

RN... is it in you?

The Student Nurses Association Leaves Its Mark



In November, Student Nurses Association President Theresa Connolly sat down with *Unison NOW* to discuss the Association's part in the famous UConn tradition: decorating the rock outside the Alumni Building.

Unison: Why put this message—"RN: Is it in you?"—on the school rock—what does it represent to you? Why not somewhere else on campus?

Theresa: We had been trying to paint the rock for an extremely long time—we had the paint in the office for a year. Painting the rock is a UConn experience, and was something that the SNA decided we wanted to do as a bonding exercise a long time ago. A few times we had dates to paint it, but we didn't want to interrupt student memorials happening there. Finally we got a perfect opportunity to do it this past October. It's nice for us to put the message out there and tell students that we are here and working hard to become the future of our healthcare. We'll be the ones taking care of other students someday.

Unison: What process did the SNA go through to come up with the slogan "RN: Is it in you?"

Theresa: We wanted to think of something that wouldn't be extremely difficult to paint on the rock, since, as nursing students, none of us is

particularly artistically able. In the end we decided on a slogan which we had seen at the National Student Nurses Association convention this past April. We all really loved it.

Unison: How does this message reflect the goals of the Student Nurses Association?

Theresa: Well, the SNA's purpose is to provide networking possibilities for nursing students, give them community service options, and host different social events to provide opportunities for seniors and juniors as well as sophomores and first-year students to network with each other, fostering a group of students that is always there for them. That's one of the things that I personally loved about the SNA. As a freshman I made relationships with sophomores, juniors, and seniors which allowed me abundant resources to help my progress in the nursing program. Frankly, nursing school is very difficult: it is something that is in you, or it isn't. It isn't a just profession; it's a calling. It is something you want to be a part of, something you want to dedicate your life to. It was a great message to put up for other students to see.

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RN... is it in you?

The Student Nurses Association Leaves Its Mark (continued)

Unison: What challenges make nursing students unique among the student body?

Theresa: I think a nursing student has a different college experience than the typical UConn student just because the level of excellence that is expected of us. There is a lot of work we have to do, and I think that what we become are way better time managers. Not only do you have three classes as a junior and senior, but two full days out of the week you're gone getting experience in the field. You're learning about yourself and your capabilities *on top of* learning how to be a nurse. You just have to spread yourself evenly over everything you do so that you can get the most out of your education, nursing experience, and UConn experience.

Unison: How will this slogan influence or focus the future goals of the Student Nurses Association?

Theresa: It's a reminder for us as seniors and juniors to be good role models for the younger students and to put ourselves out there to support them, showing them that, yes, the nursing program won't be the easiest four years of their lives but the friends and support that you earn make the journey worth it. Eventually, they'll start to work with patients and remember the reason they're there in the first place.

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