

Belleville's April Williams to Shine at State of the Union as Guest

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congresswoman Nikki Budzinski (IL-13) has announced a very special guest from the area as her guest for the State of the Union address. Spending time with the congresswoman tonight, March 7, 2024, will be April Williams, an East St. Louis native and current Belleville resident who serves veterans as a Certified Wound Care Nurse in the VA St. Louis Health Care System.

Williams is also a legislative coordinator for American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 96 and a member of Congresswoman Budzinski's [Veterans Advisory Council](#).

Budzinski said as a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, she tries to ensure all our local heroes receive the care and support they deserve.

April is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., East St. Louis Alumnae Chapter and is the proud mother of two and wife of a retired veteran who served 20 years active duty in the U.S. Navy and Air National Guard.

Congresswoman Budzinski said VA care is so important for veterans.

"As a Certified Wound Care Nurse with the VA St. Louis Health Care System, April Williams provides direct care for our nation's heroes," she added. "And as a member of the American Federation of Government Employees, she's an advocate for folks who provide critical services throughout our federal government, including at the VA.

"I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to bring April with me to the President's State of the Union Address to highlight the important role that VA system workers play in caring for our nation's veterans."

In Congress, Budzinski has introduced the [Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship Opportunity Act](#)— bipartisan legislation to help more veterans pursue good-paying careers in science, health care and technology. Budzinski introduced the legislation earlier after a study conducted by the Wounded Warrior Project found employment and financial wellness to be significant challenges facing women veterans in the United States. [The legislation passed unanimously in the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs in December](#) and awaits action on the House Floor.

Background on April Williams:

April Williams, RN, BSN, MBA, CWCN is a native of East St. Louis, Illinois and current resident of Belleville, Illinois. April is a graduate of Goldfarb School of Nursing, Golden Gate University, Fisk University, and is currently pursuing her master's degree and Family Nurse Practitioner at Walden University with expected graduation in September 2024. April works as a Certified Wound Care Nurse at the VA health care system serving veterans in Illinois and Missouri.

Williams draws inspiration from her parents, the late David and Marcella Manning and Fisk Alumnus, John Lewis, both who navigated the challenges of the Jim Crow era and the Civil Rights Movement. Their resilience instilled in April the values of perseverance

and the importance of activism through fighting for justice, learning through their example that sometimes, to make a difference, one must embrace the principles of “Good Trouble and Necessary Trouble.”

Driven by her belief in service from the heart she strives to improve every environment she encounters. April believes in using legislative advocacy to build strong communities.

As a dedicated legislative coordinator for American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), Local 96, she understands the importance of grassroots mobilization in effecting meaningful change. Through collaboration with multiple labor organizations, she works tirelessly empowering workers to ensure concerns are heard at the highest level. She has been recognized by the labor community for her organizing efforts and advocacy that has inspired others to fight for economic and social justice.

In addition to her legislative advocacy work, April demonstrates leadership in the community by developing education programs for underserved communities largely impacted by chronic health conditions through partnerships with non-profit organizations including the American Heart Association, United Nations Association of St. Louis, Jack and Jill of America Inc., NieCat Foundation and Drug Enforcements Agency’s “One Pill Can Kill” substance abuse prevention initiative.