Purposing Registered Nurses’ (RNs’) ability to build and gain trust place them in a unique position to aid in initiating and supporting continuation of exclusive breastfeeding for infants. RNs with less than one-year of personal or clinical breastfeeding experience can demonstrate apprehension in providing breastfeeding support for new mothers. This can lead to a decrease incidence of breastfeeding.

Increasing RNs’ breastfeeding knowledge and perceived ability to provide breastfeeding support can enable RNs to become more positive breastfeeding role models to recently delivered mothers.

BACKGROUND
The project was implemented in a Baby-Friendly Hospital with a high volume of annual births in the Texas Medical Center, Houston, Texas. This site hires approximately 20 new maternity RNs each year.

METHODOLOGY
*Putting the Nurse into Nursing* was designed as a multifaceted, modifiable breastfeeding education program for new RNs with the inclusion of simulation and case studies with the intent to increase their confidence in providing breastfeeding support, knowledge, application and critical thinking abilities. The program’s effectiveness in a pilot group (n=10) was measured before and after the program to assess knowledge acquisition, perceived ability and program usefulness to practice.

RESULTS
The overall average scores when comparing each unpaired pre-test questionnaire showed improvement from before (68%) to after program completion (75%). RN perceived-ability had a before program mean score of 2.96 on a 5-point Likert scale, with an increase in mean score of 4.54 after program completion. Most nurses (n= 9; 90%) stated the course would result in change in practice with all agreeing the program was relevant to their current nursing positions.

IMPLICATIONS
By providing a standardized breastfeeding-related education program, hospitals can help ensure new RNs are prepared to provide mothers the breastfeeding support they need to successfully breastfeed.