



Healing Politics: An Initiative to Improve Public Policy Through the Power of Nursing

[Healing Politics](#) was launched on December 28, 2021 as a 501(c)3 with a mission to inspire, motivate and train nurses and midwives to run for elected office up and down the ballot while building a culture of civic engagement within the professions. The organization's priority is also its most bold and transformative objective: to hold the first non-partisan Campaign School for Nurses & Midwives in May 2023.

Need: Since the 1970s, the American Medical Association has [trained physicians to run](#) for elected office, but there has never been an analogous campaign training program for nurses and midwives. While trust in government is at historic lows, nursing is [consistently rated](#) as the most ethical profession and [the only group the public trusts](#) to reform the health care system.

Numbering over 5 million, nurses are the largest group of healthcare providers in the U.S. and the one closest to the patient. The expertise, value, and scientific knowledge that nurses and midwives bring to the healthcare system and their communities has been highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic, making them ideally positioned to develop and implement public policy that addresses inequities exposed during the pandemic. Whether the subject is education, housing, public transportation, food security, or the environment, nurses and midwives understand the social determinants of health and see their communities through the eyes of their patients.

Diversity of thought and experience is important in policymaking. [Research demonstrates](#) that expanding the occupational experience of elected officials ensures that public policy is more effective and more representative of society at large.

Goal and Objectives:

Healing Politics will educate nurses and midwives to understand and use their power to create change at the local, state, and national levels while creating a pipeline of nurses and midwives to run for elected office. The priority is to hold the first Campaign School for Nurses and Midwives in May of 2023.

- Inspire nurses and midwives to run for office up and down the ballot
- Identify nurses and midwives who are interested in running for office
- Provide non-partisan educational programs so nurses and midwives who run, *win*
- Promote a culture within the professions where colleagues support those who enter politics
- Partner with researchers to add to the literature about nurses and midwives in elected office

About the Healing Politics Team:

The seeds of Healing Politics were planted in 2018 when Kimberly Gordon entered the Doctor of Nursing Practice program at Yale School of Nursing, where Lisa Summers was Deputy Director. With another classmate, they developed the first in the nation [Yale Candidate School for Nurses and Midwives](#). The COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of the May 2020 school but did not dampen their enthusiasm. In December 2021, they established Healing Politics as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

In the few short months since the launch, Healing Politics has built a strong foundation. They were declared a tax-exempt public charity by the IRS. They have built, tested, and launched a compelling website and established a social media presence. Along the way, they engaged dozens of key stakeholders within the campaign, political science, nursing, and midwifery communities in individual conversations and held four focus groups to help guide their initial efforts.

Healing Politics has partnered with experts in electoral politics, including nurse legislators serving at the local, state, and federal levels, and campaign operatives who have practical experience in fields ranging from fundraising to digital strategy. A team of political scientists will contribute to the body of knowledge regarding non-traditional political candidates and will provide ongoing evaluation of the program. Formal partnerships with a host of associations and organizations are being developed and an Advisory Council is being formed.

Lisa sees Healing Politics as the culmination of a career that was grounded in clinical care and education before expanding to policy and advocacy. Lisa practiced clinically for 20 years as a nurse and midwife and held faculty positions in schools of nursing and medicine before shifting to health policy work. She was the Director of Professional Services at the American College of Nurse-Midwives and held policy positions at the American Nurses Association and Centering Healthcare Institute. She has spoken and written widely on healthcare policy and advocacy and, for 10 years prior to co-founding Healing Politics, taught health policy at Yale School of Nursing. She holds a BSN from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, an MSN from Yale University, and a DrPH from Columbia University.

Kimberly brings to Healing Politics her belief that nurses can change the world and her passion for helping them do that. Kimberly is a former cost and budget accountant and a current certified registered nurse anesthetist with 20 years of political engagement, campaign work, and advocacy experience at the state and federal levels. She has held leadership positions in the corporate world, the healthcare industry, and in multiple professional nursing organizations. Kimberly also teaches policy/advocacy and leadership courses to doctoral nursing students. She holds a BS in Business Administration from John Carroll University, a BSN/MSN from the University of North Carolina - Greensboro and a DNP from Yale University.

Budget

An initial grant of 2.8 million over three years would build capacity and be targeted towards:

- Professional expenses including legal, design, and marketing service
- Staff and program director salaries
- Website development and expansion including a platform for event registration and virtual events
- The development and execution of marketing materials and social media campaigns
- Creating educational resources that are specific to nurses and midwives running for office
- Developing and delivering additional virtual and in-person educational programs
- Delivering one 3-day in-person campaign training program to 50 nurses and midwives annually

The initial funding necessary to deliver the campaign training program in May 2023 is \$75,000.