



RAINIER OLYMPIC NURSES ASSOCIATION

FALL
2026

ENGAGE + ENCOURAGE + EMPOWER + SUPPORT

2026 Nurse of the Year



We are honored to celebrate Kathleen Jabasa, a nurse whose compassion, courage, and commitment have touched countless lives.

Kat's mother is a nurse; her grandmother is a nurse. As Kat says, "I was born to be a nurse". Born and raised in the Philippines, Kat graduated from nursing school and began her nursing career at the age of 19, she went straight into the operating room. She later taught at Cebu Doctors' University and earned her Master's degree in 2013.

Upon arriving in the US, Kat initially began working in Arizona as a wound care nurse before moving to WA in 2017.

After a couple of years as a care manager at a kidney center, she returned to the operating room. From 2019 to 2026, Kat worked at St. Joseph. While there she served as a bargaining team member and grievance officer, helping support her fellow nurses. It was while precepting new nurses that Kat began to question why she was getting paid less than nurses with less experience. At that time, international nurses from countries including the Philippines were only getting half of their work experience counted so they were being placed on lower salary steps - often drastically impacting their income.

Kat brought her concerns to her local unit leadership and WSNA and, with their help, fought to change the policy. They were successful. This change had a profound impact - for example, Kat moved from Step 16 to Step 24. When the hospital initially resisted an immediate re-stepping of all 31 nurses impacted, she once again advocated

for herself and her fellow nurses - insisting that the situation be remedied without further delay. Upon reflecting on this fight for equity, Kat said "The victory is more than financial. It's a restoration of dignity, our pride and our rightful place in the field of nursing." "We finally feel seen as whole professionals."

Kat's advice to new nurses is to "Be teachable". No one knows everything when they're just beginning. If you come in willing to learn, your fellow nurses will help you, you'll find mentors. If you come in arrogant, it will be harder. She's found this to be true during every pivot and change in her nursing career. Kat recently made another change; she now works at Kaiser Permanente. While still in the operating room, every job transition allows for opportunities to learn and grow.

Kathleen reminds us that nursing is more than a profession — it's a lifelong act of service. Please join me in celebrating her extraordinary dedication and leadership.

Lifetime Achievement Awards



MIKE KRASHIN

Over the last three decades, Mike has dedicated countless hours to PCNA/ RONA including serving several terms on the board as a director and two stints as president,

each lasting multiple terms. Even after stepping back from being on the board of directors, he continued to serve as a committee chair for the banquet committee. Mike's quiet and steady leadership shepherded our association through challenging times and made many of our annual celebrations successful.

After leaving the military, Mike worked at Good Samaritan Hospital, where he served as a local unit leader through several contract negotiations and as a local unit chair. He also stepped up to leadership roles at WSNA, serving as a delegate for the ANA House of del-

egates conventions as well as on the WSNA economic and general welfare cabinet, including multiple terms as chair of the cabinet.

Over the years Mike has attended countless presentations to nursing students across our region, sharing the story of his nursing career with young and future nurses. In his words, he wanted them to know that "nursing is big enough that you can do anything you want."



EVELYN STREET

Evelyn has always believed in advocating for her patients and her fellow nurses. She began her journey to make a difference by taking on leadership roles in her local unit as co-chair where she helped lead her team in several contract negotiations while also serving within WSNA as a

cabinet member, and ANA delegate, a WSNF board member, and a WSNA Board Director.

Evelyn also became active in PCNA leadership, serving terms on the board as a director as well as two terms as president. During her second term as President, PCNA began to evolve. She worked to professionalize the association, putting in place policies and procedures, implementing a new pointing grid for awarding scholarships, bringing in a bookkeeper to provide detailed monthly financial reports and the long process of transitioning the association from a 501(c)6 to a 501(c)3 organization.

In addition to serving on the board, Evelyn has served on the scholarship committee, finance committee, banquet committee, and is currently working as our newsletter editor. When asked why she steps up to lead and why she stays involved, she shared that it's not only about supporting her fellow nurses, but also fellowship with peers, "to laugh at the end of a hard day".

RONA SCHOLARSHIPS



Andrea Green

Florence Golda Scholarship

Our recipient this year is **Andrea Green**. With ten years of nursing experience, including her current role in the Neuro Trauma Intensive Care Unit at Tacoma General, Andrea has developed a strong foundation in patient care and advocacy. Over her nursing career, she has been committed to advancing her education and skills to improve health outcomes.

Graduating from nursing school in 2015, she earned her BSN in 2018 and obtained certifications. She is now pursuing a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree at Pacific Lutheran University where she maintains a very impressive 4.0GPA. Andrea believes that, in her words, "nursing is not just a profession; it's a vocation that requires compassion, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to those we serve."

We are thrilled to support Andrea with the Florence Golda scholarship to assist her in continuing her nursing education.

COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS

Lend your talents to our committees:

- Newsletter & Social Media
- Fundraising & Scholarships
- Member Education & More!

Even a small amount of your time goes a long way in shaping the future of our industry.

GET INVOLVED TODAY

rainierolympicnurses.org/events

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS



Elia Aguilar-Grant



Mercy Kwamboka



Caitlyn Podolak



Tynnetta Stumvoll



HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS



Aniya Gallion



Chloe Gaydeski



Landon Hamblin



Hadley Lowery

FOR FULL WRITE-UPS ON THESE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS, USE THE QR CODE ABOVE OR VISIT RainierOlympicNurses.org/2026-scholarship-recipients/



Nursing Career Information Session

Sept 23, 2026 | 5:30-6:30pm



Want to inspire the next generation? RONA is looking for volunteers for our Nursing Information Sessions! Share your knowledge and personal experiences with high school students who are interested in entering the nursing field.

Low Commitment: Just 1-2 hours a year makes a massive difference!

Easy & Relaxed: We lead the conversation; you just bring your expertise.

Networking: Connect with fellow nurses in a fun, supportive environment.

Reach out today:

RainierOlympicNurses.org/volunteers-needed

WASHINGTON STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION®

Biennial Business Meeting & Health Equity Webinar

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2026

2 Free CNE contact hours for WSNA members

Important updates from WSNA's new Executive Director, Gerard Friesz. Immediately following the update, Dr. Vanessa Cameron, PhD, RN, NPD-BC, CEN, CNL will present on ableism in healthcare.

REGISTER AT wsna.org



Amanda Mackey & Sue Jacobson make yard sale signs.

Summer Fund Raising

We had an eventful summer of fundraising activities. In addition to our 3rd annual Yard Sale, we hosted a Panera restaurant takeover, and a Classy Chassis Car Wash fundraiser. Over the last two months, we've raised **over \$1,400** for the RONA Scholarship Fund!

Our next large fundraiser is our Bowling Tournament on Saturday, February 6th. We hope you'll consider forming a team and hitting the lanes with us!



Seasonal Affective Depression Changing Leaves, Changing Moods

By Carol Gijima, DNP, MSN, RN, ARNP, PMHNP-BC

With the changing colors of autumn come changes that extend beyond the landscape. As summer gives way to cooler days and longer nights, the seasonal transition can influence not only our routines but also our mental and emotional wellness. For healthcare professionals like nurses, recognizing these emotional shifts in both ourselves and our patients is vital to promoting holistic health.

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a form of depression that typically occurs during the fall and winter months, and is associated with changes in serotonin, a neurotransmitter that helps regulate mood (National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], 2023 ; Spurny-Dworak et al., 2026).

Why Do Seasonal Changes Affect Mood?

The transition into fall disrupts internal biological clocks and daily environments through several distinct mechanisms:

Biochemical shifts—As daylight hours decrease, our bodies receive less exposure to sunlight, which can affect the regulation of serotonin and melatonin, two chemicals that play important roles in mood, sleep, and overall well-being. Changes in these neurotransmitter and hormone levels may contribute to fatigue, low mood, decreased motivation, and increased stress. In some individuals, reduced light exposure and seasonal changes are strongly associated with the development of seasonal affective disorder (SAD), a condition linked to disruptions in serotonin regulation and circadian rhythms (Mayo Clinic, 2021; Spurny-Dworak et al., 2026).

Routine Disruptions—Fall often brings significant changes in routine. Back-to-school demands, surging workplace workloads, and early holiday planning create compressed timelines and heavy emotional strain.

Signs to Watch For

While occasional mood changes are normal, it is important to recognize when symptoms may be affecting daily life. Common signs include:

- Increased fatigue or low energy
- Changes or disruptions in sleep patterns
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feelings of sadness or irritability
- Loss of interest in usual activities
- Increased or unmanaged stress, or anxiety
- Social withdrawal (Mayo Clinic, 2021).

Nurses are uniquely positioned to identify these signs early in patients, colleagues, and themselves.

Prioritizing Mental Wellness This Season

The arrival of fall presents an ideal opportunity to reset and adopt intentional and healthy habits that support emotional well-being.

Get Outside—Cooler temperatures don't have to mean staying indoors. Taking advantage of natural light, especially in the morning, can help support mood, energy levels, and healthy sleep-wake cycles. Even a short walk during a work break or after a shift can make a meaningful difference. Because seasonal mood changes are closely linked to reduced daylight exposure, increasing time outdoors and, when appropriate, using bright light therapy may help support emotional well-being during the fall and winter months (NIMH, 2023; Menegaz de Almeida et al., 2025).

Keep Moving—Incorporate regular physical movement, such as brisk autumn walks or quick home workouts. Exercise triggers endorphin releases that naturally combat seasonal sluggishness.

Maintain Healthy Sleep Habits—Consistent sleep schedules support both mental and physical health. Aim for adequate rest and establish a calming bedtime routine whenever possible. Keep your sleep environment dark and cool and turn off digital screens at least 30 minutes before resting.

Stay Connected—Social support remains one of the most powerful protective factors for mental health. Make time to connect with friends, family, coworkers, and supportive community groups. Resist the urge to isolate as temperatures drop. Schedule intentional check-ins with friends, family, or nursing peers to share experiences and reduce emotional load.

Practice Mindfulness—Simple practices such as deep breathing, gratitude journaling, or meditation can help reduce stress and improve emotional resilience.

Make Self-Care a Priority—Nurses spend much of their time caring for others. This season, remember that self-care is not a luxury, it is a necessity. Taking breaks, setting boundaries, and engaging in activities that bring joy can help prevent burnout and compassion fatigue.

Remember

Just as leaves change with the seasons, our emotional needs may change as well. Checking in with ourselves is every

bit as important as assessing our patients. By recognizing the impact seasonal transitions can have on mental health, we can better support our own well-being and continue providing compassionate care to those who depend on us.

Fall Mental Health Challenge

This month, choose one wellness goal:

- Take a 15-minute walk outside three times per week
- Practice gratitude each day
- Schedule time for a favorite hobby
- Reach out to a friend or family member weekly
- Commit to a consistent sleep routine

Small changes can have a lasting impact. As the leaves begin to change, let this season be a reminder to nurture your mental health and embrace the opportunities for growth, balance, and renewal.



Scan the QR Code or visit the article online for references" at RainierOlympicNurses.org/2026/08/18/seasonal-affective-depression-changing-leaves-changing-moods/

WHAT'S REALLY ON THE MENU?

Exploring the Science of Ultra-Processed Food



SATURDAY

NOVEMBER 7, 2026

OPEN 9-10:30AM

VIA ZOOM

RESEVATIONS MADE AT:

WWW.RAINIEROLYMPICNURSES.ORG





Gordy West
PhD, MPH, BSN, RN, FACHE, AMBC
Assistant Professor
University Place

President's Message | Board of Directors 2026 - 2027

Dear Members and Friends,

As the crisp air of autumn settles in, I want to take a moment to reflect on a fantastic season and share our deepest gratitude for your continued support.

Our summer fundraising activities were a resounding success, and that accomplishment belongs entirely to this community. Whether you volunteered your time, donated, attended our events, or helped spread the word, your involvement made a tangible difference. Because of your generosity, RONA is well-positioned to continue funding our core programs.

As we transition into fall, we remain committed to strengthening our community connections, advocating for our shared interests, and hosting engaging local programming. Please check out this newsletter and our social channels for upcoming meeting announcements and seasonal events.

I also want to take a moment to thank our past president, Tami Green, for her dedicated leadership and tireless service to RONA. Her commitment to our mission and this community has left a lasting impact, and we are deeply grateful for everything she gave during her time at the helm.

Fall is also an important season for civic engagement. As we head toward the upcoming elections, I want to encourage all of our members to make their voices heard. Participating in the democratic process is one of the most meaningful ways we can advocate for our community, our profession, and the issues that matter to nurses. Please take the time to check your voter registration, learn about what's on your ballot, and make a plan to vote.

Thank you once again for your dedication, enthusiasm, and partnership in making our community. Our efforts collectively support our mission to support, encourage, empower, and engage current and future nurses by connecting them to each other and to their community.

Warm regards,
Gordy West
President, RONA

Vice President



Debi Brogan
MSN, RNC
Faculty / L&D
Elma

Secretary



Kimberley Russell
RN
Ortho-Med-Surg
Lakewood

Treasurer



Josie Hansen
RN
Clinical Instructor
Gig Harbor

Director



Rachael De Souza
MEd, MPH, BSN, RN
School Nurse
Tacoma

Director



Althea Dinglasan
BSN, RN
Cardiac ICU
Tacoma

Director



Carol Gjijma
DNP, MSN, BS, ARNP, PMNP-BC
Psych
Puyallup

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Scott Jahner
ARNP
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Zac Lemieux
RN
IR/ER
Gig Harbor

Director



Jessica Lenczycki
MSN, RN, CCR
Labor & Delivery
Tacoma

Director



Carina Price
BSN, BA, RN
Cardiac ICU
Lakewood

Thank you Tami Green, Susan Jacobson & Karli Looi for your years of service and leadership on the RONA Board of Directors!



4115 Bridgeport Way W., Suite F.
University Place, WA 98466

FREE EDUCATION EVENT FOR NURSES

Film Screening & Facilitated Discussion



Saturday, October 17

10 am to 12:30 pm

Tacoma Community College Auditorium

6501 S 19th St, Tacoma, WA 98466

Limited Seating
Registration Required



Register on RainierOlympicNurses.org —or— use the QR code above.

RONA

SAVE THE DATES!

FEB
6

Bowling Tournament

Saturday, February 6, 2027

FEB
20

Nurses Ed Series

First Contact in Migraine Care

Saturday, February 20, 2027

MAY
15

RONA Nurses Month Celebration

Saturday, May 15, 2027