



## BREAKTHROUGH to Nursing

The Breakthrough to Nursing column presents ideas and perspectives about the importance of cultural diversity in nursing and general recruitment into nursing.

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### Staving off the Doubt

You may be the parent that had trouble putting your children to sleep the night before a test. You may be struggling all week to pay your bills and are torn between working more hours or studying for your test. You may be the person struck with a life-changing situation that forces you to change the way you handle nursing school.

Life throws so many curve balls at us. You ask yourself, "How am I going to do it? Am I fit to be a nurse? What happens if I fail?" First, you are a student nurse and you've earned that title! You have the potential to not only be a successful student nurse but the ability to handle the stressors that come with it. As to the question of self-doubt, let me ask, "What happens if you don't fail?" That is one question that only you have the answer to, because each person's life takes us in different paths (even though we may have the same goal). One does not fail when one's hardest does not accomplish their goal, one fails when their hardest is easily neglected. The worse that can happen when you push and strive is that nothing changes; everything in your life stays right where it is. I remember refusing to go anywhere during my first Spring Break in nursing school because I had an important exam the first day back to school. I studied day and night, with

countless practice questions and held numerous study groups. I thought I knew everything there was to know, and was certain I'd get an A. But when the test grades game back, I stared in disbelief as the numbers 76 taunted me. Surely, my grades were confused with someone else's. The most primitive defense mechanism of doubt flooded my mind. I started thinking how much time I spent over Spring Break—only to get a 76.



I could have enjoyed the beach with my friends! Dr. Igbo, my instructor, noticed me nearly break down and listened as I vented about all the time I "wasted" studying. She told me one statement that I've lived by from that day on: "No time spent on progress is wasted time." My grade could have been much lower and it would have

been that much harder to pick up my overall all grade had I not studied at all. I would have had to live with the guilt that I should've studied harder and longer, and who knows what kind of self-doubt would have stirred up?

The question of doubt may be just one of the reasons why there are significantly low proportions of disabled, males, and ethnic minorities in the nursing profession today. The reasons why the numbers are low can be due to a multitude of factors. It may be situational, environmental, or even just a personal choice. The Breakthrough to Nursing theme for this year is "Can't Stop, Won't Stop: Breaking through the Barriers" and I challenge all of you to reach out to your colleagues who may fit one or more of the categories above but may be hesitant to pursue the nursing profession. Help them embrace their strengths and utilize their resources as there are so many resources that go untouched. Diversity is a stronghold in the nursing profession. It only makes sense to have the proportion of diversity in the nursing profession to mirror the patient population. It is only natural for patients to not only communicate better with those who have similarities, but those that can relate and understand their plights. Even if you are part of one of these groups, I urge you to be persistent and diligent. Nursing needs you. <sup>esb</sup>

