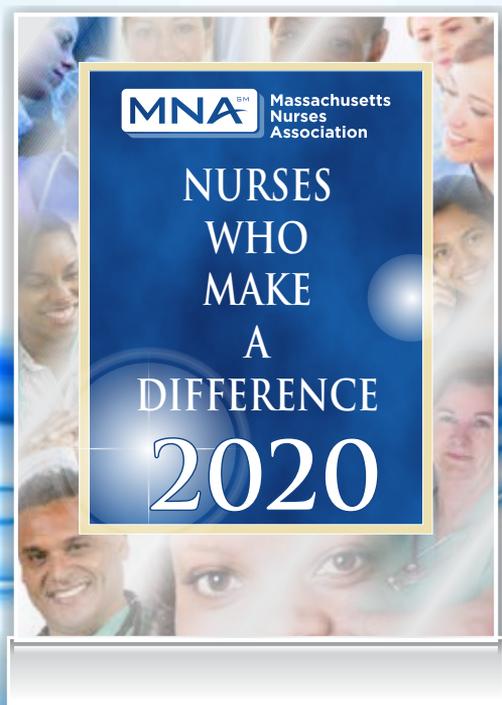




Massachusetts  
Nurses Association

# ANNUAL AWARDS



# PAST PRESIDENTS

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Mary Riddle <i>1903-1911</i> & <i>1913-1915</i>	Elizabeth McMahon <i>1947-1951</i>	Barbara Blakeney <i>1979-1981</i>
Mary E. D. Davis <i>1911-1913</i>	Katherine McCabe <i>1951-1953</i>	Nancy Waldron <i>1981-1983</i>
Sara E. Parsons <i>1915-1918</i>	Alice Seale <i>1953-1955</i>	Judith Shindul <i>1983-1985</i>
Esther Dart <i>1918-1921</i>	Florence Flores <i>1955-1957</i>	Phyllis Moore <i>1985-1987</i>
Carrie Hall <i>1921-1925</i>	Marguerite Hastings <i>1957-1959</i>	Marie E. Snyder <i>1987-1989</i>
Jessie Catton <i>1925-1928</i>	Marie Andrews <i>1959-1963</i>	Barbara E. Stanley <i>1989-1993</i>
Bertha Allen <i>1928-1931</i>	Grace Nangle <i>1963-1965</i>	Margaret T. Barry <i>1993-1997</i>
Elizabeth Ross <i>1931-1933</i>	Ruth Hurley <i>1965-1967</i>	Karen Daly <i>1997-2000</i>
Delight Jones <i>1933-1937</i>	Minnie Cohen <i>1967-1969</i>	Denise Garlick <i>2000-2001</i>
Blanche Blackman <i>1937-1939</i>	Anne G. Hargreaves <i>1969-1973</i>	Karen Higgins <i>2001-2005</i>
Margaret Boyle <i>1939-1941</i>	Catherine Tower <i>1973-1975</i>	Beth Piknick <i>2005-2009</i>
Margaret Dieter <i>1941-1945</i>	Margaret Anderson <i>1975-1977</i>	Donna Kelly-Williams <i>2009-2020</i>
Eva Waldron <i>1945-1947</i>	Jean Steel <i>1977-1979</i>	



# 2020 ANNUAL AWARDS

## EILEEN NORTON LABOR ACTIVIST AWARD

*Eileen Norton is a joyful crusader for the rights of workers to fair and just treatment, safe environments, and the protection of collective action. Established in 2020, this award recognizes an individual or group that promotes and advances the ideals of labor and is given for the first time this year. This year's recipient is Barbara Madeloni.*

**BARBARA MADELONI**, past president of the Massachusetts Teacher's Association and current Coordinator of Education for Labor Notes, has been a labor activist for many years. Barbara has been a supporter of MNA campaigns, in particular the *Yes on One* ballot question campaign for Safe Staffing, securing the endorsement of MTA for this effort. She is a frequent speaker and panelist at MNA programs and has been a valuable advisor and ally.

Barbara works in solidarity with educators and with the labor movement as a whole and inspires and strengthens us all. In her current position at Labor Notes, she is developing a new role- expanding the labor training program and promoting collaboration with the leadership from national unions to build a cohesive and powerful alliance to challenge austerity, consolidate the power of workers and advance a progressive social agenda. Barbara exemplifies the spirit of MNA leader and role model, Eileen Norton and is a labor leader in the truest sense. She is a uniquely effective labor leader whose vision, actions and speech are carrying us all forward towards the future

we need. The Massachusetts Nurses Association is grateful for her dedication and contributions to the labor movement and is pleased to present the first Eileen Norton Labor Activist Award to Barbara Madeloni.

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## MNA EXCELLENCE IN NURSING PRACTICE AWARD

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*This award recognizes a member who demonstrates an outstanding performance in nursing practice. This award publicly acknowledges the essential contributions that nurses across all practice settings make to the healthcare of our society.*

*This year's recipients are Marla Masci Purciello and Alison Sarnoski.*

**MARLA MASCI PURCIELLO, RN, BSN** is a clinical nurse leader in the cardiothoracic ICU at Tufts Medical Center, approaching her position with empathy, compassion and humor. She serves as a mentor and resource to new graduates and experienced staff alike. Her ability to establish a positive rapport with intensivists, attending physicians, collaborating staff and her colleagues contributes to her effective leadership and impacts a positive work environment. Her strength, humor and perseverance were a constant resource to those challenged with both a global pandemic and flood in the ICU, necessitating the relocation of patients and staff to unfamiliar units. Her consistent leadership and accessibility as resource supported patients and staff through a difficult period.

Marla seeks out new learning opportunities, sharing her knowledge with colleagues, maintaining high standards and implementing evidence-based practice and evolving practice guidelines. She is innovative and contributes to the unit-based practice council, providing the nurses' perspective while simultaneously balancing economics and ensuring enhanced and quality nursing care. It is with great pleasure that the Massachusetts Nurses Association acknowledges the contributions to patients and patient care and her fellow nurses that Marla has made and is pleased to present the MNA Excellence in Nursing Practice Award to Marla Masci Purciello.

**ALISON SARNOSKI**, BSN, RN practices exclusively at the bedside as a skillful Labor and Delivery nurse at the Cambridge Hospital, participating in unit-based activities that support direct patient care. Previously working as an experienced critical care nurse, Alison has worked on several units and various hospital committees and is recognized by peers as an expert who is knowledgeable about current evidence and best practices. Maintaining an active membership in AWHONN, the national authority on nursing practice for the care of women and newborns, Alison regularly attends educational offerings and conferences, bringing current knowledge to the unit and sharing it freely. Alison keeps abreast of policy changes, carefully evaluating practice standards and informs insightful questions for Management and colleagues alike to serve as a change agent who refines and improves patient care through professional nursing practice. As an outstanding role model, Alison has capably precepted nursing students and fellow nurses on the unit.

Additionally, Alison is active in her community of Melrose. She advocates for school funding and quality education. She is attentive to political issues and can be depended upon for reasoned conclusions and is not afraid to act. She supported and led her colleagues by example when nurses in the Maternal Child Health unit needed to work with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to assure safe staffing and practice changes and challenge ineffective management. Alison supports collective action in the Cambridge Unit and has walked picket lines for other units. Alison was active in the safe care campaign and dependably engaged in the formulation of responses to management in light of the COVID-19 pandemic mismanagement. She works diligently for the professional, economic, and general welfare of nursing as an engaged and well-respected professional. She maintains adherence to the CHA contract and general welfare of the profes-

sion. Alison supports her colleagues and utilizes her leadership skills to advance clinical practice and advance patient care. The Massachusetts Nurses Association acknowledges Alison's outstanding contributions to patient care and nursing practice and is pleased to present the MNA Excellence in Nursing Practice Award to Alison Sarnoski.

## HUMAN NEEDS SERVICES AWARD

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*This award recognizes an individual or group who has performed outstanding services based on human need, with respect for human dignity, unrestricted by consideration of nationality, race, creed, color, or status.*

*This year's recipient is Judith Laguerre.*

**JUDITH LAGUERRE**, BSN, RN-BC works on the Geriatric Psychiatry Unit in the CHA Everett site, where the staff on the unit were told they did not need N95's during the escalation of COVID-19. Aware that the hospital-supplied PPE was inadequate, she continued to work and take care of patients under extremely difficult circumstances. She recognized the intensifying risk to the patient population, a marginalized group challenged to access adequate healthcare. Judith continues to organize and advocate for the safety and the best care for patients. She has participated in MNA-sponsored actions to raise awareness of the needs of staff and patients for adequate protection in the midst of a global pandemic as well as the daily needs of a disparaged population - the mentally ill and the aged. Judith shared her personal story in public testimony risking a negative response from management to illuminate the risks taken by staff.

Judith has long been respected by her fellow nurses as a compassionate nurse with deep and evident respect for human dignity of all people. She has participated for years in working with missions to Haiti, raising money and resources to support many important projects. She has recognized needs in all of her homes and responded readily and with goodwill. Judith is an exemplar of the realization of the opportunity to affect significant change in the human condition. The Massachusetts Nurses Association applauds her work and is grateful for her selfless dedication to healthcare and is pleased to present the MNA Human Needs Services Award to Judith Laguerre.

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## MNA IMAGE OF THE PROFESSIONAL NURSE AWARD

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*This award recognizes a member who has demonstrated outstanding leadership in enhancing the image of the professional nurse in the community.*

*This year's recipient is Samantha Joseph-Erskine*

**SAMANTHA JOSEPH-ERSKINE**, BSN, RN is a true advocate for nurses and patients in all arenas. She assumed her role as a member of the MNA Board of Directors and confidently contributes to discussions and vital decisions to move the organization forward. Samantha has been instrumental in the success of her bargaining unit at St. Luke's Hospital in New Bedford. She has been an active organizer and serves on the negotiating team for a first contract. Her personal contact with the nurses is indispensable in explaining union positions, enlisting support, and developing unity in a difficult fight for recognition while demanding management's respect and good faith bargaining from the employer. Samantha continues to represent the nurses to the media in New Bedford and across the state in a markedly positive way. She has been an organizer and leader of public demonstrations in respectful and authoritative recognition of the contributions frontline workers have made in the COVID-19 pandemic and Black Lives Matter movement. Samantha has been a driving force at St. Luke's and on the MNA Board of Directors, the Safe Care Campaign, MNA 2025, and now in the revitalization of the MNA Diversity Committee. Her opinions, knowledge, and experiences inform the work of the Board of Directors and any endeavor she joins. Samantha is truly an advocate for nurses and patients, consistently and effectively. The Massachusetts Nurses Association is proud of her accomplishments and contributions and is pleased to present the MNA Image of the Professional Nurse Award to Samantha Joseph-Erskine.

## MNA BARGAINING UNIT ROOKIE OF THE YEAR AWARD

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*Established in 2008, this award recognizes a Labor Relations Program member who has been a member of the bargaining unit for five or less years and has made a significant contribution to the professional, economic and general welfare of a strong and unified bargaining unit.*

*This year's recipients are Jillian Brelsford and Autumn St. Hilaire.*

**JILLIAN BRELSFORD**, RN has been a practicing nurse at Cambridge Hospital since her graduation from the University of Massachusetts-Boston. Jillian is widely known to have grown significantly in knowledge and experience very quickly on her busy medical-surgical unit. Often serving in the role of charge nurse, Jillian is an effective problem-solver and professional role model for novice nurses and collaborating staff, making it difficult to consider Jillian a “Rookie”. She presents as knowledgeable and confident, well beyond her age and years of nursing experience. An active supporter of the MNA labor program, Jillian works hard to assure a strong and unified bargaining unit. As a floor representative, Jillian started the unit's first list-serve to keep the membership on her unit informed and to implement an effective mapping tool for her unit. Jillian consistently attends bargaining unit meetings, stays aware of issues, and effectively communicates with her colleagues to help them fend off threats to their rights. Jillian monitors the progress of contract negotiations and encourages the engagement of her co-workers in surveys and direct actions. She has been instrumental in mobilizing the Cambridge nurses to work for appropriate PPE, presumption of occupational exposure, and hazard pay within the MNA's movement to respond to nurses' concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Jillian is a thoughtful and skilled writer who pens convincing

arguments for the nurses' positions and can communicate with the membership as successfully as with management. Jillian is fearless and is persistent, despite the risk of ramifications from supervisory staff. When the nurses on her unit were directed by management to reuse dirty isolation gowns, Jillian organized an action that featured the nurses wearing trash bags as PPE. Jillian prioritized the safety of the nurses and support staff, despite being immediately threatened with discipline. Her involvement in a related press conference helped to secure a meeting with the hospital CEO. The result was the acquisition of appropriate PPE, contributing to the safety of patients and staff.

Jillian is a member of the organizing subcommittee of the Floor Representatives Committee within the bargaining unit. In addition, she has served on the MNA Board of Directors, contributing to the collective debate and decision making for the association. The Massachusetts Nurse Association is grateful for her contributions and is proud to present the MNA Bargaining Unit Rookie of the Year Award to Jillian Brelsford.



**AUTUMN ST. HILAIRE**, RN, SFNP consistently contributes to a strong and unified bargaining unit at the Cambridge Hospital where she works on a medical-surgical unit recently designated as the hospital's COVID-19 unit. Keenly aware of the importance of appropriate PPE and its correct use, Autumn contributed to the production of a video demonstrating the correct donning and doffing process and highlighting the concerns with inappropriate and ineffective PPE. Posted on Facebook for broad access by bargaining unit staff, this was an effective tool that was also viewed by legislative allies to help communicate the very real concerns and risks for nurses. Autumn stays

informed about the issues faced by the bargaining unit members and contributes to meaningful conversations using the unit list-serve, Facebook, and in person connections. A professional role model who is recognized by nurses and collaborating staff, Autumn was recently recognized by a staff physician in the “Honoring Our Heroes” section of the hospital’s daily COVID report for the care provided to two of her many patients. Autumn is a member of the Professional Practice Council for Nursing in her facility. Contrary to other facilities where these committees are rubber-stamp apologists for “Nursing Leadership”, Autumn contributes to nursing care by formulating incisive questions, challenging management assumptions, researching evidence, and articulating her position as a bedside nurse confidently and clearly. She has made her role as a leader clear, not by title, but by example.

Autumn is a strong professional and union advocate. In addition to the video, Autumn remains steadfast in her conviction for patient and staff safety despite risk of discipline by supervisory staff. She spoke eloquently at a press conference that illuminated the risks and dangers to both staff and patients by CHA’s failure to protect from COVID-19 and failure to provide adequate PPE. Autumn planned and executed the first incredibly moving “discharge parade” for a patient who survived intubation and a lengthy hospitalization with COVID-19, inspiring the hospital leadership to formalize this ritual. Autumn’s volunteerism, civic-mindedness, peer solidarity and moral courage are unmatched. The Massachusetts Nurses Association recognizes Autumn’s contribution to a strong and unified unit and is pleased to present the MNA Bargaining Unit Rookie of the Year Award to Autumn St. Hilaire.

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## ELAINE COONEY LABOR RELATIONS AWARD

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*Elaine Cooney was a nurse who passionately believed in both the central importance of the nurse in the healthcare industry and the role of collective bargaining in protecting the interests of nurses and patients. When Elaine was hired into a staff position at the MNA, she became one of the first RNs in Massachusetts to negotiate contracts on behalf of RNs. The Massachusetts Nurses Association proudly remembers Elaine Cooney and her dedication to our members and profession by recognizing members who make significant contributions to the professional, economic and general welfare of nursing.*

*This award recognizes a Labor Relations Program member who has made a significant contribution to the professional, economic and general welfare of nursing.*

*This year's recipient is Evelyn Crotty.*

**EVELYN CROTTY**, BSN, RNC-OB has been a strong supporter of the Labor Relations program and her bargaining unit at the Cambridge Hospital over her career. She has served as a Floor Representative on the Maternity Service for several years. By participating in Labor/Management meetings, representing nurses at investigational conference and in grievance proceedings, Evelyn consistently contributes to the professional, economic, and general welfare of the nurses she represents. She is a meticulous researcher who scours the collective bargaining agreement, the law, and regulations to find supporting information when a member's rights are threatened; she is not afraid to confront management in any forum, including staff meetings and the CEO's office. An impeccable practitioner, Evelyn remains current in evidence-based practice and puts particular effort into coaching colleagues as policies and standards evolve. Evelyn serves faithfully and ably on the Maternity Service Professional Practice Committee, focused on patient

care and improving outcomes.

During the COVID-19 pandemic when she was unable to provide direct patient contact, Evelyn continued to support her colleagues with daily check-ins, providing information and support related to testing, PPE, leave policies, and maintaining worker rights on the job. As the bargaining unit's actions in response to management encroachment has expanded during the COVID-19 global pandemic, Evelyn has assumed a leadership role on the Organizing Subcommittee, providing a consistent presence who challenges assumptions and critically evaluates options while seeking solutions. Evelyn is tenacious when tackling a problem and considered a tireless and fervent nurse advocate. The Massachusetts Nurses Association is grateful for Evelyn's contributions to patient care and staff nurse advocacy and is pleased to present the Elaine Cooney Labor Relations Award to Evelyn Crotty.

## THE MNA JUDITH SHINDUL-ROTHSCHILD AWARD

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*As past president of the Massachusetts Nurses Association, Judith Shindul-Rothschild, PhD, RNPC was instrumental in the creation of today's MNA. Dr. Rothschild is an advocate for nurses and the labor movement. She is recognized nationally as a voice for nurses working at the bedside. Her research interests include staffing and quality of care, and licensure and discipline of registered nurses.*

*The Judith Shindul-Rothschild Award recognizes an MNA member who speaks with a strong voice for the nursing community at the state and/or national level.*

*This year's recipient is Donna Kelly-Williams.*

**DONNA KELLY-WILLIAMS, RN, BA, MM, CPN** is a true model of leadership. Her tremendous grace, warmth, intelligence, commitment, and courage are unparalleled. She has given decades of authentic leadership to the MNA, and to patients and healthcare providers of our Commonwealth. Before her term as President of the MNA, Donna served as chair of her bargaining unit at the Cambridge Hospital representing nurses during investigations, disciplinary hearings, grievances, in regular Labor/Management sessions and at the negotiating table. She has always been a respected leader whose reasoning and persuasive power could often affect even management's opinions and decisions. She has continuously been focused on solutions to problems. Donna has championed a multitude of issues over her years of commitment to the MNA membership and the patients we serve including safe staffing; universal single payer healthcare coverage; checks on the power of profit-driven healthcare; the rights of nurses to a secure retirement; the rights of all workers to union protection; the rights

of all people to adequate housing, education and social justice. Donna has spoken locally, nationally and internationally on these and many issues, representing MNA and her colleagues both ably and convincingly. Donna has made innumerable contributions to the welfare of nurses, healthcare professionals, patients and their families. She has forever left her mark on the landscape of this Commonwealth and we are better for it. It is with great pleasure that the Massachusetts Nurses Association recognizes Donna's years of service, contributions and dedication and we are pleased to present the MNA Judith Shindul-Rothschild Award to Donna Kelly-Williams.







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