Mark Your Calendars for AACN’s Virtual Advocacy Day on Monday, March 24, 2014

AACN will be hosting its spring virtual advocacy day on Monday, March 24, 2014 in conjunction with AACN’s Hill Day during the Spring Annual Meeting in Washington, DC. Your support is critical to ensuring that nursing’s voice is at the forefront of those that influence policy decision-making at the federal level. Members of AACN’s Grassroots Network will be invited to send a message to their federal legislators requesting they support funding priorities impacting nursing education, research, and practice in Fiscal Year 2015 as well as pressing policy initiatives.

To join AACN’s Grassroots Network, see: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/take-action. AACN appreciates all that our members do to support programs and legislation that advance our profession and the health of our patients.

AACN Launches Faculty Tool Kit on the Health Insurance Marketplace

A new resource is now available for AACN members and faculty to assist students and patients in navigating the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act’s (ACA) [P.L. 111-148] Health Insurance Marketplace. This tool kit was created for AACN faculty members to enhance their understanding of the Marketplace and what it means for nurse educators, students, and patients. The tool kit includes:

- Messages from Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and Administrator of Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN, on nursing’s role in educating the public on the Marketplace
- Presentation with Mandy Cohen, MD, MPH, Senior Advisor to the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and Ellen-Marie Whelan, PhD, RN, FAAN, Senior Advisor for the Innovation Center on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services about the impact of the ACA on nursing
- Information on the Marketplace (enrollment, eligibility, current state action)
- Activities and assignments for faculty members to utilize with students
- Additional resources for nursing practices that qualify as small businesses

Strategic guidance and review of the tool kit’s outline was provided by AACN’s inaugural class of Faculty Policy Intensive Fellows. While AACN did not take an official position on the ACA, the association’s leadership recognizes the responsibility to educate our constituents about the law and what the Marketplace means for clinical practice, faculty, students, and patients. To access AACN’s Understanding the Health Insurance Marketplace: A Tool Kit for Nursing Faculty, visit: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/market-place-tool-kit.
AACN Grassroots Network Sounds the Alarm on APRN Practice Authority

Thank you to the over 1,000 members of AACN’s Grassroots Network who responded to the recent action alert regarding full practice authority for advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). In the alert, AACN asked stakeholders to contact their Representative requesting they refrain from signing a Dear Colleague letter that was being circulated by Representatives Michael Grimm (R-NY) and Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ) opposing the VHA’s proposed recommendation to its Nursing Handbook, specifically in relation to Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists. The recommendation would allow APRNs to be recognized as full practice providers within the VHA system.

AACN collaborated with its colleagues in the APRN community, including the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists and the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, as well as the broader Nursing Community coalition (comprised of 60 national professional nursing organizations) to voice the importance of allowing APRNs to practice to the full extent of their education and training within the VHA system. It is imperative that APRNs are supported in this capacity to ensure that our nation’s Veterans receive access to the high-quality healthcare services they deserve. AACN, along with its APRN colleagues and the Nursing Community, submitted letters to Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki in support of the VHA’s proposal.

AACN is excited to report that our Grassroots Network sent a total of 1,073 messages to Representatives on this critical issue! This is the highest response rate from AACN’s Grassroots Network since its creation in 2008. Moreover, there were Grassroots Network members participating from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The following chart below shows the distribution of the sent messages by state between January 29 and February 7, 2014.

For more information on this issue and to view more of AACN’s APRN advocacy, please see our website: https://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/aprn-scope-of-practice.
AACN Policy Webinars

In preparation for AACN’s fifth annual Student Policy Summit (March 23-25 in Washington, DC), AACN is hosting a three-part webinar series centered on nursing policy and advocacy. The webinars are open to students attending the Summit as well as AACN members and the public. To access the webinars, both live and archived, visit: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/webinars.

Lay of the Land: Healthcare Policy’s Political Landscape in 2014 (archived)
On January 22, 2014, Julie Shroyer, MSW, Senior Policy Advisor for Polsinelli, a healthcare policy firm in Washington, DC presented the first webinar Lay of the Land: Healthcare Policy’s Political Landscape in 2014. Mrs. Shroyer provided an overview of the political landscape shaping healthcare policy in the coming year. Listeners gained a broad understanding of major actors in Congress and the Administration influencing legislation that drive our nation’s healthcare delivery system, including committees of jurisdiction, nursing champions in the House of Representatives and the Senate, and federal agencies. In addition, viewers learned how the current budget environment and the upcoming Fall 2014 election cycle may impact nursing and health care.

50 States and One Profession: How State Policy and Advocacy Impacts Your Nursing Career (archived)
On February 25, 2014, Janet Haebler, MSN, RN, Associate Director of State Government Affairs with the American Nurses Association, and Taynin Kopanos, DNP, NP, RN, Vice President of State Government Affairs at the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, presented the second webinar in this series. The webinar informed participants on how policy decisions at the state level impact the nursing profession and America’s patients. Listeners heard how current issues at the state level are being shaped by political dynamics and policy decisions. Ms. Haebler provided examples of how the collective voice and nursing’s expertise is integral to informing state laws, such as safe staffing and shared key insights for how nurses can be engaged in the process. Dr. Kopanos provided her expertise on current scope of practice issues for APRNs, and what efforts are being implemented to remove barriers to full practice.

Preparing for the Student Policy Summit: Making the Most of Your Experience (airing March 11, 2014)
The third and final webinar Preparing for the Student Policy Summit: Making the Most of Your Experience will air on March 11, 2014 from 2:00-3:00pm ET featuring AACN’s Director of Government Affairs and Health Policy, Suzanne Miyamoto, PhD, RN and Government Affairs and Grassroots Manager, Lauren Inouye, RN. Student Policy Summit attendees will be provided further information about AACN’s advocacy priorities that form the cornerstone of their advocacy efforts during the Summit. Preliminary information about Capitol Hill visits and how to maximize one’s experience during the conference will be addressed.

If you have any questions regarding the webinars, please contact Lauren Inouye at Linouye@aacn.nche.edu.

2014 Student Policy Summit Scholarship Winners Chosen

AACN is proud to announce its student scholarship winners for the fifth annual Student Policy Summit set to take place March 23-25, 2014 in Washington, DC. Each year, AACN receives a remarkable and competitive pool of applications from students in our member schools across the country, from which only two are selected. This year, Maritza Lara Villota, a BSN student from the University of Utah College of Nursing, and Lisa Klasek-Gray, a DNP candidate from the Medical University of South Carolina, were selected. Congratulations Maritza and Lisa!

Maritza aspirations of becoming a nurse were further ignited when she realized the vital importance of health policy stating, “I see policy as the pathway for change so that nurses can do without reverse what the art of healing calls for, to advocate and to improve lives.” Her passion for health policy has given her hope and guidance to how she can implement change and...
improve health care for the uninsured and underinsured populations she hopes to serve.

Lisa hopes to attend the Summit to further understand how she can help incorporate into practice the vital contributions that nursing research makes to improving quality outcomes in the healthcare system. Lisa states, “We have an uphill climb. Many state laws governing the practice of health care still have provisions for Nurse Practitioners. If we are able to practice to the full extent of our scope of practice, we could put preventative health care into practice across the lifespan and direct change in our healthcare systems for the better.”

Maritza and Lisa will be recognized as the 2014 scholarship winners at the Summit as we welcome the rest of our attendees. For more information about the Summit, see: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/student-policy-summit.

Mary Beth Bigley Named Director of the Division of Nursing, HRSA

This month, Mary Beth Bigley, DrPH, MSN, ANPe, became the new Director for the Division of Nursing within the Bureau of Health Professions at the Health Resources and Services Administration. Dr. Bigley succeeds Dr. Alexis Bakos, who served as Acting Director for the division. In her new role, Dr. Bigley will lead the division’s work to advance the nursing profession and ensure access to care for all Americans. In addition, she will serve as the Chair of the National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice. AACN would like to congratulate Dr. Bigley on her new position and looks forward to her leadership at the division.

Prior to joining the Division of Nursing, Dr. Bigley served in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, where she was the Director of the Division of Science and Communications in the Office of the Surgeon General. There, she was instrumental in the work of the National Prevention Council, which includes providing guidance and coordination in the drafting of the National Prevention Strategy.

Before joining the Office of the Surgeon General in 2008, Dr. Bigley was the Director of Nursing Programs at The George Washington University, Department of Nursing, where she currently holds an Adjunct Assistant Professor position.

Ann E. Kurth Provides Nursing’s Voice to the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force

On February 5, 2014, the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force announced its five newest members. The new cohort, which is comprised of non-federal experts within the healthcare profession, includes Ann E. Kurth, PhD, RN, MSN, MPH. The Task Force members are appointed by the director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality with the help of current task force leaders, to serve a four-year term and work to improve preventative services and evidence-based medicine. The task force “conducts scientific evidence reviews of a broad range of clinical preventive healthcare services (such as screening, counseling, and preventive medications) and develops recommendations for primary care clinicians and health systems.

These recommendations are published in the form of “Recommendation Statements.” Dr. Kurth is a nurse-midwife and epidemiologist whose expertise lies within the field of HIV/STI screening, prevention, and treatment adherence. Dr. Kurth is also currently a Professor at the New York University College of Nursing (NYUCN), in addition to her role as
founder and Executive Director of the NYUCN-Global. AACN congratulates Dr. Ann Kurth on her new role with the task force. For more information about the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force, please visit: http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/.

**NINR Summer Genetics Institute (SGI) Application Period Still Open**

The SGI is a tuition-free, one-month intensive research training program open to graduate students, faculty, and clinicians. This four-week, eight-credit graduate level program will take place from June 2-27, 2014 at the Bethesda, Maryland, campus of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

This NINR-sponsored program will be administered by the Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences as one of its Specialty Bio-Trac programs. Attendees will be given the opportunity to increase research capabilities and expand clinical practice in genetics through lectures and hands-on laboratory training.

Applicants should exhibit highly productive research or clinical careers and be able to provide the following: academic performance; research experience; publications; two letters of recommendation; a personal statement, and a curriculum vitae. Interested participants should note that the application period will close on **March 1, 2014 at 5:00pm ET.** References letters may be submitted until **March 15, 2014.** For more information please visit: www.ninr.nih.gov/Training/SGI.

**NINR Innovative Questions Initiative Seeks Your Feedback**

The National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) launched its current Strategic Plan back in 2011, which called for further focus to the scientific agenda. In meeting those demands, the NINR has released the **Innovative Questions Initiative.** The initiative has two parts, workshops and webinars, both aimed at stimulating dialogue among the scientific communities, professional organizations, and the public communities.

The website is available to all interested persons, scientists, and the general public who wish to contribute innovative questions that will help guide future nursing research. **Questions are due by 6:00pm PT on July 31, 2014.** Please visit the following link to submit questions and learn more: https://ninriq.ideascale.com/a/panel.do.

Workshops are aimed at engaging interdisciplinary experts and leading scientists in dialogue to forge a pathway for future nursing research. There are three upcoming workshops set to take place on the NIH Campus in Bethesda, MD. Topics include Self-Mangement, End-of-Life and Palliative Care, and Promoting Innovation. For more information please visit: http://www.ninr.nih.gov/aboutninr/ninr-mission-and-strategic-plan/iqworkshops#.UvuzFLS2xO8.

**NIH Consortium to Fight Diseases**

On February 10, 2014, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced it would be joining forces with private industry to promote research into treatments for some of our most intractable diseases. The list of diseases includes; lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, Type 2 diabetes, and Alzheimer’s. For more information and footage of the exclusive interview with NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins, visit the following link: http://thedianerehmshow.org/shows/2014-02-10/conversation-dr-francis-collins-director-nih.
PCORI Research Opportunity

On February 5, 2014, the Addressing Disparities program at the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) released its funding announcement soliciting applications. PCORI is seeking applicants to test the comparative effectiveness of Obesity Treatment Options Set in Primary Care for Underserved Populations, including racial/ethnic minorities, low socio-economic, and/or rural adult populations. This five-year project would include two randomized, multi-site clinical trials surrounding the issue of obesity.

More details are available at http://www.pcori.org/funding-opportunities/funding-announcements/obesity-treatment-options-set-in-primary-care-for-underserved-populations/. Interested participants should notice that letters of intent are due by 5pm on March 7, 2014.

National Healthcare Decisions Day Set for April 16, 2014

AACN will once again support the National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD) at a national level, and we encourage our members to engage in activities at the local level. This grassroots effort joins Americans across the country in making future healthcare decisions known to family, friends, and healthcare providers. NHDD is an opportunity for the AACN to showcase our support for this important issue. To learn more about National Healthcare Decisions Day, get free information, and confirm participation, please visit: http://www.nhdd.org/.

Million Hearts Hypertension Control Challenge Winners

Million Hearts is a national initiative aimed at preventing high blood pressure by supporting clinicians with identifications, measurement, and reporting of high blood pressure. In 2012, Million Hearts launched the Hypertension Control Challenge to encourage public and private health practices to their patient’s hypertension under control.

The 2013 winners, who succeed with getting at least 70% of their patients hypertension under control were: Broadway Internal Medicine PC in Queens, NY; Cheshire Medical Center/Dartmouth-Hitchcock Keene in Keene, NH; Jen Brui, MD, in Plainville, KS; Kaiser Permanente in Northern California; Nilesh V. Patel, MD, FRCS(Eng) in Audubon, PA; Pawhuska Indian Health Center (U.S. Indian Health Service) in Pawhuska, OK; River Falls Medical Clinic in River Falls, WI; ThedaCare in Appleton, WI; and Veterans Health Administration (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs).

Roughly 36 million American adults are currently living with uncontrolled hypertension, a disease that can be prevented and treated. For more information and a toolkit for high blood pressure please visit: http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/newsevents/hypertension_control_champions_resources.html and for more information about Million Hearts, visit http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/index.html.

AACN is a proud supporter of the Million Hearts initiative. To view a full list of supporters, visit: http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/aboutmh/partners/aacn.html.