



# ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

## Message from the President

### Energizing Generations: The Race to Distinction!

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**Katrina Bickerstaff, BSN, RN, CPAN, CAPA**  
**ASPAN President 2016-2017**

The profession of perianesthesia nursing, in which we have all chosen to work, is one that is exceptional, a caring life work that embodies values and a sense of honor. This past year, President Armi Holcomb renewed our passion for perianesthesia nursing and inspired us to strive for excellence. Passion and excellence are two of the many principles that shape our professional actions, and are two of ASPAN's five core values. These are the principles that serve as the compass for our organization, guiding ASPAN's direction and goals. As an organization, ASPAN has embraced these terms, and we have employed the acronym PRIDE to represent ASPAN's values.

- Passion:** for our nursing specialty, caring for our patients at their most vulnerable moments
- Respect:** respect for each other, embracing what each of us bring forth to our profession from the novice to expert
- Integrity:** always upholding the tenets of the specialty of perianesthesia nursing
- Diversity:** how we engage with others who bring different viewpoints to the table
- Excellence:** always striving to be the best we can in our practice

#### **The Early Vision of ASPAN's Founders**

This year marks the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of ASPAN. From its inception, the founding members had the insight to see something exceptional, something unique, a true specialty in nursing. Through the hard work of ASPAN's mission directors and past leaders, we have advanced and promoted the unique specialty of perianesthesia nursing.

As we look back at our humble beginnings, ASPAN's original members had the vision and understanding to provide direction for this specialty. On October 30, 1980, the original nineteen founding directors signed Articles of Incorporation, and ASPAN became a formal association.<sup>1</sup>

This first decade saw the first newsletter, first conference, and ASPAN's first professional journal. The fledgling organization members also had the foresight to anticipate and support the clinical needs of the postanesthesia nurse and created ASPAN's first *Guidelines for Standards of Care*. The 1990s saw ASPAN's scope of practice redefined to include ambulatory surgery nurses and its education programs updated. The word of this specialty began to spread as ASPAN grew in membership. By the late 1990s, all forty components were established across the country. By the 21<sup>st</sup> century, ASPAN's research objectives were recognized, and we created our evidence-based practice model that began the conversation about why we do what we do.

#### **ASPAN's Continued Growth**

Over the last ten years, we have advanced our available technology, providing improved member services, multiple educational opportunities, and social networking. This last year we added a multitude of new Web-based and live Webcasted educational programs. We also published many updated products, such as the ASPAN *Competency Based Orientation for the Registered Nurse in the Perianesthesia Setting*, the updated 2015 edition of the *Redi-Ref* pocket guide, and the newest edition of the ASPAN *Perianesthesia Nursing Standards, Practice Recommendations and Interpretive Statements*. This current year, we just published ASPAN's very first *Competency Based Orientation for the Registered Nurse Caring for the Pediatric Patient in the Perianesthesia Setting*.

We should all take pride in what we have accomplished, but we should not be content to rest on our laurels. We have come a long way, and we have stumbled from time to time, wishing we had the hindsight, but we have always stayed the course - focusing on our goals, and building upon our foundation.

### **Where Does the Future Lead?**

With any commemoration comes the chance to look onward to what lies ahead. Where do we go from here? What will the future look like? As we move ahead, we must consider the challenges of today: affordable healthcare, generational diversity, the upcoming shortage of nurses, the aging population, and technology moving faster than the speed of light. I believe that every challenge brings an opportunity, so as we race toward distinction, we look out onto the horizon and ask: do we have the foresight and the understanding of what ASPAN can continue to bring to perianesthesia nursing?

As we consider our challenges moving into the coming years, I am confident. We will see major advances in technology, providing the most up to date interactive education and information at our fingertips. We will see that ASPAN's practice recommendations become the universal baseline for practice, because we will have searched out and appraised the evidence. Our ASPAN-driven nursing research projects will be commonplace and we will see that our organization will be the only one all perianesthesia nurses rely on to find education, standards of care, and current ASPAN research.

The Roman god Janus gave us his name to the month January. He is the god of beginnings, and endings, symbolizing change and transitions, the progression of past to future. Janus has two heads: one looking back, the other looking forward.<sup>2</sup> ASPAN's founding members had the insight, at times we wished we had the hindsight, but we all forged ahead with the foresight. We have taken from the past and moved through the present to the future. Future makers have three heads, one looking forwards, one backwards, and one into themselves. This gives us the foresight, the hindsight, and the insight.<sup>3</sup>

### **ASPAN Leaders**

In closing, I would like to share a quote from Britain's poet laureate William Wordsworth: "Life is divided into three terms - that which was, which is, and which will be. Let us learn from the past to profit by the present, and from the present, to live better in the future."<sup>4</sup>

Our challenge is not simply to manage a difficult task; our challenge is also a summons, a call to action. We acknowledge that there is still a great deal to be done, but it is the members of this organization whose energy and talent will perpetuate the vitality and growth of ASPAN and perianesthesia nursing. This year can be seen not simply as an anniversary, but as the beginning of the next 35 years and beyond, for ASPAN.

Thank you for your support and for all you do for ASPAN and our specialty. Remember—the future begins now.

### **REFERENCES**

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