

## **2019 ASPAN National Conference Scholarship Recipient Experience Report**

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It has been an honor and privilege being a scholarship recipient to attend ASPAN's 38<sup>th</sup> National Conference: *Leading with Knowledge: Serving with Heart* in Nashville, Tennessee. The experience enhanced my knowledge, which increases my ability to contribute to the specialty of perianesthesia nursing. I attended the Conference from Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup> through Thursday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. Therefore, I was fortunate to attend a pre-conference offering, participate in Component Night, the Opening Ceremony, the President's Reception, and the Closing Ceremony.

My first session was the *American Board of Perianesthesia Nursing Certification (ABPANC) Workshop: Learning How to Write CPAN/CAPA Exam Questions*. The course included an overview of the CPAN/CAPA item writing process and then breakouts into small groups to practice developing exam questions and responses. It was a wonderful experience collaborating with fellow perianesthesia nurses from around the country. Collaboration continued during the CPAN/CAPA Celebration Luncheon. Each table joined forces to complete an ABPANC trivia game and the two high scoring tables won a private back stage meeting with Charles Esten, our guest speaker and entertainer during the luncheon.

Every session I attended enhanced my knowledge and encouraged me to examine my practice, and question whether my facility's practice is current and evidence-based. The speakers were well prepared, engaging, and receptive to questions from the audience. I believe encouraging audience participation promoted open conversations on how to improve our perianesthesia practice. A few of the sessions that resulted in me sharing information with colleagues at my facility include: *So You're the Educator in Your Unit! We Need to Talk to You!*; *The Positive Outcomes of Perioperative Patient Warming and Monitoring Core Body Temperatures: One Hospital's Experience*; *Family Visitation in PACU*; and *Empowering Workplace Safety: An EBP Project to Improve Chemotherapy Use in Perianesthesia Practice*.

Being at the Conference for the entire week enabled me to participate in an early morning meeting with members of the ASPAN Standards and Guidelines Strategic Work Team. It was great to get an overview of what our work will entail this year. In addition, I attended the Development Celebration Breakfast. ASPAN's "Hail, Honor, Salute" campaign was highlighted during the breakfast. The campaign encourages individuals to make a charitable donation to ASPAN in honor of a colleague or special person. Each honoree receives a certificate that acknowledges your appreciation. I believe in acknowledging colleagues, and since the National Conference I honored three colleagues through "Hail, Honor, Salute."

Working at the ASPAN booth on the conference floor was another highlight for me. It was delightful interacting with perianesthesia nurses from around the country. I shared my experience of applying for an ASPAN scholarship. Furthermore, many attendees had questions about ASPAN membership and CPAN/CAPA certification. This gave me an opportunity to share the value and benefits of membership in a professional organization and obtaining nurse specialty certification.

Overall, attending ASPAN's National Conference resulted in both professional and personal growth for me. I believe my experience and new gained knowledge enhances my commitment to evidence-based practice as we strive to achieve optimal patient outcomes. In addition, the experience leads me to encouraging colleagues to attend future National Conferences. I thank the scholarship committee for supporting my attendance, and I encourage individuals to visit the ASPAN website and review the many benefits our organization offers.