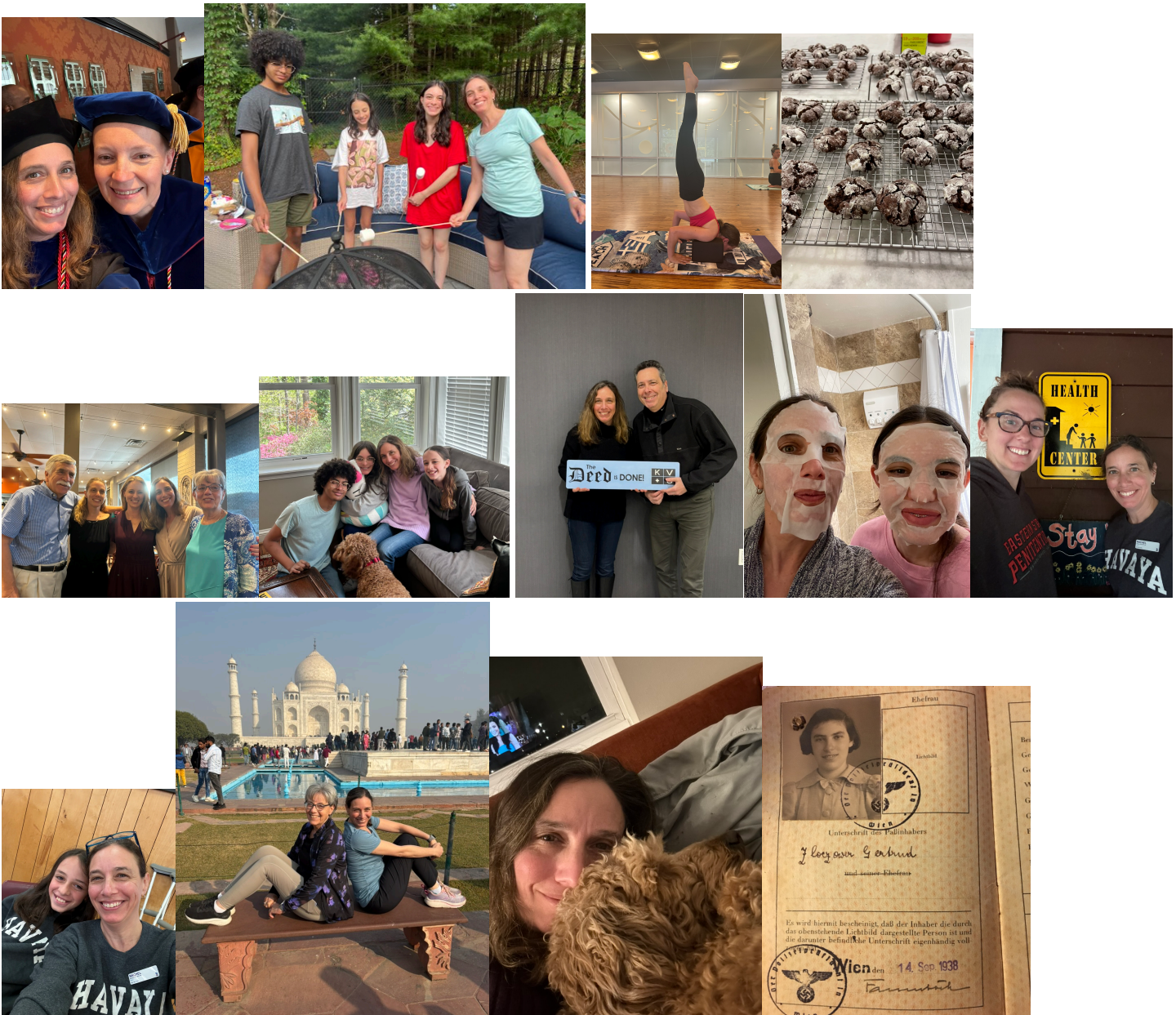




Nurse**TRUST**

**2025
EMERGING
LEADER
FELLOWS**



I am excited to be a part of the NurseTRUST fellowship to network, learn leadership skills, and focus on what I want my career to be. I feel incredibly fortunate to have been selected. There are many different paths I have taken in life including, Peace Corps volunteer, language enthusiast, feminist, women's health advocate, nurse, researcher, and mentor. In my personal life I am a mom, daughter, sister, granddaughter of Holocaust survivors, yogi, dog lover, world traveler, and foodie.

Words I try to live by/my personal mantras

- There's always an upside
- When you set your goals, it's the journey that teaches you the most
- There is nothing better than a great meal with friends/family with lots of laughter
- Work with great people and it's not work
- Savor the good and the bad because both will change...everything is temporary



Kerri Covert, MSN, RNC-NIC

My nursing journey started in high school, in Phoenix, Arizona. I had an amazing opportunity to participate in a Health Occupation Education course, which allowed me to become a certified nursing assistant. It was my first introduction to the idea of working in health care and inspired me to explore new possibilities.

After that class, I obtained my Emergency Medical Technician certification, began working in a nearby hospital, and started my college career at the University of Arizona, where I obtained my Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

During nursing school, I knew I had a strong interest in Maternal Child Health and was fortunate to begin my nursing career as Mother-Baby nurse right after graduation. From there my path led to new opportunities learning to care for women and children - antepartum, postpartum, newborns, and NICU.

After working as a clinical nurse for a few years, I decided to explore nursing opportunities outside of Arizona, as a travel nurse. It was within this role that I experienced the many different types of inpatient hospital settings and began noticing how different variables affect patient outcomes. During this time, I also had an amazing opportunity to hear Lucian Leape discuss the patient safety movement, and my drive to make a difference was instantly ignited! I knew I wanted to take an active role in reducing safety events, improving outcomes, and elevating nursing practice. This marked the beginning of my career in nursing leadership.

As my nursing leadership journey continues, I am excited to be a part of NurseTrust. To gain new leadership skills and advanced critical thinking, to be aware of my own strengths and challenges, and to expand my knowledge of the impact nursing leadership can have in all areas of health care.



Arizona



New adventures!
Travel Nursing

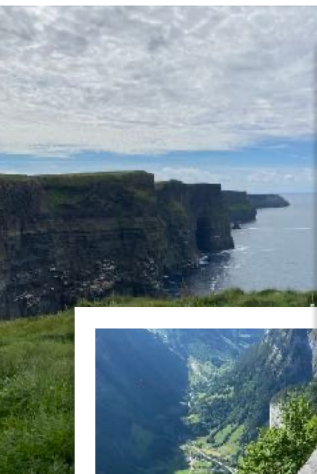


A new home in
California



Melissa Florell PhD, RN

Rural. Health. Policy.



Explorer. Daughter. Mom. Friend.



2024- Greg left. Arthur came. Sam & Matty Celebrated.



DESIRAE GARCIA

University Health

NURSE MANAGER/
PATIENT CARE
COORDINATOR

CONTACT



☎ 830-385-6167

✉ desiraeg082@gmail.com

My name is Desirae Garcia. I am a Registered Nurse with a Master's Degree in Nursing Administration. I have been a Certified Medical Surgical Registered Nurse since 2020. I have had my nursing license and have been an active nurse since 2016. I am a huge advocate for continued learning and professional development. I started as a Certified Nurse Aide and worked my way up to a Nurse Manager (currently). I do have career goals to be in nursing administration and a director level role. I have always had a passion in helping others but quickly realized that I wanted to reach people at a higher level like in a leadership position. One of my strengths is putting myself in the other person's shoes. It is important to understand a situation from different views to address completely and appropriately. Another strength that I have is supporting my team to reach their professional and personal goals. I am a huge advocate for work-life balance and creating joy in the workplace. I plan to commit my time to NurseTRUST, my mentor and colleagues to learn and grow different skills, perspectives and strengths to lead from an inspirational and informed position.

SHEVONBA M. GRAHAM, DNP, APRN,
FNP-BC, MEDSURG-BC, GERO-BC,
CMSRN, PCCN, C-EFM, RNC-OB,
RNC-MNN



- ☐ Follower of Jesus Christ.
- ☐ Family gatherings are vital.
- ☐ Dog mom.
- ☐ Assistant professor of nursing.
- ☐ Family nurse practitioner.
- ☐ Member of Chi Eta Phi Sorority.
- ☐ ANCC FNP content expert.
- ☐ Future leader.



Douglass Haas, DNP, APRN-NP

From my start in healthcare at 15 to now, at 38, my career has been a step-by-step progression—mastering each stage before advancing. Beginning as a bedside nurse, I built my expertise through critical care, cardiology, and primary care, always seeking deeper knowledge through education and certification. Earning my DNP solidified my ability to evaluate systems and drive change beyond direct patient care. My attention to detail and commitment to excellence have been strengths, but my hesitance to delegate has limited my leadership reach. The NurseTRUST Leadership Fellowship provides the structured development, mentorship, and national network I need to refine my leadership approach, enhance my ability to trust and empower teams, and extend my impact on healthcare at a systems level. With this opportunity, I aim to grow into a national leader who not only executes but also inspires and sustains meaningful change.



Momma is my hero

Oldest of 2 boys

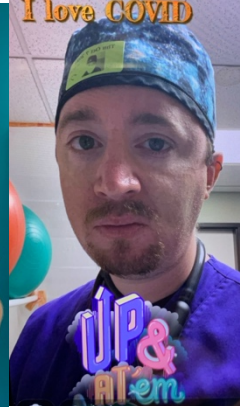
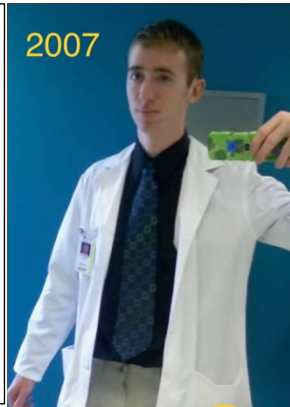
Uncle Doug is the title I value the most

Best Friends are the BEST

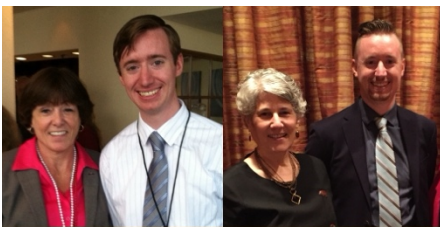


"I've spent a lot of time with my nurse, and she really knows my problem. I'd feel better if she were present. Thanks, doc."

From hospital orientation as a nursing student to teaching BSN clinicals and then to treating COVID in rural Nebraska, I have always believed that the Nursing approach is BEST!



Clinical Assistant Professor who believes rules make everything more fun.

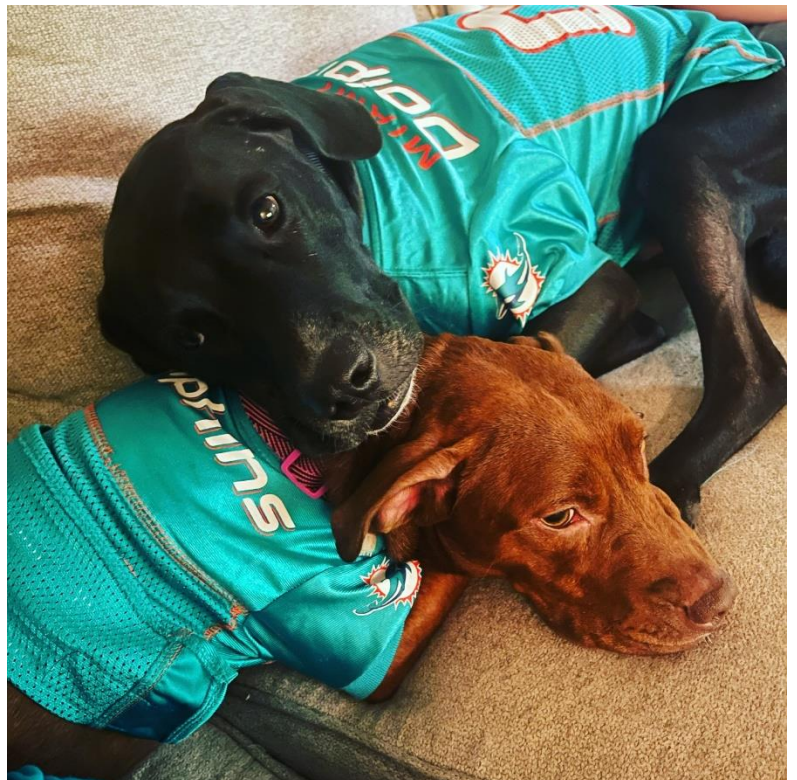
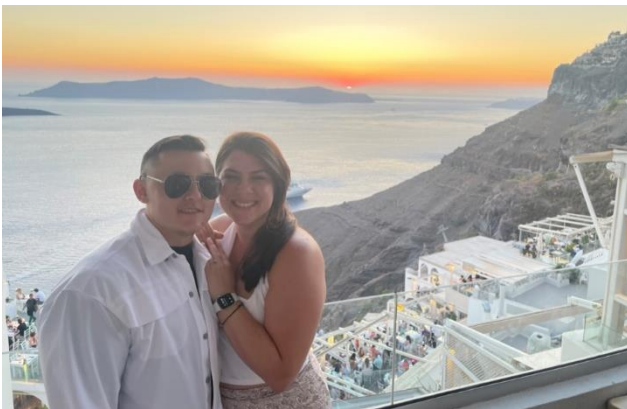


I am grateful for the powerful leaders I have met through nursing organizations.



Hello, my name is Stephan Harper. I am a proud first-generation college graduate with a deep passion for human rights, healthcare best practices, and driving innovation in the workplace. With a commitment to advancing equitable solutions, I seek to create environments that prioritize both individual well-being and organizational growth. Armed with a strong educational foundation and a relentless drive for positive change, I am dedicated to empowering under-represented communities, improving healthcare systems, and championing workplace innovation for a more inclusive and efficient future.

Outside of professional endeavors, I enjoy reading, fishing, and traveling the world with my wife and two dogs. These personal passions offer a sense of adventure and balance, allowing me to stay grounded while continuously exploring new cultures, ideas, and experiences that enrich both personal and professional life.



Haley Hays DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, ENP-C, AGACNP-BC

The roots of my commitment to the work of NurseTRUST are deeply embedded in my journey as a nurse, educator, and leader in advancing healthcare excellence. From my early days as an emergency nurse practitioner in critical access settings to my current role as an academic leader, I have witnessed firsthand the profound impact of strong, values-driven leadership in shaping the future of nursing.



My leadership journey has been guided by a deep sense of responsibility to elevate nursing practice, foster innovation, and ensure the next generation of nurse leaders is well-equipped to meet the evolving demands of healthcare. As I progressed from clinical practice to administration, I recognized that transformational leadership is not just about decision-making but about inspiring others, cultivating resilience, and driving meaningful change.

Lauren Inouye, MPP, RN

I'm Lauren Inouye and I am thrilled to be a part of the 2025 NurseTRUST Emerging Leaders Program cohort! I currently serve as Chief Advancement Officer for the American Academy of Nursing, which has a membership of over 3,200 Fellows, representing the profession's leaders across policy, academia, practice, research, innovation, and more. In collaboration with our members and our leadership team, I work to strengthen the organization's culture of philanthropy through its fundraising efforts. Additionally, I serve as lead staff to the Academy's signature initiative programs: Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science, Institute for Nursing Leadership, and Edge Runners. I believe the Academy's work to impact policy and its vision, Healthy Lives for All People, is critical, perhaps now more than ever.

I am committed to the work of NurseTRUST, particularly its mission to grow nursing leadership to advance health equity. Having practiced in critical care, I have witnessed numerous patients struggle with health equity issues such as insurance coverage, end of life decision-making, and navigating their care post-hospitalization. All of these challenges can be addressed through policy. I was active on our hospital's legislative council and co-developed an interprofessional education event for hospital staff about understanding patients' wishes and navigating the legal environment surrounding advanced directives. In 2011, I made a career transition to health policy and government affairs, working with my mentor Dr. Suzanne Miyamoto at the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. It was truly eye-opening. My leadership journey started to flourish as I learned how nursing's expertise, knowledge, and voice are necessary for sound policymaking. Learning how to communicate with legislative and executive branch staff is a skill that has served me well as a leader, as it taught me to think about the conversation from my audience's point of view and to understand their motivations.

I have been fortunate to call Washington, DC my home for nearly 20 years. I met my husband Conor on night of the 2012 election (thanks, Obama!), and we married in 2022. In March of 2023, we welcomed our son, Rory, who is a vivacious and curious toddler. I believe DC is a wonderful place to raise him. The NurseTRUST Emerging Leaders program is the next step in my leadership journey, and I cannot wait to embark on it with my mentor Dr. Judy Beal and my co-Fellows.



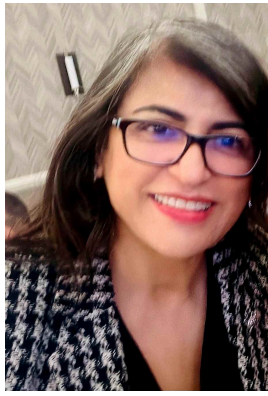
Night shift in the adult medical ICU (2009)



Walking the halls of Congress (2013)



With my son on the White House lawn (2023)



Kat Jalali, PhD, RN, NPD-BC, CCRN, TCRN

As a nurse leader with over 25 years of clinical experience in various practice specialties, and education, I currently serve as a Director at University Health, overseeing simulation, professional development, clinical education, and continuing education programs. My clinical background spans diverse critical and acute care settings across Arizona, Northern California, and Texas. I have also held adjunct faculty positions at multiple Texas universities and continued to work with UT Health Science Center in San Antonio. I am passionate about patient-centered care and nurses' wellbeing. The most fulfilling aspect of my work is assisting nurses in growing and integrating leadership into their professional roles, no matter what position they hold. I have a sweet grandbaby who just turned one, one dog and three cats. I enjoy nature hikes, crafts (knitting and sewing), and music (both listening and playing).

I am a nurse leader with extensive experience in clinical practice and education, and I am relatively new to the administrative role. I hold a bachelor's degree in nursing and midwifery (UK equivalent, 1992), a BSN from the University of Arizona, a master's degree in nursing administration and education (2017), and a PhD in nursing administration and education (2021). My clinical background includes diverse critical care settings, such as Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit (CVICU), Neuro Trauma ICU, and Med/Surg. ICUs, where I have served as a charge nurse and preceptor. Additionally, I have experience as a travel nurse in multiple states. I have also worked as a clinical educator and an academic educator across various levels of graduate and undergraduate nursing education, offering didactic, clinical, and online formats. Currently, I serve as the Executive Director for a department at University Health, where I oversee simulation, professional development, clinical education, and continuing education programs.

I have heard great compliments about NurseTRUST members and their support. I hope that by joining, I gain leadership insights and skills to become more effective and efficient. Networking and learning about other leaders' styles and experiences are other valuable gains I hope to achieve by joining the organization. I am willing to contribute by serving as a mentor and dedicating some of my time to the organization.



National/ International
Committee Member



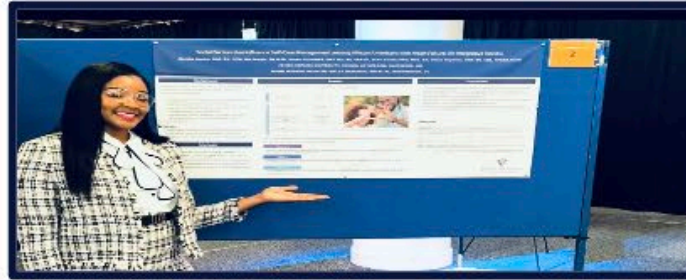
Professional Mentor/
Coach/ Consultant



Transformative Leader



I am Afro-Guyanese.
I love Caribbean
culture, cuisine &
music!



Researcher/Author



I enjoy spending time with my
daughter, family and friends ❤️



Doctoral Fellow Distinguished Scholar



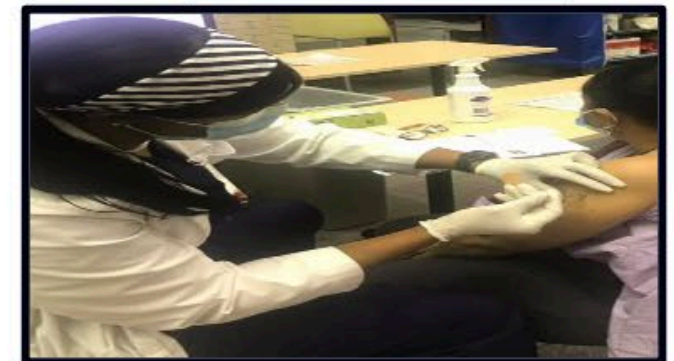
Professor/Provider



Social Justice Advocate/ Activist



Public Speaker/Agent of Change



Advanced Practice Nurse

Mary Dawn Koenig, PhD, RN, CNM, FACNM, FAWHONN

I am originally from Canada and a dedicated mother to 10-year-old Ethan and 8-year-old Hannah, who are homeschooled by my husband, Chris. I find joy in creative pursuits like sewing, cross-stitch, and embroidery, and I am an avid downhill skier and ice skater.

My passion for maternal and child health is deeply rooted in my experiences as a nurse-midwife and researcher. From my early clinical practice to my current research in maternal nutrition and health disparities, I have been driven by a commitment to improving health outcomes for women and children. This dedication aligns with the mission of NurseTRUST, which fosters leadership and innovation in nursing to create lasting change.

As an INFP, I am a thoughtful idealist—loyal, curious, and quick to see possibilities. My leadership journey has been shaped by a commitment to collaboration, adaptability, and a desire to empower others. I thrive in environments where connection and mentorship drive meaningful progress.

In communication, I am a good listener who values deep, one-on-one conversations. Sensitive and empathetic, I seek consensus and connection, recognizing the power of relationships in leadership and advocacy. While I am officially an introvert, I deeply appreciate building relationships and fostering a sense of community.



Krystal McGovern

DNP, MSN-ED, RN, MBA, CNE, CPHQ, CCRN

ABOUT ME:

- Wife to Andy
- Mother to Dempsey (18), Matthew (16), and Liam (14).
- Always up for an adventure
- Perpetually optimistic that a solution can be found
- Creative, innovative, patient



NURSE:

- Thrives on providing person centered, compassionate care to patients and their families
- Applies concepts of improvement science, systems theory, and human factors to nursing care
- Uses performance measures to assess and improve the delivery of evidence-based practices and high-value care.

NurseTRUST Goals: Absorb and apply program

- competencies of
- self-awareness,
- motivating others, and
- influencing outcomes



MELISSA NEWLAN, MSN, RN, CRNI

Hello! I've worked my nursing career in various roles throughout the hospital, venturing into the academic world about five years ago. Last year I had the exciting opportunity to start a new dual role between the hospital facility and the academic university I work for. This has led to exciting new growth for our nursing program, growth for our education team at the hospital, and growth for my professional development.

A little about me... My husband and I have four rambunctious boys who are all growing up entirely way too fast. We enjoy traveling around to many different sporting events (because it would be too easy if they all played the same sport). We also love everything outdoors, which makes Idaho the perfect place for us to live. I am excited to learn new things and look forward to working with everyone on the fellowship team!



Jason Sheaffer Biographical Sketch.

Hello Nurse Trust fellows! I am really looking forward to meeting you, the mentors, and our new colleagues as we embark on this journey. Per request, here is my background both personal and professional.

I graduated from my local junior college with an ADN here in Galveston in 1998. I started working at UTMB in hematology/oncology before transferring to the Shriners Burns Hospital Galveston in 1999. I worked in pediatric burns care for the next ten years in various areas but primarily ICU care and wound care. The work was intense but very gratifying. I am proud to have been a member of one of the finest burn care teams on the planet.

In April 2009, the Shriners hospital closed due to damage from Hurricane Ike. I transitioned back to UTMB and began anew as a staff nurse on the Adult Burn unit. The adult team at UTMB is just as engaging and caring of the burned pt as my former family at Shriners. They have been my friends, colleagues, and support group since and are every bit as amazing as my former teammates at Shriners. After starting over I made the decision to focus on my career and professional development. I finished BSN in 2012 and enrolled in the MSN-ENL program. I completed this training in 2015 and was already working as a manager in my chosen area-Burns care. Burns care is, and always will be, a passion of mine. I am an ABLS instructor and was in the first cohort to achieve the Certified Burn Nurse certification (CBRN). In a fit of insanity, I enrolled in the DNP program in 2020 when COVID was sweeping the nation and embarked on a journey of learning and stress for the next two years. I continued in my role as a Director of UTMB's burns care and took on new professional challenges in a variety of areas. I did interim stints on different units in addition to my school and reg work duties as well as absorbing new offices including staffing and our Clinical Operations Admin (COA) Team.

Last summer I became interim chief nursing officer for our hospital. This was a major change for me in that it was the first opportunity I have had to lead leaders. I have learned a great deal over the past 8 months. In January I was promoted to Associate Chief nursing Officer (ACNO) of the Jennie Sealy Hospital. We are feverishly preparing for TJC and working on the usual suspects in harm reduction.

I am a lifelong learner, very curious, and very committed to using the skills I have gained in academics and professional experience. I am concerned that my background is insular and am looking forward to networking with you all to gain insight into other organizations' culture and practices.

My strengths lie in analytics, embracing and leading change, and big picture projects, I move very quickly. My biggest weaknesses are a tendency towards impatience and general organization skills.

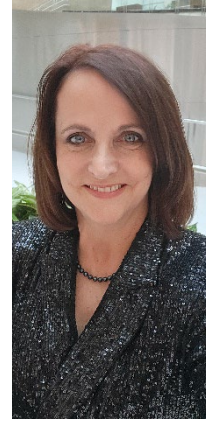
Personally, I have been married to my wife Mandy for 26 years, I have two children (Emma Grace and Evan Alex), two cats (Miko and Milo) and a dog (Chewie). I am a bit of a DIY'er and tinkerer and thus now have a decades long home rehabilitation on my hands that will only conclude on the day I sell (or die). I love the outdoors and am an avid fly fisher, hunter. I am also fascinated

with tech, cinema, and anything AV. I enjoy spending time with family and am constantly fighting my workaholic tendencies.

Thanks, for taking the time to read my bio. I am looking forward to meeting everyone in Charlotte. I hope this finds everyone well. -J

Professionally:

I am a tenured associate professor in the School of Nursing at Vanderbilt University. My clinical background is critical care nursing, which I fell in love with during nursing school. I did some nursing staff development work for a few years before going back to school to do my PhD full-time in pursuit of a nurse scientist role in academia. Currently, my research is in implementation science to improve nursing practice, quality of care, and patient outcomes. My goal is to understand how best we can implement evidence-based practices in healthcare settings and sustain them over time so that the benefits derived from implementation are achieved long-term. I focus on complex, interdisciplinary, multi-level interventions as their complexity can make implementation particularly challenging. My research context includes medication safety, heart failure, clinical decision-support tools, and more recently, hospital at home programs. In the context of hospital at home programs, I am particularly interested in the role of caregivers and the preparation of nurses working in these programs. I also serve as Senior Nurse Scholar in the VA Quality Scholars program where I mentor pre- and post-doctoral nurses. As I have achieved two of my main goals (tenure and FAAN), I am now shifting my focus on leadership development in anticipation of a future formal leadership role. The NurseTRUST Leadership program will help me to become better at persuasion, being strategic politically in my leadership, and communicating effectively.

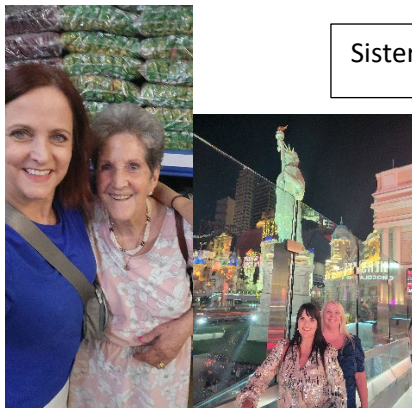


Personal level:

I was born and raised in South Africa where I did my bachelors and master's degrees. I immigrated to the USA in 1997. I am a wife, mother, sister, daughter, aunt, and grandmother. I am in a blended family with one son, 3 step-children and 5 grandkids, all who happen to be older than our son who turned 13 years old today (3/3). Marriage and parenting came to me in my 40's and my husband is even older so we are not your typical 20/30 + year old parents. My mom is nearly 79 years old (dad died in 2018). Both she, one sister, and my brother and rest of family still lives in South Africa. My older sister lives in the UK. With family abroad, international travel is part of our lives. We also travel within the United States. Us three sisters took a trip to Las Vegas last April and we build memories for a lifetime. Our family trip to Toronto, Niagara Falls, and roller coasters (1st time for our son) last summer was a big family highlight. My Christian faith is an inherent part of who I am and it defines my outlook on life and the things I value. I always think of my life in terms of who will hold my hand when I am dying and who will attend my funeral and what will they say. A bit morbid perhaps, but this is what helps me stay grounded in the things that are truly important. My faith is also my strong tower during difficult times and helps me find the right words when helping or comforting others.



With my mom



Sisters



Deonni, Augie (son), Dan(spouse)



Brother, his partner, younger sister and mom (Nov 2024)

