

# Black History Month Nurse Leader Spotlight



## Tira Williams DNP, RN NE-BC

### Area of Oversight

Nursing Director of Medical-Surgical Services:  
5T200 Medical-Urology  
5T300 Medical-Oncology  
6T200 Medical-Renal, Respiratory  
6T300 Orthopedic, Neurology and Trauma

### Education & Experience

I have been a nurse for 21 years. I graduated in 2020 with a Doctorate in Nursing Practice. My entire career has been spent in medical-surgical nursing. I believe MED-SURG nurses are the best at what we do. Having the skills to think critically and provide direct care to a variety of patients is not easy. Most medical-surgical patients are acutely ill and are suffering from co-morbidities that the medical-surgical nurse must manage in addition to the patient's acute illness or surgery. We are a unique group of nurses, and we are passionate about what we do.

### What's Your Motivation for Becoming a Nurse Leader?

I became a nurse leader to lead change and advocate. Often there are people making decisions for nurses that are not "doing" the work. Being a leader requires one to have the professional courage to speak up in difficult times and not be afraid to lead through difficult times. The most rewarding part of being a nurse leader is motivating other nurses to speak up and advocate for their patients and advocate for what they need to care for patients.

### How have Diversity and Inclusion Impacted your Career Path? Did it Hinder or Help?

Diversity and inclusion are very important to me. There are not many African American nurse leaders. I have two great mentors that saw me as a nurse leader, Pat Adkins and Dr. Karen Bankston. Both took me under their wings and showed me how important it was to not just be in the room but have a seat at the table. The impact of Diversity and Inclusion has helped me demonstrate to others there is opportunity for one to elevate as a nurse leader. The hindrance becomes an issue when organizations do not realize diversity is what makes their organization better. Instead of just being in the room, we need more seats at the table to really make bold changes.

### Who in Black History Inspires You?

As a child, I was always fascinated by Harriet Tubman and how she was able to free so many slaves. Even with a bounty on her head, she kept going! Her story is captivating. She was such a strong woman that refused to give up, and not to mention she was also a nurse. Her strong will and determination made a way for so many to escape to freedom. When I read her story over and over in school, I would always imagine being a woman that strong. Therefore, I do not believe in giving up when I think about how Mrs. Tubman put her life on the line for others. I feel it is my obligation to keep moving forward and give it my all.

### What's Your Best Advice?

Do not regret anything. Take it as a lesson learned and move forward.

### How Do You Engage with the Community?

I love teaching. I teach at Cincinnati State, which is a way for me to pay it forward for future nurses. I am currently mentoring three nursing students, and I am a preceptor to a graduate student.