



# President's Message

Dr. Kathleen "Kathy" Neal, PhD, RN

I was installed as President of the Delaware Nurses Association (DNA) in November, and I'm excited to introduce myself and share my goals for our association. I'm a Delaware native, born and raised in El-

mere, and a proud graduate of Delaware Technical Community College, Wilmington University (BSN and MSN in Nursing Education), and Widener University (PhD). I've had the privilege of teaching at multiple

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### Delaware Nurses Association

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<https://denurses.org/> | Phone: (302) 733-5880

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**President:** Kathleen Neal, PhD, RN

**Immediate Past President:** Stephanie McClellan, DNP, MBA, RN, CMSRN, NE-BC

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### DELAWARE NURSES ASSOCIATION

#### LEADERSHIP & STAFF

##### Executive Director

Christopher E. Otto, MSN, RN, CCRN  
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##### Administrative Coordinator

Kathleen Devine, MPA, BS  
[admin@denurses.org](mailto:admin@denurses.org)

### ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATES

Black Nurses Rock Delaware Chapter  
Delaware Emergency Nurses Association  
Delaware State Affiliate - American College of Nurse-Midwives  
Delaware Coalition of Nurse Practitioners  
Delaware Association of Nurse Anesthetists

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One of my top priorities is to increase membership and ensure we're representing nurses from all practice settings. Engaging more nurses will help us consider diverse needs and perspectives as we shape the future of our profession.

universities, including Wilmington, Wesley College, and Neumann University. I also spent 18 years at Nemours as a pediatric staff nurse and nurse educator. My heart is in nursing, and it's an honor to represent our profession here in Delaware.

In December, Chris Otto, Stephanie McClellan, and I attended the ANA Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C. We connected with nurse leaders from across the country and discovered shared challenges, especially regarding the inclusion of Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs). Delaware has already welcomed LPNs into the DNA, and I'm proud that our state has set the bar for others. Thanks to Chris and Stephanie's leadership, LPNs are now represented on our Board and actively contribute to DNA publications like the *DNA Reporter*. Their voices are crucial to our association's success.

One of my top priorities is to increase membership and ensure we're representing nurses from all practice settings. Engaging more nurses will help us consider diverse needs and perspectives as we shape the future of our profession. I also plan to continue

supporting initiatives like the DAISY Foundation Awards. Our 2024 DAISY Gala was a fantastic celebration and networking opportunity, and I'm excited to build on that momentum in the years to come.

Another priority is advancing the work of our Advocacy Committee. In 2024, we saw how crucial it is for nurses to have a seat at the table when healthcare policies are being discussed. Our input directly impacts legislation that affects our practice and the care we provide to patients. The DNA's voice is essential to shaping healthcare in Delaware, and I'm committed to furthering this advocacy work.

The Professional Development Committee also sponsored a highly successful conference in November,

and I'm eager to continue offering meaningful educational opportunities for our members.

Lastly, I'm passionate about developing a Nursing Workforce Center in Delaware. This initiative will address the factors contributing to the nursing shortage, promote nurse education, and advocate for the full utilization of nurses' licensure. We need your help to make these goals a reality. Please continue to engage with us through surveys, focus groups, and committees. Your involvement will help ensure Delaware is a thriving place for nurses to work and grow.

If you have ideas or feedback on how we can achieve these goals, please reach out to me. I look forward to hearing from you! ■

## LEADING HEALTHCARE TRANSFORMATION

The **SCHOOL OF NURSING** within the **COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES** engages in world-class innovation through community collaboration, and provides exceptional care to the public and hands-on experience for our students at the University of Delaware. In addition to our Traditional Undergraduate Program, we offer:

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