Dear Reader,


When you begin a new undertaking such as deciding to pursue an advanced education, it is important to develop a strategy that includes setting personal goals.

You need to think about how you will get where you want to be in your pursuit of education. Can you afford to quit your job and go back to school in a traditional environment, or do you need an online program that offers more flexibility? Can you motivate yourself to complete a degree program in a self-paced environment, or do you need more structure? What type of degree will help you land your dream job? Do you have friends and family members who will support and encourage you as you go back to school?

Goals provide you with a measurement to determine whether or not progress is being made. Set measurable goals — both incremental and all-encompassing. For example, if your overarching goal is to earn your bachelor’s degree in the next three years, an incremental goal could be setting aside a minimum of one hour per night to study for your courses.

Keep your focus on the benefits you will gain from achieving your goals and obtaining advanced education ... new job, better pay, inspiration for children, etc.

This edition of the magazine includes articles about self-motivation, education as an investment, goal achievement, new education programs available, and more.

We hope you will find this magazine to be a great resource, and we encourage you to share it with a friend by forwarding it on.

Submit stories about your educational journey or your experiences as a healthcare professional for publication. You can also supply research you are working on that might be of use to other readers or information about upcoming events in your area.

Information should be submitted for potential publication in future editions to editor@collegenetwork.com no later than the 15th of each month.

Enjoy this edition of *Education Editorial*!

Sincerely,

**Lindsay Schmitt, editor**
The College Network
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Authors/Contributors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Flexibility to Earn a BS in Nursing</td>
<td>Wendy Jo Augeson, RN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Education Makes Good Cents</td>
<td>Stefanie Kinsey, Business Analyst for The College Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses</td>
<td>Anjeanette Sausedo, NFLPN Executive Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Five Keys to Self Discipline</td>
<td>Hilari Luck, Program Advisor at The College Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The Guidance Call: Positioning You for Success</td>
<td>Brooke Cassidy, Manager of Academic Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Inspiring the Next Generation of Nurses</td>
<td>Julie Blalock, RN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mental Health First Aid Certification Training</td>
<td>Anjeanette Sausedo, NFLPN Executive Administrator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Flexibility to Earn a BS in Nursing

A former waitress, bartender, EMT, certified assistant nurse, home health aide, and licensed practical nurse, Wendy Jo Augeson worked a variety of jobs before earning her RN license. “Nursing is just something I always wanted to do,” said Wendy. “I have always loved the fast pace of the emergency room, as well as the diversity of functions that a registered nurse in a critical access hospital is able to obtain. There are never two days in a row alike.”

Wendy’s Director of Nursing strongly encouraged her to earn her BSN. “I certainly think that with the current financial situation the way it is, anything you can do to prepare yourself for opportunities is a positive thing,” said Wendy.

Married with three children, ranging in age from 3 to 14, Wendy started a BS in Nursing program with The College Network and Regis University when her youngest child was still a baby. “I had just returned from maternity leave when I started the program,” said Wendy. “It was a lot of late nights and early mornings, and it was challenging at times.”

Wendy had looked into other programs but liked the flexibility of The College Network and Regis University. “Other programs required specific times that you had to be online and that was a drawback. The flexibility of this program worked to my benefit,” she said. “There just weren’t many options in my area. If I would have had to drive hours to get to school, I never would have been able to complete it.”

She was able to find a co-worker who had started the program about the same time. “It was nice to have a study buddy, someone to bounce things off of,” said Wendy. “We would videotape each other doing assessments, which was very helpful and added a little fun to studying.”

Wendy describes herself as a “self-taught computer learner” and encourages others to overcome technology fears.

“I was extremely limited in my computer abilities, but I just worked through my fears and learned. And I was hesitant going in, wondering how much I could get out of an online course, but the teachers were amazing at what they could facilitate through chats,” said Wendy. “I was really impressed. Anybody can do it, even without computer expertise or experience. That’s something people worry about, but don’t let that hold you back.”

Wendy was able to earn her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Regis University in only two years while working at least 32 hours a week at a community hospital. She is now employed on the nursing administration team, working with new hires, staff education, and staff development. Wendy is strongly considering going back to school, yet again, to earn her Master of Science in Nursing degree next—online.

Learn How You Can Get Started In a Program from Regis University

BS in Nursing
MS in Nursing
RN to MS in Nursing

Call us at 1-800-395-1014 to learn more

www.collegenetwork.com/TCNmagRegis
Higher education is an investment, which many people often mistake as an expense. We’ve compiled a list of three key reasons to consider investing in education. There are long-term returns to investing in your education and earning an advanced degree including increased salary, more job opportunities, and lower unemployment.

1. Increased Earnings throughout your life
According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the article “Back to College: BLS Spotlight on Statistics,” the median weekly earnings of workers who have earned a bachelor’s degree was 1.8 times the average amount earned by those with a high school diploma. The median weekly earnings of workers with a bachelor’s degree increased to 2.5 times the earnings of someone who did not complete high school education.

![Median Weekly Earnings](image)

U.S. News & World Report published that those holding a bachelor’s degree, no matter what field, can expect to earn $1.55 million more in their lifetime than someone with “some college” and $1.30 million more than a person with a maximum education level of high school diploma. Additional education beyond a bachelor’s degree further widens the gap in lifetime earnings.

2. Better Job Opportunities
In a tough economy and ever-changing job market, the best thing to have is advanced education and training. Degree and professional certification programs help you build the skills employers find most valuable for promotable positions such as management. In fact, The National Center for Education Statistics found that more than 88 percent of all persons in management, professional, and related occupations, and 64 percent of all employed persons over the age of 25 have achieved at least some college education.

3. Less likely to be unemployed
Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. found in August 2012 that higher unemployment rates, especially in metropolitan areas across the country, could be the result of education gaps. The number of job openings per unemployed worker in the United States was almost twice as many for people with a bachelor’s degree or higher compared with those who reported having “some college or an associate degree.” According to Department of Numbers, the unemployment rate for individuals with a degree was one-third of the rate for individuals without a high school diploma in November 2012.

You can see that education simply makes sense when you are considering how to invest your money. Consider a short-term financial investment for long-term gain throughout your career.
If you are a nurse, a great way to get continued nursing education and stay connected with your peers is to join a professional organization like the National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses (NFLPN).

NFLPN is the top organization for licensed practical/vocational nurses in the United States. Our mission is to foster high standards of nursing care and promote continued competence through education/certification and lifelong learning with a focus on public protection. We are committed to quality and professionalism in the delivery of nursing care.

NFLPN is the only organization in the United States that is governed entirely by LPNs and LVNs and has become known by other nursing organizations as the official voice of LPNs and LVNs.

Membership in NFLPN is based on a two-tier concept of state and national enrollment with members consisting of licensed practical and vocational nurses, retired LPNs/LVNs, PN/VN nursing students, and affiliates.

Our purpose at the NFLPN is to:

- Provide leadership for the nearly one million LPNs and LVNs in the U.S.
- Encourage every LPN/LVN to make continuing education a priority
- Advocate the effective use of LPNs/LVNs in every type of healthcare facility
- Serve as the central source of information for LPNs/LVNs on the local, state, and national level

For more information on NFLPN or membership in our organization, visit us online at [www.nflpn.org](http://www.nflpn.org).

### Join the National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses Today!

Visit [www.nflpn.org](http://www.nflpn.org) for more information

---

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The College Network is the preferred education partner of NFLPN
We must envision where we are going before we get there, because the first step to any journey is to see the vision and believe it is for you. The first steps of success in your education starts with you, and you can't walk effectively towards success without self-discipline.

If only we could have learned this lesson sooner. Many of us can talk and remember journeys we were on far too long; not because the distance was far but because we spent way too much time grumbling and complaining. We have allowed life issues to enter in and redirect our focus. Sometimes it's not until we are up against a wall that we are ready to claim our responsibility and choose our destiny to be successful.

How about you? How is your self-discipline? Plato said, "The first and best victory is to conquer self." Here are a five steps, to help you conquer self and to develop your self-discipline.

1. Develop and follow your priorities.

Choose you. Make your education a priority in your life. It will be much easier to follow through. Do not just begin, but FINISH your degree when you make your education a priority for you.

2. Make a disciplined lifestyle your goal.

To be successful in any area in your life self-discipline can’t be a one-time event; it has to become a lifestyle.

3. Challenge your excuses.

Eliminate any tendencies you have to make an excuse not to continue your education. We can all name reasons and excuses why we shouldn’t do something — why we can’t have self-discipline. Realize that this is really just a barrier to stop you and me from succeeding. All of this needs to be challenged and broken down if we want to move to the next level.

4. Remove rewards until you complete the job.

Many of us have gotten to the point where we enjoy our desserts before we even eat our meal. If we start to reward positive and negative actions the same, I'm afraid many of us will see that our rewards are truly unearned and undeserved.

5. Stay focused on results.

Anytime we focus our attention only on work instead of results, we become very discouraged. The next time you are facing the task to decide if you need to study or instead do what is convenient and easy, pay the price, change your focus and think about the benefits of completing your degree.

So today, not tomorrow, continue to promote or incorporate self-discipline in your path toward your future and towards your higher degree by setting up an appointment with one of our Program Advisors. As I stated earlier, the first step to any journey is to see the vision and believe it is for you. We at The College Network have a proven record and the tools you need to succeed, so let us help you move into your vision of obtaining a higher degree.

Hilari is a Senior Program Advisor who has been with The College Network for nearly 4 years. She lives and works in Southern New Jersey.

She has been praised by many customers for her caring spirit and motivational support.
The Guidance Call: Positioning You for Success

By: Brooke Cassidy, Academic Support Manager

Beginning an independent study program can seem overwhelming, especially in the early stages, which is why Academic Support offers each of our customers the opportunity to complete a Guidance Call — The College Network’s introductory orientation call.

The Guidance Call gives an Academic Advisor the chance to discuss a customer’s goals and expectations, alleviating any trepidation about jumping into the first course, while establishing a rapport with the customer that can endure throughout their program. Conveying our desire to support the customer’s efforts to earn their degree is our highest priority, and that message is reinforced throughout the call.

Moreover, the Guidance Call is used to introduce the customer to the resources that have been designed with the needs of the distance learner in mind. This includes a comprehensive tour of our online learning tool, The College Network Resource Center™, as well as explanations of the Center for Learning Empowerment™, the Academic Guidance Planner, and The College Network’s discussion forum where customers discuss content, locate study partners, and share their distance learning experiences.

In addition to reviewing the available resources, we discuss study planning as it relates to the customer’s goals, schedule, and learning style. Helping the customer establish realistic goals and expectations play a key role in keeping the customer actively engaged in the day-to-day studies, while progressing to the larger milestones of passing exams, school enrollment, and graduation.

The Guidance Call is concluded by giving the customer the opportunity to ask questions and schedule an optional follow-up call. We remind the customer of our hours of operation and contact methods to ensure the customer knows when we are available and that we are here to help.

Call The College Network at 1-800-395-1014 to learn more about the online programs available.
Nursing is in Julie Blalock’s family blood. “I guess I got the nursing gene from my great aunt,” Julie said. “She was a nurse near the turn of the century and even left me her old nursing stuff—including an antique travel kit with reusable needles.”

Julie began her nursing career as a medic in the Army then transferred to the Air Force. “I was in the Air Force for 21 years before I retired in 2006,” she said. Even though Julie retired from the military, her nursing career was far from over.

Julie worked as an LVN at a VA Hospital following her retirement, but soon found that she would need additional education. “There is a big push in nursing to get a BSN. All hospitals want bachelor’s prepared nurses and many even want nurses with an MSN. Soon the entry point will be having your degree,” she said.

Julie enrolled in the LVN to BS in Nursing program with Indiana State University. “I worked nights, and it was awesome to be able to do the program at 2 a.m. I used all of my downtime and created flash cards that I took everywhere,” she said.

Working on her own in an online program was an empowering experience for Julie. “During clinical rotations, I was able to find answers for myself and felt comfortable going straight to the doctors for advice.”

When her niece was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer during her finals, Julie was extremely thankful that she had chosen a flexible, online program. “My niece had to undergo seven hours of surgery around the time of my finals. Because I was earning my degree online, I was able to study at the hospital and continue in my courses,” she said.

Julie graduated from Indiana State University in December 2010 and chose to continue working in med-surg at the VA hospital. When asked if she would do anything differently, she said, “I wouldn’t wait until I was older to start. I would have started on my BSN when I was younger.”

Now she is inspiring the next generation in her family to choose nursing as a profession. “My 15-year-old niece wants to be a nurse like me,” Julie said. As for advice to other nurses who are considering earning a BSN online, Julie says it is important to simply get started. “It is good to stay on top of things and just keep going. It is definitely possible to earn your BSN.”
You are invited to attend this very prestigious Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) certification training, hosted by NFLPN on October 18-19, 2013.

The MHFA training is of value to everyone in patient care, first responder, social work, and community outreach industries. This training, although hosted by NFLPN, is not solely for our members but for everyone. We invite you to share this experience with us in effort to help strengthen patient care in the communities we serve.

More about the MHFA program: Recently endorsed by President Obama in his recommendations to respond to Mental Illness in our nation's schools, Mental Health First Aid is a groundbreaking public education program that helps identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. This MHFA training is endorsed by the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare and administered by certified MHFA trainers.

Mental Health First Aid is offered in the form of an interactive two-day, 12 CE hour course that presents an overview of mental illness and substance use disorders in the U.S. It also introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems, builds understanding of their impact, and provides an overview of common treatments. Those who take the course to certify as Mental Health First Aiders will learn a 5-step action plan encompassing the skills, resources and knowledge for helping an individual in crisis connect with appropriate professional, peer, social and self-help care.

The Mental Health First Aid USA course has benefited a variety of audiences and key professions including nurses and other primary care professionals, employers and business leaders, faith communities, school personnel and educators, state police and corrections officers, nursing home staff, mental health authorities, state policymakers, volunteers, families and the general public. Please share this opportunity with others and invite them to attend!

The types of registration and full convention agenda are detailed on our website. Attendees that are employer sponsored, please have your employer contact NFLPN directly when arranging payment if necessary or if they require a W-9 for processing.

Contact NFLPN at 919-779-0046 if you have any questions or email nflpn@mgmt4u.com.
A Special Gift for Our Readers

Save up to 20% on your degree program* when you get started by March 31, 2013.

Call 1-800-395-1014 to learn more!

*Certain restrictions apply. Offer available only on specific TCN programs through March 31, 2013.
We hope you enjoyed this edition of *Education Editorial*!

www.collegenetwork.com