

## 2025 ASPAN National Conference – Dallas, TX

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### Reflections on the 44th ASPAN National Conference in Dallas, Texas: Growth, Connection, and Recognition

Once again, the ASPAN National Conference delivered an extraordinary experience for perianesthesia nurse professionals, fostering both personal and professional growth. As I reflect on my time there, three key themes stand out: mentorship, knowledge sharing, and the power of being seen.

#### Mentorship: Learning from the Best

From the moment I arrived, I felt surrounded by an overwhelming wealth of knowledge and expertise. The mentorship opportunities were invaluable, and I couldn't help but think, "I am so grateful." One particularly memorable experience was the Wednesday afternoon session: *QI/EBP Implementation in the Perianesthesia Setting – Conquering Practice Change*. As a DNP student, I seek out sessions that support my educational journey, and this one exceeded my expectations. During the Q&A, an attendee boldly declared, "*I would be crazy not to ask a question and take advantage of the knowledge and experience in this room!*" She was absolutely right—not just about this session but the entire conference, including the Pre-Conference, Perianesthesia Leadership Academy, and Post-Conference events.

#### Knowledge Sharing: Strength in Community

At the Perianesthesia Leadership Academy and Management SPG meet-up, I connected with perianesthesia leaders nationwide. We exchanged best practices, discussed challenges, explored innovations, and shared insights on self-care and leadership. It was a powerful reminder that none of us walks this path alone. The conversations were inspiring, reinforcing the importance of community and collaboration in advancing our field.

#### Recognition: The Impact of Being Seen

While recognition isn't something I seek, I can't deny the joy of being noticed. Whether it was hearing my name called from across the room upon arrival or reconnecting with colleagues I hadn't seen since the Denver or Orlando conferences, those moments mattered. Attending the Certification Celebration Luncheon on Tuesday was a particularly moving experience. The speaker shared an inspiring story about his healthcare team's impact on his ability to thrive through immense challenges. His words underscored a vital truth: *we make a difference, and others see us*. This reminded me how important it is to recognize and acknowledge the people who shape our journeys.

#### A Lasting Impact

Personal and professional growth are deeply interconnected, each influencing the other in profound ways. I left the conference feeling transformed and enriched by the connections I made, and I knew that many others shared this sentiment. Together, we are stronger, better connected, and ready to continue making an impact for ourselves, our teams, and our perianesthesia specialty.