

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Judy Thomas, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, is the Service Line Director for the Hematology/Oncology & Infusion Center at Children's Hospital & Medical Center in Omaha, Nebraska. Previously, she held the position of Director of Professional Nursing Practice and Magnet® Program Director at Children's. Before joining Children's in 2015, she was the Pediatric Manager at the Nebraska Medical Center. In 2017, she received the Nursing Leadership Award and a DAISY Award.

Thomas's academic career began as a BSN graduate in nursing. She then earned a master's degree in nursing leadership, for which she was awarded the Academic Excellence Award. During the course of her 25-year career, Thomas has served as a certified nursing assistant, a hospital-based RN, a home health-care RN, a charge nurse, a manager, a director, and a nursing instructor.

Thomas is Nurse Executive Advanced Board Certified (NEA-BC), a PROSI Certified Change Management Practitioner, a Fundamentals of Magnet certificate holder; and a trained Language of Caring educator. With her Gallup strengths of Relator, Developer, Strategic, Restorative, and Woo, she has a talent for leading teams through the journeys of engagement, retention, and recruitment and toward positive outcomes.

You will *never* find Thomas eating anything that swims or a vegetable, as she truly prefers the kids' menu at any restaurant.



Mellisa Renter, MSN, RN, CPN, is the Director of Professional Nursing Practice and Magnet® Program Director at Children’s Hospital & Medical Center in Omaha, Nebraska. Previously, she served as a Clinical Education Specialist for the ambulatory specialty clinics at Children’s.

Renter graduated with a bachelor of science in nursing in 2008 and with a master’s of science in nursing education in 2013. During her 12-year nursing career, Renter has held various roles in the ambulatory care setting as a direct patient care nurse. She has also worked in academia, teaching bachelor’s-prepared nursing students. Most recently she served as a member of nursing leadership.

Renter is the recipient of the 2019 March of Dimes Nurse of the Year Award in Pediatric Excellence. She is a PROSCI Certified Change Management Practitioner. In 2014 her article “How Magnet® Designation Affects Nurse Retention: An Evidence-Based Research Project” was published in the *American Nurse Today* journal.

Renter’s Gallup strengths of Futuristic, Discipline, Focus, Learner, and Significance have all guided her to success. Her passion to empower and engage nurses through professional development, create healthy work environments to thrive, and establish cross-continuum connectedness have been foundational elements of her career path.

In her spare time, you will find Renter wearing a baseball cap and leggings, cheering on her beautiful children from the sidelines in one of their multiple sports year-round, or shopping at Target.