

NURSING: THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE – A LIMITLESS PROFESSION

Speaker Biographies



Sean Clarke, RN, PhD, FAAN

In his current role as Executive Vice Dean at the NYU Rory Meyers College of Nursing, he oversees recruitment and development of faculty at one of the largest private university schools of nursing in the US—NYU Meyers had over 1600 students in its bachelor’s through doctoral programs and employed more than 80 full-time faculty in Fall 2020. With fellow leaders at the College and at NYU, he is closely involved in both day-to-day operations and the planning and execution of longer-range strategy for the College. He continues to be involved in writing, teaching, research collaborations and professional service touching on his longstanding interests in workforce and professional issues in nursing, health policy, and the quality and safety of patient care.

Why Dr. Clarke Chose Nursing:

Dr. Sean Clarke entered nursing school in 1998 after earning bachelor’s degrees in biochemistry and psychology. After coming into contact with nurses through family experiences and an early series of jobs in health care, he saw many traits in nurses that he admired—he saw insightful, practically-grounded, and action-oriented people with finely tuned instincts around priorities and proportion and exceptional senses of humor. He also saw an unparalleled opportunity to blend his interests in the life sciences and the social sciences in a single career path and was excited by the possibility of joining a profession very much still in evolution. Almost 30 years and many positions and roles later, he remains very proud to be a member of the profession, admires nurses and their work across settings every bit as much, and believes strongly that some of the most important contributions of the nursing profession in the US and globally are still yet to come.



Jennifer Dohrn, DNP, CNM, FAAN

I am currently Assistant Dean of Global Initiatives at Columbia University School of Nursing. As a midwife, I directed and taught in the Midwifery Program at CU, and now teach Global Health Equity and the Responsibility of the Nursing Profession. I have built a global student clinical experiences program, where approximately 70 students spend their final six weeks of integration at a global site – nursing education institution, hospital, community center. I am also director of our WHO/PAHO Collaborating Center for Advanced Practice Nursing which collaborates with regional nursing and midwifery leadership on promoting expanded roles for nurses to achieve universal health coverage for all.

Why Dr. Dohrn Chose Nursing:

I chose nursing because my own experiences during childbirth motivated me to become a midwife who would serve women who historically have not had equitable care for safe childbirth. This journey continues to take me on many paths, from opening a birthing center under the leadership of Dr. Ruth que in the South Bronx, to working with nurses and midwives in over 10 Sub Saharan African countries to improve HIV and primary care services, to documenting nurses’ and midwives’ stories on the frontlines of the Ebola epidemic in Sierra Leone and Liberia and

now in NYC in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. I am extremely grateful that the nursing profession challenges me to be a global nurse and midwife fighting for equity in health care for all. Nursing is more than a career for me. It is my life's journey – nurse–midwife, an educator, a global nurse, an activist for justice.



Susan B. Hassmiller, RN, PhD, FAAN

I am the senior adviser for nursing at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the director of the Future of Nursing: Campaign for Action, a joint initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, AARP, and the AARP Foundation to improve health through nursing.

I am also the Senior Scholar-in-Residence and Senior Adviser to the President on Nursing at the National Academy of Medicine.

Why Dr. Hassmiller Chose Nursing:

I became a nurse because my mother was one, and I wanted to serve others and give back to my community.



Sandra Lewenson, EdD, MS, RN, FAAN

Dr. Lewenson integrates nursing's rich history into her work as professor of nursing at the Lienhard School of Nursing, College of Health Professions, Pace University. She weaves her love of nursing history into her courses including those on primary health care, nursing education, and theoretical underpinnings. She serves on doctoral committees at both Pace University and at Teachers College, Columbia University.

She has been the recipient of the Outstanding Scholarship and Research Award from Teachers College, Columbia University, inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Alumni Association of Hunter College, and received the American Association for the History of Nursing Lavinia Dock Award for Historical Scholarship and Research in Nursing for her seminal work, *Taking Charge: Nursing, Suffrage, and Feminism in America, 1873–1920*. In addition, she has won two American Journal of Nursing Book of the Year Awards in 2008 for *Capturing Nursing History: A Guide to Historical Methods in Research and Decision-Making in Nursing: Thoughtful Approaches for Practice*. Her colleagues at Pace University awarded her the 2008–2009 Keenan Award for Teaching Excellence. Dr. Lewenson received the AAHN Mary M. Roberts Award in 2013 for her co-edited book, *Nursing Interventions Through Time: History as Evidence* and in 2018 for *Nursing History for Contemporary Role*. Dr. Lewenson is a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing since 2000, and a member of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society since 1984.

Why Dr. Lewenson Chose Nursing:

Growing up I saw nurses at work caring for families including my own. I wanted to better understand the world in which I lived, and nursing (I thought) could provide me with answers. In 1967 I enrolled at Hunter College's baccalaureate nursing program that was newly affiliated with Bellevue Hospital. Hunter's program replaced Bellevue's noted diploma school of nursing. I moved from my home in the Bronx into the nurses' residence in New York City and entered a whole new world. My love for the profession grew during my time at Hunter, where we witnessed the ongoing civil rights movement, the peace demonstrations, the women's movement, and the social reforms of the day. I fell in love with my public health rotation in Central Harlem, and never looked back. Public health nursing became my specialty and history (later in life) became the focus of my research. After a few years in public health nursing, I became a nurse educator, merging my interests in public health and history.



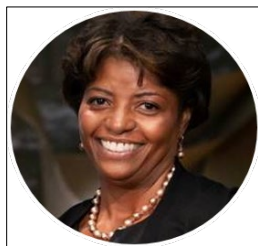
Rear Admiral Susan Orsega, MSN, FNP-BC, FAANP, FAAN

Rear Admiral Susan Orsega is the Director of Commissioned Corps Headquarters (CCHQ) at the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, US Department of Health and Human Services. Appointed in March 2019, she is responsible for directing all functions regarding personnel, operations, readiness, deployment, and policy for the approximate 6,100 members of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps (USPHS) and development of the Reserve Corps. She is currently leading CCHQ operations in a historic COVID-19 deployment of officers. She served as the 11th USPHS Chief Nurse Officer from May 2016 to October 2019 and began her career 31 years ago in the USPHS assigned as an Ensign at National Institutes of Health. She transferred to National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) in 2001. From 2007- 2019, she was responsible for the operational management of 2 NIAID projects with South African and Malian Governments, and was an instrumental member of the West Africa Ebola research team. She has a distinguished public health emergency experience ranging from selection to an elite USPHS medical team after 9/11 as well as 14 other national and international disaster responses.

Why Rear Admiral Orsega Chose Nursing:

I was drawn to the nursing profession because of an intrigue I had with science and I liked helping people. Growing up in Pittsburgh seeing diabetes inflict both grandparents, I saw first-hand their challenges and complexity with their chronic diseases, treatment, and access to care. I often wondered how their disease would have been positively impacted if there was more access to public health and prevention measures.

I had many role models who encouraged me to go into nursing. My great aunt, who was a nurse, was one of them. Her fascinating stories, how she applied her love of science to her patient care, inspired me. She would boisterously laugh as she talked about having fun with the nurses she worked while working hard. Today, I have some of the same stories with cherished colleagues. During high school, I accompanied my neighbor, a community health nurse, who provided public health interventions to patients, or she called 'clients', in disadvantaged communities in the city. I remember thinking how novel the concept of bringing health to neighborhoods. Both, like many of their peers, were relentless in advancing nursing practice through excellence. I wanted to make a similar impact.



Edwidge Thomas, DNP, ANP

As the Medical/Clinical Director of Mount Sinai Hospital's Performing Provider System (MSPPS) for Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program, an \$8 Billion clinical incentive program designed to transform care delivery for Medicaid eligible patients in NY state. My responsibilities includes providing strategic direction to maximize MSPPS' potential earnable dollars, designing and implementing innovative quality improvement programs while collaborating with PPS partners to enhance their infrastructure and implement clinical transformation strategies to help their transition to

a value based payment system.

Why Dr. Thomas Chose Nursing:

During my formative years, I worked with my immigrant parents to support newly immigrated families to acculturate to the American system of healthcare, education, political process, building wealth through buying real state and investing. One of my earlier assignments was to escort mothers and children to their doctor's appointments to translate and provide emotional support. My early exposure to the importance of preventative healthcare and have a trusting relationship with a medical provider nurtured the desire to help people navigate and manage their health challenges and maintain optimal health in the pursuit of the American dream, while pursuing my own American dream of becoming doctor.

After college, I decided to attend nursing school to raise money for medical school. While working at Columbia Presbyterian Neurosurgical ICU, I was introduced to the role of the Nurse Practitioner and realized that the role encompassed all the critical attributes of a clinician that I had aspired to be. Guiding patients' health with compassion using clinical evidence to determine the best course while encouraging patient engagement in treatment decisions and incorporating all social, behavioral, economic, and political determinants that influences health and wellness, could only be achieved in Nursing. Best decision I ever made.