AACN Announces Grassroots Prize for Student Policy Summit Attendees

For the 2015 Student Policy Summit, AACN is announcing a new competition for the association’s Grassroots Prize. On behalf of all of the contributors to the award-winning book, *Policy and Politics in Nursing and Health Care*, who so generously donate their time to advance nurses' knowledge of health policy and political action, the editors of the book, Diana J. Mason, Judith K. Leavitt, Mary W. Chaffee, and its publisher, Elsevier, are pleased to sponsor the new Grassroots opportunity.

The AACN Student Grassroots Prize will provide $500 each to three exceptional students who have created a project that engaged individuals (i.e. students, coworkers, or other colleagues in the community) toward a common local, state, or federal policy effort. Available only to attendees of the Student Policy Summit, applicants will have until the December following the Summit to submit an application essay or other form of media (e.g. video) detailing the grassroots project they have created.

This year’s Student Policy Summit begins this Sunday, March 22, 2015, at the Park Hyatt in Washington, DC. The three-day conference will welcome baccalaureate and graduate nursing students from across the country, and immerse them in program sessions focused on the federal policy process and nursing’s role in professional advocacy. For more information on the Summit, visit the Student Policy Summit website. For live tweets from the event, follow us on Twitter, @AACNPolicy and look for #SPS15.

Countdown to AACN’s Spring Virtual Advocacy Day on March 23!

AACN will be hosting its spring Virtual Advocacy Day on Monday, March 23, 2015 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 receive an email on March 23rd asking them to send a message to their federal legislators requesting they support funding priorities impacting nursing education and research in Fiscal Year 2016, as well as other pressing policy initiatives. AACN encourages you to participate as every voice counts!

Be sure to share your advocacy efforts on Twitter with #AACNadvocacy and follow us at @AACNPolicy for live feed on AACN’s Advocacy day on Capitol Hill. 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.
Mary Wakefield Appointed Acting Deputy Secretary of HHS

On March 12, 2015, Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN, FAAN, Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, was appointed as Acting Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). In the association’s statement, AACN’s CEO Deb Trautman stated, “As a visionary leader, she [Dr. Wakefield] is an ideal candidate to serve in this position and will make great strides to improve America's health and wellness.” Dr. Wakefield will be one of the highest ranking nurses within the federal government, as she takes this new role and continues working to advance America’s health and health care.

AACN is honored to have Dr. Wakefield’s leadership in this highly-esteemed role. Read AACN’s press release and letter of congratulations here.

AACN’s Supported Legislation in the 114th Congress

Each Congress, AACN works on a bipartisan basis to promote and advance nursing education, research, and healthcare priorities to ensure the voice of academic nursing is helping to craft legislation that will impact America’s health. The list below provides an overview of supported legislation in which AACN staff has assisted in the drafting process or has offered support based on the priorities set forth by AACN’s 2015 Federal Policy Agenda.

- Accelerating Biomedical Research Act of 2015 (H.R. 531, S. 318)
- Protecting Access to Rural Therapy Services (PARTS) Act of 2015 (S. 257)
- American Cures Act of 2015 (S. 289)
- Supporting Academic Freedom through Regulatory Relief Act of 2015 (H.R. 970, S. 559)
- Indian Health Service Health Professions Tax Fairness Act of 2015 (S. 536)
- Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act of 2015 (H.R. 1342, S. 578)
- Improving Access to Maternity Care Act of 2015 (H.R. 1209, S. 628)
- Improving Veterans Access to Quality Healthcare Act of 2015 (H.R. 1247)

To learn more, visit the AACN’s Supported Legislation page.

AACN and the Nursing Community Host Capitol Hill Event on Nursing’s Impact in Today’s Health Care

On February 24, 2015, AACN – as a member of the Nursing Community (NC) coalition, and in collaboration with the House Nursing Caucus Co-Chairs Representative Lois Capps, RN (D-CA) and Representative David Joyce (R-OH) – hosted a one-day event to discuss the impact nursing has on improving our nation’s health care. Representatives from 21 of the coalition’s members traveled to Washington, DC for the event. Comprised of 61 national nursing associations, the NC works to improve the nation’s health through advancing the nursing profession.

The day began with a briefing titled, “Solving Today’s Pressing Healthcare Issues: Nursing’s Impact.” A panel of experts illuminated the vital role nursing professionals have on healthcare access, cost, and quality. Speakers included, Maryann Alexander, PhD, RN, Chief Officer of Nursing Regulation for the National Council of State Boards of Nursing; Col. Janet Setnor, CRNA, MSN, President-Elect for the Virginia Association of Nurse Anesthetists; Julie Sochalski, PhD, RN, FAAN, Associate Professor of Nursing, Senior Fellow at the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics, and Affiliated Faculty at the Penn-Wharton Public Policy Initiative at the University of Pennsylvania; and Maureen Swick, PhD, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, Senior Vice President and Chief Nurse Executive for Inova Health System. The panel spoke to the four key messages outlined in the Institute of Medicine, The Future
of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health, and articulated how nursing expertise can advise policy makers. The event was attended by Congressional staff and multiple NC members.

Later that evening, the Nursing Community, in collaboration with the House Nursing Caucus Co-Chairs, held a reception titled, “Nursing’s Voice in Health Care.” The reception provided an opportunity for nursing leadership to connect with Members of Congress and their staff. The event convened over 55 Congressional staffers, representing 31 Congressional offices across 20 states from both the House and the Senate. The Members of Congress in attendance for the event included House Nursing Caucus Co-Chairs Representatives Lois Capps, RN (D-CA) and David Joyce (R-OH), Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX), Rep. Dave Loebsack (D-IA), Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM), and Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL).

AACN Attends HHS Affordable Care Act Post Enrollment Update

On Monday March 9, 2015, AACN attended the Health and Human Services (HHS) Affordable Care Act (ACA) post-enrollment update. HHS Secretary Sylvia Burwell, Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy, and White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough addressed an audience of ACA advocacy groups and collaborative organizations to collectively thank the health advocacy community for their dedication and commitment throughout the 2015 open enrollment period.

NURSE Corps Scholarship Program 2015 Funding Cycle Now Open

The Health Resources and Services Administration recently announced that the application cycle for the 2015 NURSE Corps Scholarship Program is now open. The scholarship is available to students enrolled in diploma, associate, baccalaureate, and graduate nursing programs to receive funding for tuition, fees, and other educational costs in exchange for them working in a Critical Shortage Facility upon graduation. The deadline for completed applications is May 21, 2015, at 7:30pm EST. Interested applicants are also encouraged to attend two technical assistance conference calls, that will cover eligibility requirements, application resources, and the application process. Program staff will be available on the calls to help applicants. The Technical Assistance conference calls are available on the following dates:

- **NURSE Corps Scholarship Application Technical Assistance Conference Call #1**
  - April 7, 2015 from 8:00 to 10:00 pm ET
  - Dial-in Number: 1-800-779-8389
  - Passcode: 8645774
NURSE Corps Scholarship Application Technical Assistance Conference Call #2
May 16, 2015 from 1:00 to 3:00 pm ET
Dial-in Number: 1- 800-779-8389
Passcode: 8645774

Interested applicants are also encouraged to view the NURSE Corps Scholarship Technical Assistance Webinar. For more information please be sure to visit the NURSE Corps participant resources page.

NINR Call for Abstracts

The National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) is accepting abstract submissions for a poster session that will be held during NINR’s 30th Anniversary: Advancing Science, Improving Lives kickoff symposium. The symposium will take place on October 13, 2015 at the National Institutes of Health campus in Bethesda, MD.

The poster presentation can be based on completed work, work-in-progress, work presented at other meetings, or work previously published. Submissions from a wide variety of disciplines are being solicited, on topics related to:

- Symptom Science: Promoting Personalized Health Strategies
- Wellness: Promoting Health and Preventing Illness
- Self-Management: Improving Quality of Life for Individuals with Chronic Illness
- End-of-Life and Palliative Care: The Science of Compassion

An award will be given to one abstract in the Investigator, New Investigator, and Pre/Postdoctoral Investigator categories in recognition of the most significant science consistent with the NINR mission. The submission deadline is May 15, 2015 and selections will be announced by July 1, 2015. For more information about the symposium, the call for abstracts, and the submission instructions, please visit www.ninr.nih.gov/30years.

AHRQ Launches New Resources for Primary Care Researchers and Evaluators

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) recently launched new resources for research and evaluators. These provide access to searchable databases to help users efficiently identify and select the most appropriate instruments and measures in four key areas of primary care services. The four databases include:

- Care Coordination Measures Database
- Clinical-Community Relationships Measures Database
- Team-Based Primary Care Measures Database
- Atlas of Integrated Behavioral Health Care Quality Measures

The available resources include conceptual frameworks for measurement in each area, profiles of existing instruments that include information about validation and use, and other information designed both to assist current investigators and advance primary care research and evaluation.

To learn more about this new toolkit please visit: http://primarycaremeasures.ahrq.gov/. Additional AHRQ resources for primary care researchers and evaluators, and for improving primary care practice, are available at pcmh.ahrq.gov and http://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/prevention-chronic-care/improve/index.html.
The 2015 National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Scholarship Program application cycle is now open. The NHSC is a federal government program administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Health Workforce. Established in 1972, the NHSC has been building healthy communities by connecting primary healthcare providers to areas of the United States with limited access to care.

Eligible applicants include nurse practitioners and certified nurse-wives enrolled at a U.S. accredited school. Scholarship support includes tax-free payment of tuition, required fees, other reasonable educational costs, and a taxable monthly living stipend. For each year of financial support (up to four years) a NHSC Scholarship recipient serves one year (minimum of two years) at an NHSC-approved site in one of many high-need urban, rural, and frontier communities (minimum two year commitment).

Interested applicants should review the Application and Program Guidance information. Applications are due in full by May 7, 2015.