



ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

Message from the President

ASPAN Celebrates Diversity and Cultural Competence

March/April 2006

Meg Beturne MSN, RN, CPAN, CAPA
ASPAN President 2005-2006

As my term serving as ASPAN's twenty-fifth president winds down, I reflect on the progress our organization has made regarding diversity and cultural competence. I feel proud that all committees, strategic work teams, and the Board of Directors heeded my call to action. The visible results are a tribute to ASPAN members and leaders who held true to our core value of diversity and operationalized it in so many ways. This year, the member-get-a-member campaign challenged each of you to "touch the world that touches you." This initiative entailed being open and inviting to colleagues of all ages along the perianesthesia continuum, from the novice practitioner to the seasoned expert. The campaign resulted in the recruitment of nurses working in remote sites where moderate sedation administration occurs, and ultimately it offered the perfect solution to efficient succession planning. As the first cohort of enthused and committed "up and comers" began an ASPAN career mentoring track, diversity of opportunity became a reality at the grassroots level.

The work of the Diversity Strategic Work Team (SWT) greatly advanced our organizational goals by focusing on educating our leaders, members and staff members regarding positive outcomes promoted by the diversity effort. The Diversity SWT solicited and published subject matter articles in *JoPAN*, *Breathline*, and component newsletters. The team increased ASPAN's influence and enhanced our diverse collaborations with healthcare organizations and agencies. We will realize the fruits of this labor at the Diversity Summit, taking place at our National Conference in Orlando. The summit will bring participants together from nursing groups that share in the care of patients and families, and includes multi-generational individuals from varied ethnicities and homelands, plus representatives from the armed forces. It will target nurses inside and outside of ASPAN who wish to identify diversity issues and address potential practice standards. Through an interactive brainstorming session, the formulation of key objectives for ASPAN's strategic plan will occur.

The Clinical Practice Committee, supported by evidence based practice, worked to develop a proposed Position Statement on Perianesthesia Cultural Diversity in Nursing Practice for presentation to the Representative Assembly in April. Additionally, a call for best practice abstracts went out to all perianesthesia specialty areas for inclusion in the "Celebrate Successful Practices" posters at the 2006 ASPAN National Conference. The Research Committee thought outside of the box this year and initiated an online journal club. This activity included the posting of research articles and a subsequent interaction of diverse opinions and views. Ultimately, it served to improve the research critique skills of members. Outstanding work in the areas of hypothermia and postoperative nausea and vomiting propelled our organization to investigate and collaborate with other leading experts for the benefit of our patients. The Data Elements SWT continued its work on perianesthesia data elements, which positively affect perianesthesia practice by providing consistent and concrete definitions to discrete elements, such as pain and comfort. The Education Provider Committee stepped forward to satisfy diverse needs of our members by adding program offerings on understanding industry regulations, leadership and management, and by restructuring certification preparation courses to include case scenarios. Providing lectures in a DVD format is another proactive committee plan to supply education using diverse media. The Governmental Affairs (GA) Committee kept us informed on diverse political issues that require ASPAN members' attention, vocalization, and participation in advocacy efforts. The ASPAN website hosts ongoing GA updates that offer an excellent and effective vehicle to inform our members, and they are just a convenient click away. The National Conference SWT took center stage and planned the ultimate

celebration of diversity and cultural competence imaginable, while enlisting the help of expert speakers to spread the word on how to make diversity work for us and how our touch can change the world around us!

This year, our component leaders got in touch with their leadership potential at the annual Component Development Institute while renewing their passion for perianesthesia nursing. A domino effect occurred as the leaders imparted this information to members, and now component revitalization is being encouraged and supported by all! As I traveled extensively across this great land of America, I witnessed grassroots members carrying the diversity banner and wearing the badge of cultural competence in daily practice. A desire to share local foods and customs led me to appreciate even more the richness and force that tradition has on our patients and us. In the perianesthesia nurses with whom I met, from every part of this great Nation, I found support for inclusion rather than exclusion and acceptance rather than rejection. I was very proud that ASPAN was represented at the very first conference held by the Arab American Nurses Association. The conference featured keynote speaker Madeleine Leininger, a pioneer nurse anthropologist, nurse theorist, and founder of the Transcultural Nursing Society. Dr. Leininger, a true inspiration for all nurses, has dedicated her life's work to researching and promoting beneficial, meaningful, and culturally congruent health care to all people.

All of this year's achievements resulted from the work of so many ASPAN members, some visible at the front lines and those who kept the efforts going behind the scenes. The measurement of success, on all levels and in all instances, can be found where members resisted the forces of apathy, negativism and ethnocentrism. Today, we celebrate our advancements as individuals, as a professional nursing organization, and as a key player in the healthcare arena. Our future charge is to keep this momentum going and to build on the rich legacy of past ASPAN leaders. Building for the future means removing complacency and substituting an energizing spirit. This requires initiative, passion and acceptance and it means walking the talk of diversity and cultural competence. United in purpose, we can reach this goal and ultimately touch our world in a most profound way. Please take this walk with your perianesthesia colleagues and me!