

2017 ASPAN National Conference Reflections

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Action-packed and fun-filled was the 2017 ASPAN National Conference which concluded May 4, 2017 in Indianapolis, IN. I had the privilege to attend thanks to an ASPAN scholarship. The ambience was contagious as perianesthesia nurses from across the country gathered to network, strengthen their practice not limited to gaining specialty knowledge but making new friends along the way, too. It was an overwhelming week and I appreciated all that was offered to me.

There was something for all attendees from the opening ceremony, which included patriotism, passion, humanity and spirituality, to Thursday's closing address of emphasizing encouragement, professionalism and optimism towards the future in perianesthesia nursing. The convention parties deserve a mention as Component Night was fun and very creative while the President's Reception also did not disappoint its attendees.

The ASPAN National Conference is absolutely the best venue to gain continuing education. With being a CAPA, I took advantage of attending many of the fine class offerings. These classes, in my humble opinion, were presented by the "best of the best" professionals within our specialty. They were all at one convenient location. The classes were held extended hours of the day into early evening. Each speaker showcased their expertise in their own style so every session was unique and interesting. The rooms were spacious and comfortable. I enjoyed experiencing the on-demand modules, too. The class choices to select included beginner, advanced and intermediate topics. Upon first glance in the registration brochure I thought, "This is tough, there is so much." To make it easier to decide which sessions I should attend, I first chose a variety of topics starting with what I thought could strengthen my current practice. Then, I chose a few basic topics that could be utilized for review. Finally, I chose a few completely new things to learn. Again, there was something for everyone from the novice to the experienced RN all in one convenient location.

I was excited to arrive at the conference and took off running on Sunday afternoon to attend the ABPANC writing item class. It was a friendly, relaxed and interesting class. It was a pleasure to put faces with names of ABPANC. I quickly learned that I have a niche for the material and have become a new certification test item writer. The CAPA/CPAN luncheon was a favorite event of mine. The event celebrated RNs with good food, fellowship, door prizes and awards. Lucky for me, I was one of the door prize winners. I will treasure my pretty amethyst CAPA bracelet. The speaker was funny and kept all laughing even into the next day!

It was also truly wonderful to meet members of the Preop Assessment Specialty Practice Group during the week. It was easy to connect with everyone while learning of all available ASPAN resources. Proudly, I will be submitting a SPG newsletter article this summer. Meanwhile, the

ASPAN Development Breakfast was a time for reflection, appreciation for our colleagues and its speaker surely did not disappoint, instilling motivation to always stand proud within our profession.

It is hard to believe with such a full week that there was time to be an Indy tourist, too. I visited the city highlights to include the speedway, fireman memorial and its pristine restaurants. My most memorable time this week is my ability to get reacquainted with two special IU Medical Center RNs. I had the pleasure to know them for 27 years. Yes, we were novice RNs when we worked together at IU. I enjoyed sharing all of the joy and challenges of being a perianesthesia RN. But, most of all, I was excited to share my valuable experiences from being an ASPAN member and attending the ASPAN National Conference. Finally, I left for home on Thursday feeling renewed, refreshed, empowered and proud of my rewarding profession.