

The Power of Nurses at the ANA Membership Assembly

Four elected MNA representatives, President Dr. Nayna Philipsen, Immediate Past President Dr. Lou Bartolo, Past President Dr. Charlotte Wood, and Dr. Dinah Price, made Maryland proud at the ANA Membership Assembly, bringing our state's voice directly into ANA's highest decision-making arena. As voting delegates, they elected national ANA leaders, determined the outcome of bylaw amendments, and cast votes on proposals that will shape the direction of nursing across the country. Their presence ensured Maryland nurses weren't just watching the future unfold; they were part of the decisions driving it.

Presidential Perspectives

In an unprecedented moment for the American Nurses Association, eight former ANA Presidents gathered alongside Dr. Mensik Kennedy for a historic Former Presidents' Luncheon, Presidential Perspectives: Legacy, Leadership, and Shaping the Future of Nursing. (*see photo 1*)

What unfolded was an awesome living archive of nursing's past speaking directly to its future. Each former ANA President has an inspiring and distinct vantage point shaped by the era they led:

- The reformers who fought for pro-

fessional recognition and legislative authority.

- The advocates who expanded the voice of nurses in national policy.
- The innovators who pushed the profession into new models of care, technology, and equity.
- The bridge-builders who strengthened ANA's role in unifying nurses across specialties, generations, and states.

The former ANA Presidents spoke from eras defined by legislative battles, workforce transformation, public health crises, and the relentless pursuit of professional recognition. Their perspectives revealed how each generation of leaders confronted challenges that ultimately expanded the influence and authority of nurses nationwide. Their reflections offered a panoramic view of the evolution of nursing. They spoke candidly about the responsibility of legacy, the weight of leadership, and the urgency of preparing nurses for a rapidly shifting health care landscape. The luncheon became a powerful exchange among the ANA Presidents. Their wisdom and vision represented a shared commitment to nursing, while shaping a future that

is bold, resilient, and uncompromisingly patient-centered.

ANA Elections

The voting representatives of the Assembly elected the following leaders, who will take office on January 1, 2026:

- President: Anita Girard, DNP, RN, CNL, CPHQ, NEA-BC; Secretary: Heidi Sanborn, DNP, RN, CNE
- Directors-at-Large: Ahnyel Burkes, DNP, RN-BC, NEA-BC; Nelson Tuazon, DNP, DBA, RN, NEA-BC, CENP, CPPS, CPHFH, CNE, FACHE, FNAP, FAMS, FAAN; and Josephine Agyei, BSN, RN.

The Power of Networking

MNA representatives made Maryland shine at the ANA Membership Assembly, turning a national forum into a powerful networking arena. Throughout the event, they connected with colleagues from across the country, exchanged insights into the profession's most pressing issues, and elevated Maryland's presence on the national stage. They also proudly promoted the upcoming MNA Convention, spotlighting its keynote speaker, ANA President Dr. Jennifer Mensik Kennedy, which generated excitement and curiosity among attendees. With a photo capturing the MNA delegation alongside the ANA President, each holding the MNA 123rd Annual Convention marketing postcard, their engagement showcased Maryland's energy, visibility, and commitment to shaping the future of nursing. ■



Photo 1: Former ANA Presidents gathered alongside Dr. Mensik Kennedy for a historic Former Presidents' Luncheon, Presidential Perspectives: Legacy, Leadership, and Shaping the Future of Nursing.

ANA Membership Assembly Approves Two Bylaws Amendments

By Lou J. Bartolo, DNP, MSN, RN



MNA Representative to the ANA Membership Assembly

At its Special Meeting on Saturday, June 27, 2026, the ANA Membership Assembly adopted two significant amendments to the ANA Bylaws.

The first amendment changes how votes and representatives are apportioned among constituent and state nurses associations. Apportionment will now be based on member counts rather than each association's percentage of ANA dues revenue. This is a shift the Apportionment Ad-Hoc Committee endorsed as a more equitable way to allocate representation. The change takes effect with the apportionment numbers issued in July 2027, which will determine representation at the 2028 Membership Assembly.

History was made with the second amendment, and with much discussion over the past years, it was approved by a decisive vote of 88.82% in favor to 11.18% opposed and, for the first time, will open ANA membership to Licensed Practical Nurses and Licensed Vocational Nurses, with the same dues, rights, privileges, and representation in governance as RN members. Implementation is delayed until 2027 under a proviso giving ANA time to develop marketing, operations, and recruitment plans. Each C/SNA will decide for itself whether to add LPNs/LVNs to its own membership. ■

Summary of the 2026 ANA Professional Policy Committee Dialogue Forums

By Dinah Price, DNP, MBA, MSN, RN, AGPCNP-C



MNA Representative to the ANA Membership Assembly

The 2026 ANA Professional Policy Committee presented three dialogue forums addressing emerging priorities for the nursing profession: workplace civility, environmental sustainability, and cannabis nursing competencies.

Dialogue Forum #1 focused on establishing a national framework to prevent and address incivility and bullying across nursing education and practice. Members emphasized the need for confidential reporting systems, trauma-informed responses, clear definitions, preceptor education, partnerships with organizations such as the NLN, AACN, NCSBN, and NSNA, and stronger protections for nursing students. The committee recommended that ANA strengthen its position statement on incivility by including standardized reporting pathways, safeguards against retaliation, mental health resources, educational toolkits,

and mechanisms to monitor incivility in academic settings.

Dialogue Forum #2 examined nurses' role in advancing healthcare sustainability, highlighting opportunities for collaboration with sustainability organizations, greater nurse leadership in environmental initiatives, education on sustainable healthcare practices, and attention to emerging issues such as the environmental impact of artificial intelligence and data centers. Recommendations included surveying the nursing workforce to identify barriers and opportunities and developing practical, evidence-based guidance that equips nurses to lead sustainability efforts.

Dialogue Forum #3 addressed integrating cannabis nursing competencies into education, policy, and clinical practice to improve patient safety and compassionate care as cannabis use becomes more common. Discussion identified gaps in nurses' knowledge regarding evidence-based cannabis

care, including risks, drug interactions, effectiveness, genetic considerations, documentation, legal issues, patient autonomy, and the need to distinguish therapeutic cannabis from illicit substance use. Members noted that patients often seek guidance from nurses and that current standards do not consistently address cannabis-related care, while also sharing positive patient experiences with medical cannabis. The committee recommended that ANA continue advocating for policies that support safe, evidence-based cannabis nursing practice and collaborate with stakeholders to expand cannabis education across all nursing licensure levels and healthcare settings. Overall, the committee's recommendations seek to strengthen nursing practice, education, leadership, and patient care by promoting safe learning environments, environmental stewardship, and competency in emerging areas of healthcare. ■