

Nursing excellence in the time of COVID-19



■ NursePitch™ winners ■ Caring for family

An extraordinary event in unprecedented times

By Elizabeth Moore, MFA

Though life as we know it has changed in nearly every way since the COVID-19 pandemic began, one thing remains constant—nurses' commitment to excellence in patient care. This overarching message echoed throughout the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Virtual Summit™, October 7-8.

"This is an event like no other in ANCC history," said Rebecca Graystone, MS, MBA, RN, NE-BC, vice president, Magnet Recognition Program® and Pathway to Excellence®, to more than 4,800 attendees as she opened the summit. The event encompassed all ANCC programs: the Magnet Recognition Program®, Pathway to Excellence®, Nursing Continuing Professional Development Accreditation, Practice Transition Accreditation Program®, Joint Accreditation for Inter-professional Continuing Education™, and Certification, plus a track for Advanced Practice Nursing Leadership, with a schedule that offered 48 engaging educational sessions for nurses and nurse teams. A virtual showroom featured 54 exhibitors and sponsors. The summit also was designed to offer "camaraderie, unity, support, and recognition," said Graystone, with six networking lounges, recorded messages from celebrities, online yoga breaks, and even a virtual dance party with a DJ. In her welcome, Graystone honored and thanked nurses for all they've done during the pandemic.



Rebecca Graystone

In the opening keynote, "The American Nurse: Without You, We Don't Stand a Chance," award-winning filmmaker Carolyn Jones shared observations from making her latest documentary, *In Case of Emergency*, which was filmed in emergency departments before and after COVID-19 hit.

"I was struck by how much more difficult your job is," she told the audience, noting the layers of protection that are now necessary between nurses and patients and how nurses found ways to connect patients with their loved ones through video calls. Jones described how one nurse profiled in the film had to "physically and emotionally wipe away the experience of the day" after every shift before she could see her family.

"How much does it cost the human spirit to put aside your feelings and the heaviness of it all and continue



Carolyn Jones



to try and help patients in the middle of all this?" she asked. "We respect and admire what you have been through. Please get the care you need so you can continue to do what you do."

Additionally, Jones praised nurses for their storytelling ability because they provide a unique perspective on society. "Whenever you have an opportunity to use your voice, we benefit from hearing it," she said.

Education for a new reality

The summit's educational sessions focused on maintaining excellence during challenging times, the benefits of a strong Magnet culture, using the Pathway Framework, the advantages of certification and accreditation, and leadership development.

In a session called "We Got This: Lessons Learned from a Magnet® Nurse Leader During a Crisis," nurse leaders from Magnet-recognized New York Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center described how the COVID-19 crisis spurred their teams to be innovative and flexible.

"As March 2020 brought unimaginable change," said presenter Nicole Hartman, DNP, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, "the Magnet model was the component that guided us through." Innovations included redeploying staff, converting med-surg units into step-down and intensive care unit (ICU) rooms, and using operating rooms to house more ICU beds. "We moved all I.V. lines out of rooms into the hallways to limit the number of times the team had to enter rooms in order to preserve PPE [personal protective equipment]," she said.

In "Building Nursing Strength and Well-being Through Resiliency and Wellness," Bernadette Mazurek Melnyk, PhD, APRN-CNP, FAAN, FAANP, discussed the effects of stress on nurses' mental health and shared recommendations for increasing well-being, in alignment with Pathway Standard 5 (well-being).

"Be aware of your level of burnout," said Melnyk, who is vice president for health promotion, university

chief wellness officer, and dean of nursing at The Ohio State University and an ANA member. COVID-19 is triggering stress, anxiety, and depression in nearly everyone, so it's important to remember that nurses are not alone, she said. When those feelings start interfering with one's ability to function, it's important to ask for help.

Melnyk offered several tips and strategies for stress reduction, including nurses being open about their feelings, seeking support and resources, practicing mindfulness and deep breathing, and making time for physical activity.

Another presentation highlighted the importance of creating a talent management pipeline and providing opportunities for professional development in an organization.

"I believe when you help your employees to grow it promotes retention and relationships with employees and they are not going to leave—the idea of loyalty," said Frank Baez, BSN, RN, who shared his journey from housekeeping to becoming a nurse at NYU Langone Health. His employer provided support through tuition reimbursement, a flexible work schedule, a career path, and an empowering work environment.

Challenges, change, and opportunities

"2020 has challenged us to be innovative, flexible, and persistent," said ANA President Ernest Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN, in his remarks to attendees. He recognized nurses' contributions during the pandemic and acknowledged how COVID-19 has exacerbated racial disparities in health and healthcare. He encouraged attendees to educate themselves on the issues that matter to them and to use their voices to influence and educate others. "Nurses speak as one strong voice as leaders and role models of compassion and empathy for our patients, families, communities, and most importantly, to one another," he said.



Ernest Grant

Grant introduced Stephanie Ferguson, PhD, RN, FAAN, FNAP, the CEO and president of Stephanie L. Ferguson & Associates, LLC, a global health consulting firm, who said the summit was "a call to action for advocacy to ensure nursing excellence." She cited the World Health Organization's *2020 State of the World's Nursing Report* findings that underscored the critical need for better support, investment, and resourcing of the nursing and midwifery professions around the world.

"Now more than ever, the world needs a robust and well-supported healthcare workforce," said Ferguson, a Virginia Nurses Association member. "ANCC's credentialing programs for organizations and individual nurses can help meet these challenges with confidence.



Credentialing is formal confirmation that a superior measure of quality or achievement has been met."

Closing keynote speaker Lydel A. Wright, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, gave summit attendees plenty to think about in his presentation, "The Power of a Thought." He challenged the audience to consider where their beliefs come from, and whether those beliefs support and align with the life they want to live.



Lydel Wright

"We have the power to change what we believe and perceive," said Wright, a Texas Nurses Association member. He stressed the importance of unlearning, explaining that "learning how to unlearn is necessary for the evolution of our thoughts, our lives, and our organizations." Continuing, he said "Biases reinforce the false narrative that bleeds into the way we provide care and empathize with patients and each other.

"For organizations and leaders—you have the awesome responsibility of leading and supporting a diverse group of contributors and care seekers. It is therefore unequivocally your responsibility to turn up the dial on diversity and inclusiveness," Wright said.

Wright concluded by inviting the audience to "strip away all the distractions, the complexity of humanity, and live in the power of your thoughts."

What's next

Save the date: The ANCC Pathway to Excellence® and ANCC National Magnet Conference® face-to-face event has been rescheduled to November 11-13, 2021, in Atlanta, Georgia. To learn more about ANCC programs, visit nursingworld.org/ANCC.

— Elizabeth Moore is a writer at the American Nurses Association.

Resources

The ANCC Virtual Summit is on demand through January 8, 2021, offering up to 36 continuing nurse education (CNE) credits. Members save with promo code ANAONDEMAND20 (hubs.ly/H0yKsmrO).

For mental health support, visit The Well-being Initiative at nursingworld.org/thewellbeinginitiative.

Survey: Keep RNs informed about COVID-19 vaccines

Survey findings indicate an urgent need to provide nurses and all healthcare professionals with consistent information and include them in the vaccine development process, according to responses from nearly 13,000 nurses conducted in October by the American Nurses Foundation.

Nearly half (44%) of nurses say they're not comfortable having conversations with their patients about COVID-19 vaccines, yet 65% said they've provided direct care to patients with a known or suspected case of COVID-19 since February. When asked if they would voluntarily be vaccinated against COVID-19, nurses' responses were almost evenly split with approximately one third (34%) saying "yes," one third (36%) "no," and one third (31%) "unsure."

"These findings underscore the gaps that need to be addressed quickly and effectively," said American Nurses Association (ANA) President Ernest J. Grant,

PhD, RN, FAAN. "Education of nurses and other healthcare workers must be a top priority to ensure a high level of vaccination among these essential workers."

When safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines are available, ANA strongly recommends that nurses are prioritized to be vaccinated according to current recommendations for the immunization of healthcare professionals by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology.

For more information about COVID-19 vaccine development, access ANA's free on-demand webinar for nurses (tinyurl.com/y3zqodw4) and read about ANA's key principles to guide nurses' considerations for COVID-19 vaccinations (nursingworld.org/-4a94ba/globalassets/covid19/vaccines/guiding-principles-for-nurses-and-the-covid19-vaccine_v2.pdf).

ANA elections: Call for nominations

The nomination period ends January 15, 2021, at 11:59 PM Eastern Time.

On December 7, 2020, the American Nurses Association (ANA) Nominations and Elections Committee issued a call for nominations for a slate of candidates to be presented to the Membership Assembly in 2021. The following positions will be elected in 2021:

ANA Board of Directors

Officers

- Vice-president
- Treasurer

The term of service for both officer positions is January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2023.

Directors-at-large

- One director-at-large
- One director-at-large, recent graduate

The term of service for officer and director-at-large positions is January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2023.

ANA Nominations and Elections Committee

- Four member positions

The term of service for the Nominations and Elections Committee member positions is January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2023.

ANA places a high priority on diversity and seeks to encourage and foster increased minority and staff nurse involvement at the national level.

Nominations must be submitted via the online nomination form by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on Friday, January 15, 2021. A second call for nominations will be

conducted for elective positions with insufficient nominations.

Preparing nomination materials

1. READ the roles and responsibilities for your position of choice to ensure that they match your interests, experience, and qualifications.
2. IDENTIFY the degree to which you possess the required competencies to serve successfully and effectively in the desired position.
3. SELECT a campaign manager, if desired, and provide their contact information where requested on the online nomination form.
4. COMPLETE AND SIGN/INITIAL where noted. Nominees for the ANA Board of Directors also must submit the following additional documents, which are included on the online nomination form.
 - Conflict of interest statement
 - Financial interest disclosure form
5. SUBMIT all nomination components by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on Friday, January 15, 2021.

Please note:

- You will need to create a user ID and password before accessing the form.
- Nominations that are incomplete, handwritten, faxed, or submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.

If you have any questions about ANA's nomination process or national elections, please email nec@ana.org.

RNs offer creative solutions to healthcare challenges

Creativity reigned at the second annual NursePitch™, a collaboration between the American Nurses Association (ANA) and the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society, Inc. (HIMSS) and sponsored by BD. This virtual event, which took place in August, gave nurses the opportunity to pitch their innovative products to a panel of expert judges who represented industry, healthcare, and venture capitalists.

“We are excited to continue the NursePitch competition to offer nurse innovators the opportunity to bring their ideas to the stage and share how these ideas apply to clinical practice,” said Christel Anderson, vice president of informatics at HIMSS. “Nurses have incredible knowledge and experiences, and our goal is to inspire nurses to embrace this capability and turn their ideas into action.”

Finalists were asked questions about their product, such as what problem it solves, its cost to produce, target markets, and specific details about how it would work. Cash prizes to further develop innovations were awarded for first, second, and third place.

“Nurses courageously shared their work during this national 2020 NursePitch event. Their pitches highlighted some of the expansive ways in which our profession is leading to create and transform health,” said Oriana Beaudet, DNP, RN, PHN, vice president of nursing innovation at ANA. “We are committed to continuing to grow and support the nurse innovators who are paving new possibilities across healthcare.” Here are the winners.

First place: AMPAworks (ampaworks.com) recognized that inventory and supplies are the second leading cost in hospitals today. The average hospital spends about \$10 million annually on supply chain waste from labor hours that go toward hand-counting and replenishing inventory. The AMPAworks interprofessional team, including Bianca Gonzalez, PhD, MBA, NP, co-founder and CEO, has built a computer vision-enabled Internet of Things (IoT) system that keeps track of inventory in real-time. This suite of devices and software applications provides workflow tasks, accounts for inventory used during pa-



AMPAworks team

tient-related tasks, and gives feedback to team members, enabling healthcare organizations to promote safety, improve quality, and track inventory and supply chain.

Second place: Nurses and healthcare teams need relief from administrative burdens and a clear picture of their day-to-day workflow. Edgility Cognitive Healthcare (edgilityhealth.com) is a healthcare technology company that maximizes existing health system investments to create air traffic control-like situational awareness with actionable data so nurses can focus on patient outcomes. According to Chief Outcomes Officer Lisa Meyer, MSN, RN, NE-BC, the goal is to remove low-value work from high-value nursing and provider assets. By seamlessly integrating with existing electronic health record (EHR) systems and other technology investments, Edgility brings together vital data and provides patient prioritization watchlists to route critical lab alerts and manage logistical tasks associated with a discharge process.



Edgility team

Third place: goNurse is a mobile health (mHealth) remote patient monitoring application created by Suzanne Richardson, MSN, RN, and Laurie Eccleston, MPA, RN. This innovation started with a vision of designing a digital health solution to support high-risk patients beyond the walls of the hospital, improve clinical outcomes, and avoid costly readmissions. The design of the application includes customizable branching logic to enhance clinical assessments, results reporting, and interactive patient visual and auditory cueing. Another feature is EHR integration, which allows for abnormal result notifications and monitoring of trends to improve patient adherence and individualize care management. goNurse is a sophisticated mHealth application that combines a digital product and proven program for an all-in-one solution.



goNurse

Recognizing excellence through the inaugural Pathway awards

The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) has announced the recipients of the inaugural Pathway Nurse of the Year™ Award and the 2020 Pathway Award®.

The Pathway Nurse of the Year Award recognizes the outstanding contributions of one direct care nurse and one nurse leader from all Pathway to Excellence® designated organizations around the world.

Pathway Nurse of the Year, Nurse Leader

Julie Powers, MSN, RN, NE-BC, director of adult health, Inspira Medical Center Mullica Hill, Mullica Hill, New Jersey

A highly engaged and transformational leader, Powers was recognized for her contributions to leadership and shared decision-making. She's widely respected and recognized as an advocate who prioritizes a healthy work environment where frontline nurses are empowered to practice to the fullest extent of their license, encouraged to develop collaborative relationships with the interprofessional team, and supported by their senior nursing leaders.



Julie Powers



Pathway Nurse of the Year, Direct Care Nurse

Donia Till, MSN, RN, CNL, CGRN, VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System, North Las Vegas, Nevada

A clinical nurse leader, Till was a driving force behind her organization's pursuit of a Pathway to Excellence designation. She was recognized for her exemplary contributions and commitment to shared decision-making and the organization's shared governance structure. Till was described as energetic, knowledgeable, and as someone who will help anyone at any time. She continues to be a key leader locally in the battle against COVID-19.



Donia Till

MEMBER BENEFITS

New educational COVID-19 quick videos from ANA

In addition to free 60-minute webinars on COVID-19 topics, ANA now offers the option of watching quick videos (5 to 15 minutes each) as part of its COVID-19 Video Education Series.

The quick videos are available for viewing immediately. (Registration is required for the full webinars.)

ANA has focused the video education series on COVID-19 topics covering different aspects of the crisis and providing information that can be applied immediately in your care of COVID-19 patients. Topic areas include personal protective equipment, racial disparities, ethical challenges, disease progression, ventilator management, mental health support, and ambulatory care.

All ANA COVID-19 videos are FREE for both ANA members and non-members. More than 165,000 nurses have already accessed this valuable information. Register for free today (tinyurl.com/y298qoxj).



2020 ANCC Pathway Award

MinuteClinic® the retail health clinic of CVS Health, headquartered in Woonsocket, Rhode Island

The ANCC Pathway Award, sponsored by Cerner Corporation, a global leader in healthcare technology, honors a project proposal in a Pathway to Excellence designated organization that creates a positive nurse practice environment using innovation and technology.

Virtual Collaboration (VC) for Nurses—CVS Health's winning proposal—will enable HIPAA-compliant, high-quality virtual peer-to-peer consultations for managing patients with both common acute and chronic health conditions. VC for Nurses equips MinuteClinic providers with a device-agnostic, on-demand, collaboration solution that enables synchronous and asynchronous text, audio meetings, video meetings, and image capture/exchange.

Providing care to family members

To: Ethics Advisory Board

From: Concerned RN

Subject: Caring for family members

Can you tell me if the American Nurses Association (ANA) has a stance on nurses providing care to their family?



From: ANA Center for Ethics and Human Rights

Although this question is raised periodically, ANA doesn't have a specific position statement regarding nurses providing care for family members. In an *American Nurse Journal* article, "Being the nurse in the family," Roberta Young, MSN, RN, CENP, and Teresa (Terry) Anderson, EdD, MSN, NE-BC, discussed the topic, but didn't address the ethical commitments involved. For a nurse, "care" might involve treating or prescribing, direct professional care, or informal caregiving. Understanding the nurse's professional relationship and ethical commitments are key to answering questions about scenarios such as the ones that follow.

Treating or prescribing

A cousin asks a nurse practitioner (NP), "Would you write me a prescription for a UTI [urinary tract infection]?"

This relationship is familial and may not promote a candid discussion about medication history, antecedents (such as sexual activity), follow-up care, or documentation of the encounter. NPs need to follow all state regulations, such as requiring an established professional relationship with the patient before prescribing. Based on a commitment to prevent harm (nonmaleficence) and promote long-term good (beneficence), the caring response would be to encourage the cousin to contact their usual provider and not provide a prescription.

Direct professional care

A nurse's fiancé is admitted to the facility where she works for an exacerbation of a chronic condition. The nurse tells the supervisor "It will be quicker if I do his admission since I know his history."

In the *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* (the Code) (nursingworld.org/coe-view-only/), Provision 2.4 specifies, "The intimate nature of nursing care...may contribute to the risk of boundary violations" and guides nurses to seek assistance. The supervisor and nurse need to consider whether the nurse will be able to maintain a professional relationship and provide equitable care to her entire patient assignment if she assumes the nursing responsibilities for her fiancé. Also, does hospital policy prohibit caring for a loved one? Based on a commitment to justice and beneficence, the nurse should not assume this professional caregiving role. If other nurses are available, the nurse's patients might benefit if she's relieved of her assignment and allowed to support her fiancé.

Informal caregiving

"I won't need a visiting nurse. My daughter is a nurse."

This plan is centered around the parent's emotional connection and pride. Does this represent an autonomous decision by both parent and daughter—free from the perception of a power differential or coercion? Although this plan may be in the parent's best interest, efforts should be made to protect the daughter from personal or professional harm. Provision 2.2 of the Code stipulates, "Nurses must examine the conflicts arising between their own personal and professional values...and the values and interests of the patients." Being a nurse doesn't guarantee that the daughter possesses the knowledge, skills, or physical strength to meet her parent's needs. Provision 4.3 notes, "Nurses are responsible for assessing their own competence. When the needs of the patient are beyond the qualifications..., and the nurse must seek consultation." Even if the daughter agrees to assume this caregiver role, a referral to a visiting nurse organization would be ethically justifiable.

From an ethical standpoint, nurses must be mindful about boundary issues and ethical commitments when contemplating providing care to family.

— Response by Marcia Bosek, DNSc, RN, member of the ANA Ethics and Human Rights Advisory Board

Do you have a question for the Ethics Inbox?
Submit at ethics@ana.org.

Carli Zegers: Leadership for a more inclusive future

By Jessica Stein Diamond

Childhood experiences forged Carli Zegers' determination to help make healthcare more inclusive and equitable.

"I've grounded myself in remembering where I'm from and keep that perspective in mind in everything I do," said Zegers, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, recipient of the 2020 Jeannine Rivet National Leadership Fellowship established by the American Nurses Foundation through a gift from the United Health Foundation. "Advancing my leadership skills as a nurse is important so I can get to the next level to make sure that everyone's voices, especially underserved and vulnerable individuals, are heard."



Carli Zegers

Early influences

Zegers obtained her doctorate at age 29, and at 31 is currently working toward an MBA while participating in fellowship-supported leadership development courses and mentoring. "The only reason I'm here today is because of the exceptional people who took time to mentor me," said Zegers, who grew up in a low-socioeconomic community in South Omaha, Nebraska, and helped raise her younger sister and brother while her single mom, a high school graduate, worked two jobs around the clock. She vividly recalls her fifth grade teacher's advice: "The only way out of this lifestyle is through education because they can't take it from you."

"We need to be unbiased for the patient and give them more power by sharing information in a calm, respectful, and caring interaction."

— Carli Zegers

Today, Zegers works as an emergency department nurse practitioner at Truman Medical Center in Kansas City, Missouri, a safety-net hospital, and is an assistant professor at the University of Missouri Kansas City School of Nursing and Health Studies. She frequently replaces textbook case studies with real patient stories because, she explains, "Life doesn't always let you be a textbook answer." For example, instead of the standard blood transfusion case, her students discuss how to support the transfusion needs of an undocumented mother fleeing an abuser

whose four children had nowhere to go after she was admitted.

"We need to be unbiased for the patient and give them more power by sharing information in a calm, respectful, and caring interaction," Zegers said. Childhood memories and a relative's experience as an immigrant from Mexico shape her focus on effective communication in her service on the boards of the Academy of Communication in Healthcare and the National Association of Hispanic Nurses.

Opening doors

Through the fellowship, Zegers is being mentored by Mary Jo Jerde, MBA, BSN, RN, FAAN, senior vice president of UnitedHealth Group, and is participating in three lead-

ership seminars and certificate programs. "More than anything, this has opened the door for exceptional networking as I consider future options," she said. "I would love to see if I could impact hospital systems in a leadership role, work in policy, and gain more insight on the healthcare sector so that someday I could try to help fix some of the problems. As my mother used to say, 'You have to know the rule book before you can fix the rules.'"

Building upon a legacy

The Jeannine Rivet National Leadership Fund supports nurses who will build upon the trailblazing contributions to healthcare and business of Jeannine Rivet, MPH, RN, FAAN, a retired executive vice president of the UnitedHealth Group. Andrea Brooks, DNP, CRNP, FNP-BC, was the inaugural recipient in 2019 of a Rivet Fellowship. The Rivet Fund provides a one-time \$10,000 fellowship to each of its 10 recipients over a decade.

"Awards like this are especially important for diversifying what nursing looks like—not just me as a Hispanic female in her 30s—but with my policy and business capabilities, and diversity of thought," Zegers said. "Philanthropy like this is how money turns into change because you invest in a unique cohort of future leaders who are committed to change. This is especially important given how the pandemic has exposed the inequities in healthcare."

— Jessica Stein Diamond is a journalist who specializes in healthcare, engineering, behavioral health, education, and equity topics.