



Blood Shortages Leave Doctors with No Acceptable Options — Only Solution Is More Blood Donors

Dr. Eric Gehrie, executive medical director, American Red Cross

Right now, the American Red Cross urges people to donate lifesaving blood to help overcome an emergency blood shortage — a situation so dire that our national blood supply dropped by more than 25% in July.

As a medical professional, I recognize the concept of a blood shortage can seem difficult to relate to, especially given all the miraculous medical advances that we have enjoyed as a society. It can be tempting to wonder if we truly need blood transfusions as much as we did in the past, or to question whether there may be alternatives to blood transfusion that could be pursued.

Yet the only feasible source of blood for transfusion is the arm of a generous blood donor — and today’s need for blood is as critical as ever.

Over the past 25 years, advances in transfusion medicine identified numerous clinical circumstances where restrictive red blood cell transfusion practices resulted in the same or better patient outcomes, as compared to historically accepted transfusion practices that were more permissive of transfusion. [The first of these major studies](#) was published in the New England Journal of Medicine in 1999 and showed that critically ill adults in medical intensive care units who were transfused less did just as well as those who were transfused more. Subsequent studies showed similar results in various clinical settings, including [critically ill children](#), [severe gastrointestinal bleeding](#), [septic shock](#), [traumatic brain injury](#), hip surgery and [cardiac surgery](#).



American Red Cross volunteer Jamie Daniel delivers lifesaving blood to hospitals in the Charlotte, North Carolina area. The Red Cross declared an emergency blood shortage when the national blood supply dropped more than 25% in July. Photo by Brad Zerivitz/American Red Cross

This shift — to withhold transfusion until anemia becomes more pronounced — places an even greater emphasis on the availability of blood supplies. Because most transfusion prescriptions are for patients with relatively severe anemia, a blood shortage leaves doctors with no easy choices for withholding transfusion. Instead, they wrestle with a series of bad options — often facing the very real possibility that a patient could suffer due to a delayed transfusion.

Trauma

One of the most important advances in trauma medicine is the recognition that providing blood early can help save lives by preventing the development of intractable bleeding or bleeding that is difficult to stop (the coagulopathy of trauma).

Compared to 20 years ago — when a trauma patient’s resuscitation would have typically started with saline and red blood cells after reaching the hospital — more recent trends have identified the importance of providing blood early in the emergency room or, if possible, in the ambulance or helicopter enroute to the hospital.

As a result, trauma hospitals are now encouraged to store blood in the emergency room to avoid a transfusion delay that could worsen patient outcomes. But during a blood shortage, hospital blood banks are often forced to remove blood from the emergency room and other remote storage locations — leaving trauma surgeons and

anesthesiologists to consider the possibility that the hospital could run out of blood.

Childbirth

When there's an emergency like a hemorrhage from childbirth, the margin between life and death for mother and baby could easily be the availability of a blood transfusion. In fact, postpartum hemorrhage is a leading cause of maternal deaths in the United States, with rates disproportionately higher for under-represented communities. These crises can happen suddenly, regardless of whether a pregnancy has been complicated or not.

[Places like California have made progress in saving lives, in no small part, by making sure that blood is readily available when a hemorrhage occurs.](#) Still, when there's not enough blood on the shelves to serve all patients, doctors must decide if what's available can be used to sustain a mother and child.

Cancer

When undergoing cancer treatment, patients become intimately aware of their vulnerabilities, and the need for blood and platelet transfusions to protect them. But when there's a blood product shortage, their anxiety can deepen: Without a platelet transfusion, will I experience internal bleeding? Will that lead to a stroke?

That's because patients with cancer are often counselled by their physicians that they need transfusions to avoid these complications. However, during a blood shortage, they could

National Preparedness Month: Get Ready Now for More Frequent Climate Disasters

The American Red Cross is encouraging everyone to take critical actions during National Preparedness Month this September to be ready for worsening disasters. Deadly storms and floods, raging fires and extreme heat are becoming more frequent and intense due to the climate crisis and families are experiencing the effects.

Disasters can happen at any time, often without warning,

easily be sent home from clinic without a transfusion — being told that the available blood instead needs to be reserved for other patients in the operating room or intensive care unit.

What's more, a blood transfusion can be the difference between walking or using a wheelchair. Although a person's hemoglobin level may be high enough to safely send them home, it may be low enough that they are too exhausted to walk or use stairs.

Donate Today

The only solution to prevent such heart-wrenching decisions is to ensure a steady supply of blood. This can only be achieved if more healthy individuals roll up a sleeve and donate blood regularly. Every donation can mean the difference between life and death for someone in need, whether it's a trauma patient, a mother in labor or a cancer patient undergoing treatment.

In a world where medical science has made it clear just how vital and irreplaceable blood transfusions are, we must rise to the challenge. That's why we at the American Red Cross are pressing so hard right now for blood donations to overcome this shortage — and ensure patients get the lifesaving treatment that they need.

You can help. Make an appointment to give blood or platelets now using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org) or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Molly Dalton

changing lives forever in just minutes. As our climate changes, it's critical to help protect your loved ones and National Preparedness Month is the ideal time to get your household ready for emergencies.

HOW TO PREPARE Get ready for disasters by making a plan to stay safe, gathering important supplies and knowing how you'll stay connected. Follow these steps



American Red Cross disaster worker Georgi Donchetz shares a hug with Dixie Hipp, a resident who lost her home in the deadly South Fork and Salt Wildfire in New Mexico. Hipp hopes to rebuild, but her property is situated on a hill, and she is concerned about the potential for flooding due to burn scars across the landscape. Photo by Marko Kotic/American Red Cross

to prepare for emergencies:

1. Depending on the emergency, you may need to stay where you are or go somewhere else to stay safe. If you may need to leave, think about where you will go, how you will get there, where you will stay and what you'll take with you. Plan well in advance if you'll need help leaving or use public transportation.
2. Next, gather and organize critical supplies — like food, water and medicine — into a go-kit and a stay-at-home kit. Your go-kit should include three days of supplies that you can take with you. Your stay-at-home kit should have two weeks of food and water, and a one-month supply of medications, if possible.
3. Then, customize your kit to meet your household's specific needs. If you have young children, don't forget formula and diapers. If you have pets, include leashes, carriers, food, bowls, litter and a litterbox.
4. Make a plan to reconnect with loved ones if you are separated or if the phone or internet is down. Write down important phone numbers on a contact card and carry it with you.
5. Finally, download the free Red Cross Emergency app for real-time weather alerts and expert advice in both English and Spanish. And don't forget to sign up for free emergency alerts from your local government to get critical information during local emergencies.

CLIMATE CRISIS EFFECTS This year, experts forecast very active wildfire and hurricane seasons — predictions that are proving to be true. In July, Hurricane Beryl broke records as the earliest

CAP Program Helps Strengthen Local Partners to Better Prepare Communities for Disasters

In an effort to help communities be better prepared for disasters and stronger after they occur, the American Red Cross has launched its Community Adaptation Program (CAP) to work with and strengthen local nonprofits that provide services related to health, hunger and housing in areas that face an elevated risk of extreme weather and existing societal inequities.

CAP currently operates in 18 counties/parishes across the country, which were



Tulane Missionary Baptist Church volunteers and Red Cross staff gather to celebrate in front of the new food pantry in Yazoo, Mississippi, which will help provide food for dozens of families in need. Many rural areas in Mississippi are considered food deserts where the nearest grocery store can be 20 miles away, making it difficult for families that lack reliable transportation, older adults or people with disabilities to access nutritious food. Tulane Missionary Baptist Church is tackling hunger in their community through weekly food distributions, which can now be expanded to reach more people, thanks in part to funding support from the Red Cross. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

Category 5 storm ever recorded and 1.5 million more acres of land have already been burned by wildfires compared to all of 2023. In addition, 2024 is on track to be the hottest year on record

according to experts. Altogether so far in 2024, the U.S has experienced 15 climate disasters, each with losses of over a billion dollars — nearly double the average from the last 40 years.



Extensive damage in Berkeley County, South Carolina, following Hurricane Debby. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

The best defense during an emergency is to be prepared, and that's true for both our individual families and your entire community. During National Preparedness Month, consider donating to help people affected by disasters big and small, or making an appointment to give blood. If you have the time, take a first aid class or put on a red vest and join us as a volunteer.

Visit [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org) or call 800-RED CROSS (800-733-2767) to learn more today.

Molly Dalton

selected based on social vulnerability and natural hazard risk factors. In turn, these partners will commit to working with the Red Cross during times of disaster to help local families access food, health and housing support.

Unfortunately, the climate crisis is taking a heavier toll on frontline communities already dealing with other chronic social issues. Low-income families, older adults and people with disabilities often experience heightened

challenges with chronic health conditions, food insecurity and the lack of affordable housing.

As extreme weather worsens, Red Cross CAP teams are finding organizations already helping their neighbors and are working with them to amplify their efforts by funding targeted projects to help increase access to nutritious food, medical care and affordable housing.

Support may include grants, subject matter expertise, data sharing and analysis, volunteer exchanges, training and materials or equipment. This work is in its initial stages in 18 communities spread across 13 states, working on nearly 200 collaborative

Red Cross Moments from Pride 2024

Red Crossers across the country took part in local Pride events this year to promote the FDA's updated blood donation eligibility guidelines that are more inclusive for the LGBTQ+ community and share that our mission is open and welcoming to all. Parades and festivals offered opportunities to don Red Cross Pride apparel and come together to celebrate our LGBTQ+ community and each other. Buddy the Blood Drop, Red Cross vehicles and banners, vibrant rainbow accessories and even a llama made for a Pride season that saw growing



Portland - Everyone had a blast at the Portland Pride Parade celebrating not only the event, but the fact that blood donation is now more inclusive than ever. We were grateful to have our biggest (and fluffiest) supporter of the day, Caesar the No Drama Llama, walk beside us.



American Red Cross and Teche Action Clinic staff celebrate the new mobile health clinic in Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana. As part of our climate crisis Community Adaptation Program (CAP), we're helping local partners expand access to healthcare by funding enhancements like this mobile health clinic for Teche. Many people in the rural areas of Louisiana don't have access to transportation, which makes it difficult to get medical care. This mobile clinic will help the Teche team reach members of their community wherever they are and includes all of the critical items that the doctors and nurses will need to conduct exams and treat patients. Plus, it has a wheelchair lift making it accessible for all patients. Photo by Marko Kokic/American Red Cross

projects with over 100 community partners.

These communities include Montgomery County, Alabama; Mississippi County, Arkansas; Butte Lake, Monterey and Tulare Counties, California; Lee and Sarasota Counties, Florida; Chatham County, Georgia, Lake County, Indiana; Warren County, Kentucky; Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana; Yazoo County, Mississippi; Atlantic County, New Jersey; Jackson County, Oregon; Madison County, Tennessee; and Cameron and Hays Counties, Texas.

Find out more in the [CAP Story Map](#) "Transforming How Communities Cope with Disasters."

participation with several new events.

We're pleased to share photos from many of these events and recognize the team members who took part. Through special outreach events like Pride and the work we do in our communities every day, we move our mission forward.



Alaska - Parades and festivals offered opportunities to don Red Cross Pride apparel and come together to celebrate our LGBTQ+ community and each other. The Red Cross of Alaska was happy to celebrate PRIDE in Anchorage. Special thanks to all the amazing volunteers that came out to spread the message that everyone is welcome.

(A few more photos follow on the next page.)



Indiana - Red Crossers from the Indiana Region participated in the Indy Pride Parade. This is one of the many ways we celebrate diversity, equality and inclusion at the Red Cross, and dedicate our commitment to fostering an environment where everyone feels valued, respected and supported.



Red Cross Central California - Parades and festivals offered opportunities to don Red Cross Pride apparel and come together to celebrate our LGBTQ+ community and each other. Red Cross Central California has pride! Great time had by all in Fresno's Tower District at the annual Fresno Pride Parade and Festival.

International Humanitarian Law Program

Mark Tannenbaum, EdD

The American Red Cross International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Program educates and informs the American public on the tenets of IHL, also known as the law of armed conflict or the law of war. The IHL Program's managers are legal advisors Thomas Harper and Christian Jorgensen. The Program focuses on:

- educating the public about how IHL preserves humanity during wartime
- meeting the U.S. obligation under the Geneva Conventions to disseminate IHL to the public
- implementing the program through direct public engagement.

Volunteer IHL instructors and the National Headquarters IHL team host a wide variety of IHL classes, outreach events, and other similar offerings to connect with the public, both virtually and in-person. Through these events, IHL reaches the American public, primarily those 22 years old or older, while the IHL Youth Action Campaign focuses on younger clients.

IHL is a set of rules that seeks, for humanitarian reasons, to limit the effects of armed conflict. It protects persons who are not, or are no longer, directly or actively participating in hostilities, and imposes limits on the means and methods of warfare. IHL is also known as "the law of war" or "the law of armed conflict." IHL is part of public international law, which is made up primarily of treaties, customary international law and general

principles of law. A distinction must be made between IHL, which regulates the conduct of parties engaged in an armed conflict, and public international law as set out in the Charter of the United Nations, which regulates whether a state may lawfully resort to armed force against another state. The Charter prohibits such use of force with two exceptions: cases of self-defense against an armed attack and when the United Nations Security Council authorizes the use of armed force. IHL does not stipulate whether the commencement of an armed conflict was legitimate or not, but rather seeks to regulate the behavior of parties once the warfare has started.

IHL has its roots in the rules of ancient civilizations and religions. The codification of IHL began in the nineteenth century, notably through the adoption of the 1864 Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded in Armies in the Field and the 1868 Declaration of Saint Petersburg, which prohibited the use of certain projectiles in wartime. Since then, states (countries) have laid down a series of practical rules to keep pace with evolving means and methods of warfare and the related humanitarian consequences. The rules of IHL strike a careful balance between humanitarian concerns and the military requirements of states and non-state parties to armed conflict. They address a broad range of issues, including protection for wounded, sick and shipwrecked members of armed forces;

treatment of prisoners of war and other persons detained in connection with an armed conflict; protection for the civilian population and civilian objects; and restrictions on the use of certain weapons and methods of warfare. IHL distinguishes between international and non-international armed conflict.

International armed conflicts are those in which one or more states resort to the use of armed force against one or more other states. Situations of occupation are also covered by the law of international armed conflict, even if they meet with no armed resistance. International armed conflicts are governed by the four Geneva Conventions which regulate the use of weapons and conflicts in which peoples are fighting against colonial domination and alien occupation and against racist regimes in the exercise of their right of self-determination. Non-international armed conflicts involve either governmental armed forces fighting one or more non-state armed groups, or such groups fighting each other. To be governed by IHL, it must reach a certain level of intensity and the non-state parties involved must show a certain level of organization.

The Geneva Conventions regulate the protection and treatment of four categories of persons who are not, or are no longer, directly participating in hostilities, during an international armed conflict:

- the wounded and sick in armed forces in the field
- wounded, sick and shipwrecked members of the armed forces at sea
- prisoners of war

civilians, especially those who find themselves in

Red Cross and NBNA Conference Collaboration

On July 24, 2024, the American Red Cross provided 3 guest speakers to present at the National Black Nurses Association's (NBNA) 52nd Institute and Conference in San Francisco, CA. This year's conference, entitled "Advancing Health Care Across the Lifespan: Through Re-Imagining Nursing and Human

the hands of a party to the conflict or an occupying power of which they are not nationals, often known as "protected persons."

In non-international armed conflict, protection like that provided in international armed conflict applies to persons who are not, or are no longer, directly taking part in hostilities. Persons protected by IHL are entitled to respect for their lives, their dignity, and their physical and mental integrity. They are also afforded various legal guarantees. They must be treated humanely in all circumstances, with no adverse distinction founded on race, color, religion, faith, sex, birth, wealth or any other similar criteria.

Three emblems are used in IHL to identify and protect medical services and protected persons, places and objects during armed conflict. These include the [red cross, the red crescent and the red crystal](#). They may also be used, either during armed conflict or in peacetime, for the purpose of identifying persons or objects linked to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Restrictions apply to the type of weapons used, the way they are used and the general conduct of all those engaged in the armed conflict. IHL regulates the conduct of hostilities based on three core principles: distinction, proportionality and precaution.

If you are interested in learning more about IHL, consider attending a webinar or check to see if your chapter is hosting an IHL-related event. More information about the IHL program is available at redcross.org/humanityinwar.

Rebecca Harris-Smith, EdD, MSN, BA, RN, FADLN

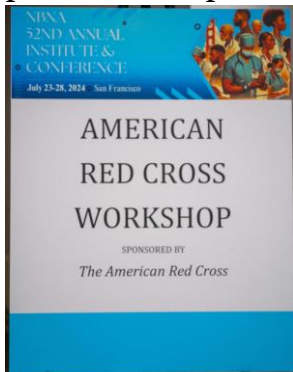


Dr. Harris-Smith gave a Red Cross workshop presentation at the NBNA conference. Photo by James Tolbert Jr.

Caring," saw one thousand nurses (DNPs, APNs, RNs, LVNs/LPNs) attend to learn, network and receive professional development in the form of continuing education credits. Each year, one of the 152 local NBNA chapters is selected to host the conference to provide a platform where members can experience the

pleasure of enjoying the local culture of the city while earning continuing educational credits. The conference provides access to best practice and evidence-based research data focused on the health and welfare of the Black community.

This collaborative effort between the Red Cross and the NBNA has been in existence for 14 years. Each year, Red Cross guest speakers present various three-hour professional development topics that cover multiple areas of practice engaged in by Red Cross nurse volunteers. These presentations provide nurses with Red Cross



Poster for the Red Cross workshop. Photo by James Tolbert Jr.

program information and training that focuses on addressing health disparities. Nurses are invited to become Red Cross volunteers to collaboratively serve communities. This year the Red Cross provided a 2-part program entitled “Tools, Techniques, and Updates from the American Red Cross for the NBNA Nurse's

Toolbox.” The content covered Disaster Health Service Fundamentals, and Hands Only CPR with 71 nurses participating in the course. Participants were encouraged to connect with their local Red Cross region to provide volunteer service in their community. Additionally, for the past 6 years, NBNA has hosted a blood drive at the conference entitled “NBNA Bleeds for You.” Each year members and guests can choose to donate blood in cooperation with the local Red Cross Donor Center. This donation is a small expression of our dedication to the healthcare of the community and to express our gratitude in the form of a “thank you,” for their warm and inviting hospitality during



Red Cross workshop participants practiced hands-only CPR... using squishy ERVs in lieu of manikins.

the conference.

As always, I appreciate the help of Dr. Carmen Kynard, Dr. Linda MacIntyre and Dr. Yvette Miller for volunteering their time with the preparation and for participating with this labor of love. We have been at this as a team for the past 8 years and have committed to continue to solidify this collaboration for years to come. I would also like to thank the members of the Red Cross community that provided their support for this event, to include Jack McMaster, President, Training Services; Jody P. Wacker, Training Services Marketing, VP; Trisha Mims, Senior Program Manager, DHS; Edward Faso, Biomedical Services Account Manager and Annika Flint, Marketing. I must also acknowledge Ebony Rose-France, Biomedical Services Senior Manager, National Partnerships, for her invaluable assistance over the years. After this year’s debriefing, I will be planning for next year’s conference which will be held in Dallas, TX, and as always, NBNA will host another blood drive as a way of donating a small bit of love for the Black Community.

A Successful First Annual Red Cross Youth Health Symposium

Peter Gorge, Kashish Priyam, Sahngwie Yim and Anishka Duvvuri (NCCR Measles and Rubella Team Members)

In connection with the Measles and Rubella Partnership (MRP), the American Red Cross in the Northern California Coastal Region (NCCR) has been committed to curating projects that empower youth, future healthcare professionals and social workers to become better healthcare communicators, educators and practitioners when it comes to community-wide infectious disease

prevention. With this initiative, the NCCR MRP team, the Red Cross Silicon Valley Chapter and the Stanford School of Medicine Department of Pediatrics collaborated to host the first “Youth Health Symposium” for Bay Area high school students interested in science and medicine. It provided a platform for students to connect with like-minded peers, discuss creative solutions to

current and forthcoming global problems and prepare for their education and career pathways by engaging with various healthcare professionals.

To kickstart the event, keynote speaker



Keynote speaker Christopher Lopez began the opening presentation. Photo by Leisha Devisetti.

Christopher Lopez described his inspiring journey in becoming a third-year MD/PhD student in the Medical Scientist Training Program at Stanford University. He encouraged students to navigate

an answer to a vital question: "Who do you want to become?" Using examples of his own personal growth and experience in medicine, he motivated students to be resilient, humble, proactive and eager to integrate their identities into their future careers.

Following Lopez's opening presentation, a series of health seminars equipped students with valuable and applicable lessons.

In an interactive discussion about addiction, Bonnie Halpern-Felsher, PhD, a leader in developmental psychology, addressed one of the largest pressures that youth face today: e-cigarettes. She warned students about the dangers of e-cigarettes and nicotine, pointing out not only their negative effects on personal health, but also their detrimental impacts on the environment. Recognizing their use by youth to cope with stress, she encouraged alternative coping mechanisms, such as engagement in healthy activities that yield long-term benefits.

Continuing the focus on maintaining good health, the next presentation was by James Noe, MA, American Red Cross Senior Program Manager for the MRP. Attending virtually from New Jersey, he outlined the MRP's drive to eradicate measles and rubella through global vaccination efforts. In doing so, he also suggested meaningful ways in which students can get involved including raising awareness on social media, getting vaccinated, and participating in fundraising initiatives such as *Vaccinate a Village*.

Changing gears, Baraka D. Floyd, MD, MSc, a pediatrician and clinical associate professor in the Stanford School of Medicine, revealed the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion in delivering holistic care. Dr. Floyd lectured on framing an approach to healthcare that considers policies, economics and social hierarchies as structures that contribute to health disparities. By learning about these disparities and the structures that may perpetuate them, healthcare professionals can be better equipped to deliver care when faced with additional complexities patients and families may face such as food insecurity, housing insecurity and financial insecurity.

And lastly, Luke Beckman, Southwest and Rocky Mountain Division Disaster State Relations Director, American Red Cross, gave a presentation on climate crisis management, revealing the



Luke Beckman presented on climate crisis management. Photo by Leisha Devisetti.

crossovers between natural disasters and health complications. In addition to correlating climate changes with an increase in chronic disease, he built off Dr. Floyd's emphasis on considering factors that may contribute to health disparities. For example, a vulnerable population such as those who speak limited English and live in an area with a high risk of wildfire may not be as prepared and so may need extra support to face the associated risk of property loss, financial hardship and risk of developing chronic illnesses.

After a brief lunch break, the symposium reconvened to feature two panels: one addressed the emerging role of artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare and the other addressed health careers. The AI panel consisted of Mildred Cho, PhD, Nymisha Chilukuri, MD and Curtis Langlotz, MD, PhD. In a world where AI has quickly integrated itself in academia and in professional fields, its use in radiology has presented a benefit that especially intrigued the students. The health careers panel featured Charlene Chow, MPAS, PA-C, Shabnam Gaskari, PharmD, Viraj Ketkar, DDS, Jesse Ortega,

MD, and Diane St. Denis, RN, Red Cross Pacific Division Disaster Health Services Advisor. With all the variety of health professions represented on the panels, students were able to gain a holistic image of the healthcare team and were able to learn about each career path. In each panel, the panelists consistently gave thoughtful answers to the prompts and were eager to engage with student questions.



The second panel of experts discussed the variety of different healthcare careers. Photo by Leisha Devisetti.

Finally, the symposium closed with a resume writing workshop tailored towards high-school students in search of jobs, internships and volunteer opportunities. This workshop was led by Allison Guerin, EdD, MEd, Senior Director of Education and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice in the Department of Pediatrics in the Stanford School of Medicine. Here, students were taught three different types of resume structures, how to identify transferable skills, how to quantify accomplishments and how to describe their experiences.

As the symposium came to a close, the feedback from student participants was overwhelmingly positive. Based on students' responses, they especially appreciated the variety of healthcare professionals and the variety of topics that were discussed. Many also reported that the symposium inspired them in their pre-health journeys and motivated them to want to become more selfless and active members of their communities. Given the success of this event and the practical utility it provided to aspiring future professionals, the Red Cross will continue its efforts to educate youth and to inspire the next generations of professionals with the next annual "Youth Health Symposium," which is set for 2025 in continued partnership with Stanford. The team hopes other Red Cross chapters will use this template to engage their local youths by hosting their own youth health symposiums.

Participant Feedback:
Kashish Priyam: "The symposium was an amazing



Team members of the American Red Cross Northern California Coastal Region and Stanford School of Medicine Department of Pediatrics at the youth symposium. Photo by Leisha Devisetti.

experience. The most salient part was the passion of the different speakers in each panel and seminar. Witnessing the happiness that they get from their jobs, from helping people, was an inspiration to me as well as a motivation. It allowed me to envision a future and career and also broadened my perspective on what such a career could look like."

Anishka Duvvuri: "Receiving the invite in my inbox and signing up for the symposium couldn't have been a better choice. I was so moved and inspired when listening to speakers like Baraka Floyd and Christopher Lopez, whose passion for medicine sparked a sense of awe in us. Being exposed to the different healthcare paths from the career panel and speakers gave me a deeper understanding of ways we can help our community in the future. The symposium was an invaluable experience, which I will hold onto forever as I move along my journey.

Srilalitha Nair: "Learning about the different ways to be a healthcare provider as well as the more applicable ways to contribute to initiatives taken by the Red Cross as high schoolers were the two most impactful parts of the symposium, which made it an enjoyable and informative event!"

Sahngwie Yim: "The Symposium provided me with a unique experience to learn about various different aspects of healthcare. I loved learning about the intersections of healthcare, such as climate and technology, different healthcare career paths, and factors that influence health outcomes."

Please watch the entire 2024 Youth Symposium at:
<https://tinyurl.com/RCStanford2024-YouthSymposium>.

Serving Communities Through Academic Service-Learning

Linda MacIntyre, PhD, RN, PHN, FAAN

What is AS-L?

The American Red Cross Academic Service-Learning (AS-L) program offers opportunities for students to impact communities through service and learning. Students may earn course credit or volunteer service hours. Red Cross opportunities include in-person and virtual activities as available. Faculty determine whether the activity meets requirements for course credit or volunteer service hours.

Who participates and how?

Students in any discipline might find opportunities within the Red Cross to enhance their learning while serving communities. Red Cross AS-L volunteers must meet volunteer application requirements. Faculty are encouraged to also become volunteers and can serve in the AS-L Agency Faculty position so that they have access to Red Cross resources to better support their students. The entire academic community can collaborate with the Red Cross in service to their community. For example, students might hold a campus-wide blood drive. Staff and administrators might become Disaster Shelter Managers, teach Hands Only CPR, or promote diverse blood donation. They might serve on regional committees, boards, or deliver blood as a Transportation Specialist.

Who benefits from Red Cross AS-L?

AS-L benefits all who are involved. Students earn course credit or service hours and can build their resumes as they complete Red Cross training and/or fill leadership positions. Faculty benefit by having another option to offer students practical and meaningful community experiences that enhance learning. Communities benefit in many ways. Examples include being better prepared for disasters, having the right type of blood available when needed, support for veterans and their families and better outcomes from sudden cardiac arrest due to CPR and AED usage. The Red Cross benefits by increasing workforce capacity to ensure mission delivery of timely and equitable services that are relevant to the community.

What does Red Cross AS-L offer?

The Red Cross AS-L program offers position,

project and activity-based experiences. Position descriptions include necessary training and when all requirements are met, volunteers can fully function in their roles. Examples include Disaster Action Team members who support families after a house fire. Disaster Health Services positions prepare volunteers to support their communities locally or to deploy based on their license and training. The training for Blood Donor Ambassadors is short and volunteers can often get involved quickly to support blood donors at blood drives.

Individuals or teams may support project-based activities to achieve specific goals. Projects might be completed in one term or span several terms with different groups of AS-L volunteers. Activity-based opportunities might be available, such as distributing water, staffing an informational booth or canvassing a neighborhood for smoke detector installation.

Well-being is essential. The Red Cross has a Well-being Toolkit with many options to support personal well-being and resilience. Through a memorandum of understanding, all Red Cross employees and volunteers have access to HeartMath® evidence-based training. This includes micro learning, or up to six hours of training to learn techniques to increase coherence during stressful moments and to strengthen personal well-being.

Independent learning activities are available to augment Red Cross activities. The last three activities below are geared toward nursing and health students.

- Participating in Blood Drives
- Blood Donation Deferrals
- Blood, Diversity and Community Assessment
- Diverse Blood Group Donation
- Supporting Health Equity in our Communities: Addressing the Social Determinants of Health and Future of Nursing Report 2020 to 2030 - AS-L Independent Learning Activity
- Sickle Cell Disease and the Red Cross Initiative: AS-L Independent Learning Activity
- Vaccination Self Learning Module Presentation

The Red Cross has a new Population Health syllabus with modules that can be used as a stand-alone option or combined over one or more terms. Red Cross activities for the modules have been mapped to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education. Additionally, a team of Red Cross nurses with academic experience developed pre- and post-questions that are self-scored by learners to help assess knowledge and confidence. This can be helpful in assessing competence across several areas.

Impacting Communities Through Education and Service

Academic Service-Learning has been present in the Red Cross for many years and became a national program under my leadership in 2014. AS-L is open to high school, college or university students of all ages. AS-L has always been open to students across many disciplines; however, most Red Cross AS-L volunteers are from nursing, social work or public health programs. In FY 2025 (July 2024-

June 2025), Allison Spearman, Director of Volunteer Diversity and Youth Programs, and her team will lead expansion into other disciplines with a focus on youth and young professionals.

Red Cross Nursing Network leaders will focus on AS-L in FY 2025. They will encourage nursing faculty and students to complete disaster training so that they can confidently respond to disasters and other public health emergencies. Faculty and students will be invited to become Disaster Health Services and Disaster Mental Health Services volunteers to help ensure that their communities are prepared for disasters, and can respond to and recover from them. In collaboration with Red Cross youth and young professional leads, Nursing Network leaders will help expand AS-L in service of communities.

To learn more, please contact your local Red Cross chapter, or email

VolunteerResources@redcross.org or
RedCrossNurse@redcross.org.

Jane Delano Nursing Student Scholarship, 2024

Laurie Willshire, MPH, BSN, RN

American Red Cross volunteers Valerie Grahn and Jordan Gates have been selected as recipients of the 2024 Jane Delano Nursing Student Scholarship. This scholarship was established to promote nursing as a career and the involvement of new nurses in the American Red Cross. It is currently supported by contributions in memory of Carol Fox Martin, RN.

Valerie Grahn is a full-time direct-entry MSN student at the University of St. Thomas, Susan B.



Valerie Grahn

Morrison College of Health, in St. Paul, Minnesota. She plans to graduate in May 2025.

Valerie volunteers as a Disaster Cycle Services Duty Officer for the Minnesota-Dakotas Region, where she evaluates notifications and determines the appropriate Disaster Action Team

response. According to her supervisor, “Most of the time, Valerie is the single point of contact who calms the situation down and ensures our clients are receiving the appropriate help needed. It is

evident that Valerie not only takes care of our clients, but she is very conscious of our Disaster Action Team members. I have had numerous requests from our regional leadership to have Valerie work with them while they are covering responses for the region.”

She is also part of the regional Disaster Health Services team. Additionally, she volunteers with Meals on Wheels, delivering lunches to those in need.

Valerie described her decision to enter the nursing profession: “As I settled into middle age, it was a time of reflection. I felt as though I had more to do. This pull to do more was also tied to “doing good” and serving my community. I have always been a part of the medical industry and my first career was designing and developing medical devices, particularly implants. The implants improved surgical outcomes or a patient’s quality of life. As I enter the nursing profession, I realize I now have an opportunity to impact patient lives directly, rather than indirectly.”

After graduation she hopes to work in emergency

medicine and forensic nursing and become certified as a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE). She also plans to do nursing research projects and volunteer with the Red Cross by deploying to disaster relief operations.

Jordan Gates is a full-time nursing student at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and plans to graduate with a BSN in May 2025. She volunteers with the Washington, D.C. chapter of the National Capital and Greater Chesapeake Region as a Blood Donor Ambassador, participating in 50 blood drives in two years. Jordan states, “Joining the American Red Cross as a Blood Donor Ambassador was a natural extension of my desire to make a difference. From assisting



Jordan Gates

donors during blood drives to providing support and comfort, I’ve found fulfillment in every aspect of my role. Whether it’s calming nerves or offering a friendly smile, I’ve come to understand the importance of human connection in times of need.”

In addition to her activities with the Red Cross, she has undertaken leadership roles with various university and nursing organizations, including the Howard University Nursing Club, Generation Action, Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Inc., and Howard University Undergraduate Student Assembly. She also joined the National Black Nurses Association, where she serves on the Health Policy Committee.

Jordan has this to say about her Red Cross

Get ready: 2024 Nursing Awards Nomination Period Starts Soon

National Awards will be communicating awards cycle information, including nomination deadlines, at the end of August. Detailed application forms and information will be available at that time on OneSource. There is typically a six-week nomination window from early September to mid-October for the Presidential and Leadership Awards, including the Ann Magnussen Award and the Susan Hassmiller Nursing Award.

volunteer experience: “Throughout my journey, the American Red Cross has been more than an organization—it has been a family. Over the last two years, my experience as a Blood Donor Ambassador has been nothing short of transformative. The Red Cross has provided me with a platform to learn, grow, and connect with individuals from all walks of life. Each interaction, whether with donors, fellow volunteers or staff members, has enriched my understanding of compassion, empathy and humanity.

“One of the most valuable aspects of my experience with the Red Cross has been the exposure to a wide variety of career options within the field of healthcare. Through interactions with healthcare professionals involved in the Red Cross’s mission, I have gained insights into specialized areas of nursing that I never knew existed. This exposure has solidified my desire to specialize in neonatal intensive care nursing (NICU), a passion that has burned brightly within me since childhood.”

This annual scholarship is named after Jane A. Delano, the primary organizer of the American Red Cross Nursing Service. Undergraduate or graduate nursing students who have contributed volunteer service or are employees of an American Red Cross Unit are eligible to apply, and at least one scholarship is awarded each year. The Nursing Awards Subcommittee reviews the applications and makes the final decision on who will receive a scholarship. Information regarding the 2025 Jane Delano Scholarship will be available in February 2025 on OneSource, the American Red Cross intranet. Inquiries may be directed to RedCrossNurse@redcross.org.

Laurie Willshire, MPH, BSN, RN

The Ann Magnussen Award is presented annually to a volunteer or employed registered nurse with three or more years of Red Cross service who has made an outstanding contribution to strengthening or improving American Red Cross programs and services. It is the highest honor of nursing achievement in the American Red Cross.

The Susan Hassmiller Nursing Award provides \$5,000 in grant support for a Red Cross proposal that promotes nurse and nursing student

involvement across Red Cross lines of business, and/or in policy and leadership roles. Submissions are invited from chapters, regions and stations, and *external collaboration is encouraged*. The proposal must be replicable and sustainable.

In September the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will be sending out a call for nominations for the **Florence Nightingale Medal**, the highest Red Cross international award a nurse can receive. This medal is awarded every two years to nurses and voluntary nursing aides around the world who have shown exceptional courage and devotion to the wounded, sick or disabled or to civilian victims of a conflict or disaster; and/or exemplary services or creativity in public health or nursing education. Once this nomination information has been received from the ICRC, it will be communicated broadly throughout the American Red Cross, and pertinent information and documents will be posted on

Following in the Footsteps of Clara Barton on a Study Tour

The Clara Barton Study Tour took place June 1-5, 2024. With the other participants, I had the incredible opportunity to trace the remarkable legacy of Clara Barton, from her groundbreaking work during the Civil War to the founding of the American Red Cross. This journey, curated by the esteemed Dr. Sue Hassmiller, took us through significant historical sites in Washington D.C. and Maryland that highlight the pivotal moments in Barton's life and work.

The study tour was an idea that originated in 2016 with Dr. Sue Hassmiller and her dear husband Bob. As dedicated Red Cross volunteers of almost 50 years as well as having personal connections to the organization, the Hassmillers created the study tour to explore the life and legacy of Clara Barton. The purpose was to retrace Barton's steps in both Washington, D.C. and Geneva, Switzerland over the span of two weeks. After a tragic accident a day

OneSource.

Individuals and Red Cross units are asked to think seriously about nominating qualified individuals for the Ann Magnussen Award, the Florence Nightingale Medal, and/or submitting a proposal for the Susan Hassmiller Nursing Award. While previous winners cannot be nominated again, non-recipients can certainly be submitted again for consideration.

Effective nominations and proposals take some time to write, so planning ahead will be very helpful in getting a quick start. Additionally, the Awards Subcommittee of the National Nursing Committee will be providing additional guidance that will support this process. Please contact RedCrossNurse@redcross.org with questions or if you cannot access OneSource, the Red Cross Intranet.

Brittany Peacock-Wilson, BSN, RN

before the planned trip and Bob's untimely passing, Dr. Hassmiller couldn't make the trip.

After eight transformative years, the trip was organized again and Dr. Hassmiller put out the call again to groups of nurses and others who champion nursing to embark with her on the journey. This time the trip commenced without the Geneva component. Many participants were individuals with lifelong

leadership and service with Red Cross, with some newcomers to the organization.

The trip was highly successful, not only as a learning experience, but also with solidly engaging everyone toward the mission of the Red Cross. Due to the trip's success, Dr. Hassmiller plans to do another study tour in 2026.

Having graduated from Saint Mary of the Woods College with a BSN less than three weeks before the



The study tour group at Red Cross National Headquarters in Washington, D.C.



Left to right: Brittany Peacock-Wilson, Linda MacIntyre and Cheryl Schmidt at Red Cross NHQ

tour, it was an honor and privilege to be in the same spaces with absolute trailblazers. I had the opportunity to be roommates with Dr. Cheryl Schmidt; I was so appreciative of her generosity and kindness. We previously connected through our involvement with the National Student Nurses' Association, so it was pleasantly surprising to see a familiar face.

We visited the Clara Barton Missing Soldiers Office Museum, where we

saw evidence of the dedication and tireless efforts Barton put into identifying and bringing closure to the families of thousands of missing soldiers after the Civil War. Another highlight was visiting



'Clara Barton, Angel of the Battlefield' display, with Cynthia A. Leaver and Brittany Peacock-Wilson.

Antietam, the Civil War battlefield where Barton earned the nickname "Angel of the Battlefield" for her courageous work tending to the

wounded under fire.

What made this tour even more meaningful was the inclusion of stories about Black nurses in the Red Cross. Clara Barton was not only a pioneering nurse but also a staunch abolitionist who advocated for the rights of Black men and women. Her commitment to equality was evident in her

The Value and Impact of the Chief Nurse: Part Three in a Series

Following is part three in a series of articles about Red Cross chief nurses. With this series we are recognizing our past and present nurse leaders within Red Cross Nursing, and trying to do justice to Vivian Littlefield's final contribution to this newsletter and perhaps her last great idea to help support Nursing and nurses within the

support for Black individuals during a time when they faced immense discrimination. Barton's efforts eventually helped ensure that Black nurses were included and respected for their contributions to healthcare, laying the groundwork for a more inclusive Red Cross.

Throughout the tour, I couldn't help but feel the weight of history and the responsibility to carry forward the values Barton stood for. Writing about this experience as a new graduate for the tour's blog (see link below) was both humbling and inspiring, especially knowing the role Barton played in advocating for the rights of all people, regardless of race. It reminded me of the importance of continuing to support and uplift the contributions of Black nurses within the Red Cross and the broader healthcare community.

This journey was more than just a tour; it was a powerful reminder of the impact one person can have on history and the ongoing work needed to ensure equality and justice in healthcare. I now serve as a Blood Ambassador volunteer due to the inspiration and admiration that I have for Clara Barton and the Red Cross organization. Being able to provide service to humanity is a humbling experience, and I will continue to follow in the footsteps, as well as trailblaze as those before me have done.



Left to right: Brittany Peacock-Wilson, Mari N. McAndrews, Sue Hassmiller, and Cathy Tisdale, in front of a display with an original Red Cross first aid muslin cloth.

*You can read the [blog posts](#) about the study tour written on AJN's *Off the Charts*. Posts also have been incorporated into the updated [Red Cross Nursing and Health story map](#).*

Red Cross. As Dr. Littlefield wrote in 2011 in an article for the first edition of this newsletter, "OUR HERITAGE ASSURES OUR FUTURE."

If you missed part one or two of the series, you can read them in the [Winter](#) and [Spring](#) editions of this newsletter.

Thoughts From a Former Red Cross Chief Nurse

Sharon A. R. Stanley, Ph.D., RN and COL, U.S. Army (ret)



Sharon Stanley.

In Roman mythology, Janus was portrayed with two faces—one facing the past and one facing the future as he assisted in transitions and passages. As the American Red Cross chief nurse from March 2009 to July 2013, I met the past with its organizational and public perceptions of Red Cross nurses. I faced the need for a

realistic determination of future roles for Red Cross nurses and other health professionals. The Red Cross mission continued to evolve. The role also demanded an external representation of the organization in national and international nursing and a robust internal leadership stance. It was one of my most demanding career positions, second only to my experience as an Army brigade commander. Being the American Red Cross Chief Nurse provided an excellent opportunity to influence, create and just work hard with a purpose. My favorite part of the work (and its most challenging) was our thousands of nurse volunteers spread across the country and in every part of the American Red Cross. These dedicated volunteers were the bedrock of the health professionals in the organization, and they gave of themselves incredibly.

My appointment started after an eight-month hiatus for the position, and I was also assigned as director of Disaster Health Services (DHS). There were nurse volunteers throughout the business lines of Biomedical Services, International Services, Health and Safety Services, Service to the Armed Forces, and Disaster Health Services. Priorities involved strengthening the network of volunteer nurses and engaging non-nurse health workers in disaster response while assuring an integrated healthcare team throughout the organization. Nurses reflected public perception (think those Red Cross World War I and II posters) for the Red Cross yet represented a 21st-century healthcare team with 30,000 volunteer health professionals.



Sharon Stanley is seated front right next to Chief Nurse Linda MacIntyre, with other Red Cross Nursing leaders and advisors in 2017.

While disaster health remained a significant draw for nurses and health professional volunteers, engagement across the organizational business lines was needed. Retaining healthcare professionals beyond disaster was and is crucial to the Red Cross' core of health service delivery at the community level. When the community members came to our general population shelters, individuals had the same health needs they managed in their homes. "Special needs" shelters were phasing out. Lifestyle and chronic health needs that were adequately addressed at home could also be handled in Red Cross shelters. In addition, Red Cross nurses and the health team needed to deliver care aligned with licensure and education potential.

I joined with the hearts, hands and excellent expertise of fantastic volunteers as we answered "the call" of our American Red Cross communities. I worked with outstanding leaders in and outside the organization to address needed policy changes and resource deficits. Here are some things WE were able to accomplish.



1917 Red Cross poster by artist Hayden, from the [Library of Congress](#).

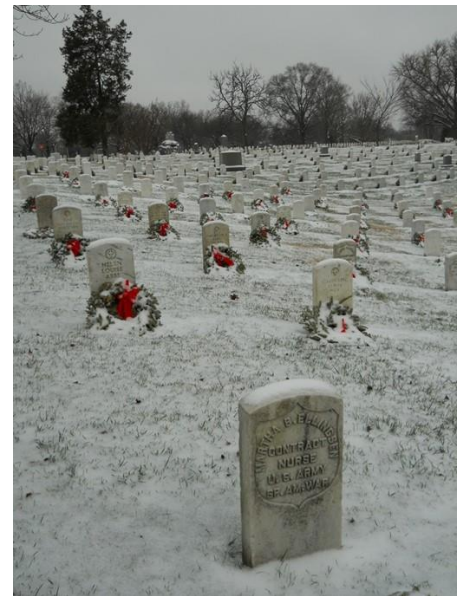
- The reinstatement of the American Red Cross Chief Nurse position thanks to a dedicated advocacy team: Trevor Rikken, then Disaster Health Services Senior Director and now President of Humanitarian Services; Dr. Vivian Littlefield, Volunteer Partner to the CN and the executive leadership force in the chief nurse position's absence; and a multitude of other volunteers and leaders, including the American Nurses Association and Red Cross former President and CEO, Gail J. McGovern.
- “Red Cross Sheltering and Disaster Health,” released in the fall of 2011 after 12 nationwide pilots. This blended learning product was designed to bond university nursing programs and local chapters in recruiting/retaining future nurses and sustain a working relationship between the chapter and the school. Dr. Cheryl Schmidt, Dr. Janice Springer, and IT provider/consultant Chris Floyd were instrumental in this effort. Simultaneously, there was a renewed award and recognition of the Red Cross nursing student pin, promoting the organization in colleges and schools nationwide.
- Development of a new category of DHS volunteer: Student Caregiver (Student CG) in the Disaster Services Human Resource (DSHR) system. Now, nursing students (along with students in other disciplines on the DHS team) were eligible to become DSHR registered volunteers in the DSHR system at the service associate level.
- Creation of a searchable American Red Cross



The American Red Cross RN pin.

nursing pin database for recruitment, national historical research and fundraising. The American Red Cross nursing pin, initiated in 1909, was tracked in various formats until 2000. Miami University of Ohio, led by Professor Douglas Troy, merged and created one searchable database that

included transferring thousands of IBM punch cards. A century of information on national nursing practice provided by Red Cross volunteers would be available, with a capacity to track current practice trends across business lines.



Section 21 of Arlington National Cemetery, which is dedicated to nurses in military service. Numbered pins used to be given to Red Cross nurses with instructions that on the nurse's eventual death, the pin should be buried with the nurse or mailed back to the Red Cross.

- Multiple publications, ten in 2012 alone, occurred in public health and community health nursing texts and health professional journals focused on American Red Cross nursing practice. These publications exposed nursing students, licensed nurses and healthcare professionals to volunteer recruitment possibilities. Dr. Susan Hassmiller was influential in securing these opportunities for publication.
- Alignment of Red Cross nursing practice with the practice recommendations of the Institute of Medicine's report on The Future of Nursing (2010). The Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing (now APHN) led by Executive Director Dr. Karen O'Brien, Executive Director Kathy Apple of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, and Donna Dorsey, Red Cross National Nursing Committee, were vital in moving this authorization to reality in the organization. Red Cross nurses could better meet the needs of their disaster-affected communities in general population shelters per their licensure and education qualifications.

- The continued ability to recognize our volunteers for their stellar efforts in the American Red Cross with time-honored annual awards such as the Ann Magnussen Award and nomination for the ICRC's Florence Nightingale Medal.



Stellar Disaster leader and volunteer Jeanne Spears receives the American Red Cross Ann Magnussen Award in 2010.

- Active networking and engagement of Red Cross nurse leadership through close and active partnerships with the National Black Nurses Association and the National Association of Hispanic Nurses, including active volunteer recruitment assistance. Each organization was given a permanent seat on the American Red Cross National Nursing Committee (NNC), the executive leadership advisory group.
- The Chief Nurse position move from Disaster Health Services to the VP of Disaster Services and then to Volunteer Services. These moves were in a continuing effort to link Red Cross healthcare volunteers across the organization.
- The continued building of a national healthcare network using volunteer representatives across the organization, including the National Student Nurses Association, Federal Nursing Service Council, National League of Nursing, American Association of Colleges of Nursing, U.S. Public Health Service, Institute of Medicine and American Association of Occupational Health Nurses.
- The addition of administrative assistance in the Chief Nurse Office of one. Ms. Patricia Schneidman expertly occupied and orchestrated the addition of an administrative assistant position to assist the chief nurse. We started to take advantage of virtual meeting

applications (e.g., GoToMeeting). This technology provided a face-to-face environment in a previous world of dull phone conferences.

60-hour weeks were routine in the Chief Nurse position. There was nationwide travel to build the nursing network, the volunteer management of a closely knit senior-level leadership cadre of 60 volunteers, many disasters, and lots of internal and external speaking engagements and networking representing the organization. I received access to an external budget through my concurrent Executive Nurse Fellowship with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. That budget made many of our accomplishments possible.

I was so pleased to be an ambassador of the Red Cross and achieve lasting change for the organization's future with my partners. The position of the American Red Cross Chief Nurse remains highly respected by the public and Red Cross volunteers not because of its occupant, but because of its positive legacy indelibly woven into the organization's history.

I left the position in July 2013 in the capable hands and caring heart of the current American Red Cross Chief Nurse and my former Volunteer Partner, Dr. Linda MacIntyre. The vision for Red Cross Nursing and Health continues, fixed within the heart and values of our American Red Cross.

Linda MacIntyre commented:

"I am deeply grateful to Dr. Sharon Stanley for her strategic work in positioning Red Cross nurses for service. Always an advocate for volunteers, Sharon attended both to individual needs and the creation of sustainable systems for humanitarian service. When I was chair of the NNC, Sharon encouraged me to develop my own goals for the committee and then supported me in achieving them. In the Red Cross courtyard in Washington, D.C., Sharon showed me the statue of Jane Delano and told me that I was following in Jane's footsteps in my role on the NNC. Since 2011, Sharon has given me wise counsel, inspired me, and made me laugh. I am indebted to her for helping facilitate my successful appointment as Chief Nurse of the American Red Cross. What I value most is her friendship."

Don't Wait Another Day to Make Your Plan

Corie Story

August was National Make-A-Will-Month and part of the American Red Cross mission is to encourage individuals to be prepared for emergencies. One key component of emergency preparedness is to have a valid will or estate plan.

Everyone needs a will or trust. Your will leaves a legacy for the people and causes that are important in your life. It also provides a "road map" that your family can use to help execute your wishes.

The American Red Cross recommends these 5 simple steps to get started.

First, create an inventory of your assets, such as real estate, checking/savings accounts, investment and retirement accounts. Also list your liabilities, for example, mortgages, lines of credit and car loans. The Red Cross has a free Will Planning Guide and Workbook that will help you gather your information. You can download this workbook at redcrosslegacy.org/willsplanning.

Second, identify the family, friends and charitable causes that are important to you and to whom you wish to leave your assets and personal property. You can prioritize caring for your immediate family, consider charitable causes like the American Red Cross, and even include instructions for personal items like artwork or family heirlooms.

Third, designate an executor or personal representative to carry out your wishes. This may also include appointing a guardian for your

children and someone with Power of Attorney.

Fourth, talk with your financial and legal advisors to choose the best means to distribute your assets. The Red Cross has resources to help you, ranging from creating a free will online to naming a beneficiary on your retirement accounts.

Fifth, decide whether you should hire an attorney and tax advisor to prepare your documents and determine the most tax-efficient way to pass on your assets, factoring in federal and state estate tax laws. If your estate is small and your wishes are simple, creating a will online may work well for you. The Red Cross has partnered with FreeWill.com/redcross to help you.

Completing your will or trust ensures that you leave a legacy of caring for your loved ones and the causes that are important to you. Gifting through your will is one of the simplest ways to leave a gift to the American Red Cross. If you do include the Red Cross in a gift plan, please notify us at redcrosslegacy.org/notifyus.

We hope you'll begin these 5 important steps today and consider creating a gift to the American Red Cross in your will or estate plan that will impact many in need for generations to come.

For more information, please contact Sr. Gift Planning Officer, Corie Story at 314-239-2524 or by email at corie.story@redcross.org.



AMERICAN RED CROSS National Nursing Committee Heritage Sub-Committee Members: Elizabeth Kazmier, Editor; Molly Dalton; Bill Darr; Donna Dorsey; Linda MacIntyre; Cheryl Schmidt; Corie Story; Mark Tannenbaum

Help us connect with and recognize other current and former Red Cross Nurses!

Please send the email, phone, and address of your friends and colleagues to us at RedCrossNurse@redcross.org. Share this newsletter via email and/or your preferred social media. Go to <http://www.redcross.org/about-us/our-work/nursing-health/nursing-network> and select a link under "View Previous Issues."

Thank you!