



# ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

## Message from the President

### Vision in Action: Celebrating Success

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**Dina A. Krenzschek MSN, RN, CPAN**  
**ASPAN President 2004-2005**

January 2004 was a very busy time for me as I was organizing ASPAN Committees, Strategic Work Teams, special assignments and many more. In addition, my mind was preoccupied in designing a vision that would influence the advancement of ASPAN excellence in practice. As I accepted the responsibility of the 24<sup>th</sup> ASPAN presidency in April 2004, reality hit me--I had one year to dream, act, and deliver with connections all over the United States and beyond. This was very exciting, but included awesome and overwhelming feelings of the desired and expected outcomes. At times, doubts came to mind, but the energy and values from within kept driving me to the next step. Sometimes I wondered how my 24 hours could be stretched or how creative I could be to fit everything in one day or within the timeline that I set for myself. Somehow we need others to help us balance our perceptions. One day, my sister, who is a missionary nun said, "God has plans for you and you must trust in Him." This was well and good, but this is faith and abstract. I needed something concrete to make my vision turn into action. My mother said, "Your dad did it with 11 children. He had a 24 hours service for his patients whenever he was needed and, at the same time remained to be a very active leader in the community and his medical society. He opened his heart and mind and had strong faith that the people around him would make things work as he partnered with them side by side." What advice, what insight, and how can she be so wise?

In a very short time, I will be turning over the Presidency to our 25th ASPAN President Meg Betune. In working with Meg for almost a year, I realize ASPAN is very fortunate to have a very fine professional and dynamic future leader who will continue the ASPAN mission with her unique vision for the future. The ASPAN Board of Directors (BOD) served as the pillars of the organization and provided the inner strength as they faced constant changes, accepted challenges, created more ideas and implemented difficult actions. The BOD continued to have an open mind, even beyond its comfort zone. The Past Presidents served as a continuous source of inspiration, as they gave their advice and unconditional support. I call them the "hidden treasures of ASPAN." The Committee Chairs and leaders made things happen. They, too, were my partners, because as I defined the vision, they acted upon them far beyond my imagination. They were driven by their values and inner passion, and the outcomes could not have been any better. The *JoPAN* and *Breathline* editors were vital in our structure. They ensured the quality of our messages, through professional and scientific publications, that were sent to the rest of the world. Our voices were heard as evident in the inquiry and references. The Component Presidents and their directors served as a very important links to the core of membership. Their jobs were very challenging as they faced issues related to recruitment and retention of members; lack of commitment; decreasing interest; and, at times, apathy of members. However, these obstacles did not stop them from moving forward, continuing to motivate others and making more connections. As a result, many components continued to grow; some managed to maintain their membership; and a few, like NevPANA, experienced inactivity. Resigned to end their component, they managed to revive their spirits and passion under the leadership of Judy Purser and her BOD. All of these component leaders have to be commended for striving towards excellence in practice. ASPAN exists for its members and the component leaders have the ability to influence the positive and productive direction of their members. Many times, we do not realize how much we make a difference to others. As I traveled throughout the United States, I felt the passion of the component leaders and the domino effects among their members. Each component had creative ways to promote our specialty organization through education, practice, and research. The ASPAN office staff was a hard working team and always showed a positive outlook and willingness to help leaders and members to succeed in what they were doing.

Today, our successful accomplishments are testaments of our great leaders and members, who are working as a team for a common mission. The journey of vision in action was made possible by the unselfish caring and commitment of members at all levels.

Ending one's presidency does not end the vision of the organization. We must aspire to create something bigger and more lasting than ourselves. Every one of us has an inner drive to learn and teach. That drive does not end after each experience, because it is only a beginning. We must continue the quest to gain new insights, develop new concepts and ideas, and create application tools and scenarios that make contributions to this great specialty organization. Although the world around us continues to change at an accelerated pace, we must not abandon the quest for fundamental concepts that stand the test of time like our core values and high performance standards. Our core values and core mission should stand strong as we move forward in search for excellence. We need to be able to critically evaluate the difference between core and non-core values, between what should never change and what should be open for change. Keep in mind that our success does not depend on the size of our organization, but rather who we are and what we stand for. Collins and Porras said: "Visionary companies, that are lasting, come in many packages. Large and small; public and private; high profile and reclusive; stand alone companies and subsidiaries."

We must continue to celebrate ASPAN's vision as the premier organization in perianesthesia nursing practice that has a significant impact nationally and internationally. As leaders of this organization, we must celebrate our successes that last beyond us. As components, we must celebrate the immense power that influenced the direction of members. As individuals, we must celebrate the difference that each and every one of us made with our patients, family members, peers and other colleagues in the different roles that we function.

In closing, I want to share with you a story about Louise Florence Fitzgerald, a 1906 nursing student accepted by M. Adelaide Nutting. She was born in 1876 in Florence, Italy, of American parents. She completed her nursing school at the Johns Hopkins University and later became an international nursing leader until the late 1950s. Fitzgerald practiced her profession to the fullest without expecting anything in return, and for this she received numerous awards including the Florence Nightingale medal. She said, "If I had to live my life again, I would not choose any other profession, for I cannot think of any other kind of work which could have brought me even a small fraction of the satisfaction I have had." Almost a decade later, nursing leaders like Florence Nightingale and Louise Florence Fitzgerald continue to be our sources of inspiration and rekindle the passion in all of us. Today, we have the responsibility to mentor and teach future nurses the gift of caring. It is our turn to teach and inspire them, so they too will make a difference, not only to their patients and family members, but the world around them by continuing our core values and mission to last for many generations to come.

Thank you for joining me in my journey of vision in action.