Constituent Association Nurses Furthering Knowledge

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The Nurses Furthering Knowledge (NFK) August Board Meeting set the direction for activities for 2026-27. Our September meeting discussed scholarship fundraising opportunities at the CNA Annual Conference held September 24 and resolutions, bylaw changes and business to be presented at the Colorado Nurses Association (CNA) Membership Assembly Meeting held September 26.

Congratulations to Kathryn (Kathy) Crisler, MS, RN who was inducted into the Colorado Nursing Hall of Fame for her participation in a multidisciplinary research team that developed and tested outcome measures for use in evaluating the quality of home care. Kathy served as the Clinical Leader in demonstration projects which led to implementation of the model for all Medicare-certified home health agencies in the US.

Kudos to Annette Cannon PhD, MA, RN, MSN, CCDI, D-ABMDI, DF-AFN who was the 2026 NFK Nurse of the Year. Annette was selected for her outreach to community nursing associations, legislative involvement, promotion of nurses working in forensics, and her monthly President's Messages published in the NFK Newsblast and posted on the CNA website. Most recently Annette had Jefferson County Coroner's Office, where she serves as coroner, officially designated as a clinical site for capstone students and forensic nursing students to address the clinical site shortage in Colorado. Nurses interested in forensics nursing can join her on Death Investigation through the Academy of Forensic Nurses. Annette can be reached at Annette2006@msn.

Our October meeting presenter was Dr. Angela Whiteacre DNP. RN, CCRN, TNCC, an Assistant Professor at Regis University, Loretta Heights School of Nursing. Angela presented on her DNP project "Disruptive Behaviors and Incivility in Nursing Education: Enhancing Learning Through Faculty Empowerment". Her presentation explored disruptive and uncivil behaviors in nursing education, and the challenges faculty may face when transitioning from clinical practice into the academic environment. The discussion introduced Nurse Shield, a faculty-development approach focused on proactive classroom expectations, professional communication, cognitive rehearsal, de-escalation, and consistent responses to challenging student behaviors. The presentation introduced practical strategies to support novice faculty confidence, protect the learning environment, and strengthen professional accountability.

Amanda Skenandore, the award-winning author of historical fiction who presented at the CNA Annual Convention in 2025, had her newest book, "When No One Else Will," released in May 2026. A grant to NFK from Colorado Nurses Foundation helped sponsor Amanda's presentation. The book is based on a true story of an illegal women's clinic at the center of a high-profile trial in 1940s Chicago. NFK readers agree it is a thought-provoking, powerfully timely novel of courage, sisterhood and women's healthcare, as Amanada describes her book.

Information on NFK meetings and activities are posted on the CNA website. ■

Stigma–A Barrier for Seeking and Providing Substance Use Treatment

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Substance Use Disorders (SUDs) cost about $4 billion a year in the United States. SUDs include alcohol, prescription medications, illicit drug use, tobacco, and substances such as heroin, methamphetamine, and other synthetic substances. Fentanyl is the most lethal drug epidemic in human history, and since the 1990's the opioid crisis has taken over 100,000 lives a year in the U.S. SUDs are associated with healthcare expenditures, accidents from motor vehicles, falls, drownings, lost productivity in the workplace, and criminal justice actions among a number of other costs to society.

With the morbidity and mortality associated with addictions, the need to expand the knowledge base of the nursing workforce is needed more than ever. Addiction is a health care disorder established as a chronic brain disorder since the 1990's. Yet today, those who have an addiction continue to be misunderstood and stigmatized. The nursing workforce can play a key role and significantly contribute to decreasing stigma associated with SUDs.

Stigma is more than a negative attitude. It is a social process in which people are labeled as different, associated with negative stereotypes, separated into "us" and "them," and experience status loss or discrimination within a context of unequal power. Substance use disorders