding, Lillian Spears, Jeanette Minnis, Sophia Hill. Center, L to R: Marion Brown, Jeannette West. Top, L to R: Clara Rollins, Lillian Ball. Photo: U.S. Army; caption details from Thoms, 1929.

a letter from Clara D. Noyes, Director of Field Nursing at the national headquarters of the American Red Cross, requesting she consider an assignment for active service. The mining company, recognizing the value of Cole’s nursing care for their miners, offered her a permanent position at a high salary in an attempt to convince her to stay. But Cole declined the offer for she had been waiting more than a year for an assignment in the Army Nurse Corps. On November 22, 1918, she received a memo from the Surgeon General of the U.S. Army, Lieutenant Colonel Baldwin, informing her of the active service assignment at the U.S. Army Base Hospital at Camp Sherman in Chillicothe, Ohio beginning December 1, 1918. On that day, Cole became one of the first 18 Black nurses to serve in the Army Nurse Corps. Nine nurses reported to duty at Camp Sherman in Chillicothe, Ohio and nine reported to duty at Camp Grant in Rockford, Illinois.

The First 18 Black American Red Cross Nurses Assigned Active Service in the Army Nurse Corps	
Camp Sherman at Chillicothe, Ohio	Camp Grant at Rockford, Illinois
Lillian Ball	Pearl Helen Billings
Susan Boulding	Eva Clay
Marion H. Brown	Willie DePriest
Aileen Bertha Cole	Magnolia Diggs
Sophia A. Hill	Anna E. Oliver Ramos
Nancy Jeanette Minnis	Virginia R. Steele
Clara A. Rollins	Frances A. Stewart
Lillian Spears	Nettie B. Vick
C. Jeannette West	Mabel Williams

Cole recalled “separate but equal” living quarters on base, the accepted segregated living at the time, and no bias nor discrimination in their nursing assignments at the base hospital. The nurses cared for both White and Black soldiers within the same wards across the hospital and Cole recalls being “liked, accepted, and respected by officers and men.” Initially, they cared for the remaining influenza patients but as infections decreased, their care and duties changed. The camps became demobilization centers and they assisted with processes to discharge thousands of soldiers. The hospital also received some of the tens of thousands of soldiers from overseas hospitals who had been severely wounded, gassed, and/or disabled. Cole and her fellow nurses of the unit were briefly transferred to Camp Grant and then discharged from active service on August 16, 1919.

These 18 Red Cross nurses and the care they provided have been regarded as well-qualified, good, satisfactory, valuable, efficient and professional by many different entities. Their willingness to serve and the opportunity to serve that was finally afforded them has positively impacted American nursing and communities. Chief nurse of Camp Sherman, Mary M. Roberts, described the personal impact the Black nurses had on her in a 1922 letter to Major Julia C. Stimson, Superintendent of the Army Nurse Corps in this way:

I do not mind saying after this long time that I was quite sure I was about to “meet my Waterloo” when order came for the colored unit. My feeling now is that it was a valuable experience for them and for me. They really were a credit to their race, for they did valuable service for our patients, and it was service which the patients appreciated. I now find myself deeply interested in the problems of all colored nurses and believe in giving them opportunities as they can grasp for advancement.



Aileen Bertha Cole Stewart, contemplating photos from the past; date unknown. Photo: U.S. Army.

Historian Marian Moser Jones and her co-author further explain in their 2019 publication in the *American Journal of Public Health Nursing* how these nurses' experience in the Army Nurse Corps positively impacted their careers and “became a springboard for careers advancing Black women within the nursing profession and improving the health of Black communities.” They specifically describe how Cole went on to become superintendent of nurses at the Booker T. Washington Sanatorium in Harlem, the first private hospital in New York City established by Black physicians. Cole also worked as a public health nurse within New York City for decades addressing infant mortality and other community health problems. She married George Stewart in 1928 and together they had one daughter. After decades of public health service in New York, she followed her daughter and moved to the West coast. At the age of 68 she obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at the University of Washington.

Cole noted in her 1963 publication that she “met

with a minimum of racial prejudice” throughout her years as nurse, yet she remembered those many months of waiting to serve her country during World War I as the “only one major instance in which segregation kept [her], for a time, from serving as [she] would have wished as a nurse.” We cannot go back in time to change the decisions of those who came before us, but we can now recognize and honor those who were once ignored, dismissed and undervalued. Aileen Cole Stewart is just one of many Black nurses who was willing, to use Dr. Moser Jones' words, “to scale a wall of bigotry” to be able to

serve during the war, and who did serve by providing excellent, skilled nursing care. May we always remember her as a valuable and respected American Red Cross and Army Nurse Corps nurse who supported and served our country and the nursing profession during and after World War I.

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## In Appreciation of Red Cross Nurse Jeanne Conley

Carol Chellino, BSN, RN, MPH

Nancy Jeanne Conley, or “Jeanne,” as she prefers to be called by her Red Cross friends, came to the American Red Cross chapter serving King County, Washington in 2017, because she wanted to do volunteer nursing after retirement and heard that Red Cross “always needs nurses” and values their services. With a BSN in Nursing and a Master’s in Public Health from the University of Washington, Conley was a Research Coordinator and Clinical Trials Manager, first for the University of Washington’s AIDS Clinical Trials Unit and then the International Clinical Research Center, located at Seattle’s Harborview Hospital. Part of her work included traveling internationally to establish and train research sites in Peru, Uganda and Kenya. After that, she worked as a safety associate for clinical trials being conducted through the HIV Vaccine Trials Network. Prior to working in HIV/AIDS research she worked for two years in Hematology/Oncology at the University of Washington Hospital.



Jeanne Conley, BSN, RN, MPH

pandemic, she maintained a presence at the chapter office and took on the project of re-organizing the inventory and physical space for Disaster Health Services volunteers, which resulted in donating surplus first aid supplies to the Washington State Ukraine Community, who were sending supplies to Ukraine. Sorting and organizing are the non-glamorous functions of maintenance, but when a shelter needs a kit, it must be organized, timely and ready to go. Conley makes sure the kits are up-to-date and available.

Many chapters lost volunteers through the pandemic years and Conley steadily worked at recruiting 5 new nurse volunteers. She understands the importance of orientation and training for new and established volunteers and serves as the King County Chapter’s Volunteer Training Coordinator, devoting many hours each week to supporting the nursing team by her patient listening and guidance in navigating the Red Cross system. Conley says one of the best things about being a Red Cross nurse is the camaraderie with other volunteers. The Red Cross serving King County is grateful for Jeanne Conley’s work, and the Red Cross nurses who work with her want to be sure she is recognized for her much-appreciated service.

Since she became a Red Cross nurse in 2017, Jeanne Conley has deployed to national disaster relief operations in California, Florida, North and South Carolina as well as assisting with local chapter responses. During the height of the

## Share Your Red Cross Story!

The American Red Cross National Nursing Committee is leading a project to compile the stories of nurses and other health professionals, focusing on why they volunteer for the Red Cross. The Committee is asking you to share your Red Cross story in a short form video. Great video vignettes are short and snappy, have a beginning, middle and end, and inspire emotion. Write your script before filming, giving special attention to the

Posie Carpenter, RN, MSN, MPH

story that you are trying to tell and how you want your viewers to feel. Choose a background that is appropriate to your story and locate a spot where your camera or phone will provide the best coverage. Run through your script a few times prior to filming. Record your video on your phone, Microsoft Teams or Zoom. Forward your completed video (or link to your video) and / or any questions you might have to [RedCrossNurse@redcross.org](mailto:RedCrossNurse@redcross.org).

## Collaboration with Rural Pharmacies?

Is your Red Cross region or chapter collaborating with pharmacies in rural areas? The National Headquarters Volunteer Services team is exploring

ways to mutually support rural communities. Please let us know by emailing [RedCrossNurse@redcross.org](mailto:RedCrossNurse@redcross.org).

## Academic Service-Learning in Support of Blood Drives

Courtney Roach

Early in 2020 at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Red Cross Biomedical Volunteer

Workforce Engagement (BVWE) saw a dramatic drop in Blood Donor Ambassador (BDA)

participation throughout the nation. Northern Ohio Regional Volunteer Services Officer, Gail Wernick, Recruitment Specialist, Melanie Collins, and



Kent State Tuscarawas students at a blood drive.

Mariann Harding, PhD, RN, CNE, FAADN, Academic Service-Learning Volunteer Coordinator took immediate steps working with local college nursing programs to have nursing students train to become BDAs and gain clinical hours at local blood drives supporting our Collections staff.

During the last 3 years our Academic Service-Learning (AS-L) students have continued to play a significant role in supporting blood drives. Participation continues to grow each semester in multiple regions throughout the nation.

## Seeking Applicants for the Jane Delano Nursing Student Scholarship

**Posie Carpenter, RN, MSN, MPH**

Applications for the Jane Delano Nursing Student Scholarship are now being accepted by Red Cross National Awards. Fittingly named for [Jane Delano](#), a leading pioneer of the modern nursing profession and first chairman of the National Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service, the scholarship was established to promote nursing as a career and to promote the involvement of new nurses in the American Red Cross. This \$3,000 scholarship, given in memory of Carol Fox Martin, RN, is available to individuals who have served as an American Red volunteer or employee within the past five (5) years; have completed the equivalent of at least one year of college/university credits; are

The Northern Ohio Region continues to lead the charge in terms of participation and partnering with other regions to grow relationships with AS-L students. In the fall, 2022 semester there were 91 students between 5 schools contributing to 68 blood drives during 375 hours in just 3 months. For the spring 2023 semester we anticipate having 50 to 60 students between the same schools contributing over 200 hours.



Students promoted a blood drive.

We continue to gain feedback from our Collections teams on how they enjoy working with these nursing students and share this success throughout the nation to encourage other regions to take part in this great program.

currently enrolled in an accredited United States nursing program; and are currently enrolled as an undergraduate or graduate student in good academic standing. The four-part [application](#) available on the Exchange includes Applicant Information, a Red Cross Endorsement by local Red Cross leadership, an Academic Institution Endorsement from the Dean/Chair of the applicant's academic institution/nursing program, and an essay. Completed [applications](#) should be forwarded via email to [NationalAwards@redcross.org](mailto:NationalAwards@redcross.org) and [RedCrossNurse@redcross.org](mailto:RedCrossNurse@redcross.org) by 5:00 p.m. ET on May 19, 2023.

## Engaging Nursing Students at all Educational Levels in Disaster Preparedness

**Ann L. Smith, PhD, RN, CPNP-PC, CNE, Academic Service-Learning Volunteer Coordinator, North Texas Region**

Those of us working in American Red Cross Disaster Health Services (DHS) do not need statistics to demonstrate the depth and breadth of need in response to disasters. "In 2020 alone, disaster events attributed to natural hazards affected approximately 100 million people, accounted for an estimated \$190 billion in global economic losses and resulted in 15,082 deaths" (Jones et al., 2022, p. 1).

In the American Association of Colleges of

Nursing's (AACN) 2021 "Essentials" document, the competencies for Domain 3, Population Health, recommend advanced preparedness for disasters, interdisciplinary collaboration and understanding the health and safety hazards of disasters. The "Essentials" competencies are for use as a curriculum framework by nursing education programs. The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) 2023 NCLEX test plan includes emergency response and disaster planning in its exam content. In 2019, the International Council on

Nursing (ICN) called for nurses at all levels to have competency in disaster preparation. Most nursing faculty have very limited experience or training in this area. In the face of the human need and despite efforts in nursing education to promote disaster preparedness, healthcare professionals and communities continue to struggle to meet the challenge (Loke et al., 2021). What are we to do with the gap between such needs and organizational readiness?



Red Cross DHS course instructors, left to right: Cynthia Jones-Weismann, PhD, RN, Kathy Davis, MSN, RN, Carol Miller, MA, RN and Ann Smith, PhD, RN.

What began as a collaboration between a single university and a local Red Cross chapter blossomed to serve multiple university

nursing programs and provided consultation to interested chapters in other regions. In the academic year 2021-22, 90 students participated in the newly developed disaster management course at Southwestern Adventist University (SWAU). In 2022-23, 65 additional students enrolled.

Since the program's inception, 204 SWAU undergraduate students participated in Red Cross training. Students complete several introductory modules on the Red Cross learning management system, EDGE, such as All are Welcome, Disaster Cycle Services Overview, Shelter Fundamentals, and Psychological First Aid. Coordinated by the Red Cross Dallas-Fort Worth Metro West Chapter, the students are then provided with an 8-hour day of small-group, interactive learning covering DHS Fundamentals I & II (required Red Cross courses for DHS response), with various scenarios integrated throughout.

The day begins with 16 puzzle pieces, only 12 of which fit into the cadre of shelter personnel. It is up to each student group to construct their puzzle and decide which pieces to include and which to leave out. The subsequent discussion helps them to understand the rationale for the staffing pattern of

a shelter. Students learn about a variety of disasters, related preparation, management and recovery methods, and work in small groups to resolve increasingly complex disaster scenarios in the Red Cross DHS

Fundamentals and Simulation presentations. Brief presentations are interspersed with

questions to which each group must agree on an answer. Each group is also supplied with "intervention cards" such as Financial Aid, Pharmacy, Durable Medical Equipment, Integrated Care Condolence Teams, etc. As different levels of complexity in the scenarios are presented, students select the relevant intervention cards, displaying them for faculty to provide feedback and pose critical thinking questions. Finally, students are challenged with an escape room exercise in which they apply all of the information from the seminar. When they enter the table-top escape room, students begin with a newsreel describing a house fire. They move through the scenario using QR codes, deciding how much financial aid they have to spend, making decisions about responsible stewardship to meet the client's needs, and accessing additional resources and consultations.

Over the course of the semester, students also work in pairs with a DHS nurse, interviewing individuals who experienced a disaster and providing disaster-related healthcare services. Through this experience, students get first-hand experience in responsible stewardship of donor dollars, acquisition of needed resources, and the process of consultation with interdisciplinary colleagues such as mental health and pastoral care professionals.

SWAU polled the most recent students, asking them to evaluate the course. Students were asked to identify how effectively the elements of the disaster management course had prepared them to participate in disaster response. The evaluations indicated that students felt well prepared to



Students identify relevant services.

participate in the elements of disaster response, with the strongest areas of development in working collaboratively, assuming the caregiver role, resource stewardship and being safe in a disaster. In the narrative part of the evaluation, students added that they learned about what to expect in disasters, understanding that individual responses to disaster may vary, the value of teamwork, and about available resources. Students consistently reported that they found all segments of the seminar experience helpful and engaging.

Since the initial collaboration with SWAU, several other colleges/schools of nursing participated in the in-person, interactive seminar process including Ranger College with 18 LVN to RN students, Chamberlain University with a total of 211 undergraduate students, and Texas Wesleyan University with 7 graduate students in a nurse practitioner program. Virtual collaboration with DHS colleagues from other regions resulted in the sharing of both materials and processes to support the expansion of the program, with the ultimate goal of gaining new Red Cross volunteers for the important role of nurses in disaster preparation, management and recovery. While it is difficult to track graduating students from these programs who move to other states upon graduation, it is hoped that this introduction to the Red Cross will encourage their future volunteering with Red Cross

programs wherever they are located. Nurses with teaching experience who may be interested in engaging nursing students in their areas in DHS can contact

[RedCrossNurse@redcross.org](mailto:RedCrossNurse@redcross.org).

*The author would like to recognize Dr. Terri Gibson, from the SWAU faculty who precipitated interest in this project and integrated it into the Population Health Course, as well as Ms. Kathy Davis, SWAU faculty who is also a DHS nurse supporting the project at multiple universities/ colleges of nursing.*

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## In Memoriam: Vonnie Thomas

Legendary American Red Cross nurse volunteer Vonnie Thomas passed away peacefully November 2022.

Based in the Minnesota and Dakotas Region, she served the Red Cross mission for over 72 years, most notably as a Disaster Health Services volunteer, instructor, leader and mentor. During her decades with the organization, Vonnie held more than 40 positions, clocked thousands of hours and deployed on countless disaster relief operations. Her service was recognized over the years, notably in 2015 through receiving a Florence Nightingale Medal, the highest international honor given to a nurse by the International Committee of the Red Cross.



Red Cross nurse Vonnie Thomas (left) hugged home fire survivor Linda Cook in 2012. Photo by Lynette Nyman/American Red Cross

## Carrie Carlson-Guest, Regional Communications Director

Beyond the numbers, those who knew her well say that there is no way to fully convey the commitment and compassion Vonnie embodied as a humanitarian and Red Cross volunteer. A colleague of Vonnie's shared this, "to know Vonnie was to be in awe of her boundless energy, servant leadership and humble and generous spirit. If you were fortunate enough to be the recipient of one of her hugs, you knew what it meant to be embraced by someone who truly cared for you, even if she had just met you."

But she wasn't all serious. Vonnie's mischievous smile and giggle were always at the ready as if she was on a not-so-secret mission to spread happiness

and kindness wherever she went. There were few conversations with her that didn't involve genuine laughter.

One of her favorite quotes from Clara Barton was, 'You should never so much think as whether you like it or not, whether it is bearable or not; you must never think of anything except the need, and how to meet it.' Simply put, she radiated the best of humanity and will be sorely missed.

Below are links to stories of her service. If you ever need inspiration and a reminder of the importance



2015 Florence Nightingale Medal recipients: Vonnice Thomas (second from left), Dr. Carmen Kynard, Diane St. Denis and Col. Laura Favand.

of the Red Cross mission, you need not look any further than Vonnice Thomas.

- Video from the Minnesota Region's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary [features Vonnice](#)

[sharing memories of her service.](#)

- Here are a few more [stories including Vonnice from the Minnesota and Dakota Region's blog.](#)
- In 2016, Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton [proclaimed June 28 that year as Vonnice Thomas Day](#), in honor of her then 65 years of volunteer service.

"Vonnice Thomas smiled and laughed often, and it was a joy to be with her. Vonnice's stories not only entertained the listener but conveyed her deep commitment to serve individuals in need. Her devotion to the Red Cross mission was unwavering. Although Vonnice is missed by many, the good work that she began will continue."

Linda MacIntyre, PhD, RN, PHN, FAAN, Red Cross Chief Nurse

## Sharing the News: Awards and Recognition

Many congratulations to Carolyn Nganga-Good, DrPH, MS, BSN, RN, Mattison Chayhitz, MSN, RN and Pat McLaine, DrPH, MPH, BSN, RN for receiving the 2022 Public Health Nursing Paper of the Year for their paper ['Overcoming barriers and improving public health nursing practice.'](#)

The cover of the *American Journal of Nursing*

March issue features artwork depicting nurses' capes. In celebration of March is Red Cross month, Linda MacIntyre, PhD, RN, PHN, FAAN and Linda Fahey, DNP, RN, CENP reflected on the history of the cape, Red Cross nurses today, and how nurses continue to inspire the public's trust and confidence. [Read their cover story and view the artwork via this link.](#)

## Red Cross Nurse Debby Dailey and her 43-Year Volunteer Impact

Linda MacIntyre, PhD, RN, PHN, FAAN

Debby Dailey came to the Red Cross in 1980 after her family suffered a home fire. A former fire fighter and current registered nurse, Debby is committed to serving individuals in need. She is a strong advocate for promoting equity for both clients and colleagues.

### Advocacy

Dailey is grateful for the Red Cross services her family received: she is committed to



Debby Dailey, far left, with other Red Cross volunteers and quilters who simultaneously supported the Rose Bowl and health student experience in the community this year.

giving back. Dailey supports 8-10 disaster responses per year and has done this for 43 years. After a wildfire, one Red Cross shelter had several families with children on the autism spectrum. Dailey and her colleagues ensured that the children had access to headphones, weighted blankets and a calming room for quiet respite. Knowing that children recover more quickly from disasters when their routine is kept as

consistent as possible, Dailey and her colleagues invited their teachers to come to the shelter and provide classes for the children.

Dailey will go to great lengths to ensure that needs are met. When she learned that a volunteer undergoing transgender surgery was uncomfortable using the staff shelter showers, she facilitated resources where the volunteer felt safe, thus ensuring their continued engagement in serving the community.

In 2007, Dailey organized nursing students and disaster team members to take off their boots and collect money for individuals affected by California wildfires. Diane St. Denis, Pacific Division Disaster Health Services Advisor said, “I will never forget the year her nursing students raised \$24,000 in a Fill the Boot campaign!”

Dailey met with a volunteer who is legally blind and was impressed with her skills. She advocated for this individual to participate in a disaster response. Providing accommodations for this volunteer to serve on the disaster response allowed clients to receive her unique perspective and support. The volunteer will be receiving an award soon for her service on the disaster deployment.

### Academic Service-Learning

Dailey has worked as a clinical nursing instructor for 30 years. Along with her colleague, Gina Bustamante, Dailey helps ensure that nursing students receive disaster training and support their communities through Red Cross Academic Service-Learning (AS-L) activities. Dailey and Bustamante followed up after the students graduated and began their first nursing positions. Understanding that the first year or two is very demanding for new nurses, Dailey and Bustamante invited the nurses to participate in small events every 6-12 months. Their mentoring and support paid off. At one point, 60% of the volunteer Disaster Health Services nurses in their region had participated as students with the Red Cross. Bustamante and Dailey helped expand AS-L in their region due to receiving the [Susan Hassmiller Nursing Award](#).

### Self-care and Providing Comfort

Dailey is acutely aware of the need for self-care and well-being resources for both Red Crossers and the

clients they serve. In 2018, HeartMath resilience techniques were taught in microlearning sessions interspersed throughout a two-day Red Cross nurse training. Dailey shared that she has ADHD and that HeartMath resilience techniques helped halve her medication needs and increased her effectiveness in employment, personal and volunteer activities. “It gave me the serenity to say it’s okay to take time for self-care. If I’m so scrambled in thoughts that I can’t communicate clearly, I’m not the best that I can be to support others. If we’re going to be inclusive and serve clients with disabilities, we [also] have to do that for volunteers and employees.”

Dailey organized a group of nurses who wanted to follow Clara Barton’s example of quilting for the Red Cross and provide quilts for families after a home fire or other disaster. Employees and volunteers also give quilts to

veterans in need and the families or colleagues of individuals who died in a fire or other disaster. The nurses also make “landing pads” for service dogs and dogs that have been in a fire.

Fire departments cannot donate logoed shirts due to potential misuse, so they usually burn uniforms that are no longer needed. Dailey’s team collects the shirts and cuts

the shirt fabric for quilt pieces. The nurses repurpose and recycle fabric, making this an eco-friendly initiative. They make quilts with a fire fighter’s name to honor a fire fighter who died and provide these for their family. The nurses also use



A quilt made by the team.



The team also creates “landing pads” for service dogs and dogs that have been in a fire.

the shirts to make quilts with the names of



The nurses repurpose into quilting fabric firefighters' shirts that cannot be donated.

firefighters who responded to home fires and provide these to families served by these units.

Dailey said, "Engaging nurses as part of a group and meeting quarterly to teach nurses how to quilt [is like] my inner sanctum of

peace to de-stress." Quilting is a stress reliever for the nurses and provides personalized care for individuals who have experienced a loss. The team made 507 quilts in the past year. Disaster Health Services and Disaster Action Team (DAT) members distributed more than 300 quilts. The quilts also honor the lives of those who die in a disaster or due to domestic violence, including children and firefighters. Veterans who participate in an overnight Stand Down event also receive a quilt.

### Teamwork

Dailey volunteers regularly for her Disaster Action Team (DAT). The team received a fire call and Dailey's colleague phoned her and said that the family "didn't say they needed a nurse," but he thought they could use a call from Dailey. A caseworker also called Dailey expressing concern for the family – a mom with a 4-month-old baby, a toddler and other children as she heard them in the background and said that they "seemed to be struggling." When Dailey contacted the mom, she learned that the mom had two sick children, that things were stressful, and the mom was worried. The mom told Dailey that she put a humidifier on after the fire but wasn't sure it was helping. Dailey asked for a video call and noted that the baby's diaphragm was retracting, and Dailey advised the mom to take the baby to the hospital to have the baby evaluated. The mom was concerned about COVID exposure and Dailey suggested she have another adult go with her and stay in the car with

the baby while she spoke to the healthcare providers. The baby was admitted to the hospital with RSV and low oxygen saturations. The baby received care because the team paid attention and engaged a nurse, even when the mom did not request a nurse.

Dailey went to the hospital to support a family who was following up on their seven-year-old daughter's health needs. The family had recently lost

everything in a fire and Dailey was visiting the family as part of the DAT team follow-up. Dailey gave the girl a quilt and she told Dailey that it was the softest blanket she had ever had. The girl asked if she could keep the quilt and Dailey said, "Sure." Then the girl said, "Miss Red Cross Lady, can I tell you a secret?" Dailey listened as the girl told her that she



Dailey and her colleagues practice expert nursing and expert quilting too: this one is sewn with spirals!

didn't want to share the blanket with her brother as he has "stinky feet." Dailey asked a colleague to get her brother a blanket. The girl then said that her sisters don't have stinky feet and asked if she had to share the blanket with them. Dailey's colleagues got two more quilts from Dailey's car for the sisters. The DAT team found the family resources for a flight to St. Jude's so the daughter could receive care for her health needs (unrelated to the home fire).

### In the Community

Twelve RNs who make Red Cross quilts joined together to support the 2023 Rose Bowl in Pasadena. The nurses supported individuals who had health issues during the event. They wore first responders' uniforms and made over 300 contacts – due to heat exhaustion, cardiac issues, cramps, blisters and falls. There were 16 stations with nurses and paramedics. Each station had approximately ten health students in addition to the health professionals. Because of RN training and education, they needed about a quarter less

preparation time and the organizers realized the value of engaging RNs in this work.

### **Nurse Contribution**

Dailey brings her considerable skills and expertise to deliver the Red Cross mission. She is aware that in order to be successful with service delivery, she must advocate for the well-being of all Red

Crossers. Dailey's work with nursing students helps ensure that her community is better prepared for disasters. The stories shared here are but a small sample of her influence. Read an article that describes another example of her advocacy [here](#). With over 43 years of service as a Red Cross nurse, Dailey has made positive, incalculable impacts in delivering the mission.

### **NEW IRA Rollover Charitable Gift Annuity Plan**

**Candace Roosevelt, MAN, MBA**

A new tax law allows donors over 70½ to make a one-time contribution to a charity such as the American Red Cross from their individual retirement account (IRA) and receive a lifetime of payments in return. This new gift plan combines a charitable gift annuity and a Qualified Charitable Distribution from an IRA. Here is how it works.

A **charitable gift annuity** is a simple contract between you and Red Cross promising to pay you a fixed amount of money each year for life in exchange for a gift. The amount paid to you will depend upon your age at the time of your gift and does not change for the rest of your lifetime.

A **Qualified Charitable Distribution** is a contribution from your IRA to the Red Cross. You can make a Qualified Charitable Distribution if you are at least age 70½. Unlike most distributions from your retirement account, you pay no income tax on a Qualified Charitable Distribution.

Under the new law, donors can now make a

Qualified Charitable Distribution in exchange for a charitable gift annuity. There are some rules and limitations. You can do it only once and there is a limit of \$50,000. The entire payment you receive from your charitable gift annuity will be subject to income tax. There is no income tax deduction for your contribution (although there is no tax on your Qualified Charitable Distribution either). We would be pleased to work with you and your advisors to help determine how this new option might work for you.

For more information on setting up a Charitable Gift Annuity using a Qualified Charitable Distribution from an IRA, please contact Gift Planning Officer, Candace Roosevelt at 617-306-3875 or at [Candace.Roosevelt@redcross.org](mailto:Candace.Roosevelt@redcross.org).

AMERICAN RED CROSS National Nursing Committee  
Heritage Sub-Committee Members: Vivian Littlefield, Chair; Elizabeth Kazmier, Editor; Molly Dalton; Bill Darr; Donna Dorsey; Linda MacIntyre; April Matthias; Candace Roosevelt; Cheryl Schmidt



### **Help us connect with and recognize other current and former Red Cross Nurses!**

Please send the email, phone, and address of your friends and colleagues to us at [RedCrossNurse@redcross.org](mailto:RedCrossNurse@redcross.org). Share this newsletter via email, Facebook, Twitter and your preferred social media. Go to <http://www.redcross.org/about-us/our-work/nursing-health/nursing-network> and select a link under "View Previous Issues."

**Thank you!**