



Winter 2023

HORIZONS



President's Message

This year has seemed to fly by, and we are already cresting the top of 2023 and heading into 2024! With a new year comes new opportunities and often new experiences as well as gratitude for what we have experienced this past year.

As my tenure as president of WONL comes to an end, I want to thank my fellow board members and our membership for continuing to inspire me and teach me the value of Nursing Leadership in our Healthcare Landscape. Dennise Lavrenz will be taking over the reins and I couldn't be more excited to see what our future has in store. Dennise is an incredible leader, with a strong passion for nursing, leadership, mental health, and involvement in the community. Her vision and commitment to WONL will continue to lead us forward and position us for success in shaping nursing leadership throughout Wisconsin.

As we look to 2024, it is a great opportunity for us to renew our commitment to nursing and leadership. We learned from a few of our incredible speakers at the fall WONL conference, our mindset plays a significant role in our physical and mental well-being both as individuals and leaders. (Joe Sanfelippo and Dr. Jerry Teplitz were two of the speakers that made the point very clear!) We need to "give ourselves a chance" to find joy and meaning in our work. It is through our ability to lead with positivity that we can overcome our challenges and role model improvement and resilience with our teams.

There is a great book called "Big Potential" by Shawn Achor that highlights how each of us can influence our achievements, happiness and well-being through specific actions we do every day. Many of us have heard and talked about these tactics, but we often don't practice them. A good example he shares is "How do you start the first minutes of your day?"—do you introduce negative news, emails or texts as the first thing you engage with every morning? Do you go right to your phone and allow what came in overnight to set the tone for the day? Shawn shares the research about how that can impact us for the rest of the day—it is truly fascinating.

As leaders we are role models, and it is just as important for all of us to start our days with a positive mindset. I was a bit of a skeptic at first, but then I did my own experiment for two weeks. I changed my morning

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routine to not look at messages, news or emails in the first 10 minutes of my day. I started instead with what I was excited about, appreciated or was grateful for—then later in my morning I moved on to the normal things. With just that simple change, I noted a difference in my own mindset and how I progressed with my day.

In times like today where we are surrounded by so many challenges, negative news, and hurdles to navigate, “let’s give ourselves a chance” and start our day with positivity and celebrate all that is good around us. As nurses, we are critical to the healthcare landscape and we need our energy for our families, teams, patients, and communities. So with 2024 right around the corner, ask yourself what commitment you will be making to your own health and well-being so your service to others can be even stronger.

Laura Hieb
WONL President

Prepare for Registered Nurse Renewals Now!

The registered nurse (RN) renewal timeframe is fast approaching. This will be the first renewal cycle completed in the new Department of Safety and Professionals (DSPS) new online system, LicenseE. According to the [LicenseE instructions for renewals](#), RNs will receive an email that includes their username when the renewal period opens. DSPS provides further instructions for what to do if an email is not received, including instructions for how to create a username and reset your password.



Getting off on the right foot with your renewal relies on knowing what email you have listed with DSPS, and updating the information DSPS has if the email you have listed is no longer active. The email on file with DSPS can be found on the RN’s Profile on the DSPS self service page. To view your profile, including the email address on file with DSPS, select [Profile Update](#), and enter your credential number and PIN. No worries if you don’t know your PIN; there are instructions on how to retrieve your PIN right on the page. If you don’t have your credential number handy, there is a [license look-up](#) on the DSPS self service menu, too.

The biggest advice from DSPS for current license holders starting their renewal is at the top of the LicenseE login page: “IMPORTANT: Those already licensed, DO NOT create a new account to renew. Please use your email address with .dps at the end as your username.”

The renewal timeframe for RNs will open in January 2024 and ends February 28, 2024. Having an up-to-date email with DSPS and knowing that email is a positive step you can take to be prepared!

2023 Annual WONL Conference

WONL is pleased to report 145 leaders attended the annual WONL conference held in Green Bay September 27-29! The speakers were engaging and informative and the networking was outstanding!!

We are actively planning for our next conference that will be held September 18-20 in Elkhart Lake. Mark your calendars and we will be sure to keep you updated with details as they become available.



WONL President Laura Heib



Dennise Lavrenz



2023 Annual WONL Conference (cont'd.)



Keynote speaker Joe Sanfelippo



WONL first Packers tailgate

Surprise Guest Speaker

Lieutenant Governor and Wisconsin's #1 Nurse, Sara Rodriguez partners with the WONL board and leaders across the state at the annual WONL conference held in September regarding current healthcare policy.



Sara Rodriguez and Dennise Lavrenz



Leading Health Systems Discuss Financial Strategies for Labor Optimization

With ongoing financial pressures and workforce challenges burdening health systems, Aya Healthcare invited leaders from best-in-class health systems to share their strategies for labor optimization. [Brad Ouellet](#), Executive Director Supply Chain Services, UC San Diego Health, [Leigh Ann Nordt](#), Director, Nursing Business Operation and Staffing, UVA Health, and [Bryan Hickey](#), Executive Director, Talent Acquisition, Cedar Sinai shared valuable insights and lessons learned as they navigated their health systems through system-wide initiatives to increase their cost savings while maintaining optimal patient care.

Watch the [full webinar on demand](#) or continue reading to discover some of the strategies they implemented in their own health systems.

Aggregate data from different sources into a single view

Maintaining alignment with staffing budgetary targets is a key focus for healthcare financial leaders. However, alignment can pose difficulties when functional groups utilize different data to make decisions and operations are siloed. To combat these difficulties, Nordt worked closely with her nursing data analyst to develop a workforce analytics tool that consolidated current and future travelers, pay rates and unit vacancies. Data from Lotus Connect, UVA Health's workforce management platform, on contingent labor utilization and market rate trends was integrated into the tool.

"Our workforce analytics tool allows us to maximize the data we have to collaborate with our finance team, human resources team and nursing leaders—all working in sync," Nordt explained. "We set our targets from the very beginning, and we meet each week and make sure we review the workforce analytics tool and make decisions in full alignment with each other."

Track market trends in real-time

Healthcare staffing has always moved quickly, with trends adjusting weekly if not daily. Having the most up-to-date data allows for relevant planning and allocation of workforce resources. Hickey shared how his health system has operated at a heightened patient census for the past couple of years but has decreased contingent labor usage and maintained excellent patient care and service levels.

"We are very realistic that there is no world we can function in—between leaves, sick calls, vacations, etc.—where we will need to supplement with travelers," Hickey explained. "But we use the comprehensive market trend data from Aya Healthcare and leverage our brand to be more aggressive and keep our rates lower than state averages."

The staffing market is dynamic, making the regular review of rates critical. Nordt shared that bi-weekly pay reviews and identifying trends around pay reduction was a key strategy to remain agile for her health system. Nordt regularly reviewed the rates and where they were for every contingent labor role and identified opportunities to reduce rates based on fill rates, time-to-fill and core vacancies.



Nurse Leader of the Year Award

2023

Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Leaders
Annual Conference

About the Award

Each year, the Wisconsin Organization of Nurse Leaders (WONL) honors Wisconsin nurse leaders who have made significant contributions to nursing and nursing leadership, to WONL, and to his/her place of employment and community. This year, there are two categories:

- Rising Star
- Executive Nurse Leader

Each award recipient selected for this annual recognition meets the following criteria:

- Is a member in good standing of WONL
- Has provided service to WONL through participation in special or standing committees or through elected offices
- Demonstrates creativity in nursing leadership
- Promotes the profession of nursing and nursing leadership within the organization and the community, serving as a role model, mentor, and coach to others
- Demonstrates nursing leadership by sharing knowledge and expertise through presentation in seminars, formal course offerings and/or publications
- Develops positive relations with other disciplines, including administration and medicine
- Demonstrates compassion and spirit toward patients, families, and colleagues]
- Participates in a broad range of civic and health care-related organization and a political activity for nursing and health care.

This year, WONL is honored to select 2 nurse leaders as recipients of this award.

WONL 2023

Rising Star of the Year

Dominic Ehman, MSN, RN, CEN, CPEN

Emergency Department Manager
Westfields Hospital and Clinic

Dominic Ehman is the Emergency Department Manager at Westfields Hospital & Clinic in New Richmond. Dominic leads his team with compassion and a passion for providing patient centered care to all patients and families.

Prior to Dominic moving into the role of ED manager, he worked clinically in the emergency department as the trauma care coordinator for seven years. In this role Dominic had responsibility for the Trauma Care Program, Code Blue Team and education for staff and medical providers in caring for patients with trauma. Westfields has had two extremely successful trauma surveys due to his leadership. Dominic maintains a high level of clinical excellence through ongoing education and involvement in his professional societies. He recently completed his master's degree in nursing at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. Dominic also maintains certifications in ACLS, TNCC, and ENPC.

Dominic sets a high bar for performance expectations, and his team delivers. Dominic ensures that his team is providing evidence-based nursing practice while meeting the patients and families where they are at. His collaborative nature with his partners across the organization has led to this excellence in care. This includes lab, pharmacy, imaging, medical surgical department, primary care, and specialty care clinics.

Dominic is a respectful and strong ethical leader. He has the respect of his peers and partners across the organization.



WONL 2023

Executive Leader of the Year

Dennise Lavrenz, MBA, RN, CENP

Chief Clinical Officer (Retired)
Mentor/Consultant – Nurses Improving Care to the Healthsystem Elders,
NYU Meyers College of Nursing

Dennise Lavrenz has been an active member of AONL/WONL for the past 13 years and a board member for the last four years. She is the WONL president-elect. Her service includes chairperson of the Bylaws Committee, co-chair of the Program Planning Committee (9 years), Scholarship Committee member (4 years), member of the Wisconsin Hospital Association Quality Council and liaison for the Administrators of Nursing Education of Wisconsin. Dennise is also a board member of the Wisconsin Nurses Association and a member of the American Nurses Association and the American Academy of Nursing. She is involved in the Wisconsin Center for Nursing and Wisconsin Peer Alliance for Nurses. She chairs the Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services Combined Community Services Board, is a member of the Milwaukee County Mental Health Board, Milwaukee County Mental Health Finance and Quality Committees, and chairs the Community Engagement Committee. Dennise is a former member of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services Long-Term Care Advisory Council. Dennise was also awarded the Wisconsin Nurses Association Nurse of the Year 2022.



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Dennise is among the first generation of nurse managers to adopt modern quality management methods to improve the overall quality and safety of clinical care. As a nurse leader and senior consultant with NICHE, a national nurse-led geriatric care program, she has made a substantial impact toward changing the landscape of older adult population health across the nation for the last 25 years. Dennise supports senior nurse managers to more effectively implement large-scale transformative changes in clinical practice that leverage best practices, quality improvement tools and theories of planned organizational change.

Dennise has been actively involved in aging and workforce policy activities in Wisconsin. As a chief nurse and president-elect of WONL, she mobilizes nurses from across the state to advocate with legislators for healthcare workforce support, value-based payment models and other health reforms to address issues of access, quality, and equity. She is an accomplished nurse executive and a state policy leader whose contributions to the nursing profession and the people of Wisconsin have led to transformative care.

Establishing Appropriate Governance Structure for a Centralized, Proactive Approach

With financial pressures forcing healthcare systems to optimize their workforce programs, now is an ideal time for staffing leaders and procurement professionals to regain control of their program's health and establish the appropriate governance structure in their contingent labor program. Hickey explained how his health system created a position control committee consisting of members from finance, nursing operations, human resources and talent acquisition. Everyone on the committee contributes to the process enabling a cohesive focus on achieving budget goals together with as much insight as possible.

Leveraging the expertise of your supply chain leader can create strong governance in a centralized contingent labor program. They can develop centralized processes that are efficient and collaborative, especially in instances when service line and department leaders are reluctant to give up control.

"The critical thing in implementing and getting success into your program is being patient centered and collaborative, but most importantly, explaining the why behind it," says Ouelett. "We couldn't get trust and success by creating mandates. Instead, we created an online electronic process where we managed all the workflows and approvals behind the scenes. The only thing the managers had to do was submit their request online, and they either received their resource or some sort of response through the system. We made it the simplest thing to do, that took no time and very little effort on their part. We got almost 100% adoption organically on the new process which was more successful than if we said you must do this."

The valuable concepts shared by the leaders of top-tier health systems illustrates the power of data analytics and strong governance structures in managing contingent labor programs. The commitment to optimizing contingent labor utilization and costs remains a critical cornerstone for achieving operational excellence and ensuring the highest quality of care for patients.

WONL at the WCN Conference

WONL board members Amy Hermes and Dennise Lavrenz partner with Wisconsin Center for Nursing (WCN) Executive Director Barbara Nichols and Wisconsin Nurses Association (WNA) President Elizabeth Markham at the WCN fall conference.



Barbara Nichols, Dennise Lavrenz, Elizabeth Markham



Dennise Lavrenz and Amy Hermes

WONL Board of Directors 2023

President

Laura Hieb
CNO, SVP
Bellin Health System
744 S. Webster Ave
PO Box 23400
Green Bay WI 54305-3400
(w) 920-433-7436
(c) 920-639-1020
Laura.Hieb@Bellin.org

Treasurer

Sharon Cox
VP/CNO
Beloit Health System
1969 W Hart Rd
Beloit, WI 53511
(W) 608-364-5530
(C) 608-751-4397
(H) 608-201-3843
scox@beloithealthsystem.org

Secretary

Nicole Gruebling, DNP, RN, NEA-BC
Vice President
Member Connections
T (312) 775-4572
M (608) 334-0298
Vizient
155 N. Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60606
vizientinc.com
Nicole.gruebling@vizientinc.com

President-Elect

Dennise Lavrenz, RN
Retired Chief Clinical Officer
N7W27485 Woodbridge Line
Waukesha, WI 53188
(C) 262-470-5345
denniseLavrenz@wi.rr.com

Board Members

Board

Leah Bergstrom, RN, MSN
Director Emergency Services/
Trauma/SANE/Access One
HSHS St Mary's Hospital
HSHS St Nicholas Hospital
HSHS St. Vincent Hospital
835 S. Van Buren St.
Green Bay, WI 54301
Office-498-4501
Cell-265-2191
leah.bergstrom@hshs.org

Board Members

Board

Jen Drayton
Nursing Administrator
Mayo Clinic Health System
2321 Stout Road
Menomonie, WI 54751
(O) 715-233-7287
drayton.jen@mayo.edu

Board

April Hansen, RN, MSN
Group Pres.Workforce Solutions
Aya Healthcare
W7746 Cora Lane
Crivitz, WI 54114
(C) 920-737-9969
ahansen@ayahealthcare.com

Board

Amy Hermes
VP Patient Services (CNO)
Stoughton Hospital
900 Ridge Street
Stoughton, WI 53589
(W) 608-873-2308
(C) 608-516-8720
ahermes@stoughtonhealth.com

Board

Heather Logslett
Nurse Mgr., Primary Care Clinic
Mayo Clinic Health System
2321 Stout Road
Menomonie, WI 54751
715-688-9532
logslett.heather@mayo.edu

Board

Kristi Seibert
Director Patient Care Services
Children's Hospital of Wisconsin-
Fox Valley
NICU, Pediatrics, Respiratory Care
130 Second Street
Neenah, WI 54956
(W) 920-969-7948
(C) 920-246-7700
kseibert@chw.org

Board

Pam White
Retired Chief Nursing Officer
10400 Olson Drive
Eau Claire, WI 54703
715-577-5946

WONL Committee Chairs 2023

Membership

April Hansen, RN, MSN
Group Pres.Workforce Solutions
Aya Healthcare
W7746 Cora Lane
Crivitz, WI 54114
(C) 920-737-9969
ahansen@ayahealthcare.com

Legislative

Georgia Brockway
Director Med/Surg and ICU
Aspirus Divine Savior Healthcare
2817 New Pinery Rd
Portage, WI 53901
(W) 608-745-5612
(C) 608-617-1817
georgia.brockway@aspirus.org

Education and Scholarship

Tracy Galione
Dir. of Performance Improvement
TeamHealth, Inc.
120 Twin Harbor Drive
Winneconne, WI 54986
(C) 920-573-2329
tgallione98@gmail.com

Historian

Leilani Mazzone, MS-M, BSN, RN
Patient Care Director - Inpatient
Neurosciences Department
Children's Wisconsin
8915 W. Connell Ct.
Milwaukee, WI 63226
O: 414-337-3223
M: 414.243.0209
LMazzone@childrenswi.org

Marketing and Communications

Annye Graff
Med. Unit, Clinical Decision Unit,
Outpatient Infusion &
Adult Hospitalists
Bellin Health
755 Webster Ave.
Green Bay, WI 54301
(O) 920-433-7406
(C) 920-362-8695
annye.graff@bellin.org

Committee Chair/WI Board of Nursing/Program Chair

Lori Cardinal
Dir. of Hospital Nursing Resources
St. Agnes Hosp.-SSM Healthcare
430 E. Division St.
Fond Du Lac, WI 54935
(W) 920-926-4768
(C) 920-979-4249
Lori.Cardinal@ssmhealth.com

Co-Chair License Plate Committee

Betsy Benz
Administrator Health Care
Services/Director of Nursing
St. Rita's Health Center
Holy Family Convent
2409 S. Alverno Road
Manitowoc, WI 54220
(W) 920-652-7561
betsy@fsccladto.org

Co-Chair License Plate Committee

Sharon Warden
ICU/CCU Manager
MAYO Clinic NWWI
1221 Whipple Street
P.O. Box 4105
Eau Claire, WI 54702-4105
(W) 715-838-3842
warden.sharon@mayo.edu

Member Checklist

- ! Please contact April Ossmann whenever you have a change in either employment or residential address to guarantee timely mailings. E-mail aossmann@wha.org or 608/268-1806.
- ! Submit articles for publication in the next issue of Horizons to Annye Graff, 920-433-7406, annye.graff@bellin.org
- ! If you are interested in being a part of a specific committee, contact the committee chair.

WHA Contact

April Ossmann
Receptionist
Wisconsin Hospital Association
5510 Research Park Drive
Fitchburg, WI 53711
Work: 608/274-1820
Fax: 608/274-8554
E-mail: wonl@wha.org

WHA Liaison

Ann Zenk
V.P., Workforce & Clinical Practice
5510 Research Park Drive
Fitchburg, WI 53711
Work: 608/274-1820
Fax: 608/274-8554
E-mail: azenk@wha.org