

VENA 2027 Election Candidate Announcement

Virginia Emergency Nurses Association



Virginia State Council

Voting opens September 25 through October 10.

Advancing Emergency Nursing Across Virginia

EXECUTIVE BOARD CANDIDATES



PRESIDENT-ELECT

Teresa Kristek, DNP, MSN, RN, FNE, TCRN

Highly experienced emergency and trauma nurse with over 25 years of clinical, educational, and leadership expertise. Serving as VENA Director and Chair of the Education Committee, she has enhanced statewide educational programs and contributed to national emergency nursing scholarship as a peer reviewer for the Journal of Emergency Nursing. Her diverse background spans forensic nursing, trauma program development, and advanced practice leadership. Teresa is dedicated to advancing professional development, broadening access to quality education, and championing member-driven initiatives throughout Virginia.



TREASURER-ELECT

Kristal M. Sullivan, MSN, RN, CPEN, TCRN

Respected emergency and trauma nursing leader with more than 25 years of experience. She has served VENA as President (2024 & 2026), Director, Trauma State Chair, and Education Chair, contributing significantly to statewide trauma education, pediatric emergency care, and organizational governance. Kristal's leadership is marked by fiscal responsibility, transparent communication, and a strong commitment to advancing emergency nursing practice. She brings deep experience in program development, trauma systems, and statewide collaboration.



SECRETARY

Lynn Cunningham, MSN, RN, CEN, TCRN

Highly experienced emergency nurse and educator with decades of clinical expertise and leadership across Virginia. A lifetime ENA member and current VENA Secretary, Lynn has contributed to statewide education, professional development, and chapter leadership. Her background includes clinical professional development, trauma education, and emergency department operations. Lynn is known for her organizational excellence, communication skills, and dedication to supporting emergency nurses through mentorship and statewide engagement.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATES: 2 NON-OFFICER BOARD MEMBERS – SELECT 2



Michelle Thorp, BSN, RN, CEN

Committed leader in community outreach, quality improvement, and statewide engagement. As VENA Membership Chair, she has strengthened member involvement and supported initiatives that enhance professional growth. She has over 27 years of ED nursing experience, with a focus on quality, safety, and mentoring new emergency nurses. She is passionate about fostering connection, supporting professional development, and advancing emergency nursing excellence. She also serves as co-chair of the new national ENA Ambassador Program Committee.



Tiffany Chatham, BSN, RN, CEN, CPEN, TCN

Trauma outreach coordinator and pediatric emergency nurse with 17 years of ED experience. She has led statewide trauma education initiatives, developed outreach programs, and supported pediatric emergency care across multiple systems. Tiffany's leadership includes trauma program development, community education, and mentorship of new emergency nurses. She is dedicated to strengthening trauma readiness, improving pediatric emergency care, and supporting statewide collaboration.



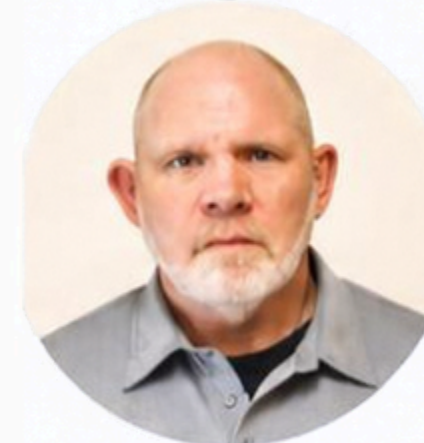
Alex Kasmere, MSN, RN, CPEN, TCN, EMTP

Pediatric ED Nurse Manager at UVA Health Children's and a current VENA Director. His background includes emergency services, leadership, workforce strategy, trauma program development, and national VENA involvement. Alex has led operational redesign, improved clinical governance, and supported statewide pediatric emergency initiatives. He is dedicated to advancing emergency nursing education, strengthening workforce development, and supporting statewide collaboration.



Cheryl Blichzar, BSN, RN, CEN, TCRN, CLNC

Long-time VENA leader with current VENA Treasurer with extensive emergency, trauma, and critical care experience. Her background includes rural emergency care, trauma education, legal nurse consulting, and statewide government affairs involvement. Cheryl has contributed significantly to statewide conference planning, trauma initiatives, and chapter leadership. She is dedicated to supporting rural emergency nurses, strengthening statewide advocacy, and advancing trauma education.



Mark Boswell, MSN, FNP-BC, CEN, CFPN, CTRN, TCRN

Advanced practice provider with more than 26 years of emergency, trauma, and transport nursing experience. A lifelong VENA member, Mark has served in multiple leadership roles and contributed extensively to trauma education, flight nursing, and emergency preparedness. His background includes advanced certifications across emergency, transport, and trauma specialties, and he brings a strong commitment to clinical excellence, statewide education, and advocacy for emergency nurses.



Kristi Adams, MSN-FNP, RN, CEN, CPEN, TCRN

Experienced emergency nurse and family nurse practitioner with more than 20 years of clinical experience. Her leadership includes mentoring new nurses, improving ED throughout, and supporting trauma and emergency care operations. Kristi has contributed to emergency department redesign, quality improvement, and staff development. She is committed to strengthening emergency nursing practice, supporting workforce resilience, and advancing statewide education.



Johnetta "Denise" Phillip, MSN, RN

Accomplished nurse leader with more than 15 years of emergency and urgent care experience. Her leadership includes serving as Director of Medical Support, Clinical Nurse Manager, and developer of standardized preceptor programs. Denise has led ED teams, improved throughout, and strengthened clinical operations. She is committed to supporting emergency nurse development, improving patient flow, and advancing statewide emergency care initiatives.

SIG Candidates



CENTRAL VIRGINIA SIG – CHAIR-ELECT

Donna Talbot, RN, CEN

Decades of ENA leadership, trauma education experience, and statewide engagement. She is committed to strengthening SIG collaboration, supporting new emergency nurses, and expanding educational opportunities across Central Virginia.



RURAL EMERGENCY CARE OF VIRGINIA SIG – CHAIR-ELECT

Cheryl Blicharz, BSN, RN, CEN, TCRN, CLNC

Diverse experience across rural, freestanding, and trauma EDs positions her to advocate strongly for rural emergency nurses. She aims to expand rural education, strengthen collaboration, and support statewide trauma readiness.

The 2027 VENA Election slate reflects the strength, diversity, and dedication of emergency nurses across Virginia. Each candidate brings unique expertise and a shared commitment to advancing emergency nursing practice, education, advocacy, and member engagement.



VENA thanks all nominees for their willingness to serve and for their continued contributions to emergency nursing throughout the Commonwealth.