

Report of the ANA Membership Assembly

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ANA-Ohio was well represented at the 2025 American Nurses Association (ANA) Membership Assembly (MA) meeting, held in Washington, D.C., June 26 -28. President Becky Patton, Executive Director Tiffany Bukoffsky, ANA Board member Khaliah Fisher-Grace, voting representatives Sally Morgan and Barb Brunt, alternate representative Meghan Ramic, observer Yvonne Smith, ANA Professional Practice Committee member Raya Cupler, and *OJIN: The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing* editor Jackie Owens all attended the Assembly. In addition, Andre'a Wallace and Janet Michaelis attended Hill Day, the day before the MA.

Hill Day

To prepare members for Hill Day, ANA provided a breakfast briefing and provided informational materials on the following issues: Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs, Improving Care and Access to Nurses (ICAN) Act, Medicaid, and Workplace Violence. During Hill Day, members met with Ohio senators and congressional representatives, shared personal stories focusing on these issues, and left them with materials outlining nurses' concerns. In addition, ANA gifted stethoscopes to the legislators to remind them of the power of nurses.

Board of Directors Roundtable

The ANA Board of Directors hosted a roundtable discussion after Hill Day to provide members with updates on several topics, including legislative activities, bylaws, and emergent issues. Members brought their top-of-mind issues to the attention of the board and staff including the need for subject matter experts on vaccines, the public health crisis in Florida due to removing fluoride from the water, the increased nurse suicide rate, the need for patient education about cannabis use, and having ANA consider supporting venture capitalists in health-care and education.

Membership Assembly

The opening session of the assembly on Friday, June 27th included a report of the Nominations and Elections Committee, the ANA President's Address, and the ANA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Report. The Treasurer's report generated various questions, because while the ANA Enterprise, (consisting of ANA, the American Nurses Credentialing Center, and the American Nurses Foundation) made money the last four years, ANA itself suffered losses. Much of ANA's work is related to strategic initiatives which do not generate revenue. ANA will continue to focus on increased growth and non-dues revenue.

Bylaws Changes

Prior to this MA meeting, 111 bylaws changes were proposed, which were divided into 36 groups for discussion. There were four bylaws' hearings prior to the MA to allow members the opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns. Based on feedback from these hearings, the board removed some of the bylaws change proposals and suggested that they be considered at a virtual special meeting later this year.

The most controversial bylaws change was a proposal to allow LPNs to become full members of ANA. Lively discussion ensued, with people speaking both in favor of this change (including LPNs themselves) and others in opposition. It was later moved to send the proposed LPN membership changes to a committee for further exploration. Another proposed change related to MA representation to be based on actual number of members per state rather than the amount of dues paid. This proposal was also referred to a committee for further consideration.

There were proposed changes to allow all ANA members to vote on officers, rather than just the voting MA members. Members shared that they appreciated being able to talk to the candidates during the MA meeting and indicated they had been elected

to their position to represent the members in their state. This proposed amendment failed. Proposed amendments relating to the Leadership Council being able to provide recommendations to the Board and allowing the chief staff officer to vote passed. Currently, ANA has a category of members called e-members, who are not full members but have access to specific areas of the ANA website and receive communications from ANA. This has created confusion among these members, who consider themselves as ANA members, and it does not benefit the states. The proposal to eliminate e-members passed. The proposed amendment to have a designated board seat for an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) failed.

Another proposed amendment that generated robust discussion was a change from conducting an affirmative action program to supporting diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging (DEIAB) for all nurses. There was no argument about the concept of this change, but concern about whether the wording would create future problems for ANA, given the current environment. A motion was made to change the wording to 'support access to professional opportunities and belonging for all nurses.' The motion and proposal passed. There was a motion to postpone all the other proposed bylaws amendments to a special session, which also passed.

Dialogue Forums and Recommendations

Three dialogue forums provided MA participants an opportunity to give feedback on the proposed recommendations which will guide the board's focus for the upcoming year. The first forum topic was Advancing Rural Health Through Nursing Innovation and Advocacy. The recommendation to advance policies that promote use of nurse-led care delivery modalities to address health care access in rural areas was passed. The second

topic was Policy Development for the Effective Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) from the Lens of Ethics Within the Scope of Nursing Practice. Based on feedback from the MA, the following recommendations were accepted:

- Partner with stakeholders to develop guidelines that consider both the ethical and legal domains for the use of AI tools within nursing practice. Consideration should be given to:
 - a. Protecting the role, clinical judgment, and the patient relationship,
 - b. The impact of AI use on the environment,
 - c. Including nurses in AI governance and development, and
 - d. Advocating the regulations and payment structures that ethically and equitably advance the use of AI.

The third topic was Revising and Protecting the Role of the RN Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice. ANA-Ohio first Vice President Kurt Kless was one of the authors of this dialogue forum. There were no recommendations for this proposal. Feedback from the MA participants will be sent to the group that is revising the current *Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice*.

Candidate's Forum

A Candidate's Forum was held that evening so members could talk with candidates running for office. Current ANA board member and ANA-Ohio member Khaliah Fisher Grace ran for Treasurer, and ANA-Ohio member Sally Morgan served as her campaign manager. Voting took place immediately after the forum and continued until 9:00 am the next day. Although the outcome was not what ANA-Ohio would have hoped, Khaliah and Sally ran a good campaign.

The evening concluded with an ANA-PAC (Political Action Committee) reception at the Capital City Brewing Company. The theme was: PAC in the Saddle – Giddy Up for Change. This is a bipartisan PAC that supports candidates for federal office who have demonstrated support for legislative and regulatory goals of ANA.

Saturday Session

The Saturday MA session started with remarks from the ANA Subsidiaries: American Academy of Nursing, the American Nurses Credentialing Center, and the American Nurses Foundation. Each speaker addressed the challenges and accomplishments over the past year. There were also remarks from the National Student Nurses Association and the Chief Nursing Officer of the ANA Enterprise, who reported on progress of the 2024 Dialogue Forums issues. These included Breaking Barriers to Nurse Workforce Well-Being, Improving Care for Veterans, and the Code of Ethics for Nurses. Voting on the Dialogue Forum recommendations and proposed bylaws amendments took the rest of this session.

Defending Nursing's Principles and Protecting our Patients

There was one item of new business, which was Defending Nursing's Principles and Protecting our Patients. This was submitted by fourteen State Constituent Organizations (C/SNAs), including ANA-Ohio. Considering the significant federal policies and actions that have affected nurses and patients over recent months, the MA wanted to reaffirm the following priorities:

1. Reaffirm our commitment to nursing's values.
2. Highlight the need for ANA to be more visible and direct about its position on foundational issues affecting the profession and patient care.
3. Address major issues without a political lens.
4. Unify the voice of the profession, affiliates, and C/SNAs by highlighting our universal commitment to these values, regardless of region.

The proposal urges ANA to take immediate, visible, and sustained public positions in opposition to federal policies that erode access to care, undermine the nursing workforce, weaken diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, and dismantle programs that provide life-saving care and services to underserved populations around the world. The MA ex-

pressed its position that ANA must directly articulate the profession's strong opposition to these threats and reaffirm ANA's commitment to equity, patient-centered care, public health, professional autonomy, and evidence-based nursing practice. This motion passed.

Keynote

Suleika Jaouad, an Emmy Award-winning journalist, author, and speaker, shared her journey after being diagnosed with leukemia at age 22. She suffered several relapses and related the importance of nurses in her health care journey. She encouraged all nurses to take care of themselves, acknowledging that she uses a "To Feel" list, rather than a "To Do" list.

The final session of the MA included the Nurses Legacy Memorial, which is ANA's annual recognition of fallen nurses whose enduring contributions have profoundly impacted lives and communities. Members of the Maryland Nurses Honor Guard led the tribute. Outgoing board members were recognized, and the newly elected board members were announced. President Jennifer Mensik Kennedy provided concluding remarks, including that \$33,500 was raised for ANA-PAC and \$15,500 for a Barbara Nichols Scholarship Fund. ANA conducted a Socks for the Homeless Campaign during the meeting and collected 651 pairs of socks.

Hill Day and the MA meeting were exciting events that provided opportunity to network with nurses from around the country and to have input on issues that affect nursing. Participation increases the visibility of nurses and reinforces their value as health-care experts and advisors on policy issues. ■