

National Student Nurses Association, Inc. ®

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**IMPORTANT: YOUR SCHOOL'S BTN ® CHAIR HAS BEEN ADDED TO NSNA'S ®
DATABASE AND WILL RECEIVE PERIODIC MAILINGS FROM THE NSNA ®
BREAKTHROUGH TO NURSING ® DIRECTOR. PLEASE GIVE THIS INFORMATION
TO THE BTN ® COMMITTEE CHAIR.**

WHAT IS BREAKTHROUGH TO NURSING ®?

The goal of NSNA's ® Breakthrough to Nursing ® Project is to increase the number of qualified students enrolled in and graduated from nursing schools. The project was started in 1965 to address NSNA's ® concerns about:

- The adequacy of health care services for minority group members.
- The need to increase the number of minority group health care providers.
- The need to provide opportunities for minority nursing students to develop leadership skills.
- The need for the nursing education system to be more responsive to the needs of the minority group students.

The Breakthrough to Nursing ® Project received federal funding from 1971-1977. At that time, the House of Delegates directed NSNA ® to continue an active leadership role in the recruitment and retention of ethnic people of color and men into schools of nursing, in accordance with NSNA ® bylaws and policies.

The program has been adapted in many ways since its inception. NSNA ® has reaffirmed the need for Breakthrough to Nursing ® by expanding the program's scope to include: recognizing the needs of the physically challenged nursing student (1982 House of Delegates); sensitization to the health care needs of the diverse ethnic groups nursing students and nurses serve (1974 House of Delegates); increasing the number of men entering nursing programs (1969 House of Delegates); recognizing the needs of economically and educationally disadvantaged nursing students (1985 House of Delegates); recognizing and addressing the needs of the non-traditional student (1995 Board of Directors) and general recruitment and retention (1986 Board of Directors).

The concerns of Breakthrough to Nursing ® continue to be relevant today. Recruitment/retention, minority recruitment, the number of men in the profession, young students, non-traditional students, and the need to support all enrolled in professional nursing programs are goals of BTN ®. Recruitment of young people into the profession is critical due to the aging of the nursing workforce. Effectiveness of the Breakthrough to Nursing ® Project seems due, in part, to the peer relationships that can be established between nursing students and other

students. In recent years the project has been expanded to the recruitment of all qualified individuals into nursing.

In order to provide direction for the Breakthrough to Nursing ® Project, a mission statement in keeping with NSNA's ® mission statement has been developed.

GETTING A BREAKTHROUGH TO NURSING ® COMMITTEE STARTED

The mission of the Breakthrough to Nursing ® Project is to:

- organize, represent, and mentor students preparing for initial licensure as registered nurses, as well as those nurses enrolled in baccalaureate completion programs, in becoming practitioners sensitive to the cultural diversity that exists in our society;
- promote the development of the skills needed to be responsible, accountable members of the nursing profession who respect the differences and similarities between people;
- advocate for high quality care, utilizing the principles of transcultural nursing;
- facilitate the development of peer support systems, which enhance recruitment and retention within the nursing profession.

To implement the project at the school level, a core group of 5-10 committee members is needed. The committee composition may be as follows: Chair (NSNA ® member) and 2-3 additional NSNA ® members; faculty representatives; representatives from the nursing school, college or university recruitment staff; local hospital recruiters if possible. These individuals should be willing to commit themselves to work on the project for at least a year.

The first task is to gather information about the nursing workforce and nursing school admissions/enrollments/graduations and pre-nursing students in the area; length and types of nursing programs; waiting lists; and financial assistance available.

Committee members (one student should always be on the field visits since youngsters will relate well to someone who is in school) can then go out to speak with potential nursing students. Meetings can be arranged through local junior and senior high school counselors, churches, boys and girls clubs, or other community contacts. Another target population is “undeclared” college students in your own college or university. Information provided to junior and senior high school students should include:

- What nursing is really about (i.e. the values of nurses and nursing’s service to society);
- Career opportunities in nursing;
- The academic prerequisites and grades required for nursing school admission;
- Personal attributes needed for professional nursing (i.e., good interpersonal and communication skills; like to work with people, etc.).

Interested students can then be contacted individually by nursing students. Follow-up should be continued with these students until they are enrolled into nursing school or decide that nursing is not what they want.

As an incentive, NSNA ® offers a scholarship program that includes scholarships for ethnic people of color. In addition, awards are given for projects conducted by NSNA ® school and state constituents.* The awards are presented during the Awards Ceremony at the Annual NSNA ® Convention.

The Breakthrough to Nursing ® Project should play a major role in every state chapter and school association. BTN ® has proven to be one of the major avenues by which nursing students can work in a unified way to improve the quality of nursing care given to diverse cultural groups, thus making nursing a more visible and attractive profession.. The BTN ® Project can play a major role to interest student in nursing during the growing nursing shortage.

BTN ® TOOLS

NURSING – THE ULTIMATE ADVENTURE VIDEO

The NSNA ® has a new video available for use by BTN ® Committees. *Nursing – The Ultimate Adventure*, is free of charge to all schools that have official NSNA ® chapters and BTN ® committees (student members of the BTN ® committee must be NSNA ® members). The video (10 minutes long) is designed to interest teenagers in a nursing career. Informative literature is provided to give to students after they view the video. An order form is attached.

DISCOVER NURSING CAREER CENTER ON WWW.NSNA.ORG

NSNA's ® new Career Center on www.nsna.org is for both students interested in a nursing career and for nursing students planning their careers. Junior and senior high school students can find general information about nursing careers and directly access nursing school web sites. The Discover Nursing page includes:

Nursing – The Ultimate Adventure Information for junior and high school students interested in going to nursing school. *Information about nursing opportunities, how to apply for nursing school, and educational pathways for nursing education.*

Is Nursing for You?

If you are a licensed practical nurse, nurses' aid, working in an allied health field or want a second career...nursing may be for you.

Nursing in the New Millennium by Cynthia Saver

Where will the jobs for nurses be in the next five years? Which careers are hot and which are not? How is technology changing the way nurses practice and the skills they need?

Tips on Being a Mom and a Nursing Student

Article from Imprint magazine.

Juggling Nursing School and Family

Article from Imprint Magazine.

Nursing Schools

Direct connect to the web sites of nursing schools to explore the entrance requirements, program of study, degree earned and much more.

Occupational Outlook for Registered Nurses

Provides excellent information about the nature of nursing work, working conditions, qualifications, employment outlook and earnings.

Nursing Spectrum Careers in Nursing

Learn about traditional and non-traditional nursing opportunities.

And, here's what you'll find on the Planning your Career page:

Resource for senior nursing students, new graduates, and registered nurses.

Direct Links to hospitals with positions for new graduates.

How to Choose the Right First Job by Cynthia Saver *The job outlook for new graduates is bright but how do you determine the right job for you?*

Tips on Getting the Job You Want by Paul Walden *The employment outlook for new graduates is promising, as we currently find ourselves in a nursing shortage similar to that of the early nineties.*

Preparing for Licensure as a Registered Nurse

Specialty Nursing – Learn about opportunities in different nursing specialties.

Career Planning for Nurses by Bette Case

An in depth guide to career planning. Discount for NSNA ® members.

Nursing Student to Nursing Leader by Carol Andersen *Learn from nursing leaders what nursing leadership is all about. Discount for NSNA ® members.*

Nursing Spectrum Relocation Guide

Relocation tools to help you find the right job in the right location.

Nursing Spectrum Career Management

Help to get your career in shape and keep it in shape for all of your professional life.

Graduate Nursing Schools

Includes grad schools in US and other countries, and distance learning programs.

GUIDELINES TO ESTABLISH A BTN ® PROJECT

The following guidelines will assist school and state constituents to establish and maintain a Breakthrough to Nursing ® Project:

1. The first step is for school chapters and state associations to appoint a BTN ® chairperson who will be responsible for implementing the project. The BTN ® chairperson's role and responsibilities should be included in the association's bylaws to insure continuity from year to year.
2. Obtain faculty support for the project. Many schools have faculty committees that address student recruitment and retention issues. Be sure there is a student representative (preferably the BTN ® chair) on this committee.
3. To implement the project at the state level, establish a BTN ® committee of 10-12 members. Invite schools in your state's regional chapters to appoint an NSNA ® member and/or a faculty representative to serve on the committee. Invite the state association of hospital nurse recruiters or recruiters who are supportive of your state association to participate on the committee. The state hospital association can assist with these contacts. These individuals should be willing to commit themselves to work on the project for at least a year. Find out

what the nursing staff needs are on the state level. This information is available from your state hospital association. Establish the admissions/enrollments/graduation trends for nursing schools in your state. This information is available from your state board of nursing.

4. To implement the project at the school level, a core group of 5-10 committee members is needed. The committee composition may be as follows: Chair (NSNA ® member) and 2-3 additional NSNA ® members; faculty representatives; representatives from the nursing school, college or university recruitment staff; local hospital recruiters if possible. These individuals should be willing to commit themselves to work on the project for at least a year.
5. Monitor BTN ® activities on the national, state, and school levels by communicating regularly with other BTN ® representatives.
6. Keep abreast of current nursing school enrollment, quality of the applicants, and graduation statistics in your school and region to assess the project for its effectiveness and needed modifications. Compare these statistics against the baseline data collected when the project was started.
7. Search for sources of funding for the project; provide creative incentives for participants.
8. Submit articles to school and state newsletters to inform others of the BTN ® Project's accomplishments and upcoming activities; post a "What is Breakthrough to Nursing?" flyer on the bulletin board.
9. Contact local radio and television stations and arrange interviews about nursing.
10. Contact local newspapers and offer information about nursing. Write letters to the editor about nursing opportunities in your community.
11. Before leaving office, leave a list of guidelines and recommendations for the incoming BTN ® chairperson and committee members.
12. Submit a bylaws amendment at the state convention to have the BTN ® director included in the state bylaws as an elected or appointed position on the Board of Directors.
13. In addition to seeking potential nursing students at junior and senior high schools, look for other groups of people who may be interested in a nursing career. Focus especially on the populations targeted by BTN ®. Use your imagination to plan projects appropriate to them.
14. Network with other area schools to share project and promotional ideas.

IDEAS FOR BTN ® ACTIVITIES

1. Set achievable short term BTN ® goals that can be accomplished in one year. Work with faculty and recruitment staff to set long-range goals.
2. Describe BTN's ® purpose in concrete terms.
3. Ask NSNA ® headquarters for assistance in planning and implementing projects.
4. Recruit for nursing in general, as well as focusing on underrepresented populations in nursing.
5. Work with your school or state Image of Nursing Committee to promote a positive image of the nursing profession to the public.

6. BTN® chairpersons can get together during the annual NSNA® convention or the MidYear Conference to share activities and ideas. Time is set aside at both meetings for this purpose.
7. Organize a state or chapter level contest for BTN®.
8. Make plans so that your BTN® projects have continuity from year to year.
9. Write junior and senior high school principals and counselors to inform them of the nature, purpose and goals of the BTN® project; propose a role that each school may play in implementing the project.
10. Offer involvement in high school career days.
11. Have nursing students write letters to their high school guidance counselors letting them know how much they are learning in nursing school and to refer potential nursing students to them if they want to talk to a nursing student about what nursing school is like.
12. Update guidance counselors about nursing and requirements for entrance into nursing school.
13. Contact a local guidance counselor association and ask to be placed on the agenda for one of their meetings—show the BTN® video.
14. Contact school nurses to see how they can become involved.
15. Cooperate with local hospitals and community nursing agencies to have a career day for junior and high school students at their facility.
16. Have a BTN® fundraiser to provide funds for tutoring students with academic needs.
17. Focus on retention as well as recruitment of students, i.e. establishment study groups and peer support groups.
18. Encourage minority students to get involved in BTN® projects and to serve as role models and mentors for other students.
19. Think of creative ways to recruit "second-career" people into nursing. Increase the involvement of community agencies, clinics and hospitals in the BTN® project.

For information about becoming an official constituent of the National Student Nurses Association, refer to *Getting the Pieces to Fit*, available at www.nsna.org (click on Publications and download). Or write or call NSNA® for a free copy.

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Or— use the attached form.

Breakthrough to Nursing

Interest Form

Note: If you already have a Breakthrough to Nursing ® Committee, please make sure that NSNA ® has the name of the chairperson by sending an e-mail to *susan@nsna.org*. Include name and address of the school and the name and membership number of the BTN ® chairperson.

If you do not have a BTN ® Committee and want to start one, complete this form and FAX or mail it to NSNA ®.

Print all information clearly

Name

Membership number:

School

City and State of School:

Address where you want your mail to go: Circle: home school

Street

City

State

Zip

Your phone number: ()

Your e-mail address: _____

Mail to: Att: BTN ®, National Student Nurses Association, 45 Main Street,
Suite 606, Brooklyn, New York 11201
