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Contact: Janet D'Alesandro
janetd@ajj.com; 856-256-2422

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On a Roll: American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing Celebrates Another Successful Conference

Pitman, NJ – Nearly 1,200 nurses attended the recent [American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing \(AAACN\) 43rd Annual Conference](#) in Lake Buena Vista, FL, marking it as the second highest attended conference in the association's history.

“AAACN's goal is to inspire, innovate, and influence to shape our future,” AAACN President Kathy Mertens, DNP, MPH, RN, said. “We offer many programs and resources to help ambulatory care nurses advance professionally, but the conference is hard to beat as the pivotal event that pulls everyone and everything together.”

Ambulatory care nurses work in a [sweeping range of settings](#) and have a highly advanced skill set, so they rely on the conference to update them with the latest information presented by experts. Keeping in step with changes in the health care industry, the ambulatory care nursing specialty has experienced tremendous growth in such areas as [Care Coordination and Transition Management \(CCTM\)](#), [telehealth](#), [leadership](#), and [other practice arenas](#).

Along with the education sessions, conference participants enjoyed networking with their colleagues, special events, and an interactive exhibit hall.

Conference Highlights

Outgoing AAACN President M. Elizabeth Greenberg, PhD, RN-BC, C-TNP, CNE, opened the conference on Wednesday, May 9, with the official “Welcome and President's Address.” Immediately following, Mary Gullatte, PhD, RN, ANP-BC, AOCN, FAAN, explored exciting possibilities for nurses during her Keynote Address, “Transforming the Future of Healthcare: Lead, Inspire, and Empower.”

Concurrent and general sessions on a wide variety of ambulatory care nursing topics continued through Friday, May 11. During the conference, attendees also viewed poster presentations by their nurse colleagues that showcased best practices and innovations.

As in previous years, AAACN held a Silent Auction to help support members with scholarships, grants and awards. The year, the auction raised \$4,600.

AAACN also had brisk sales of two new products at the conference: [Scope and Standards of Practice for Professional Telehealth Nursing, 6th edition](#), and [Ambulatory Care Nursing Orientation and Competency Assessment Guide, 3rd edition](#).

The conference closed May 12 with the [Ambulatory Care Nursing Certification Review Course](#) post-conference workshop.

[View conference photos](#)

New Officers Inducted

Mertens, who is [Associate Chief Nurse, Assistant Administrator](#), Harborview Medical Center, [Seattle, WA](#), was inducted during the conference as AAACN 2018-19 president for a 1-year term. In this role, she will lead the AAACN Board of Directors (BOD) in fulfilling the association's strategic plan and steering the direction and vision of AAACN.

Also inducted to the BOD as directors were Quanna Batiste, DNP, RN, Playa Vista, CA, and Christine Ruygrok, MBA, RN-BC, Tujunga, CA.

[View current AAACN BOD](#)

New CEO Welcomed

Linda Alexander officially began her role as CEO of AAACN during the conference. Alexander brings over a decade of association management experience to her new role. She served previously as AAACN's Director of Association Services; her academic education includes a major in communications with a minor in public relations. Alexander will oversee all daily operations and assist the BOD as they achieve AAACN's mission and goals.

Scholarships and Awards

The following awards were presented:

- **President's Above and Beyond Award** (highest award to a AAACN member who exceeded the expectations of his or her volunteer roles):
Julie Alban, DNP, MPH, RN-BC, CCCTM, was recognized for outstanding contributions to AAACN since joining in 2010. Alban has been a major force in growing the VA Special Interest Group (SIG), and mentoring VA members and others during her time as VA SIG chair from 2015-2017. She has presented sessions or posters at every conference since 2013 and has been involved with many of AAACN's CCTM projects.
- **President's Above and Beyond Award** (special award):
Cynthia Nowicki Hnatiuk, EdD, RN, CAE, FAAN, received this award for her dedicated service as CEO for AAACN for 24 years. Greenberg spoke for the entire BOD while honoring Hnatiuk, saying "Cyndee has been a major contributor to AAACN's success, guiding Boards of Directors and volunteer leaders, contributing her expertise to every AAACN initiative and project, moving AAACN forward in every way."
- **Research/Evidence Based Practice Project Award (\$1,000)**: Erin Black, BSN, RN, CPEN, Dayton, OH, for her study, "Role of the Nurse Navigator: An EBP Project."
- **Conference Scholarship** (members in nursing 2+ years): Kathy Andersen, MSN, CCM, RN-BC, Myrtle Creek, OR.
- **Conference Scholarship** (nursing students): Sean Maher, San Antonio, TX.

- **Education Scholarship:** Trudy Laffoon, MA, RN-BC, Iowa City, IA.
- **Clinical Excellence Award** (sponsored by the Anthony J. Jannetti, Inc. *Nursing Economic\$* Foundation, given to a AAACN member who personifies clinical excellence in ambulatory care; \$500): Anabel Quintanar, MSN, RN-BC, PHN, Guadalupe, CA.
- **Administrative Excellence Award:** (sponsored by the Anthony J. Jannetti, Inc. *Nursing Economic\$* Foundation, given to a AAACN member who personifies administrative excellence in ambulatory care; \$500): Sobha Fuller, DNP, RN-BC, NEA-BC, Tyler, TX.
- **2018 ViewPoint Writer's Award** (given for an outstanding article published in the association's official newsletter, *ViewPoint*): Charlotte Badler, RN, BSN, Boston, MA, for the article, *Confronting the Opioid Epidemic in Ambulatory Care: Preparing for Overdose Emergencies*, November/December 2017.

[View Scholarship and Award Recipients](#)

Care Coordination and Transition Management Summit Held After Conference

Following the conference, AAACN convened 41 national nurse and health care leaders for a Care Coordination and Transition Management (CCTM®) Invitational Summit on May 12. Attendees represented ambulatory care facilities, hospitals, professional nursing associations, academic institutions, action coalitions, and other health care and consumer organizations.

The purpose of the Summit was to create a strategic, collaborative agenda designed to facilitate adoption of the Registered Nurse in Care Coordination and Transition Management (RN-CCTM) role as part of nursing education, as well as the RN role across the care continuum, from acute care hospitals to skilled care, home care, and other ambulatory care settings.

Summit attendees also addressed potential strategies to enhance health policy initiatives affecting CCTM and increase research on the effectiveness and outcomes of RN-CCTM practice.

The AAACN Board of Directors will compile data gathered at the Summit and develop strategic priorities for this work.

Online Library

Nurses who attended the full conference have access to an extensive source of CNE contact hours in the [AAACN Online Library](#), which can be used for certification and licensure requirements. For more information about accessing conference content, visit library.aaacn.org/aaacn

2019 Conference

The [AAACN 44th Annual Conference](#) will be held May 8-11, 2019, in Palm Springs, CA. Poster abstracts are being accepted through December 15, 2018.

For more information about AAACN, visit www.aaacn.org; call: 1-800-AMB-NURS (1-800-262-6877) or email: aaacn@aaacn.org.

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The American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing (AAACN) is a welcoming, unifying community for registered nurses in all ambulatory care settings.

