

Nebraska Nursing Hall of Fame



Sheila Exstrom

2015 Nebraska Nurses Association Hall of Fame Inductee

Sheila Exstrom PhD MA BSN RN became the most recent inductee to the NNA Hall of Fame. The induction ceremony was held on February 12th at the conclusion of the NNA Nurses Day at the Legislature.

“During her 25 years of dedicated service as Education Consultant for the Nebraska Board of Nursing, Sheila was also actively involved at the national level with the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN). She attended and actively participated at Mid-Year and annual Delegate Assembly meetings for 25 years. She additionally served on several different NCSBN committees and task forces, ensuring Nebraska’s inclusion in high stakes discussions

and decisions regarding the future of nursing.

“One of her greatest contributions to NCSBN was her involvement on the Examination Committee – arguably the most important committee of NCSBN. She served on the Examination Committee for NCSBN as a committee member from 1995-2005, and chaired this committee from 2005-2009. She provided visionary leadership to the Examination Committee – skillfully providing guidance in the adoption of computer adaptive testing and maintaining the integrity and currency of the National Council Licensure Examinations (NCLEX) for nurses.

“A dynamic leader, members of the NCSBN Examination Committee commended Sheila for her ability to draw forth the unique contributions of each member. She worked tirelessly to ensure that the NCLEX exam continued to the “Gold Standard” for examinations that lead to licensure. Her committee members identify Sheila’s genuine leadership skills – of being inclusive, receptive to differing opinions, and for insisting that all members be respectfully “heard” – resulting in committee members valuing themselves and each other. The profession of nursing at both state and national levels is strengthened because of Dr. Exstrom’s contributions.”

Her nomination letters highlight other lifelong contributions. Dr. Exstrom “made significant contributions as a staff nurse when she and colleague had the foresight to initiate the first Coronary Care Unit and Code 4 team at Immanuel Hospital. While leading the nursing department at Immanuel as Director of Nursing, Sheila fostered the innovative patient-centered care through strategic leadership related to the building of a Friesen-designed facility, the introduction of Primary Nursing, and unit secretaries transcribing orders. Sheila also held a top leadership role as Assistant Administrator at Lincoln General Hospital where she facilitated creation of the first trauma center in a private hospital in Nebraska. These revolutionary initiatives brought Nebraska nursing care delivery and healthcare to the national forefront.”

Dr. Exstrom served nurses in Nebraska as the President of Nebraska Nurses Association from 1974 – 1978. Her “consummate leadership abilities at the state and national levels and genuine commitment to collaborative decision-making regarding vital issues in practice, education, administration, and licensure have advanced the profession of nursing.”