

NCONL Emerging Leader Award

The Emerging Leader Award recognizes a nurse leader who demonstrates exceptional promise, initiative, and impact early in their leadership journey. This honor celebrates individuals who demonstrate commitment to professional growth, uphold the mission and vision of the North Carolina Organization of Nurse Leaders (NCONL), and embody the American Organization for Nursing Leadership Nurse Leader Competencies of Communication and Relationship Building, Knowledge of the Healthcare Environment, Leadership, Professionalism, and Business Skills and Principles (AONL, 2023). Recipients of the Emerging Leader Award are those who actively contribute to positive change in nursing practice and leadership—those who inspire others, champion inclusivity, and extend their influence beyond their immediate role to shape the future of the profession. These leaders demonstrate courage, curiosity, and integrity as they grow into transformational nurse leaders.

Nominees for this award:

- Exhibit early and impactful contributions that enhance team performance, patient outcomes, or organizational culture
- Demonstrate a strong commitment to continuous learning, professional development, and leadership growth
- Engage actively in professional organizations, mentorship, or advocacy that advances the voice of nursing
- Embody the values of inclusivity, respect, and accountability
- Show potential for continued leadership within NCONL, AONL, and the broader nursing community

Award/Selection Criteria:

Applicants will be evaluated based on the following utilizing a Likert scale:

A. Impact on Nursing

Demonstrates measurable contributions to patient care, nursing practice, and outcomes through evidence-based initiatives, quality improvement projects, or innovative approaches that enhance the delivery of safe, effective, and compassionate care.

B. Leadership

Inspires, motivates, and guides others toward shared goals, fostering teamwork, professional growth, and engagement. Exemplifies authenticity, accountability, and vision in advancing both individual and organizational success.

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C. Advocacy

Promotes the needs and voices of patients, peers, and the nursing profession. Champions nursing visibility, policy involvement, and the advancement of initiatives that strengthen the voice of nurses in shaping health care delivery.

D. Culture of Belonging

Creates an inclusive environment that fosters respect, collaboration, and equity. Demonstrates commitment to diversity, inclusion, and the empowerment of others within teams, organizations, and professional communities.

E. Influence

Extends positive impact beyond the immediate role by affecting peers, teams, organizations, or the broader community. Engages in professional organizations, mentorship, or outreach activities that build capacity and leadership among nurses.

Nomination Process:

Individuals may be nominated by an NCONL colleague or self-nominated

Supporting documentation includes:

- 1) Resume or CV;
 - 2) One letter of recommendation/support from a current nurse supervisor;
 - 3) One letter of recommendation/support from a peer, mentor, or second supervisor
- Letters of support/recommendation should highlight their emerging leadership qualities and achievements.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Maintains active & unencumbered RN license
- Current NCONL member, 1 year minimum
- Five years **or less** in a formal or informal leadership role
- Minimum education level – bachelor's degree

Source:

American Organization for Nursing Leadership. (2023). *AONL nurse leader core competencies*. American Hospital Association.
<https://www.aonl.org/resources/nurse-leader-competencies>