MILITARY, VETERAN, AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE COMMUNITIES

Commit . . . Learn . . . Launch

According to author Shannon Huffman Polson, who is among the first women to fly an Apache helicopter in combat in the United States Army, (1) commit, (2) learn, and (3) launch are the foundational steps to her process of cultivating internal grit and resilience.1 Given the importance of continuing to ensure that nurses are well represented in international, national, and state high-level decision-making and leadership roles to achieve population health equity,2 this process is poignantly relevant to our specialty. Polson1 recommends drawing a circle of trustworthy relationship connections as part of the second step, learning. This circle includes mentors, your dream team, colleagues, friends, and acquaintances. At the edges of this solar system of connections are role models, some of whom may be people you have never met or whom you emulate from history or from afar. As members of our discipline and emergency specialty make ongoing contributions to valuable knowledge by continuing to assume high-level leadership and policymaking roles, we are creating a brilliant and inspiring constellation of emergency nursing pioneers, vanguards, and leaders as role models to elevate one another and the next generation of emergency nursing professionals.

Pioneers, Vanguards, and Leaders

Dr. Faye Glenn Abdellah, EdD, LLD, ScD, RN, FAAN, is one of those distant lights that is a shining example for me.3 In a time when our specialty is pulling together and cohesively supporting one another in the face of pandemic-related burnout and professional crises, I’m reminded of the wisdom and deep resilience of my earliest professional mentors who navigated nursing during international war and conflict during their own early careers. They show us that together we can and will overcome the challenges of today, no matter how impossible it may seem.

Abdellah was the pioneer of many firsts: first nurse to serve as Deputy Surgeon General of the US (1981-1989), first nurse to earn the rank of Rear Admiral, Upper Half, and founding Dean for the Uniformed Services University Graduate School of Nursing. Lauded among early nursing theorists, her 21 Nursing Problems theory offers a unique and solid pragmatism that resonated for me with the unscheduled and immediate problem-solving nature of our emergency nursing specialty.4 Over the last century, the military and nursing evolved together from one of the few and initial professional systems by which women could formally achieve senior leadership promotion and rank in substantial numbers, serve in formally recognized and deployed roles in the military,5 and generate long-lasting scientific innovations and advances in disaster and trauma nursing interventions, prehospital trauma, and women’s health.6 We have a tradition in the Journal of Emergency Nursing (JEN) of honoring our military and veteran nurses annually in our November issue. The purpose of this editorial is to introduce this November 2021 issue that carries on the tradition of honoring military and veteran nurses while seeking to expand to include their families, communities, and our public health service nurses moving forward.

We currently have a call for military community and veteran health manuscripts at JEN. We are actively recruiting emergency care relevant manuscripts that focus on military members, military families and caregivers, veterans, or veteran families and caregivers as the population or sample; include military or veterans as a measured characteristic to test hypotheses or predictive models; include military treatment facility, veteran hospital, or military environment as the setting; or advance interventions, clinical techniques, theories, concepts, leadership, or evidence-based practices rooted in or derived from military/veterans affairs.

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innovation or science. Readers can visit the JEN website for a collection of recently published military community and veteran health original research, literature review, and evidence-based papers on topics that include infection control, emergency nursing education and professional development, mental health, specimen-collection devices in the unit supply chain, emergency department point-of-care blood biomarker testing, and more.

Tribute and Farewell

Each November, we’ve included a tribute and farewell to members of the editorial team who have served for a decade or more. This November, we honor Carrie A. McCoy, PhD, MSPH RN, CEN. Dr. McCoy became coeditor of the Emergency Nursing Review Questions section of JEN in 1995, after serving as a CEN item writer, member of the Board of Certification for Emergency Nursing (BCEN) Board of Directors, and BCEN Research Committee. Dr. McCoy also served as a member of the Editorial Board of JEN and chaired the search committee for a new editor for JEN in 2006. She received a doctoral scholarship from the Emergency Nursing Association as well as a National Institute for Nursing Research predoctoral fellowship to study risk for agricultural injuries in women. Dr. McCoy has also been active in her local Emergency Nursing Association chapter, having served as a Trauma Nursing Core Course instructor since the inception of Trauma Nursing Core Course. In addition, she was member of the Greater Cincinnati Area Red Cross Disaster Team and the Kentucky Medial Reserve Team. She also served as member of the Community Advisory Committee for the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky. She served in the US Army as a nurse during the Vietnam era and in 2011 was awarded the Greater Cincinnati Woman Veteran of the Year in the area of education. Dr McCoy is retired from the University of Cincinnati Medical Center, where she spent many years working as a staff nurse in the emergency department, and she is Professor Emerita, Northern Kentucky University, where she taught nursing. On a personal note, I found our conversations about Dr. McCoy’s adventures in organic farming to be endlessly delightful. To discuss public health, program planning and evaluation, and clinical emergency nursing with Dr. McCoy was to feel immersed in the presence of profound and inspiring wisdom. The editorial team wishes Dr. McCoy much happiness, health, and joy in her retirement.

REFERENCES