

2024 ASPAN National Conference – Orlando, FL

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I was honored to be awarded one of the scholarships to attend ASPAN's 43rd National Conference "Fulfilling the Dream with Foresight Vision: A World of Belonging, Innovation, and Solutions." This was the 10th in-person national conference that I have had the privilege of attending. I was also able to attend two of the virtual conferences that were offered during the COVID pandemic. I was looking forward to this conference since it was the first in-person national conference that I have been able to attend since 2019. Orlando's weather is beautiful this time of year and made this year's conference an easy choice to attend. Some of the other reasons that I enjoy attending national conferences are the excellent educational offerings, the inspirational speakers, the component comraderies, and the opportunity to meet and network with other Perianesthesia nurses from around the country. It was so nice to see other nurses that I had not seen since 2019! It is wonderful to have developed friendships over the years of attending national conferences.

This year's conference agenda did not disappoint. I am always impressed with all the topics that are offered at national conferences each year. It has always been a hard choice to choose which lectures you want to attend. Now that a virtual option is also available for the in-person attendees, we can catch up on all the other sessions that we want to attend over the summer. Being CAPA certified, all the CEs available are extremely helpful!

I kicked off my arrival at the national conference by meeting with fellow OPANA members in the hotel lobby for an "OPANA Meet and Greet" on Sunday at 6 PM. Then, we were off to the "What's Happening Reception" for appetizers, music, and catching up with old friends. Monday morning started out with the Opening Ceremonies, which are always great. As the OPANA Snooze News Editor, I was anxiously waiting to see if our name would be called for any awards this year. The keynote address was very inspirational. The CPAN/CAPA luncheon was delicious as always and it was great to celebrate with other certified nurses! Once again, OPANA was recognized with a Shining Star! Monday afternoon included attending lectures on the revised ASPAN Standards and Clinical Practice Trends.

After having a lovely dinner with OPANA friends, I had time to fit in one more session on Monday evening. As a Same Day Surgery RN, I attended the lecture that addressed legal implications in discharging same day surgery patients. It was extremely informative! Tuesday and Wednesday included many great educational sessions. I was really interested in hearing the lecture, "Perianesthesia Challenges: Obesity, Weight Loss Medications, and Anesthesia – Risks, Side Effects, and More." With all the new medications that are being prescribed for both weight loss and diabetes, I wanted to be better informed about how they can affect a patient's surgical outcome if not managed appropriately. I was also interested in the "Life with Plastics: It's Fantastic – Or Is It?" lecture, as I take care of a small portion of plastics' patients at my hospital.

My Wednesday morning started out with the ASPAN Development Breakfast where all the ASPAN Scholarship winners were recognized. The last lecture that I attended on Wednesday was an interesting and highly informative lecture "What's the Buzz? Cannabis and the Perianesthesia Patient." Wednesday evening ended with a lively President's Reception!

On Thursday, I got one last chance to visit with fellow OPANA members and other ASPAN members during the closing breakfast. It was bittersweet, as we realized that the 43rd ASPAN National Conference was ending. The closing speaker was truly inspirational as he reminded us to “Be the Light!”

Thank you once again for awarding one of the 2024 ASPAN National Conference Scholarships to me. I plan to apply all the knowledge that I learned to my current PeriAnesthesia Nursing Practice.



OPANA Group Pictures

