**NIGH’s History: Two Decades of Activities & Achievements**

**Initial Meetings, Services & Crafting the ‘*Nightingale Declaration for a Healthy World’***

In June of 1999, three Nightingale scholars — **Dr. Barbara Dossey, Dr. Louise Selanders** and **Dr. Deva-Marie Beck** — met at the Florence Nightingale Museum in London — during the International Council of Nurses’ Centennial Conference (1899-1999). There, they agreed to collaborate and find innovative ways to demonstrate Nightingale’s significant relevance to the new century and the new millennium. In addition, **Dr. Beck** met with **Cyril Ritchie** in Geneva that same year — to be familiarized with international NGO activities.

In 2001, **Dr. Dossey** and **Dr. Selanders** — who had already been collaborating with Episcopal leaders to name Florence Nightingale to the *Episcopal Calendar of Lesser Feasts & Fasts* — keynoted at the first Service to thus honor Nightingale at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., convened on this *Calendar’s* chosen date, to remember Nightingale’s death on August 13, 1910. This initiative resulted in the successful entry of Florence Nightingale (1820-1910) into the *Calendar of Lesser Feasts and Fasts*in the Episcopal Church of the United States on August 12. The U.S. Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher also keynoted at this Service and **Dr. Beck** interviewed him for his follow-up insights.

Taking their Nightingale plan further, these three scholars met again in 2003 — joining with **Wayne Kines**, a global communications strategist, and with related citizen activists — during a Toronto conference convened by the nursing honorary society Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI). This was while the global SARS epidemic was raging, and nurses were dying in hospitals less than a mile from their hotel.

Because this epidemic risked the lives of so many, NIGH’s co-founders remembered the seemingly impossible challenges Nightingale faced in her time (1820-1910) — and that each nurse, across the world, can still see herself or himself as an inheritor of Nightingale’s legacy. In keeping with this understanding — and arising from his work at the United Nations, **Mr. Kines** crafted the *‘Nightingale Declaration to Achieve A Healthy World’­*— modeled after the *Preamble* to the *UN Charter*, beginning with the words “We the peoples” — to renew individual commitments to Nightingale’s vision and to underscore the possibility of what we each can achieve, in our time.

In 2004, another Nightingale Service was again convened at the National Cathedral, this time to honor Americans who had been awarded Red Cross Florence Nightingale Medals and to feature keynotes from Dr. Rita Carty, the then Secretary General of the WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing & Midwifery and Dr. Daniel Pesut, the incoming President of STTI. In the days following this Service, **Drs. Dossey***,* **Selanders** and **Beck** co-chaired meetings with nursing leaders from across the United States and were encouraged to continue with their plan to remember Nightingale’s legacy in a new 21 century context and to widely share the *Nightingale Declaration for A Healthy World*.

**Establishing NIGH**

Thus, the Nightingale Initiative for Global Health (NIGH) was co-founded and launched, starting in 2006, by featuring this *Nightingale Declaration* to eventually be signed — onsite and online — by more than 25,000 nurses and concerned citizens who officially represented millions of their organizational members. Also, in 2005, NIGH’s Nightingale scholars co-authored the textbook: *‘Florence Nightingale Today: Healing, Leadership, Global Action’* — published and distributed by the American Nurses Association’s NursesBooks.org — and winner of the ‘*American Journal of Nursing* Book of the Year.’

Beginning in 2007, NIGH has developed three successive websites to support and exemplify our mandates — providing platforms for nurses and concerned citizens for their voices to be heard and shared. Our latest website is: [www.NIGHvision.net](http://www.NIGHvision.net) where our first two homepages are [remembered](http://www.nighvision.net/nightingaledeclarationnet-remembered.html).

In 2008, NIGH collaborated with global nursing leaders to celebrate WHO's 60th Anniversary — producing a video that has been appreciated worldwide and is still available online in eight language versions —  ['Nurses & Midwives: Now More Than Ever for a Healthy World.'](http://www.nighvision.net/nurses--midwives-at-whos-60th.html)

Also, in 2008, NIGH’s team was invited to India for the 100th Anniversary of their national nursing organization TNAI (Trained Nurses Association of India) — for keynote addresses, visits to a number of hospitals, and also for a screening of the above video at the WHO SEARO Regional Office in New Delhi. During this visit, we established a strong and ongoing connection with **Dr. Phalakshi Manjrekar** — who joined NIGH World’s Board of Directors in 2011 — and other Indian nursing leaders.

In 2009, NIGH World was awarded UN / NGO Status for UN DPI — in recognition of NIGH's work to increase global public awareness about issues connected to UN mandates, agencies and related projects. In collaboration with **Cyril Ritchie** — who joined the NIGH World Board of Directors — NIGH teams presented at two UN Civil Society Development Forum Panels in preparation for annual UN ECOSOC meetings — in 2009, on *‘Global Health’* and, in 2010, for *‘Women's Issues.’*

Also, in 2009, NIGH facilitated a partnership formed between the University of Cincinnati (UC) in Ohio and the ‘NM Sadguru’ — a nongovernmental organization [NGO] based within India. Initially, the UC team worked across the disciplines of engineering, business, science, and design to consider interventions to improve economic opportunity — within the context of a rural, agricultural setting in India. Then, as this plan developed, **Dr. Manjrekar** participated and involved Indian nurses — as part of the UC team and in collaboration with NIGH — offering a critical perspective that health should be used as an important lens to evaluate the effectiveness of these multi-disciplined interventions.

**Celebrating the 2010 International Year of the Nurse / Florence Nightingale Centennial:**

**Establishing Nursing’s Advocacy to Achieve United Nations Global Goals**

Starting with NIGH’s founding and continuing throughout 2010, NIGH teams were catalysts to celebrate the *2010 International Year of the Nurse,* to celebrate Nightingale’s Centennial Year, and to promote this *2010 Year* with advocacy for achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) — a specific strategy introduced by NIGH in 2009 and embraced widely. NIGH thus co-hosted the [*2010 Global Commemorative Service & Webcast for Nightingale*](http://www.nighvision.net/2010-global-service-videos.html) *—* that filled theNational Cathedral in Washington, D.C. with an overflow gathering of nurses. Similar Canadian commemorative Services were convened at cathedrals and churches in Kingston, Toronto, Kitchener and Ottawa.

Further, in 2010, NIGH co-hosted — with CoNGO (the Conference of NGOs in Relationship with the United Nations) — a Lincoln Center Concert highlighted by two advocacy performances — [soprano](http://www.nighvision.net/crying-her-song.html) and [piano](http://www.nighvision.net/pianist-highlights-un-mdgs.html) — focused the UN MDGs — specifically on maternal and child health — during the 2010 ‘Summit’ for UN Millennium Development Goals convened at UN Headquarters in New York City.

From 2011 to 2014 — NIGH continued a focus on advocacy for UN MDG # 5 with our [*'Daring, Caring & Sharing to Save Mothers' Lives'*](http://www.nighvision.net/raising-awareness-for-mdg-5.html) public awareness campaign, launched in New York City and then shared, online, across the world. Over 24 months, NIGH achieved 3.5 million hits with 90,000 unique online visitors from 146 nations. As well, in 2014, a NIGH team attended an international Maternal Health Summit convened in Toronto by the Canadian government — while serving as ‘media’ and subsequently writing a series of related articles for Canadian community newspapers.

Also in 2014, WHO commissioned NIGH to create a video [*'At the Heart of It All: Nurses & Midwives for Universal Health Coverage'*](http://www.nighvision.net/with-who-mdash-a-video.html) — premiered before Jordan’s Princess Muna Al-Hussein at the WHO Global Forum for Chief Nursing & Midwifery Officers in Geneva. This video has since been featured, worldwide, at WHO Regional Conferences and WHO Nursing & Midwifery Collaborating Centres.

**Establishing & Advocating for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**

Across 2012 to 2015, NIGH teams regularly collaborated with nursing leaders representing NIGH at UN NGO International Conferences and serving for two elected terms on the UN DPI-NGO Executive Committee — including younger nurses serving as [UN NGO 'Youth Reps.'](http://www.nighvision.net/nighs-2014-un-ngo-team.html) During this time, all NIGH’s UN Representatives participated in the United Nations campaign — *‘The World We Want’* — to define and establish the new UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Pro-actively, they developed and shared an online [Global Briefing](http://www.nighvision.net/a-global-online-briefing.html) and related workshops and conference presentations — for many nurses to learn, first-hand, about the UN SDGs from NIGH’s UN NGO Representatives.

NIGH’s UN Representatives have also sponsored and co-sponsored — in 2015, 2016 and 2017 — official ‘Parallel Events’ for the annual United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York City — notably also hosting a 2017 [Gala Reception to Award Nursing Exemplars](http://www.nighvision.net/2017-gala-reception--uncsw.html) and co-sponsoring a 2017 UN [‘Parallel Event’ with the International Council of Nurses](http://www.nighvision.net/at-2107-un-csw.html) (ICN).

In 2015 and 2016, NIGH World teams also presented at several key conferences, including: in Geneva, to prepare a *'History of Nursing & Midwifery at WHO'*; in Norway, at the Red Cross Nordic United World College; in Yerevan at the [3rd International Nursing Conference of Armenia;](http://www.nighvision.net/into-the-former-soviet-union.html) in London at the [3rd](http://www.commonwealthnurses.org/conference2016/) [International Conference of the Commonwealth Nurses & Midwives Federation](http://www.commonwealthnurses.org/conference2016/); and, in Glasgow, and at the [International Conference of WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing & Midwifery.](http://www.nighvision.net/what-is-our-2020-vision.html)

Established in 2016, NIGH’s current website — advertising-free @ <http://www.NIGHvision.net> — features a wide range of online features, photo-journalism and videos and to focus on ‘[connecting the dots’](http://www.nighvision.net/connecting-the-dots.html) of advocacy to achieve the UN 17 SDGs and to share [stories](http://www.nighvision.net/stories.html) of nurses and concerned citizens.

In 2016, a team of Ugandan teachers and nurses connected with NIGH World to establish a related team in Uganda and worked together to develop ways to make the UN [SDGs more visible](http://www.nighvision.net/un-day-2017.html) in their nation. Through a series of phone conferences and 2018 onsite meetings in Toronto, consensus was reached to create a ‘SDG Song’ for Ugandan children to sing. This Song is being developed for radio broadcast and a high-performance Music Video to be shared, online, for worldwide appreciation.

**Preparing for Global Participation in the 2020 Nightingale Bicentenary & Beyond**

In 2018, NIGH’s team presented the closing [Keynote](http://www.nighvision.net/at-cnmf-2018.html) at the 4th International Conference of the Commonwealth Nurses & Midwives Federation (CNMF) at the Royal College of Physicians in London, UK, and has again presented the closing [Keynote](https://www.nighvision.net/news--events/archives/03-2020) to 300 Delegates from across the world at CNMF’s 5th International Conference in 2020, convened in London during the 2020 Nightingale Bicentenary / Year of the Nurse & the Midwife.

Beginning in 2014 — and projected to be a major focus throughout 2020 and beyond — NIGH’s core team began collaboration with media professionals to develop a series of multi-media projects — including a feature film and related documentary and a multi-season ‘docudrama’ TV Series, as well as an audience-participatory transmedia campaign — to feature Nightingale’s life and her ‘Legacy of Light’ now serving humanity through the estimated 29 million nurses and midwives worldwide.

**Since NIGH’s Beginnings**

Across NIGH’s 20 years of development, members of NIGH’s team have authored and co-authored 38 [textbook chapters and peer reviewed journal articles](http://www.nighvision.net/featured-publications.html) to reflect NIGH’s mandates and outreach. Ten of these have been published since 2017, including a [Feature Article](https://journals.lww.com/ajnonline/Abstract/2019/05000/Nursing_and_the_Sustainable_Development_Goals_.27.aspx) in the prestigious *American Journal of Nursing* (*AJN*) in AJN’s 2019 May Edition, highlighting the 2019 International Nurses Week.

Across these same years, NIGH teams have traveled to address conferences and participate in consultations in Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Cambodia, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Japan, Jordan, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Qatar, Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, Venezuela, and Zambia.

CONTACTS: Deva-Marie Beck, PhD, RN, DTM @ [devamarie@earthlink.net](mailto:devamarie@earthlink.net)

Barbara M. Dossey, PhD, RN, AHN-BC, FAAN, HWNC-BC @ barbara@dosseydossey.com