

of my experience was realizing how much of local government is public health. Much of the housing stock in the city was over 80 years old so lead abatement programs were needed. Sanitation issues besides the sewer involved the entire garbage disposal and recycling systems. And I learned that auto accident prevention systems such as “road diets” had pros and cons. Parks, bike and hiking trails, tow paths and maintenance of tree canopies are also related to public health by promoting a sense of well-being.

In talking with other nurse candidates, there was consensus that the most rewarding part of campaigning was the face-to-face contact with individuals and listening to their stories. I too found that to be most rewarding aspect. It was a gratifying experience to meet so many new people and gain a different perspective on how others faced the everyday challenges of living. Nurses are educated to be skilled listeners, ask probing but unobtrusive questions, and be astute to

what’s not being said. (Patton et al., 2023) Whether learning about the challenges of the rural farming community or seeing the heart-wrenching impact of a recession on diverse families, nurses have a natural empathy to function in a public health capacity by providing resources to those in need.

The Honorable Ann Marie Donegan, former Mayor of North Olmstead, Ohio noted that conversations on the doorstep often set the priorities for future legislation. “I recognize we have a nation comprised of so many different kinds of people with so many different needs. I was able to recall some of those conversations when I needed to set priorities for what I would propose as legislation.” (A. M. Donegan, personal communication, January 24, 2026) Similarly, a current state representative expressed that these stories help her represent her constituents in Columbus. Current City Council member Megan Coy of North Olmstead, running for Ohio State Representative shared her experiences when children, especially, teen agers

show their interest when she knocks on the door. “It makes what we are doing more meaningful. After all, it is their future we are fighting for.” (Megan Coy, personal communication, January 25, 2026) She also shared how gratifying it is when she sees parents role modeling for their children by bringing them to the polls when they vote.

Underlying any campaign experience is that while one is doing everything one can to win, there is always the possibility one may lose. As someone who has won then lost, I admit it hurts. Even so, I would do it all again. I passionately believe in the power of the democratic process to promote significant social change for the good of all citizens. ■

REFERENCES

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2025 Fall Ohio Nursing Organizations Leadership Summit Report

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ANA-Ohio hosted the Fall Ohio Nursing Organizations Leadership Summit on December 5, 2025, at Chamberlain University at Easton Town Center. Eighteen nursing organizations were represented and a total of 33 people attended.

ANA-Ohio President Rebecca Patton opened the summit, and Dr. Terra Downs, Executive Dean Academic Operations at Chamberlain University, welcomed the attendees. Latisha Chastang, MNM (Masters of Nonprofit Management and Leadership) presented “Cultivating Commitment: Engaging Members and Preparing Tomorrow’s Leaders” and facilitated a discussion on recruitment, retention, and succession planning for

organizational membership. After a networking lunch, Jan Lanier provided the General Legislative Update with input from organizational leaders who have current legislative issues.

Erin Keels, DNP, APRN-CNP, Ohio Board of Nursing President, and Jack Brubaker, Legislative Liaison at the Ohio Board of Nursing (OBN), reported on several key issues/changes with OBN. These included NCLEX updates and scoring trends, changes in Continuing Education Rules, New Safe Haven Program, mandatory reporting rules, and legislative update involving OBN.

Mary Cook, DNP, MSN, RN, CNE, Executive Director, Ohio League for

Nursing (OLN), ended the summit with a discussion of “Emerging Strategies to Strengthen Nursing Education and Practice Readiness”. Dr. Cook described the current landscape in nursing education and discussed strategies for practice readiness which included competency-based education, simulation and virtual learning, and transition-to-practice models. With the emerging issue of faculty and preceptor capacity, Dr. Cook also discussed preparation for effective teaching and developing collaboration and partnerships. The 2026 Spring Ohio Nursing Organizations Leadership Summit is tentatively scheduled for April, 17, 2026. ■