



Children's Hospital Colorado



Fueled by Curiosity

Whether it's a trial for a new treatment or the brave journey to adulthood, our research considers the intersection of all roads, known and unknown.

COLORADO **Child Health Research** INSTITUTE



Colorado Child Health Research Institute (Creative Concept): The Atlas of Child Health

At the Colorado Child Health Research Institute, our mission is to improve the lives of children everywhere. This pursuit takes us down many roads — including those not yet traveled — but we are prepared for the journey ahead. Our campus-wide research network is our foundation; the ship that carries us forward. Our multidisciplinary investigators and research scientists steer the helm by uncovering truths across the continuum of research. Our curiosity fuels us to push past obstacles, create new connections and illuminate paths to a healthier future. We lay these routes tirelessly because we're eager to expand our atlas, revealing pathways to child health that the world has never seen. Dedicating ourselves to this work means heading toward a horizon we'll never quite reach, because with each new finding comes another hard question. Only by navigating the unknown can we turn today's mysteries into tomorrow's discoveries, helping the children of today become the adults of tomorrow.

Today's Mysteries, Tomorrow's Discoveries

Through our basic and clinical research, strategic partnerships and other pursuits, we're traversing uncharted territory. This curiosity fuels us to create a brighter, healthier future for all children.

COLORADO
**Child Health
Research**
INSTITUTE



2024 Broncos Campaign

10 Year Partnership



Children's Hospital Colorado



BRONCOS

OFFICIAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF THE DENVER BRONCOS



CONCEPT 1

When we team up, we all win.

Over the past ten years, Children's Hospital Colorado's partnership with the Denver Broncos has brought immeasurable joy to thousands of young patients. But that's not all. Meeting and supporting children in need has helped Broncos players find a deeper purpose in their public roles, which extends far beyond the field. It also helped our team members by honoring their important work and deepening their commitment to service amidst daily challenges. Now, as both Children's Colorado and the Broncos look back at the past decade, it remains clear that this time has helped all of us win in ways we never expected.



WHEN **WE**  WE ALL
TEAM UP, **WIN**

Whether it's Miles making kids smile, cheerleaders bringing spirit to our care teams or players dropping by patient rooms, we're stronger when we come together. We're proudly celebrating 10 years of partnership with the Denver Broncos.



Children's Hospital Colorado



BRONCOS

OFFICIAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF THE DENVER BRONCOS



2022 PCS ANNUAL REPORT

ROOTED IN STRENGTH

Stories and facts about the stellar team members within the Division of Patient Care Services



Beth Wathen Shines a Light for Nurses with 'Rooted in Strength' Philosophy

In 1988, **Beth Wathen, MSN, RN, CCRN-K**, watched a wildfire rage through Yellowstone National Park. At the time, she associated the event with loss and destruction. But when Wathen endured a series of personal tragedies soon after — including the death of her first husband — the meaning of the fire changed. She began to see that, like the beautiful flowers that grow in the ashes of a fire, humans can also heal themselves.

Wathen's mantra, "rooted in strength," was born.

"For me, [this idea] was very related to my own personal loss back then," Wathen says "and recognizing and understanding the things that rooted me in strength."

Three years later, Wathen found roots at Children's Hospital Colorado as a clinical nurse specialist and nurse practitioner for the Department of Surgery. Now, she serves as the Codes Program Coordinator, but Wathen has remained true to her philosophy both personally and professionally over the past three decades.

"It's got a very profound meaning in how I view nurses and what we've been through in the past — coming back and relying on those roots to get you through those tough times," Wathen says.

She received an opportunity to apply this idea at a national level beginning in the summer of 2020, when she became president-elect of the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN). As the largest specialty nursing organization in the world, AACN has over 130,000 members and represents the interests of more than a half million acute and critical care nurses.

When faced with dwindling nursing workforces, low morale and an ongoing pandemic, Wathen did what she always does in the face of a challenge. She went searching for roots. During her presidential year, Wathen had the privilege of holding virtual conversations with nurses around the country.

She spent this time asking nurses a series of questions: "What are the things that fill your cup, that give you strength, that root you? Why did you get into the profession of nursing

The Think Tank went public in 2022, which enabled frontline nurses, finance executives, CFOs and other stakeholders to come together to publish six focus areas in the nurse staffing crisis. This included healthy work environments; diversity, equity and inclusion; work schedule flexibility; stress injury continuum; innovative care delivery models and total compensation. Healthcare leaders can now refer to the [Think Tank website](#) to find actionable strategies for implementing positive change in each of these areas.

During her presidency, AACN also advanced partnerships that drove change for nurses at the governmental level. For instance, AACN's advocacy team facilitated listening sessions that allowed nurses to share their perspectives with the Surgeon General. Additionally, Wathen helped appoint Children's Colorado's **Robin Thomas, BSN, RN, CCRN**, who represented frontline nurses on the panel. The Surgeon General then used this input to release recommendations in fall 2022 for how healthcare organizations can address the erosion of employee wellbeing. Wathen's work with the public, organizations and government stakeholders continues to show measurable impact; however, she stresses that uplifting nurses is ultimately a community effort.

"Whether it's joining a committee in your own hospital or getting involved at the national level, we can all use our voice: in proactive, collaborative ways to help the world understand the critical role that nurses play," Wathen says. "Ensuring that nurses have a seat at the table and that their voices are heard has always been one of my personal driving missions."

Wathen isn't planning on halting this mission anytime soon. Instead, she'll continue sharing her story so that other nurses can share theirs. Her message of staying rooted in strength has a meaning nearly everyone can relate to: With the right conditions, we can heal ourselves after tragedy. It's also true that Wathen can't do this work without finding strength in her own roots — a practice that includes walks, gardening, nature and spending time with her family. Her work at Children's Colorado, too, helps her stay strong.

"If you have a job where you're doing what you love, you feel like your voice is heard, you're empowered and you're making a difference — that fills your cup and strengthens your roots," she says. "I get that every single day at Children's Colorado. I wouldn't be here if I didn't feel that this was the place that nurtured my roots and gave me strength."

**WATHEN'S MESSAGE
OF STAYING ROOTED
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A MEANING NEARLY
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*With the right
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ourselves after
tragedy.*



initially? Can you gain strength from remembering those personal connections with your patients and the reasons that you're there?"

Wathen hoped that such inquiry would shift nurses' perspectives during an unprecedented time. "One of the key messages around [being] rooted in strength, that I think we need to focus on, is flipping [our mindset]," she says.

In addition to helping nurses discover personal strength, Wathen says that her multifaceted leadership goals included championing nurses' perspectives to a larger audience. "One of the biggest roles for me, as president, was advocacy — ensuring that nurses' concerns and nurses' voices were being heard."







Within healthcare institutions, a professional governance structure creates the forum for nurses' interests to be valued and considered at an executive level. Such systems have long been a priority at Children's Colorado, but when Wathen began working more closely with staff at other institutions, she noticed a growing chasm between frontline nurses and leadership.

"Some hospitals still don't have a chief nursing executive to advocate for nurses," she says. "When tackling these longstanding staffing workforce challenges, we need to do it in collaboration with financial executives, health system executives — all of us working together to figure out how to move things forward."

The absence of such collaboration, Wathen observed, is just one of many factors that contribute to unhealthy work environments — a leading factor of burnout among nurses.

"You can't have a thriving nursing workforce if you don't focus on creating healthy work environments where they can thrive. AACN has led the work around [the question], 'What does it take to create a healthy work environment?'" Wathen says. "Our healthy work environment standards, I believe, are the absolute fundamental basics that all hospitals need to implement."

According to Wathen, AACN's six healthy work environment standards include:

-  Authentic leadership that is present and transparent
-  True collaboration
-  Appropriate staffing
-  Skilled communication
-  Effective decision making
-  Meaningful recognition

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BETH WATHEN

"They're things that I've seen and felt at Children's Colorado for a long, long time. And I think it's our way forward out of this," Wathen says.

She was also aware that nurses' voices weren't being heard outside hospital walls, especially amidst the persistent challenges of COVID-19. This inspired Wathen and other nurse leaders at AACN to launch Hear Us Out, a national media campaign that shares nurse stories, along with resources for navigating difficult conversations about vaccines with loved ones.

"It really had a twofold purpose. One was to help address vaccine hesitancy with the public," Wathen says. "The second point of that campaign was to share nurses' stories from the frontlines of this pandemic and to provide an avenue for their stories to be told. The public had no sense of what was happening there."

The Hear Us Out campaign reached a broad national audience, with coverage in outlets such as NPR and The Atlantic. Sharing these stories was crucial for Wathen, because her career in nursing had shown her, firsthand, how nurses are perceived both by the public and within healthcare settings.

"There are great misperceptions out there about nurses. They think we just follow orders, turn patients, etc. The public really doesn't understand the incredible amount of critical thinking and knowledge that nurses have," she says. "We've had a little bit of a door open for us, as a profession, to be able to change that misperception."

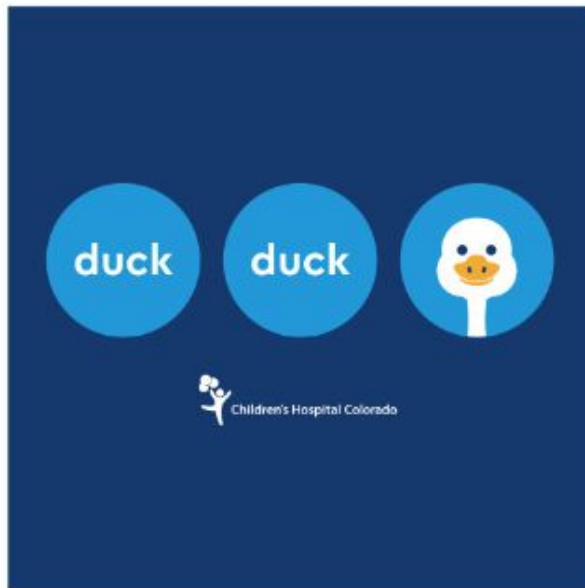
Another way Wathen championed nurse perspectives during her presidency was through the official launch of the Nurse Staffing Think Tank, a partnership that began behind the scenes in 2017 between the AACN, American Nurses Association, American Organization for Nursing Leadership, Healthcare Financial Management Association and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement.



We mango together



DUCK DUCK GOOSE



T-shirt design



Purple

Intended use:

Gift shop

Imprint size:

12" high

Colors in this design:



Sunshine
PMS 130 C



Light Blue
PMS 2925 C



White



White



Children's Hospital Colorado

SimWars ²⁰²⁴

Competing for the Crown

Teams are competing for the chance to defend our kingdom. Join the audience and help crown our winners!

Wednesday, May 15

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Mt. Oxford or join remotely via Teams



Thank you for doing your part to prevent CLABSI.

Spread Joy, Not Germs



TARGETZERO

Eliminating Preventable Harm



CLABSI PREVENTION

**A bath a day keeps
the germs away**

**All patients with a central line
need a bath daily.**

Learn more in our bathing policy.

