

## **ENA Illinois State Council Membership Spotlight**

Centegra Hospital-McHenry

Kelly Monestero, BSN, TNS, CEN  
Clinical Nurse Manager, Emergency Department & Clinical Decision Unit

Karen M. Battaglia, MSN, CEN, TNCC, TNS  
Trauma Coordinator, Emergency Services



Interview by:  
Vicki Bacidore and Karla Christiansen  
Membership Committee Co-Chairs

### **How many years have you been an ENA member and what inspired you to join?**

**Karen:** “I’ve been a member for 12 years and joined when I was chosen in a lottery run by our ED physician group who chose nurses to join ENA and go to the national conference, which was held in San Antonio that year. I was inspired by the educational offerings, the journal subscription, and attending the state council meetings. I was encouraged to apply to become a General Assembly delegate to represent the Illinois State Council and was hooked.”

**Kelly:** “I’ve been a member for 10 years. It was beneficial to join ENA in order to get discounts in obtaining my CEN certification and I was able to become a delegate with financial incentives to attend the national conference as well. ENA inspires you to look at your nursing career in a completely different light. Being a member assures that your professional voice is heard.”

### **How has ENA membership helped you in reaching your professional goals?**

**Karen:** “In terms of education, I am able to bring back a lot of information to the staff. For example, at the Orlando conference, research was presented on compassion fatigue and dealing with death in the ED. In our ED we translated some of those findings into practice and implemented some of the “little things” like lighting a battery operated candle at the nurses’ station when a death occurs, reminding the staff to take time out for reflection and self-care.”

**Kelly:** “Membership allows for networking with colleagues, other organizational professionals and for information on best practices. We are all in the same boat and are given the opportunity to learn from each other”.

### **Why do you feel that it is important that your ED staff nurses become ENA members?**

**Karen:** “I had the opportunity to represent the IL ENA State Council as their representative for the Illinois Nurse Practice Act Sunset. I learned much about the legislative and political processes and the importance that ENA membership offers nurses in terms of lobbying and advocacy regarding our professional practice at the state and national levels”.

**Kelly:** “It is important for our profession, but to also know that other nurses and emergency departments are also going through many of the same challenges that affect patient care and our practice”.

### **Can both of you share with us Centegra’s very innovative and successful ENA membership initiative?**

**Karen/Kelly:** “The idea for the initiative was sparked at the Illinois ENA State Leadership Conference last fall during brainstorming sessions to increase membership. Back at Centegra’s ED, we decided that instead of using our department funds for small holiday gifts for staff, we would pool money together, along with donations from ED leadership, and create a fund for ENA Membership Scholarships. Our Director of Emergency Services, Catie Schmit, supported and approved our initiative. ED nurses and patient care techs currently attending nursing school were informed of the scholarship opportunity and encouraged to complete an ENA Membership Scholarship Application. Applications were reviewed and judged by the ED leadership and 6 memberships were awarded (3 RN memberships and 3 student RN memberships were awarded). Based upon the success of this program, we hope to continue to offer this to our nursing staff”.

### **What advice would you give your “22-year-old self” about joining the Emergency Nurses Association?**

**Karen/Kelly:** “It’s important to get involved in ENA early in your nursing career and stay engaged in order to fully enjoy the benefits of ENA membership including the networking and educational opportunities”.