

# CONNECTIONS

Spring Issue, 2025

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Dr. Teddy A. Farias, D.C., MS,  
MTAA, CCMA, NN2 President

*“NN2 has been at the forefront of driving meaningful change in allied health education. Through our dedicated efforts, we have worked closely with esteemed organizations such as the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) where we serve as a sponsoring organization, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACCC) where we serve as an affiliate council, Health Professions Pathway (H2P), and many other*

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### Fellow Healthcare Professionals and Healthcare Educators,

My name is Teddy A. Farias, and I am a chiropractor serving as the Dean of Health and Natural Sciences at San Jacinto College in Houston, Texas. It is an honor and privilege to introduce myself as the incoming President of the National Network of Health Career Educators in Two-Year Colleges (NN2). I step into this role with great enthusiasm, fully committed to advancing our shared mission of enhancing health education and upholding the highest standards to

improve its quality and impact.

I first joined NN2 in 2014 as a “baby dean”—navigating budgets, course releases, faculty management, accreditation requirements, curriculum challenges, space limitations, and the ever-present need for more faculty. Like many in my position, I found myself searching for guidance. NN2 became my lifeline, providing invaluable support through a network of seasoned deans and healthcare leaders who had walked this path before. Their

collective wisdom and mentorship helped me not only survive but thrive in my role. Even now, 11 years into this journey, I continue to find immense value in learning from my peers. After receiving so much from NN2, I felt compelled to give back, joining the NN2 board nearly eight years ago, where I have proudly served ever since.

## **A Brief History of NN2**

Founded in 1987, NN2 has long been at the forefront of driving meaningful change in allied health education. Through our dedicated efforts, we have collaborated with esteemed organizations such as the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), where we serve as a sponsoring organization, and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), where we are an affiliate council. Additionally, we have partnered with the Health Professions Pathway (H2P) and numerous other organizations to advocate for policy reforms, raise awareness, and provide critical resources to the healthcare education community.

From championing legislative initiatives to hosting educational workshops and working closely with accreditors and professional organizations, our collective work has made a tangible impact on the future of healthcare education.

## **Looking Ahead**

As we move forward, I am eager to build upon NN2's rich history and successes, further strengthening our advocacy efforts and expanding our reach. Your continued support and engagement are essential to our mission. I encourage you to stay connected, participate in our initiatives, and share your insights as we work together to shape a healthier future.

Thank you for being an integral part of this journey. I look forward to collaborating with each of you to drive positive change and lasting improvements in our communities.

See you September 24-26 in San Antonio at our 38th annual conference!

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## **Conference Planning Committee – Danielle Cook, Chair**

***“Join us at the 2025 NN2 National Conference for an inspiring and educational experience and take advantage of all that San Antonio has to offer!”***



**Dani Cook MS, CST**

## **“Insights and Innovations: 2025 NN2 National Conference”**

**Location:** Menger Hotel, San Antonio, TX

**Dates:** September 24-26, 2025

**Registration Fees:** \$499 for members; \$650 for non-members

The National Network of Health Career Programs in Two-Year Colleges (NN2) is excited to announce its annual conference, "Insights and Innovations: 2025 NN2 National Conference," to be held at the historic Menger Hotel in San Antonio, Texas. This event promises to be a pivotal gathering for health science leaders, educators, and innovators from across the nation.

## Conference Highlights

### 1. Diverse Participation:

This year, NN2 encourages Deans and all health science leaders to attend. The conference aims to foster a collaborative environment where professionals from various roles can share insights and drive innovation in healthcare education.

### 2. Request for Proposals and Registration:

Details for submitting proposals and registering for the conference will be available soon. Stay tuned for updates on how you can contribute to and participate in this enriching event.

### 3. Engaging Sessions and Workshops:

Attendees can look forward to a series of engaging sessions and workshops designed to address the latest trends, challenges, and advancements in health science education. These sessions will provide valuable opportunities for professional development and networking.

## Fun Things to Do in San Antonio

### 1. The Alamo:

No trip to San Antonio is complete without visiting the Alamo, a historic site that played a crucial role in the Texas Revolution. Explore the museum and learn about the brave defenders who fought for Texas' independence.

### 2. River Walk:

Stroll along the famous River Walk, a scenic pathway that winds through the heart of the city. Enjoy the picturesque views, dine at riverside restaurants, and take a relaxing boat tour.

### 3. San Antonio Missions National Historical Park:

Discover the rich history of San Antonio by visiting the San Antonio Missions, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The park includes four Spanish colonial missions, each offering a unique glimpse into the past.

### 4. Market Square:

Experience the vibrant culture of San Antonio at Market Square, the largest Mexican market in the United States. Shop for unique souvenirs, enjoy live music, and savor delicious Tex-Mex cuisine.

### 5. Tower of the Americas:

For breathtaking views of the city, head to the Tower of the Americas. The observation deck offers panoramic vistas, and the revolving restaurant provides a unique dining experience.

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**Don Martin, Ed.D, ETL**  
**Past President**

*“Thank you to each member of NN2 for being part of this incredible journey. Together, we have built a community that not only supports each other but also elevates the standards of our profession. Here’s to the future and the continued success of NN2!”*

**A Message from Don Martin, EdD, Past President of NN2**

As I approach the end of my eight years of service on the NN2 Board of Directors, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey we’ve shared. My time with NN2 has spanned 14 years, during which I have had the privilege of serving in various capacities—Director, Secretary, Treasurer, President Elect, President, and now Past President. Each role has enriched my understanding of leadership and post-secondary administration, but more importantly, it has introduced me to a remarkable network of professionals who have become invaluable to me.

Currently, I am nearing the end of my second term as Vice-President at CAAHEP, where I also serve as Chair of the Performance Oversight Committee, and as a member of the Outcomes Taskforce, Governance Committee,

and Succession Planning Committee. These roles have further deepened my appreciation for the importance of collaboration and support within our professional networks.

Throughout my tenure at NN2, we have navigated significant challenges together—most notably, the recent COVID-19 pandemic, which tested our resilience and adaptability in unprecedented ways. We've also faced financial hurdles, surviving conferences that were nearly disastrously expensive. Yet, through it all, NN2 has demonstrated an incredible spirit of perseverance.

Membership in NN2 is not just a privilege; it comes with immense benefits. I can confidently say I have never encountered an organization that excels at networking quite like NN2. After all, networking is literally part of our name! If you are not taking full advantage of the networking opportunities available through NN2, you are truly missing out on something special. Whenever I have faced challenges, I've always found answers and support from my NN2 network and the broader connections I've developed through my involvement.

Reflecting on our recent conference in Kansas City, I am filled with gratitude for the engaging discussions, the shared insights, and the sense of community that permeated the event. Looking ahead, I am excited about our upcoming fall conference at the historic Menger Hotel in San Antonio. This will be another fantastic opportunity to connect, learn, and grow together.

I would like to take a moment to thank our current and past Board members for their dedication and support. It has been an honor to represent all of you at various conferences and organizations, and I look forward to seeing how NN2 continues to thrive in the future.



### **Cancer Data Management – ODS Exam and Accreditation – Dr. Teddy Farias, DC, MS**

Have you ever heard of cancer registry or the CTR/ODS credential? Chances are, if you have a Council on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management (CAHIIM) accredited program, you probably will soon. In the summer of 2022, CAHIIM announced the development of Accreditation Standards for cancer registry certificate programs and sought public comment on their proposed Accreditation Standards. CAHIIM solicited input from educators and industry professionals in related areas during a public comment period. Initially, there was pushback from the National Cancer Registrars Association (NCRA), which not only accredits cancer registry programs, but also oversees the associated Oncology Data Specialist (ODS) credential (formerly Certified Tumor Registrar of CTR). However, as of 30 January of 2025, CAHIIM and NCRA are partnering and CAHIIM is now the second body to accredit cancer registry programs. (see the press release here <https://www.cahiim.org/accreditation/cancer-registry/>) What happened and how did we get here? To start, let's review some history.

What exactly is cancer registry? Cancer registry is an information system designed for the collection, management, and analysis of data on persons with the diagnosis of a malignant or neoplastic disease (cancer). There are three types of cancer registry – Hospital, Central, and Special Purpose. The associated credential is an

Oncology Data Specialist (ODS), (formerly known as CTR Certified Tumor Registrar until 1 January 2024). This credential was established in 1983. The current accrediting body is the National Cancer Registrars Association (NCRA). The NCRA also houses the ODS exam. As of January 2025, in the USA pertaining to cancer registry and the NCRA, there is currently one accredited baccalaureate program, nine accredited associate degree programs, and seventeen accredited certificate programs in Cancer Registry. \*All nine schools that offer the associate degree also offer the certificate so there are eight schools that solely offer the certificate.

A CTR typically collects data that provides essential information to researchers, healthcare providers, and public health officials to better monitor and advance cancer treatments, conduct research, and improve cancer prevention and screening programs. This work assists with items such as identifying cases, ensuring data completeness/standard compliance, and tracking patient survival data. A lot of CTR positions are remote and the future job outlook seems promising. According to the National Cancer Registrars Association, the average annual salary is as follows:

- Cancer Registrar/Abstractor: \$57,049
- Mid-Level Manager: \$68,249
- Manager/Director: \$81,435

Now that we have some background, on one side, we have a small accrediting body, the NCRA who accredits 18 unique schools/institutions and total of 27 programs. The NCRA also approves students to sit for the CTR exam. On the other side, we have a large accrediting body, CAHIIM. CAHIIM accredits 14 certificate, 336 Associate, 68 Bachelor, and 46 Masters level programs. It seems that CAHIIM and the NCRA worked it out over the past three years and ended up working together. Now CAHIIM is offering to accredit programs for a Cancer Registry Certificate.

In this partnership, there are two facts that stick out:

1. Clinical sites are not a problem! The NCRA offers a virtual practicum that graduates of NCRA and CAHIIM programs will be able to take.
2. The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), who sponsors CAHIIM, is one of the institutions approved to offer NCRA programs and have graduates sit for the CTR exam.

Several other professions have multiple accrediting bodies and/or multiple exams/credentials - Nursing, Respiratory Care, Medical Assisting, Pharmacy Technology, come to mind, but to my knowledge, none have a partnership such as this. So, where do we go from here? Will this potential rising tide lift both the NCRA and CAHIIM? Will the NCRA see an increase in the number of programs or just CAHIIM? Will this result in more programs cancer registry programs across the nation and more recognition of the field? Will this result in higher accreditation fees for CTR programs? Regardless, ODS is a much-needed credential/field and any publicity should be good publicity. We are eager to hear your thoughts and input on this discussion. Please feel free to submit them to the NN2 forum.

Citations:

<https://www.cahiim.org/programs/program-directory>

<https://www.ncra-usa.org/About/Cancer-Registry-Profession>

<https://www.ncra-usa.org/Education/Accredited-Education-Programs-Old/Associate-and-Certificate-Programs>

<https://www.ncra-usa.org/About/Become-a-Cancer-Registrar/Job-Prospects-Salary>

<https://www.cahiim.org/accreditation/cancer-registry>

**Dr. Teddy A. Farias, D.C., M.S.**

Dean, Health and Natural Sciences | Health and Natural Sciences



**NOT A MEMBER OF NN2 YET? PLEASE JOIN THIS EXCEPTIONALLY WELCOMING AND SUPPORTIVE GROUP OF PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE DEDICATED TO ACCESSIBLE, INNOVATIVE, HIGH-QUALITY HEALTH CAREER PROGRAMS IN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES.**

***NN2HealthEducation.org***

**Contact Us**

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**Dr. Carolyn O'Daniel  
Executive Director**

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