

# The NSA Cityscape

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## **The History and Significance of Pinning**

**An Interview with Professor Catherine Shafer**

**Written by Heather Tyge**

*First let's go over the general history of pinning.*

Pinning goes all the way back to before Florence Nightingale. It was actually started way back during the crusades. So the Knights Templar were men and they were the first nurses. During the crusades they used the Maltese cross as a sign to indicate who were the health care providers in the group. So that's when the first group of pins started; it was more like a badge.

### **Similar to how we put the red cross on medics in the military?**

*Exactly, and the first women who were nurses were actually prostitutes. What the army would do, in order to keep the men happy and to keep them from deserting, was pay prostitutes to follow them wherever they went. So when the men were wounded the women would come in and “tend” to them, in more ways than one. So when Nightingale started, she started giving badges to students designating them as students who finished the curriculum, the pins were given to the high performers, and the nursing pledge had a lot to do with purity. It has since morphed into an acceptance into the profession of nursing.*

*From the Museum of Nursing History:*

*“By 1916, a ceremony awarding badges was a tradition in England and the United States. The badge symbolized educated women who were prepared to serve the health needs of society. Eventually, each school of nursing designed and awarded a customized pin. In the United States the first pin presented to a graduating class occurred at Bellevue Hospital in New York City, 1880. The pin featured a crane in the center for vigilance. This center relief is encircled by a band of blue for constancy, and an outer band of red for mercy and relief of suffering.”*

### **What’s the history of our pin as City College?**

*The lamp is always symbolic of Nightingale. It was Henry Wadsworth*

*Longfellow, who was also a nurse during the civil war, who first described Nightingale as “The Lady with the Lamp” in a poem. The poem was based on her efforts at Scutari, near Constantinople, as she walked the cots at night checking the wounded soldiers under lamp light. In other schools if you had a really high GPA they would add the lamp in addition to the school pin. A lot of people have adopted the caduceus, but that’s a symbol of the medical profession more specific to Doctors.*

### **So what’s the importance of the ceremony?**

*It’s my belief that the pinning ceremony is not just a recognition of the students’ accomplishments and a welcome from other nurses, but it’s an acceptance of the role of a nurse by the student. The people who have decided to become nurses have decided to dedicate their lives to the service of others. To me, the idea of accepting the pin is as much about accepting that role, it’s a moment for graduates to say this is really what I’m committing to do and this is what it means. That’s why when we say the pledge, I encourage you not to just say it but to listen to it. From that moment on, the rest of your professional life, it always bleeds into your home life too, but the rest of your life is dedicated to the service of others and accepting that role, accepting your pin, is a pretty significant moment.*

*Which, coincidentally, is also why you don’t wear your patch at pinning, because you’re no longer a student you’re a graduate.*

**Can you briefly summarize the way our ceremony will go?**

*We all come together, one faculty will read each student's name as they walk across the stage and another faculty will read the "shout out" that the student prepared. Then once every student has been pinned all the students and faculty will stand together and recite the Nursing Pledge, including the already licensed nurses in the audience. This is how the current nurses welcome the new graduates into, and reaffirm their own commitment to, the profession.*

**Is it the same pledge throughout all of nursing?**

*We adapted our pledge a few years ago from the Nightingale Pledge to be a little more inclusive and timely. A few years ago several students who were very active in the community felt the original pledge was exclusionary, especially references to "she, she, she" and God, but it's very similar to the pledges used at other schools.*

**San Diego City College Nursing Pledge:**

*"In the full knowledge of the responsibilities I am undertaking, I promise to care for my patients with all the knowledge, skills and understanding I possess, with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth and uniqueness of every individual, sparing no effort to conserve meaningful life, to alleviate suffering, and to promote health. I will respect, at all times, the dignity and religious beliefs of the patients under my care and hold in professional confidence all personal information entrusted to me. I will refrain from any action, which might endanger the quality of life or health. I will endeavor to keep my professional*

*knowledge and skill at the highest level and to give my support and cooperation to all members of the health team. With full awareness of my qualifications and limitations, I will do my utmost to maximize the potential of the nursing profession and to uphold and advance its standards."*

**Is pinning the same across schools?**

*My pinning was a little different because I went to a Catholic school, so Mass was involved, and my father actually pinned me. Some people don't like that idea because he's not a nurse and pinning is supposed to be about finishing nursing education. So a lot of people believe it should be faculty who do it. When my niece got pinned she wanted me to pin her and the school didn't allow that because a lot of it is about the recognition and giving the school an opportunity to congratulate students individually, which doesn't get to happen very often.*

**What else is unique to our ceremony?**

The shout outs are something I like about this ceremony because it's also a recognition of the friends and family who have made contributions to the students during school. Because nursing school is a lot of time away from home, and family, and enjoyable moments, and down time. Shout outs generally run along the lines of recognizing the sacrifices that other people have made and not just the sacrifices students have made.

## Community Health Outreach: The San Diego Rock'N'Roll Marathon



Students from the San Diego City College Nursing Program helped volunteer this month at the San Diego Rock'N'Roll Marathon. They treated runners with minor traumas, hypoglycemic incidences, and general weakness or pain.

Pictured are: Caitlin Harris, Angel Ramos, Thelma Murrieta, Amanda Carrasco, Cynthia Simones, and Claudia Cardenas

## Nursing Students in Sacramento Internship

Written by: Victoria Shirley

Nursing Students in Sacramento (NSSI) is a program offered yearly to members of the California Nursing Students' Association (CNSA). Applicants write a position paper about one of CNSA's recent resolutions as well as a mock letter to one of their legislators. CNSA works in partnership with American Nurses Association\California (ANA\C) to provide travel, accommodations, and meals to the three winners for three days in Sacramento. This year, I had the privilege on being selected for NSSI.

I was not entirely sure about what the experience would entail, but I decided to apply for NSSI after hearing about it from a previous intern. The application involved getting prior approval from City College to miss three days of school. When I was accepted, the faculty arranged for me to make up clinical hours. Late Sunday night, I flew to Sacramento and took a taxi to a Holiday Inn near the capitol.

The first day of the trip was ANA\C's annual "RN Day at the Capitol." This is a lobby day that the organization arranges; members come and speak to their legislators about issues that affect nurses and patient care. The two other NSSI recipients and I spent the morning helping with registration at the event. Nurses checked in and mingled over breakfast and coffee. At 9:00 am, we all headed over to the capitol building.

President on ANA\C, Phillip Bautista gave opening remarks for the event. He also introduced each of us NSSI winners and presented us with a free year membership to ANA\C. Marketa Houskova and Roxanne Gould, executive director and lobbyist for the ANA\C respectively, gave a presentation about how attendees should approach the legislators in their meetings scheduled for the latter half of the day. Marketa and Roxanne would be instrumental throughout the three days in helping us students wrap our brains around the complexities of the legislative process. We also had presentations from the Golden State Nursing Foundation, the Board of Registered Nursing, California Hospital Association and the Governor's Office.

Patty Gurney, president of the California Association of Nurse Practitioners (CANP) introduced the hot topic of the entire event; AB 890 is a bill with the intent of giving nurse practitioners full practice authority.



Both ANA\C and CANP support this bill as a chance to allow California nurse practitioners to practice to the full scope of their training and also extend access to healthcare for rural and underserved populations. The major opposition to the bill comes from the California Medical Association. The author of the bill, Assemblymember Wood, also came in to discuss recent concessions on the bill and how he envisioned it being successful.

Over the next two days, ANA\C arranged for each student to meet with the office of our state senator and assemblymember. I met with Marjorie Schwartz, Policy Advisor for Senator Toni Atkins who discussed the strides taken by her office to implement universal healthcare in California. My assemblymember, Brian Maienschein, talked about his work in supporting postpartum mental health. That night, we got to debrief with both Marketa and Roxanne who live in Sacramento and work representing ANA\C in Sacramento. They gave us excellent insight on the legislative process as well as colorful information about how power and influence are gained and wielded.

Much of our time over the three days was spent in committee hearings and meetings. We heard debate on bills about postpartum home visits, black infant health, licensing and certification fees for

skilled nursing facilities. We talked about mandatory patient ratios, workplace violence in hospitals, covered California subsidies, increasing pharmaceutical costs, and healthcare interpretation services. In every session and every discussion, issues were being addressed that affect us as nurses and as citizens.

Overall, NSSI was a wonderful experience: a chance to use my nursing knowledge in a completely new way. My greatest takeaway was that decisions about my life and work are being made, daily, without my knowledge and without my input. The NSSI experience has inspired me to be more informed and more involved. Nursing school already teaches us to be advocates. It is ingrained in the profession. NSSI enlightened me to just how far that advocacy can reach.



# Congratulations to the New Nursing Student Association Officers!

**President:**  
Heather Tyge

**Vice President:**  
Anna Manfreda

**Secretary:**  
Caitlin Harris

**Treasurer:**  
Mackenzie Adams

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Tara Tarries

**Communications Director:**  
Cesar Cardenas

**Community Health Director:**  
Claudia Cardenas

**Fundraising Director:**  
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**Legislative Director:**  
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