

# Advocate

KING COUNTY NURSES ASSOCIATION

WINTER 2026

Happy New Year!  
Continuing education  
Scholarships  
Getting involved

## KCNA in 2026: Strengthening our nursing community

**H**appy New Year! As we welcome the new year, KCNA is committed to strengthening our nursing community through networking, community involvement and continuing education opportunities. Together, we'll continue to grow, connect, and make a lasting impact on the health of our region. Thank you for your ongoing dedication to the nursing profession and the communities you serve.

### Nurses Education Series: Navigating Nursing Practice in a Sea of AI

Saturday, Jan. 31, 2026, 9–11:30 AM via Zoom

**\*\*2.5 ANCC contact hours (pending)**

#### Cost and registration

Free to WSNA members.

Register at [nwrna.org/NES2026](http://nwrna.org/NES2026)

**Don't miss this event!** The Nurses Education Series is a collaboration of the regional professional

nursing associations of WSNA, designed to provide valuable continuing education opportunities for nurses across the state.

This workshop gives nurses the knowledge and confidence to use artificial intelligence effectively in their practice. AI is becoming an essential part of health care, and now is the time to engage with it.

Artificial intelligence is already appearing in electronic health records, search tools and other emerging technologies, shaping the way nurses deliver care. While AI holds great promise, it remains a tool, not a replacement for clinical judgment or professional expertise. As with any instrument, nurses must approach AI with a critical eye and intentional use.

This seminar will breakdown what AI is and what it isn't, its benefits and limitations, and how it is being used in nursing today. You'll strengthen your confidence in using AI appropriately and, just as importantly, understanding when not to rely on it. The session highlights how your clinical reasoning and assessment skills remain essential as you evaluate and apply AI tools.

Join nurses from across Washington to explore how AI can support your practice. You'll learn through real-world examples and leave with practical strategies to integrate AI thoughtfully into your daily work.

This event is sponsored by the by Central Washington Region Nurses Association, Inland Empire Nurses Association, King County Nurses Association, Northwest Region Nurses Association, Rainier Olympic Nurses Association and Southwest Region Nurses Association.

[READ ABOUT OUR SPEAKER ON PAGE 2](#)

### Navigating Nursing Practice in the sea of AI

📅 Saturday, January 31, 2026

🕒 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM (PST)

📍 Online, Zoom

Free for WSNA members

**\*\*CE: 2.5 ANCC contact hours (pending)**

Register: [nwrna.org/NES2026](http://nwrna.org/NES2026)

Brought to you by:



Nurses  
Education  
Series



**\*\* This activity has been submitted to Oregon Nurses Association for approval to award contact hours. Oregon Nurses Association is accredited as an approved of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.**

**A recording of the workshop will be available. All registered participants will receive a link, even if unable to attend live.**

## KCNA 2026: connecting nurses across our community

Dear KCNA Members,

Welcome to 2026! As we start this new year, I reflect on all my nurse colleagues who work hard to support and build the profession of nursing. KCNA is there for you as nurses as your local professional association. Let's meet the challenges and triumphs of this new year together!

I have been involved with KCNA for more years than I can remember, and I take real pride in contributing to KCNA's present and future. Will you join me? There are big and small ways to engage with KCNA. Start by connecting with us on social media, reading our newsletters and attending an event, or perhaps donating to our scholarship fund. If you are ready for more, serve on a committee or run for election to our board. As a nurse, your know-how and experience prepare you to be a leader!

Open board positions: Vice President, Secretary and Member at Large; all positions are for two-year terms beginning in May 2026. We also have three positions (one-year

terms) on the Nominating Committee. Contact [jennifer@kcnurses.org](mailto:jennifer@kcnurses.org) by Jan. 9 with any questions or to notify us of your interest.

We begin 2026 with an impressive Nurses Education Series continuing education program brought to you by your regional nurses' associations: "Navigating Nursing Practice in a Sea of AI." It's FREE for KCNA members. Then in the spring we'll celebrate nursing during Nursing Month at Annual Gala in a new venue location at Cedarbrook Lodge in SeaTac. We can't wait to see you at these exceptional events!

Your KCNA Board met in September and are on track for an impactful year:

### Fall KCNA Board Highlights:

- Approved \$1,200 charitable donation for cold/flu kits for Real Change vendors.
- Approved 18 scholarships at \$4,500 each for 2026—three more than last year!

- Scholarship donation of \$9,000 approved for Mary Mahoney Professional Nurses Organization.

### Member Benefit Reminders:

- Apply for \$500 from the KCNA professional development fund.
- Students: Apply for a \$4,500 nursing student scholarship by March 2, 2026.
- Nominate a colleague for a KCNA Shining Star Nurse Award by March 15.
- Apply for a community grant.

Thank you for continuing to show up every day as a nurse and remember that KCNA is here to encourage and support you!

Warmest regards,

Nancy Wilder, RN, BA  
KCNA President



### NURSES EDUCATION SERIES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



#### About the speaker (AI):

Uba Bačkonja, PhD, MS, RN, conducts nursing research focused on health informatics, data visualization and artificial intelligence. She is a consumer health informatics researcher at the

MITRE Corporation, where she works with users to develop health technologies that address critical challenges in health care. Bačkonja completed her training at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the University of Washington and the National Institutes of Health.

### KCNA Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Page
Jan. 15	Scholarship Information Night	4
Jan. 29	WSNA Lobby Day ( <a href="http://wsna.org">wsna.org</a> )	
Jan. 31	Nurses Education Series	1
Feb. 19	KCNA Region Meeting	3
Mar. 2	Deadline: Scholarship Applications	4
Mar. 13	Deadline: Shining Star Nurse Awards	3
May 14	KCNA Annual Gala	3

Details and registration for KCNA events at [kcnurses.org](http://kcnurses.org)

## Continuing education and events

### KCNA Region Meeting: Health & Safety for Nurses in the Workplace

Thursday, Feb. 19, 2026, 6–7:30 PM via Zoom  
1.5-hour Certificate of Completion after event  
evaluation submitted.

#### Cost and registration

Free for KCNA members and nursing  
students/\$30 nonmembers  
Registration Deadline: Feb. 16, 2025

Join the KCNA Region Meeting to  
discuss association business, then  
learn key basics of occupational  
health and workplace hazards.

Have you ever wondered whether  
your work environment is truly  
safe? As nurses, you encounter  
potential hazards every day on  
the job. Join us to explore the

fundamentals of occupational  
health and industrial safety. This  
session will cover how to recognize  
workplace hazards and implement  
effective control measures to ensure  
a safe environment for all. We'll also  
review relevant laws and regulations.  
Participants will leave with  
practical tools, including a hazard  
assessment worksheet to apply  
directly in their own workplaces.

#### Meet the presenters:

**Karen Bowman,**  
MN, RN, COHN-S,  
has advocated for  
workplace safety  
and environmental  
health for more  
than 20 years.  
She shares her  
expertise through her consulting



business and as an instructor at the  
University of Washington. Bowman  
holds an advanced practice degree  
in community health systems  
with a focus on occupational  
and environmental health.

**Nancy Simcox,**  
MS, is director  
of continuing  
education for  
environmental  
and occupational  
health sciences  
at the University  
of Washington in Seattle and an  
associate teaching professor. A  
research industrial hygienist  
with more than 20 years of  
experience, she specializes in  
industrial hygiene assessments,  
exposure assessment design and  
health-based research analysis.



### Save the date!

Plan now to give yourself a night  
off to celebrate National Nurses  
Month. KCNA's 2026 Annual Gala will be held the  
evening of **May 14** at Cedarbrook Lodge near SeaTac.  
Celebrate community, connection, and impact as we  
honor Shining Star Award winners and introduce  
scholarship recipients. Then get ready for excitement  
as we host a live auction to raise funds for scholarships.  
Details and tickets at [kcnurses.org](https://kcnurses.org) in early January.



### Nominate an exceptional nurse

We are excited to share a refreshed  
logo for 2026 of our Shining Star  
Nurse Award. It's the same honor,  
with an elevated look! Each year,  
KCNA proudly recognizes nurses  
who demonstrate excellence  
in practice, contribute to the  
profession, or make a meaningful  
community impact. Know an exceptional nurse?  
Nominate them for the 2026 KCNA Shining Star Nurse  
Award by Friday, March 13, 2026, at [kcnurses.org](https://kcnurses.org) under  
the Members tab. Honorees will be celebrated at the  
KCNA Annual Gala in May 2026. Awardees must be  
KCNA members. To confirm membership, email:  
[kcnurses@kcnurses.org](mailto:kcnurses@kcnurses.org).



## KCNA Scholarship Program: expanding & going digital



Since 1993, KCNA has awarded \$865,250 in scholarships to 350 nursing students and has supported the next generation of nurses in our community! This year, KCNA is excited to share that our long-standing scholarship program is moving to a digital application process. Going online will streamline submissions and make the process more timely, organized and accessible for applicants and the Scholarship Committee.

The KCNA Scholarship Program is also growing. This year marks our largest scholarship investment yet! Eighteen students will each receive a \$4,500 scholarship.

For 2026, KCNA will offer two scholarship categories:

- **Core Plus Award:** This scholarship is for nursing students enrolled in an associate program, a baccalaureate program or an accelerated baccalaureate program—all preparing for careers as registered nurses. This category is also for licensed registered nurses in an RNB/RN-to-BSN program leading to a bachelor's degree in nursing. The Core Plus Category is also for pre-licensure nursing students working toward an advanced nursing degree.

- **Advanced Award (Valerie Weiss Memorial Scholarship):** This scholarship is for post-licensure registered nurses working toward an advanced degree in nursing or a related field. For Master's, DNP and PhD nursing students. **Valerie Weiss, ARNP, MN, MA** was an outstanding nurse whose professional commitment was an inspiration to her colleagues and patients alike.

Beginning in 2026, applications can be submitted through a new online portal, accessible through [kcnurses.org](http://kcnurses.org). Applications will be similar to previous years, including essay responses and academic information. Be sure to check eligibility requirements to see if you qualify. The application period opens in early January 2026 and closes Monday, March 2, 2026.

### KCNA Scholarship Impact



**1993**

KCNA awards first round of scholarships, beginning a 30+ year tradition of investing in future nurses.



**350**

students have received KCNA scholarships since the program began.

**\$865,270**

awarded to support nursing students within King County since 1993.



**60+**

nursing student applications are reviewed each year.

**18 SCHOLARSHIPS  
AT \$4,500**

will be awarded in 2026-2027 - our largest scholarship funded year yet!



### Scholarship information session

**Thursday, Jan. 15, 2026, 7–8 PM via Zoom**

**Free for nursing students**

**Registration Deadline: Jan. 12, 2026**

Join KCNA for an information session on our scholarship program including eligibility, qualifications, application process and utilizing our new online platform. To register go to [kcnurses.org](http://kcnurses.org) and click on the Education and Events tab.



Your support is essential to sustaining this long-standing program. Scan the QR code or visit [kcnurses.org](http://kcnurses.org) to make a donation and learn more about our program.





## KCNA Elections 2026

Are you ready to champion your fellow nurses and your professional association? The KCNA Nominating Committee invites you to submit your name to run for election to the KCNA Board in 2026. Terms are for two years and meetings happen four times per year, three of which are virtual. Meetings are in the evenings, lasting about two hours each. As a board member, you'll join a dynamic team guiding our actions and impact while monitoring our health and sustainability. It's an opportunity to expand your professional network, develop leadership skills and create community. We'd love to see you put your hat in the ring to step forward into a role of influence and impact! Open positions include Vice President, Secretary and Member at Large positions. We also have open positions on our Nominating Committee (one-year term). For more details, contact [jennifer@kcnurses.org](mailto:jennifer@kcnurses.org).



### KCNA members invest in local health

KCNA supports community health through member-led projects across King County, offering grants of \$500–\$2,000 for initiatives that improve access to care, support vulnerable populations, or promote health education. Projects must involve at least one KCNA member and a community partner, with applications reviewed year-round. In 2025, KCNA members partnered with Nurse-Family Partnership at Public Health—Seattle & King County to provide \$2,000 in breastfeeding supplies and educational support for 75 first-time mothers from low-income, diverse families. Distributed items included lanolin, hydrogel, breast pumps and milk collectors with storage bags, helping families meet their feeding goals. Additional grants approved in 2025 are still in process. Grant applications are accepted year-round. Learn more or apply at [kcnurses.org](https://kcnurses.org) under the Members tab.

### Seattle/King County Clinic

The Seattle/King County Clinic marks its 11th anniversary on **April 23–26, 2026** at Seattle Center, uniting health care professionals to provide free medical, dental, and vision care to the community. Since 2014, the clinic has served over 33,000 patients, saving \$30 million in out-of-pocket expenses. Connect and join fellow nurses while giving back to the community. For more details, visit [seattlecenter.org/volunteers](https://seattlecenter.org/volunteers).

### KCNA Professional Development Funds

KCNA is committed to supporting members in continuing their nursing education. Each year, we award up to 10 grants of \$500 each to KCNA members. Those who do not receive employer-funded education support are given preference. Funds may be used for tuition, transportation, or lodging for accredited continuing education courses. Visit [kcnurses.org](https://kcnurses.org) under the Events and Education tab for more information.



KCNA member Meena Gaspirino was awarded professional development funds to attend the Northwest PeriAnesthesia Nurses' Association Conference in September 2025.

# Welcome!

As a new member of WSNA working in King County, you're automatically part of KCNA. Connect with us on social media (Facebook: [@kingcountynurses](https://www.facebook.com/kingcountynurses). Instagram: [@kcnurses](https://www.instagram.com/kcnurses)) and subscribe to News2Use at [kcnurses.org](https://kcnurses.org), under Members/News tab. Explore benefits like grants, professional development funds, continuing education discounts and board opportunities. Learn more at [kcnurses.org](https://kcnurses.org). We look forward to supporting your professional journey.

KING COUNTY  
**NURSES**  
ASSOCIATION

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Room 352  
Seattle, WA 98103

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KING COUNTY  
**NURSES**  
ASSOCIATION

*King County Nurses Association is a professional organization of registered nurses, committed to supporting members and the communities they serve through education, advocacy and service.*

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**COMMITTEES AND  
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS:**

Finance Committee  
Neighborhood Health SIG  
Nominating Committee  
Program Committee  
Scholarship Committee  
Community Grant Task Force



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**KCNA Event Cancellation/Refund policy:** Attendees may request a refund up to seven days before the event date through Eventbrite only. Refunds will be automatically refunded to your original payment method only. Registrations cannot be transferred to others. Non-refundable fees from Eventbrite may be applied to attendees or paid for by KCNA. In the case of cancellation, attendees will receive a refund through Eventbrite, and non-refundable fees will be covered by KCNA.

**KCNA: A Constituent Association (Region) of Washington State Nurses Association • 4649 Sunnyside Ave N, Rm 352 • Seattle, WA 98103**  
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The Advocate is published to inform KCNA members about issues and activities that affect their professional growth.