Meet New House Nursing Caucus Co-Chair Rep. David Joyce

Last month, Representative David Joyce (R-OH) announced he will serve as co-chair of the House Nursing Caucus for the 113th Congress. Before joining Congress, Mr. Joyce worked as a prosecuting attorney for Geauga County. His wife, Kelly, is a Registered Nurse and has worked at University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center for 22 years.

Upon accepting the co-chair position, Rep. Joyce stated that he has “seen first-hand the critical role nurses play in their patients’ and patients’ families’ lives. I look forward to co-chairing this important caucus and working with my colleagues to address the needs of the nursing community.”

AACN government affairs staff had the opportunity to meet Congressman Joyce earlier this year and are thrilled to have his support as a nursing champion. AACN looks forward to collaborating with him and his long-standing co-chair Representative Lois Capps, RN, (D-CA).

Sequestration Looms as March 1 Deadline Approaches

Just days remain before Congress must agree on a budget deal before the onset of sequestration on March 1, 2013. Sequestration or automatic, across-the-board cuts to discretionary federal programs as mandated through the Budget Control Act of 2011, has been temporarily delayed through passage of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (H.R. 8), which was signed into law by President Obama on January 2, 2013 (for more background information on this legislation, see: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/news/2013/fiscal-cliff-deal).

In a press conference on February 19, 2013, President Obama emphasized the need for a “balanced approach” toward deficit reduction—one that cuts spending and raises revenue responsibly. The President suggested that Congress should pass a bill of smaller cuts and take the time to work on a meaningful approach to sequestration. He noted that no one will get 100 percent of what they want. House Republicans and some Democrats have suggested flexibility for the agencies to decide how to enact the cuts. AACN will continue to keep members apprised of Congressional activity surrounding the fiscal climate. For more information about sequestration’s potential impact, see: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/AACN-Sequestration-Factsheet.pdf.
Inaugural Faculty Policy Intensive Cohort Selected

AACN is proud to host the inaugural Faculty Policy Intensive this March in Washington, DC. This four-day immersion program is designed for faculty of AACN member schools who are interested in actively pursuing a role in healthcare policy. These eight faculty members were selected from a pool of highly competitive applicants to join the inaugural class. AACN will bring these leaders in nursing education to AACN headquarters to engage in opportunities to dialogue with nursing leadership and further develop advocacy skills. To find out more about the Faculty Policy Intensive, see: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/fpi.

Patricia Brennan, PhD, RN, MS, DPNAP
Assistant Professor
Samuel Merritt University

Sharon Guthrie, PhD, ARNP, CPNP, NCSN, RN-BC
Assistant Professor
Mount Mercy University

Joanne Noone, PhD, RN, CNE
Associate Professor, Associate Dean,
Oregon Health & Science University-Ashland Campus

Melondie Carter, DSN, RN
Associate Professor
University of Alabama

Lilia A. Fuentes, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC
Assistant Professor
The University of Texas – Pan American

Mary Garnica, DNP, APN-FNP-BC
Assistant Professor
University of Central Arkansas

Andrea Sonenberg, DNSc, WHNP, CNM
Assistant Professor
Pace University

Camille Burnett, PhD, MPA, RN, PHCNS-BC, BScN, DSW
Assistant Professor
University of Virginia
The fourth annual Student Policy Summit promises to be the most successful Summit yet! There is currently a lengthy waitlist for this year’s event to be held March 17-19 in Washington, DC.

Each year, AACN sponsors two exceptional nursing students to attend. These students are chosen from an impressive array of applicants from AACN member schools across the country. Ilona van der Ven is a BSN student at Hartwick College in New York, and Erin Johnson Cole is a second year DNP student at the University of Utah studying nurse midwifery and women’s health. Congratulations Ilona and Erin! Regarding her desire to attend the Summit, Ilona says “As an undergraduate nursing student, my education is based on the AACN Essentials in Baccalaureate Education, which focuses on leadership and decision-making abilities in the next generation of nurses. I envision that future nurses will be leaders in advocating not just for policies that promote universal coverage but also for policies that will reduce the social inequities that are the real root of the problem. I envision that nurses will be the key component in designing solutions to create a better way to deliver health care that is equitable, effective, and affordable.”

Erin wishes to attend the Summit to further develop her policy knowledge base and advocacy skills. “I want to be a part of this dynamic political process, either as an elected official or policymaker, to be a part of the change I hope to see. However, while I have the interest, the confidence, and the educational background to pursue policy work or even an entry into politics itself, I certainly don’t know the inner workings of the system. I have the communication skills and the comfort with public speaking to pursue these career avenues, but I need to develop my political savvy. I hope to begin to build these skills at the 2013 AACN Student Policy Summit.”

AACN looks forward to recognizing Ilona and Erin at the Student Policy Summit and welcoming the rest of the attendees. For more information about the Student Policy Summit, see: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/student-policy-summit.

2013 Spring Meeting Advocacy

Capitol Hill Visits
This year’s Spring Annual Meeting will take place March 17-19 in Washington, DC. Hill meetings will resume this spring and will take place on the afternoon of Monday, March 18, 2013. Attending members are highly encouraged to visit their legislators’ offices to discuss pertinent AACN advocacy related to nursing education, research, and practice. Hill visits provide critical opportunities to educate members of Congress and their staff on the importance of continued federal support for nursing and healthcare programs during this time of fiscal uncertainty.

AACN State Grassroots Liaisons (SGLs) attending the Spring Meeting will aim to schedule Hill visits with Senate offices. Individual AACN members should plan to schedule visits with their Representative from their district. If you have questions regarding your Hill visits, please contact your respective SGL(s). You can find the SGLs in your state here: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/SGL-list.pdf. To search your elected officials, see: http://capwiz.com/aacn/dbq/officials/.

Additionally, AACN’s Student Policy Summit will coincide with the Spring Meeting. Approximately 130 baccalaureate and graduate nursing students will be making Hill visits with deans from their states. Lobby packets and advocacy materials will be provided. A shuttle service will transport members and students between the Fairmont Hotel and Capitol Hill.
AACN Advocacy Center
In addition to Hill visits, a virtual advocacy station will be available for AACN members to record Congressional Hill visits and send advocacy information. The station will be located in the Fairmont Hotel for the duration of the Spring Meeting.

AACN Congressional Reception
AACN will host a Congressional Reception on the evening of Monday, March 18, 2013. The reception is a wonderful opportunity for AACN members, members of Congress, and Hill staff to network and discuss nursing issues. Members are highly encouraged to attend this event, which will take place in the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill from 5:00-6:30pm. A shuttle service will be provided.

Senate HELP Committee Holds Hearing on Primary Care
On January 29, 2013, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging held a hearing 30 Million New Patients and 11 Months to Go: Who Will Provide Their Primary Care? The hearing centered on what Subcommittee Chairman Senator Bernard Sanders (I-VT) called a “major crisis” in primary care when 30 million more Americans are expected to become newly insured under the Affordable Care Act. According to the senator, a significant portion of Americans do not have adequate access to primary care, in part because of the shortage of health professionals that practice in this sector of health care. The problem will only become more acute as additional patients seek medical care.

The witness panel included two registered nurses, Tess Stack Kuenning, CNS, MS, RN, Executive Director of the Bi-State Primary Care Association in Vermont and Toni Decklever, MA, RN from the Wyoming Nurses Association. In her testimony, Ms. Kuenning described to the committee how Community Health Centers can improve healthcare outcome while reducing costs. Ms. Decklever discussed the primary care needs in the State of Wyoming and current efforts to provide a stable supply of primary care providers, including state funding streams to educate a greater number of Registered Nurses and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses.

To read the witness testimony and watch a recording of the hearing, see: http://www.help.senate.gov/hearings/hearing/?id=dc487385-5056-a032-522c-082a29c4a406

Forbes Article Calls Attention to Scope of Practice Restrictions
In a recent Forbes article Sometimes The Best Medical Care Is Provided By Those Who Aren’t M.D.s., physician and author Amesh Adalja, M.D. describes a recent experience in which he positively collaborated with a nurse practitioner during a patient transfer. This exchange between colleagues is an example of the increased prevalence of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses serving in care coordinating roles. Dr. Adalja goes on to discuss how non-physician practitioners can serve as important care coordinators for a wide range of patient conditions, and that physician-only government stipulations threaten scope of practice for nurses and high-quality health care.

While recognizing there are specific conditions that at times require a physician, he says “…for many conditions the expertise of a physician is not strictly required and an individual may be ably served by a nurse practitioner or the like. Expanded scopes of practice, in which a non-physician renders care independent of a physician, not only expand access to health care and have the potential to decrease the cost of healthcare, but also reflect a respect for the free market system.”

The release of the article is timely as state laws that limit scope of practice continue to be challenged.

To read the full article, see: http://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2013/02/10/sometimes-the-best-medical-care-is-provided-by-those-who-arent-m-d-s/.
PCORI Announcements

Advisory Panels Forming:
The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) recently announced the establishment of the first of four new advisory panels. These panels will give patients, caregivers, researchers, and other healthcare stakeholders the opportunity to engage with PCORI to further its research agenda. Panels will consist of 12 to 21 members responsible for activities such as providing scientific or technical expertise and directing and prioritizing research questions. PCORI is currently forming four advisory panels: Assessment of Prevention, Diagnosis, and Treatment Options; Improving Healthcare Systems; Addressing Disparities; and Patient Engagement.

Panelists will be selected based on experience, background, ability to contribute to the scope of work described in the panel charters, and commitment to advancing PCORI’s mission. Applications can be submitted online at http://www.pcori.org/ until 5:00p.m. ET, on Monday, March 4, 2013.

First Regional Meeting Announced:
PCORI will hold its inaugural regional meeting, titled The Power of Partnership in Research: Improving Healthcare Outcomes in Rural Settings in Wichita, Kansas, March 9-10, 2013. PCORI encourages patients and stakeholders from central states, including Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Nebraska, northeastern Arkansas, eastern Colorado, northern Texas, and Iowa to consider attending this exciting event to strengthen the patient-centered research community in this region. The meeting will be an opportunity to network, learn more about PCORI, and dialogue about the future of research.

For more information, see: http://www.pcori.org/events/the-power-of-partnership-in-research-improving-healthcare-outcomes-in-rural-settings/.

PCORI was established through the Affordable Care Act to help America’s patients and their families make informed healthcare decisions and improve healthcare delivery and outcomes. For more information on PCORI, see: http://www.pcori.org/.

2013 AIDS Education and Training Centers Program

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has announced the beginning of the Fiscal Year 2013 AIDS Education and Training Centers (AETC) Program funding cycle. HRSA will award five grants of $350,000 each for the establishment of nurse practitioner and physician assistant HIV/AIDS primary care education programs. The grant announcement notes the importance of building capacity within the healthcare workforce to treat patients with HIV/AIDS in order to meet future increases in demand. Eligible nurse practitioner training program applicants are collegiate schools of nursing centers, academic health centers, state or local governments, and other public or private nonprofit entities accredited by a national nurse education accrediting agency.

For more information or to apply, please visit: http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?&mode=VIEW&oppId=217573.

The closing date for applications is March 22, 2013.
Division of Nursing Releases FAQs for Nursing Workforce Diversity Program

HRSA’s Bureau of Health Professions’ Division of Nursing has published additional guidance on the Nursing Workforce Diversity funding opportunity for Fiscal Year 2013. The new Frequently Asked Questions document contains more information about who is eligible for the program and funding administration details.


Nursing Workforce Diversity grants are awarded to increase nursing education opportunities for individuals who are from disadvantaged backgrounds (including racial and ethnic minorities under-represented among registered nurses) by providing (1) student scholarships or stipends for diploma or associate degree nurses to enter a bridge or degree completion program, and (2) student scholarships or stipends for accelerated nursing degree programs, pre-entry preparation, advanced education preparation, and retention activities.


2013 Call for APHA Awards Nominations

The American Public Health Association (APHA) is currently accepting nominations for its 2013 awards program. The APHA represents health professionals, as well as other public health stakeholders, and aims to protect all Americans, their families and their communities from preventable, serious health threats. APHA strives to assure community-based health promotion and disease prevention activities and preventive health services are universally accessible in the United States.

Many awards are available, representing a wide spectrum of individuals working in different areas to advance the field of public health and the health of their communities. APHA membership is not required for several of the awards. Awardees will be presented at the 141st APHA Annual Meeting and Exposition, November 2-6, 2013 in Boston, MA. The deadline for nominations is April 26, 2013.

For more information about the award-specific information, including nomination guidelines, visit: [http://www.apha.org/about/awards/](http://www.apha.org/about/awards/).