



ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

Message from the President

Energizing Generations: The Race to Distinction! It Takes a Village

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"Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other."¹ - John F. Kennedy

The days are shorter, nights are longer, trees are bare and the ground is cool. This is my New England. I love the fall season, the cool and crisp nights, a time to sit quietly and think about the year that has passed. This time last year, I often thought, "What will it be like being the president of ASPAN? Will I know how, and what to do? How will I manage work, ASPAN and my time?" I am sure these are some of the questions all the past presidents have thought about as well.

Having been active within ASPAN and on the Board of Directors (BOD) for several years, I observed and learned from the previous leadership. You begin to cultivate your leadership skills based on past experiences. You begin to understand the process and responsibility of being a leader, and you create the vision of what it takes to represent ASPAN. You have already begun to manage your time with work and your family. You have worked on many committees, met many deadlines and attended many meetings. You become comfortable with the ASPAN schedule and you can effectively manage it all.

The role of president is not a solo job, by any means. It takes a village. I consult with many others to make rulings and decisions. I have a weekly conference call with Susan Russell, VP/President-Elect and Kevin Dill, ASPAN CEO. I speak directly to the coordinators of ASPAN's strategic work teams (SWTs) and committees, and I frequently call Armi Holcomb, ASPAN's Immediate Past President, for advice. We all communicate frequently to be sure we understand that any decisions we make are in the best interest of the entire membership.

When you start your ASPAN journey, to wherever you let it take you, remember you are never alone. The members and leaders of this organization take the extra time to support and nurture you. You may not even be aware of members encouraging and fostering your growth. Everything I learned about ASPAN was from past leaders guiding me each step of the way. I have had many mentors in ASPAN. Each one has allowed me to open my eyes to my potential.

Being the ASPAN president is work and a time commitment, but you do not go into it unaccompanied. Being the leader can be frightening, and at times intimidating. I was scared. My message to anyone who aspires to become the ASPAN president, or aspires to any other leadership role within ASPAN, is to take the next step. Know that is it okay to feel uncertain. And know that you will always have the people around to support and guide you. It does take a village, a village of members and past leaders to provide the many shoulders to lean on.

REFERENCE

1. Brainy quotes. John F. Kennedy. Available at: http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/j/john_f_kennedy.html. Accessed August 27, 2016.