



# ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

## Message from the President

### Opportunities and Possibilities: Education

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**ASPAN President 2012-2013**

When was the last time you sat back and thought about your basic nursing training? For most of us, it was a time of hard work, new experiences, excitement, uncertainty, and sometimes down right terror, depending on the instructor or the clinical situation in which we found ourselves. But with every aspect of our lives, there is a beginning, and an establishment or foundation which allows for further growth. Our early nursing education was no different. Whether you began your nursing career at a diploma school, a community college or baccalaureate program, your basic training provided you with a solid foundation of knowledge. Did you think about it back then, that the opportunity to touch someone's life is given to everyone? However, what one chooses to do with this opportunity is what sets people apart. Do you reflect on the impact your choices and the opportunity of your basic training have had on the lives of people you touch daily? I believe the truly curious nurse is the one who continues his or her education and never stops learning, and I believe that curiosity helps drive that individual to be the best nurse possible.

Education doesn't stop once we have graduated from our basic programs. Life-long learning is the concept of pursuing the curiosity and attainment of knowledge. Brick by brick, carefully placing the experiences and wisdom gathered through classes, continuing education and advanced nursing education, allows us to build on the foundation laid by our basic training program. And, ASPAN has a variety of ways to help each one of us to continue building on our individual foundation of excellence.

ASPAN is continually challenged to expand and enhance educational opportunities to meet the needs of perianesthesia nurses everywhere. ASPAN is committed to providing endless educational opportunities. Education is one of ASPAN's strategic priorities, and it is also a priority cited in the Robert Wood Johnson Institute of Medicine's (RWJ/IOM) landmark report on the Future of Nursing.<sup>1</sup> Several of ASPAN's volunteer work teams are focusing on this important aspect of professional growth and development.

Currently, construction is taking place by our Perianesthesia Orientation Strategic Work Team (SWT), led by Dolly Ireland, to develop an orientation program designed to meet the needs of new graduate nurses desiring to begin their careers in the specialty of perianesthesia, or those nurses wanting to transition into perianesthesia practice. The work of this SWT is near and dear to my heart, as I firmly believe in bringing new graduates into the domain of perianesthesia practice. I have personally experienced the success that can be achieved with the right candidate, having created a program, and been honored to serve as mentor and preceptor for an extremely bright and gifted new graduate. On reflection, I don't know who gained more from the experience, myself or my mentee. The program in development by the Orientation SWT is based on ASPAN's Competency Based Orientation and Credentialing Program for the Registered Nurse in the Perianesthesia Setting. It will consist of training modules that a facility will be able to purchase and use in order to assure that the nurse new to perianesthesia practice receives the training he or she needs to practice safely, and with a standardized base of knowledge. These types of training programs, or residency programs, are strongly advocated in the RWJ/IOM report.<sup>1</sup>

The Education Provider Committee, led by ASPAN Director for Education, Nancy Strzyewski, is examining ideas for new ASPAN seminars, and working with the team to update the current highly requested educational programs currently being offered. In conjunction with our Digital Media SWT, led by Terry Clifford, ASPAN is developing several of its most popular programs into a digital format for

modular viewing on the ASPAN Web site. This exciting venture will allow individuals to pick and choose the material they determine is needed in order to customize a learning program unique to each individual's own learning needs.

One of the first series of modules to be developed for the Web site is the "Foundations of Perianesthesia Practice" seminar, followed closely by the extremely popular and very much in demand, "Perianesthesia Certification Review" seminar. The hardworking and dedicated Education Provider team is also examining ideas for completely new topics for development into digital educational modules and seminars. It is the hope of ASPAN to have a variety of modules available on the Web site from which to pick and chose. This in turn will allow ASPAN to reach out to those who are unable to attend seminars in person, or who desire the option of alternative learning modalities.

Education doesn't end with the completion of our basic nursing training programs. As professionals in a specialized work environment, we must be committed to life-long learning, whether continuing our education towards postgraduate degrees, and/or striving to build and expand upon work-related skills and knowledge. Henry Ford said it best when he said, "Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young."<sup>2</sup> Stay young! Seize the opportunities ASPAN provides for continued learning, and explore the many possibilities you possess to become life-long learners!

## REFERENCES

1. The Future of Nursing. Available at: <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health.aspx> Accessed July 27, 2012.
2. Good Reads. Available at: <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/education>. Accessed July 27, 2012.