

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. – HAPPY BIRTHDAY

“People fail to get along because they fear each other; they fear each other because they don’t know each other; they don’t know each other because they have not communicated with each other.”

– Martin Luther King Jr.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. would have turned 91 years old this year. Born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. He would grow up to be known for his leadership and contribution during the American civil rights movement in the 1960s. His father and mother brought on Dr. King’s interest in activism. They instilled in their children the importance of standing up for themselves and others when facing racial animosity, oppression, and unfair discrimination.

Dr. King advocated for de-segregation and anti-racism in the United States. His most famous speech was his “I Have a Dream” speech he delivered in Washington D.C. on August 28, 1963. It is important to note that Dr. King was a profound individual who continued to hold on to the hope that one day his children will live in a nation “where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by their character.” While we have made some signs of progress as a country, there is still much work to do when treating everyone equally.

We want to take this moment to celebrate a man who continues to inspire people from all races and walks of life to do stand up against injustices and subjugation. He was an inspirational and courageous man who dedicated his life to bring peace and justice to others. It is important, now more than ever, that Dr. King’s efforts for racial justice be highlighted and celebrated. His legacy is one to honor and never to be underestimated or forgotten.

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WOMEN IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROFILE – BRANDI HUNTER



Brandi Hunter knows that when you're young, an impatience for too much talk and a preference for taking action can get you into more trouble than you expected. It certainly can make the people around you wonder, as you do yourself, where you'll end up.

But take those traits and add a husband and father who support your dreams and have faith in your abilities, mentors who offer wise counsel about your chosen field, and children who remind you daily what it is all for. Weave in an educational program preparing you to work as an Emergency Manager. Finish with the confidence and persistence that the years have granted. Now those same characteristics, problematic in youth, can contribute to creating a great emergency manager. Anyone who has met Brandi Hunter will agree she has the right stuff to make a significant contribution in the field. The people around her no longer wonder where she'll end up; they are simply eager to watch how far she'll go.

Brandi is still impatient. She sees things that need to change and she decides to do something about it. She found herself, as an aspiring emergency manager, struggling to find the information and support that would smooth the path forward. She knows it is hard to reach out and ask for help – it is a skill she had to learn. She knows others are afraid of not getting the support they need. Existing resources didn't address

the problems she saw. Rather than staying stuck, she sprang into action. Brandi started a Linked In group, Aspiring Emergency Managers Online (AEMO). Experienced people in the field joined, as did students and others looking for work in emergency management. With 1200 members and growing, she has created the kind of supportive, informative space she had wished for. Brandi both writes and shares posts frequently, ensuring rich content for group members. She is a cheerleader for all those who are finding their way in the field.

As a young African American woman, Brandi is joining a field where few people will share her race, her experiences or her youth. Her understanding of Millennials, and recognition that Baby Boomers will all soon be retired from leadership positions, leads her to believe change in the field is inevitable. Her energetic entrepreneurial spirit will be somewhat alarming to those more comfortable with settled bureaucracies. But Brandi says, "I think we need to start having uncomfortable conversations". She is dedicated to making the field she has chosen more effective in serving the whole community. She knows a wider variety of perspectives will strengthen planning and response. In her position as Education and Outreach Coordinator at the Center of Excellence, Homeland Security and Emergency Management, she successfully worked to increase the diversity of the board. She has critiqued outreach materials using a different lens than is traditionally employed.

In these days of cascading disasters, it is easy to see that future emergency managers will need an even greater level of skill, focus and resources than before. Talking to Brandi Hunter, aspiring emergency manager, reassured me that the next generation in the field will step up to the greater challenges ahead.

Deb Moller is the former Public/Private Partnerships Manager at the Oregon Office of Emergency Management. She is a Senior Fellow at COHSEM. She is the author of "Get Ready! How to Prepare for and Stay Safe After a Pacific Northwest Earthquake".



THE MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL TOLL COVID-19 HAS IMPACTED OUR FRONTLINE HEALTH CARE WORKERS

By Kellie Hale

COVID-19 cases have not gone down, unfortunately, and continues to rise across the nation. Hospitals are continuing to be overwhelmed with patients. Our frontline health care workers are continuing to experience multiple stressors with little relief during the COVID-19 pandemic. There is a constant fear amongst health care workers and facilities of running out of ventilators and necessary supplies. It is not only physical risks of COVID-19 that health care workers have to worry about but mental ones. With COVID-19 patients deteriorating, families could not be by loved one's bedside, and it fell upon nurses and

nursing assistants to help provide emotional support.

Often forgoing breaks to stay by the patient's side and hold their hand as they took their last breath. That is a significant toll for anyone to take on.

When stress is left untreated, it can lead to mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, psychosis, and thoughts of suicide can arise or self-harm. Health care workers and caregivers are vital to the global response to the pandemic. However, they are often overlooked as a highly vulnerable population when it comes to getting infected with the virus.

To help combat stress:

- Know that it is okay to communicate with your supervisors and coworkers about the stress you are feeling.
- Talk about how the pandemic is affecting you and your work, which can help identify the factors that are causing the stress and begin identifying solutions.
- Ask if your workplace has any mental health resources.
- Understand that you will not always have control over certain things and begin to accept that notion.
- Keep reminding yourself that your role is essential and crucial in fighting this pandemic. Know that you are doing a good job and doing your best with the resources available for patients and staff.
- Keep a daily routine notably similar to the schedule you had before the pandemic.
- Get adequate sleep
- Be sure to take the time to eat healthy meals: breakfast, lunch, snack, and dinner.
- Spend time outdoors to get some fresh air or take a walk. Find things to enjoy during non-working hours.
- Use breathing exercises and meditation to help alleviate stress and anxiety.

The emotional and mental toll our frontline health care workers are experiencing may have a lasting toll for years to come. Nevertheless, health care workers will only become more vital in the battle to decrease COVID-19 cases and other viruses that will emerge in the years to come.

LOOKING BACK WHILE LOOKING FORWARD

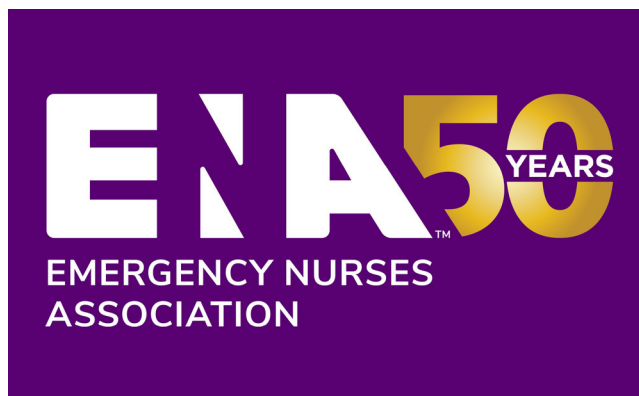
By Linda Crerar, Director CoE-HSEM

In 1969, I attended Shoreline Community College in Seattle, working on my Associate's degree and intending to go into a health care profession. I had an opportunity to join a volunteer group at Harborview Medical Center in their Emergency Room, providing social work and crisis mental health support to patients in the evenings when hospital staff was not available.

I had no idea what I would be walking into my first evening shift when I began my training, and three years later, I reluctantly left Harborview to finish my Behavioral Science Degree in another city.

For three years, I volunteered three (3) nights a week after work and school to support Harborview's health care and nursing staff. Everything I learned during that "apprenticeship" gave me a life-long commitment to working and supporting our health care professionals.

I knew early on that I was not cut out to be a nurse, but I have had many friends over the years who are a part of that honored profession.



Even though I did not go into the nursing profession, I am a member of the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA), a professional organization with over 40,000 members. Its mission is to advance excellence in emergency nursing and be the premier organization for the emergency nursing community worldwide. I wanted to show my gratitude for our medical professionals' work on the front lines of COVID today. Let us share the education and training opportunities in our state's Community and Technical Colleges and Universities to pursue health care careers.

Nurses have long endured a stereotyped image born from a hybrid of Florence Nightingale stories. In the film "[In Case of Emergency](#)" by Carolyn Jones, she examines the vital role emergency nurses play in the U.S. health care system. The film sets forth the truth about medical professions and their day-to-day struggling being on the frontline. Such struggles include from behavior health to opioid crisis, victims of gun violence, plus a constant stream of uninsured patients fearful of our health care system because they cannot afford to be sick or injured. And then

the pandemic hit and the mounting tragedy for those on the front lines who deal the amounting loss of American lives.

Hospitals are at capacity and lacking in critical PPE gear — and are overstressed and under-supported our healthcare system and its workers already are. Even before the pandemic, nurses experienced incongruities in our healthcare system. "We put Band-Aids on a lot of big issues," said Michelle Lyon, an R.N. in Lexington, Kentucky, comments in the film.

"In 1970, two visionary women set out to bring emergency nurses together to speak as a united voice for our profession. Although they were initially unaware of each other, Anita Door in New York and Judith Kelleher in California established similar organizations to ensure emergency nurses received the education need to support this newly recognized specialty.

A short time later, later they joined forces to form what is now ENA," said Jeff Solheim, Immediate Past President.

ENA has been serving in communities across the country now for over 50 years. "Nurses have been ranked as the most trusted and ethical professionals for 18 consecutive years, and they are often regarded as possessing super-power when caring for the patients and communicates we service," noted Ryan Oglesby, ENA Board Member.

Our Emergency Departments continue to face challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, so a significant influx of patients from any natural disaster or mass casualty-type event would undoubtedly put additional strain on emergency care. ENA encourages nurses and health care professionals to be always prepared for other events, including civil unrest and protests occurring within communities. ENA advocates for patient safety, develops industry-leading practice standards and guidelines and guides emergency healthcare public policy. ENA members have expertise in triage, patient care, disaster preparedness, and all aspects of emergency care. Additional information is available at www.ena.org.



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