



HAITIAN AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION
OF HUDSON VALLEY, NEW YORK, INC.

EIGHTH ANNUAL NURSING EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM 2025

**Community Resilience:
Nurses as Pillars of Support
in Times of Change**

Sponsored by



Johnson & Johnson
Innovative Medicine

In Collaboration with Sigma Theta Tau



GOAL:

To emphasize the critical roles of nurses in supporting health during uncertain times, highlighting innovative and collaborative efforts.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To provide a platform for nurses to share successful outreach and innovative practices that enhance community health.
2. To identify challenges nurses face as community health advocacy and discuss potential solutions.
3. To examine nurses' leadership in navigating policy change and sustaining community resilience.

**FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 19
8AM - 2PM**

**GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL
AUDITORIUM
255 LAFAYETTE AVE.
SUFFERN, NY 10901**

Time	Topics & Speakers
8:00am - 9:00am	Registration/Breakfast/Networking
9:00am- 9:05am	Introduction <i>Johanna Saintil-Senat BSN, RN</i> <i>Chair of Symposium Committee</i>
9:05am- 9:08am	Invocation <i>Michele Paraison RN, PhD (Hon) Min, Chaplain</i>
9:08am- 9:12am	Greetings - Introduction of Board & Keynote Speaker <i>Farrah Fils-Aimé MSN, BSN, RN</i> <i>President</i>
9:12 am 9:42am	Keynote Address - Community Resilience: Nurses as Pillars of Support in Times of Change <i>Margarette Alexandre PhD, RN, MS, FNYAM, ACUE</i> <i>Associate Professor in the Department of Nursing at CUNY York College, Board Advisory</i>
9:42am- 10:00am	Topic: Rooted in Resilience: Nurses as a Pillar in Times of Change <i>Margarette Alexandre PhD, RN, MS, FNYAM, ACUE</i> <i>Associate Professor in the Department of Nursing at CUNY York College, Board Advisor</i>
10:05am -10:25am	Topic: Beyond the Stethoscope: Reimagining Nursing Education with AI <i>Marie O. Etienne, DNP, APRN, FNP, GNP, PNP, D. Min. (h.c.), PLNC, FADNL</i> <i>President Florida Nurses Association, Past President HANA-I, Past President HANA of Florida</i>
10:35am - 10:50am	Topic: Health Equity in Crisis: The Nurses Role in Advocating for the Vulnerable <i>Margaret Narcisse, Student Nurse</i>
10:55am -11:05am	Break
11:05am - 11:35am	Topic: Understanding Vicarious Trauma and Compassion Fatigue <i>Dr. Maria Elena Cadet, LMHC-PsyD, LPC, LP, NCC</i> <i>Licensed Mental health Practitioner</i>
11:40pm -12:00pm	Keynote Address: Community Resilience: Nurses as Pillars of Support in Times of Change <i>Wilfredo M. Yap Jr., DNP, RN, AMB-BC, CENP, NEA-BC.</i> <i>Regional Vice President of Nursing for Bon Secours Charity Health System</i>
12:00pm -12:30pm	Lunch
12:30pm -12:50pm	Topic: Self-care is Essential: Harnessing the Potential of Technology to Transform Health and Wellness <i>Berthilde Dufrene DNP, DOS(h), MSNEd, BSN, AAS, CARN, RN</i> <i>Chief Nursing Officer for the New York State Office of Mental Health Corrections</i>
12:55pm - 1:15pm	Topic: Digital Literacy Nursing Education and Practice <i>Patricia Ukaigwe, DNP, RN, FWAPCNM, CADF</i> <i>Professor, clinician, and CEO of UHEAL Charities</i>
1:20pm -1:40pm	Topic: Shared Decision Making <i>Brynith Stocker MSN, BBA, AGACNP, AOCNP</i> <i>Oncology Clinical Educator for Johnson & Johnson Medicine</i>
1:45pm - 2:00pm	Topic: Life After Amputation: The Role of Community Health in Recovery <i>Edwin Cordona, Student Nurse</i>
2:00-2:00pm	Closing Remarks, <i>Farrah Fils-Aimé MSN, BSN, RN</i> <i>President</i>

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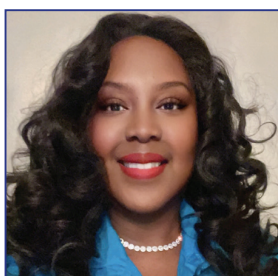
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President's Message



Farrah Fils Aimé

MSN, BSN, RN

President

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

It is with great pride and heartfelt enthusiasm that I welcome you to the Haitian American Nurses Association of Hudson Valley's Annual Nursing Symposium, held this year under the theme, "Community Resilience: Nurses as Pillars of Support in Times of Change."

Nursing has always been a profession rooted in compassion, dedication, and adaptability. Today, as we face unprecedented social, political, and public health-related challenges, the role of nurses has never been more critical. Our theme highlights the vital role nurses play as the foundation of community strength, providing unwavering support and leadership in times of uncertainty.

This symposium is designed to equip us with innovative strategies, knowledge, and collaborative tools to strengthen not only our professional practice but also the communities we serve locally and globally. Together, we will explore ways to empower each other through education, share best practices, and cultivate resilience in the face of evolving healthcare demands.

Our objectives are clear: to educate healthcare professionals on the latest advancements, foster collaboration across disciplines, and emphasize the essential role of nurses in promoting health equity and community well-being.

I encourage each of you to actively engage with the sessions, share your insights, and take inspiration from the collective strength in this room. As nurses, we are indeed pillars of support—champions of resilience and agents of positive change. Thank you for your commitment to excellence and for joining us in this vital conversation.

Warm regards,

Farrah Fils Aimé

Farrah Fils-Aimé

MSN, BSN, RN

Welcome Message

FROM THE SYMPOSIUM CHAIR



Johanna Senat

BSN, RN

Chair, Nursing Symposium

Dear Colleagues, Supporters, and Honored Guests,

It is with great pride and deep appreciation that I welcome you to the 8th Annual Nursing Symposium of the Haitian American Nurses Association (HANA) of Hudson Valley, NY. This year's theme, "Community Resilience: Nurses as Pillars of Support in Times of Change," highlights the vital role that nurses continue to play in stabilizing, supporting, and strengthening our communities in times of uncertainty and transition. Whether facing public health crises, social inequities, or natural disasters, nurses have remained a constant source of strength educating, advocating, and caring with compassion and courage.

Our goal for this symposium is to create a space for learning, connection, and empowerment. The sessions today will feature experts and innovative leaders addressing a range of topics including health equity, chronic disease management, mental wellness, leadership, and cultural competency. Each presentation is intended to inspire you, challenge your thinking, and equip you with practical tools to further your impact in the communities you serve.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Symposium Planning Committee, our dedicated volunteers, and the Executive Board of HANA for their tireless work in bringing this event to life. Special thank you to our speakers and panelists for sharing their expertise, and to our attendees for coming out today and

engaging in today's program.

I would like to extend a very special thank you to our generous sponsors Good Samaritan Hospital, Johnson & Johnson, and Sigma Theta Tau. Your continued support affirms the importance of investing in nursing leadership and professional development. As Chair, it has been an honor to help organize this symposium and witness the energy, collaboration, and commitment that make HANA such a powerful force in our community. May today's conversations inspire us to remain resilient and continue standing as the pillars our communities can rely on no matter what changes lie ahead.

In unity and service,

Johanna Senat

Johanna Senat, BSN, RN

Chair Nursing Symposium

Haitian American Nurses Association (HANA) of Hudson Valley, NY, Inc.

Keynote Speaker



**Dr. Margaret
Alexandre**
PhD, RN, MS, FNYAM,
ACUE

Dr. Margaret Alexandre is an Associate Professor in the Department of Nursing at CUNY York College. She holds a bachelor's in nursing and a master's in nursing with concentration in Administration and Education from Adelphi University. She earned her doctoral degree from the CUNY Graduate Center, where she also earned the distinction of being a Jonas Scholar. Drawing on her work in Haiti, her research agenda focuses on the physical and emotional health of Haitian Adults post 2010 earthquake in Haiti.

Her current works address the Incidence of Hypertension in College Students and the Utilizing of Simulation to Bring Theory into Practice for Undergraduate Nursing Student. She also pursues research interest in nursing students as millennium learners and innovative pedagogical approaches to teaching.

Dr. Alexandre has been a mentor to graduate, undergraduate and high school students in their educational journey. She is a recipient of the Caribbean American Healthcare Award and is a Fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine. Dr. Alexandre serves on the Executive Board of the Haitian Studies Institute at Brooklyn College and is an Advisor to HANA of Hudson Valley. Dr. Alexandre serves as reviewer for several nursing journals. She continues to work with various underprivileged communities nationally and internationally, especially through her nonprofit organization, the Grandbois Youth Empowerment Mission, Inc.

Keynote Speaker



Wilfredo Yap
DNP, RN, AMB-BC
CENP, NEA-BC

Wilfredo Yap, DNP, RN, AMB-BC, CENP, NEA-BC, is the Regional Vice President of Nursing for Bon Secours Charity Health System, a member of the Westchester Medical Center Health Network. In this role, Yap oversees nursing operations across Bon Secours Charity Health System, focusing on enhancing patient care quality, advancing nursing practice excellence, ensuring regulatory compliance and driving quality improvement initiatives. With years of experience at leading health-care institutions, Yap has expertise in clinical excellence, operations, and staff development.

Yap prioritizes professional development and empower nurses across Bon Secours Charity Health System to thrive in a supportive environment. He is committed to cultivating a culture where nurses can deliver exceptional, patient-centered care. Key initiatives under Yap's leadership includes implementing evidence-based practices, expanding professional development opportunities, optimizing workflows and enhancing patient experience efforts. He also aims to reinforce the system's culture of safety and drive operational efficiency through interprofessional collaboration.

Throughout his career, Yap has played a key role in earning prestigious nursing designations, including the American Nurses Credentialing Center's (ANCC) Pathway to Excellence designation, the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) Beacon Award and the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) Lantern

Award for emergency nursing excellence.

Yap holds a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) in Leadership from Quinnipiac University, a Master of Science in Nursing Administration from New York University and multiple national nursing certifications. He is also recognized for his contributions to nursing research, with published studies in healthcare journals and national conference presentations.

Speaker



Marie O. Etienne

DNP, APRN, FNP, GNP,
PNP, D. Min. (h.c.),
PLNC, FADNL

Marie O. Etienne, DNP, APRN, FNP, GNP, PNP, D. Min. (h.c.), PLNC, FADNL is a tenured full Professor at Miami Dade College (MDC) Benjamin Léon School of Nursing. Her academic contributions at MDC began in 1997 exemplary as a best practice educator. Her experience includes pediatrics, geriatrics, family practice, community health nursing, leadership, and course developer of online teaching for the RN-BSN program. She is a certified Professional Legal Nurse Consultant.

Dr. Etienne earned the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from the University of Miami in 2010. She is the Immediate Past President of Haitian Alliance Nurses Association International (2017-2024), past President of HANA of Florida (2005-2007), and served as Chairwoman of Haitian American Professionals Coalition (2008-2010). Dr. Etienne is Past President of Miami Chapter - Black Nurses Association 2022. In August 2023, Dr. Etienne was elected to a Board of Director for the National Black Nurses Association (2023-2025). In July 27, 2024, Dr. Etienne was inducted as one of the Fellows of the Inaugural Class of Luminary Academy of Diversity Nursing Leaders (FADNL) at NBNA's 52nd Annual Institute & Conference, in San Francisco, California. Dr. Etienne served as the first Elected Chairwoman of the City of North Miami Commission for Women (2022-2024). Dr. Etienne is the Founder and Immediate Past President of Alpha Beta Epsilon at-Large Sigma Chapter (Miami Dade College & Baptist Health South Florida

(2021-2024). Dr. Etienne is the first Minority Nurse to serve as the President of Florida Nurses Association (2023-2025) in its history.

Dr. Etienne is the 2007 recipient of the MDC Stanley G. Tate and Family Endowed Teaching Chair for Excellence in Academia. Dr. Etienne founded Global Innovative Foundation, Inc, a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization which create global awareness for the prevention of crimes with the mission to empower survivors of Human Trafficking, Domestic Violence, and Gun Violence through support, education, and scholarships. Dr. Etienne has been appointed by Miami-Dade Chairman Oliver Gilbert III to serve on the Domestic Violence Oversight Advisory Board.

As a transformational servant leader, Dr. Etienne's goal is to inspire others to become social innovators, leaders and changemakers in their respective communities.

Speaker



Berthilde Dufrene

DNP, DOS(h), MSNEd,
BSN, AAS, CARN, RN

Dr. Berthilde Dufrene earned the Doctor in Nursing Practice degree from Fairleigh Dickinson University and a Master's in Nursing Education degree from Mercy College. Dr. Dufrene was the 2023 Mercy School of Nursing Commencement Speaker and the recipient of a Doctor of Science Honorary Degree from Mercy University. She is presently serving as the Chief Nursing Officer for the New York State Office of Mental Health Corrections Based Operations. She has held several positions in marketing and administrative support at International Business Machines, Inc. (IBM). She opted for a career change in 1993 from business marketing to nursing when her employer relocated to Raleigh, NC. Dr. Dufrene is the founder and past president of the Haitian American Nurses Association of Hudson Valley New York, Inc. (HANA). She is the host of HANA's weekly Health and Wellness radio show on GrooveFM Radio. She is the current President of the Zeta Omega At Large Chapter of the Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society. She is also the founder and president of the Haitian Cultural Heritage Preservation, Inc. She has been serving on many Executive Board of Directors including HANA of Hudson Valley, HANA International, Sun River Health, and New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) Commissioner's Nursing Advisory Panel. She has served as a leader for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) of Spring Valley, NY - Health Committee. She is a nurse educator who has served as both lecturer, and clinical instructor. She is a published author, a well

decorated acclaimed leader and sought-after speaker on leadership, correctional nursing, mental health, and addiction. She is both a general practitioner and a specialist with a nursing career that encompasses many areas including pediatric and adult psychiatry, forensic psychiatry, correctional nursing, addiction, geriatric nursing, intellectual and developmental disabilities nursing, and nursing education. She has served as both a leader and member of many community organizations, such as the NAACP, the Tau Phi Chapter of Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Inc, Professional Nurses Association of Rockland County - NYSNA District 17, the Rockland County Nurses Recognition Committee, and the International Nurses Society on Addictions (IntNSA).

Speaker



Brynith Stocker

MSN, BBA, AGACNP,
AOCNP

With over 15 years of expertise in oncology nursing, Brynith Stocker serves as an Oncology Clinical Educator (OCE) for Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine in the NY Metro area. Bringing a robust background from nearly a decade as Lead Nurse Practitioner at White Plains Hospital and six years at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Brynith enhances this with prior business experience, fostering a multidisciplinary approach to healthcare.

Originally from Alaska, Brynith holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in nursing from New York University. Her dedication to the field is deepened by a personal commitment to advancing cancer care, driving a focus on innovative treatments for patients with limited options. As an OCE, Brynith contributes to community education and professional development, with expertise spanning solid tumor education, including lung, bladder, and prostate cancers, aligning with Johnson & Johnson's mission to transform patient outcomes.

Speaker



Magarette Narcisse
Student Nurse

"Health Equity in Crisis: The Nurse's Role in Advocating for the Vulnerable"

Magarette Narcisse is a passionate and determined professional with a unique background bridging law, administration, and now healthcare. Originally from Haiti, Magarette's early curiosity about the legal and administrative systems was shaped by firsthand experiences growing up in a country with many underserved communities. She often questioned why certain populations lacked access to basic services and noticed the troubling absence of accountability—particularly in healthcare settings where patients frequently died without clear explanations or follow-up.

Driven by a desire to make a difference, Magarette earned two degrees, one in law and one in administration. These academic achievements deepened her understanding of how policies are often well-written but poorly implemented, especially for the most vulnerable. She began her career working in administration at a private company, where she saw further evidence of systemic gaps between policy and practice.

Despite being forced to leave Haiti, Magarette's commitment to social justice and equitable healthcare only grew stronger. After moving to the United States, she recognized similar issues affecting underserved populations, reinforcing her long-standing dream to advocate for patient rights and policy enforcement.

Currently, Magarette is a third-year nursing student at Mercy University, where she is preparing to work directly with patients. Her ultimate goal is to become a legal nurse consultant, specializing in healthcare compliance and patient advocacy. She aims to ensure that policies are not only understood but properly followed, and that patients—regardless of their background—receive the care and transparency they deserve.

As a transformational servant leader, Dr. Etienne's goal is to inspire others to become social innovators, leaders and changemakers in their respective communities.

Speaker



Maria Elena Cadet
LMHC, PSYD

Maria Elena Cadet, LMHC, PSYD, a New York, licensed Mental Health Counselor and a Doctor in Clinical Psychology. I have experience working with at-risk youth, adolescents, children, adults, and families in various settings who have experienced a multitude of life challenges and mental health issues.

I am enthusiastic and passionate about helping my clients learn coping strategies to improve their lives and manage their stressors. I am also dedicated to assisting my clients on their road to recovery by developing self-awareness, self-acceptance, and equanimity.

I have always been passionate about helping people. While my childhood dream was to become a lawyer, working as a paralegal made me realize that it was not the right fit for me. It was then that I enrolled in a counseling program and discovered my passion and purpose for listening to people, making meaningful connections, and assisting individuals in discovering their purpose through healing.

Throughout my experience, I have worked in foster care agencies and community-based mental health facilities. Working in community-based mental health facilities has helped me be more culturally aware of people's needs as they relate to achieving mental wellness. I am trained in CBT, motivational interviewing, and DBT. Learning about complex trauma has been most impactful on my approach to healing.

Speaker



Patricia U. Ukaigwe
DNP, RN, FWAPCNM,
CADF
Chief Executive Officer
UHEAL Charities

Professor Patricia U. Ukaigwe is an RN, clinician, and CEO of UHEAL Charities, a non-profit organization dedicated to serving vulnerable populations with expertise in nursing education, digital health, and interdisciplinary practice. She has a strong background in integrating technology into healthcare training and is actively involved in advancing digital literacy among nurses, students, and allied health professionals. Her scholarly interests include simulation-based learning, artificial intelligence in education, and strategies for strengthening health workforce capacity in resource-limited settings. Dr. Ukaigwe has contributed to curriculum development, faculty training, and health promotion initiatives, with a focus on preparing the next generation of nurses to navigate the evolving digital healthcare landscape. She is passionate about fostering ethical and responsible use of technology to improve patient care and enhance nursing education.

Dr. Ukaigwe earned her DNP from Fairleigh Dickinson University, Teaneck, NJ, and MSN from Kean University. She is a Carnegie African Diaspora Fellow as well as Maternal Child Fellow of the West African Postgraduate College of Nurses and Midwives. Dr. Ukaigwe just returned from service abroad as the inaugural Provost of Edo State College of Nursing Sciences, Benin City Nigeria. She is active in professional activities and has received awards for service to humanity.

Speaker



Edwin Cardona is currently a nursing student at Rockland Community College (RCC), transitioning from a six-year career in the automotive industry. With a strong passion for healthcare and a commitment to helping others, Edwin brings resilience and determination to his academic and professional pursuits. In 2017, he underwent the amputation of his right leg following a courageous 6.5-year battle with cancer and recurrent infection. Outside of his studies, Edwin enjoys working on cars, hiking, exercising, and practicing combat sports—activities that reflect his enduring strength and active lifestyle.

Edwin Cardona
Student



H.A.N.A.

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Thank You

The Haitian American Nurses Association of
Hudson Valley, NY, Inc. would like to offer our
sincere gratitude for your support of our

8th Annual Educational Nursing Symposium

Our success is due to your ongoing support and
generosity.

Save the Date:

September 25th, 2026

9th Annual Educational Nursing Symposium

Haitian American Nurses Association of Hudson Valley, NY, Inc,

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