

# Off the Cuff

**nana** Nebraska Association  
of Nurse Anesthetists

WWW.NEANA.ORG

## Fall 2015

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## From the NANA President

*By Holly Chandler CRNA  
President*

Happy Fall NANA members!

It has been a good year and there has never been a better time to be a CRNA in Nebraska! Your association is strong, your schools are educating brilliant SRNA's for our future, and our Scope of Practice is strong and being vigilantly looked after.

The message from the AANA annual meeting was that we are stronger and better together moving forward as ONE. Those of us who went witnessed a very spirited business meeting.

Ultimately the votes came out in favor of moving forward with NBCRNA and AANA working together.

Remote voting did not pass, which was disappointing, but it will return to the ballot. Tim Glidden CRNA was able to go and was endorsed by NANA to become our SPA (State Peer Assistant). He attended many hours of educational training and we are excited to have him serve in this role.

The students had a good time and learned a lot. Tyler Preszler competed in the college bowl and represented us well by winning his round.

We have a new Region 4 director - Mark Haffey CRNA. He encourages anyone with questions or comments to contact him.

Our NANA Fall Meeting was a huge success. The feedback was extremely positive regarding our venue, speakers and food. It is a difficult but rewarding job for our Program Committee to bring these meetings to you. At our Business meeting we amended the bylaws and formed a new Student Standing Committee. We also formed a new Rural CRNAs Committee and several people volunteered to be on it. The 2015 election results were announced: our newly elected board members include Mitch Ebke CRNA and John Shandera CRNA; Julie Davis CRNA was reelected to the board. I would also like to welcome a new student representative from Mount Marty to the Board, Daniel McArthur SRNA from Papillion.

We have begun working on revising our standing rules to a policies and procedures format. These standing rules have become very outdated and it became apparent we needed a set of policies and procedures for operation.

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## Message from the NBCRNA

*By Steve Wooden, DNP, CRNA, NSPM-C  
President, Nebraska APRN Board  
President, NBCRNA*

I want to take this opportunity to update NANA members on activities surrounding the Nebraska APRN licensing board. I will soon be finishing my term as APRN board member, and it has been my honor to serve as the CRNA representative to the board. In the five years I have served on the board, we have seen very few licensure actions taken against CRNAs. I attribute this to a highly capable and professional group of CRNAs who seek to maintain an exceptional level of integrity. The staff at HHS who serve the APRN board have been very complimentary of the education and certification processes of CRNAs. I am very proud to be part of a profession that is held in such high esteem.

There have been a few changes on the board. Karen Bowen, who has been the director of the nursing division at HHS has retired, and the department is seeking a replacement. There are a couple of physician board member positions that need to be filled, and two APRN positions need to be filled within the next few months. The Board of Health is processing applications at this time, and I expect to see a full board by February of 2016.

As you may know, I was recently elected President of the NBCRNA. My goal as president is to protect the value of the CRNA credential, while guarding the wellbeing of the public by supporting the continuing education and demonstration of knowledge which is an important component of competency. I intend to engage leaders of our profession and work toward the common goal of professional integrity.

I am aware that many CRNAs are concerned about changes to the recertification requirements coming in August 2016. I can assure you that the Continued Professional Certification (CPC) program is designed around the needs and practices of CRNAs. I think most CRNAs who review the accurate details of the program (found at <http://www.nbcrna.com/CPC/Pages/default.aspx>) will see the improvements built into our new recertification process, and will be able to identify the value which the CPC program provides to individual CRNAs, the public, and the professional organization. If meeting vendors will take advantage of the opportunities the CPC Program provides, we should see more dynamic meetings, improved attendance, and better value. Time will tell, but I am committed to seeing the process prove its value.

As always, if you have any questions about the Nebraska licensing board or the NBCRNA, do not hesitate to contact me at [Steve@stevewooden.com](mailto:Steve@stevewooden.com).

Off The Cuff is published twice per year by the Nebraska Association of Nurse Anesthetists, 1633 Normandy Ct., Ste A, Lincoln, NE 68512. 402.476.3852, [neana@neana.org](mailto:neana@neana.org).

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A new website is on the agenda for the next BOD meeting and hopefully will be on its way to the members soon.

Remember to keep one ear to the ground regarding our veterans' right to have access to quality healthcare. APRNs, specifically CRNAs, have been and always should be a part of that care. National AANA will inform the FPDs and Presidents within 48 hours of the decision and at that time we will inform all of you to write in and let your voices be heard for our veterans.

Do not forget to save the date for the Foundation Golf outing this year to be held at Quarry Oaks in Ashland, Nebraska on July 16, 2016. It was an extremely fun time this year and promises to be just as fun next year!

Thank you everyone for all of the support you give your Association. Don't forget to give to the NANA PAC. We are only as strong as our PAC. I challenged 5 people at the Fall Business meeting to give to the PAC as I have and then challenged them to find 5 people to challenge. We must be prepared. AA's could be at our doorstep any day. Please mail a check payable to NANA PAC to our office:

NANA  
1633 Normandy Court, Suite A  
Lincoln NE 68512

Thanks and please support your Association also by attending our Spring Meeting in Omaha April 8-10. We have several amazing speakers planned.

## Important Tax Notice

Membership dues to the Nebraska Association of Nurse Anesthetists are not tax deductible as charitable contributions for income tax purposes. However, they may be tax deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses, subject to federal tax restrictions related to association lobbying activities, which are not tax deductible. For 2015, the portion of your state (NANA) dues which is allocable directly to lobbying and therefore non-deductible, is 36.44%.

## Bylaws Committee Report

By Tiffany Olson

NANA held the annual business meeting on Saturday, October 3 in conjunction with the Fall Conference. The membership voted in favor of adding the student committee to the standing committees required by our bylaws. The purpose of this committee will be to serve as a liaison between the students of Nebraska affiliated Nurse Anesthesia Programs and NANA. This committee will also assist the appointed NANA student representatives in the organization and fundraising involved with Mid-Year Assembly.

The Bylaws Committee is also developing a Policies and Procedures manual for NANA. This document will serve as an avenue of communication to keep the purpose and functionality of NANA intact from year-to-year as new board members and officers are elected.

## Calendar Of Events

**Nov. 6-8**  
AANA Fall Leadership  
Academy  
Rosemont, IL

**July 16, 2016**  
Foundation Golf Tournament  
Quarry Oaks Golf Course  
Ashland, NE

**Apr. 8-10, 2016**  
Spring Meeting  
Regency Marriott  
Omaha, NE

**Oct. 7-9, 2016**  
Fall State Meeting  
Lincoln, NE

## News From the Foundation

By Sarah Langan and Amy Graham  
Nebraska AANA Representatives

Thank you to everyone who came out for the 1st annual Foundation Golf Tournament on July 11th. We considered it a huge success and enjoyed the day. We were able to donate \$1500 to the Foundation plus another \$250 from the BryanLGH Student Foundation silent auction. That is a great year!!!

Next year we will be moving the golf tournament to Quarry Oaks in Ashland, NE on Saturday July 16, 2016. We hope to see everyone there! Look for us at the spring meeting and get your team ready!!!

## Program Committee Report

By Ann Donnelly-Haasch CRNA, MS  
Program Committee Chair

It is always so much fun to visit with my fellow CRNA's and SRNA's at the State meetings. This Fall was no different.

The NANA Fall State Meeting was held October 2-4 at Bryan College of Health Sciences in Lincoln, Nebraska. We want to extend a big Thank You to the college for allowing us to hold our meeting there. We had great attendance with 100 people registered. Approximately half were CRNA's and half SRNA's. A variety of topics were presented by the speakers. We thank all of them for sharing their knowledge of their specialty.

We hope people found the topics interesting and had fun with the hands on portion of the Central Line presentation. Thank you to all who worked so hard to provide this learning opportunity.

CE certificates were sent to CRNAs via email October 23. If you did not receive yours, please contact the NANA office at 402.476.3852. Thank you to everyone who attended and for your evaluations and feedback. It is very much appreciated.

This year we invited Exhibitors & Sponsors to our meeting. These people value the time you take to talk with them about their products and services that may benefit you in your practice. Thank you to all for visiting with them and hearing what they have to offer. We certainly appreciate their support.

It is with the help of many people that a meeting like this comes together. Thank you to the Program committee for your time and thoughtfulness in planning the Fall meeting. This includes the staff at our management company, McBride and Associates, who assisted us with CEU's, marketing, registration and so many other responsibilities that are required to put on a successful meeting.

Please mark your calendars for our Spring meeting on April 8-10 at the Omaha Regency Marriot. Check the website for future updates and further information on the content that will be offered in the Spring.

Last, if any member of NANA would like to participate on the program committee, we would love to have your

input and ideas. We want to keep our meetings fresh and interesting. Please consider being a part of this committee or any of several other committees that keep our organization strong. Contact myself or any Board member for information.

### Bryan College Update

By Sharon Hadenfeldt PhD, CRNA  
Dean of Nurse Anesthesia  
Bryan College of Health Sciences

Josh Wenande is the Bryan College 2015/16 student representative to the NANA Board of Directors. He will serve through his graduation in May 2016.

Five students attended the AANA Annual Congress held in Salt Lake City, UT. Attendees from the Class of 2017 include Meghan Burns, Matthew Corti, Laura Oseka, Tyler Preszler and Rebecca Rand. Program Director Sharon Hadenfeldt also attended. Tyler Preszler participated in the College Bowl and all attended the Annual Banquet.

Four BCHS nurse anesthesia students were awarded scholarships through the AANA Foundation. The AANA Foundation received 1,267 competitive student scholarship applications this year and 62 scholarships were awarded totaling \$127,500. The scholarships and recipients included the Dean M Cox Memorial Scholarship awarded to Kellyn Nieland and Ryan Stagemeyer, the GALA Scholarship awarded to Scot Brown, and the Nebraska Association of Nurse Anesthetist's Scholarship awarded to Joshua Wenande.

### Peer Assistance

AANA defines wellness as a positive state of the mind, body, and spirit reflecting a balance of effective adaptation, resilience, and coping mechanisms in personal and professional environments that enhance quality of life. The website for Peer Assistance is [www.aanapeerassistance.com](http://www.aanapeerassistance.com) and the helpline is 800-654-5167.



# NANA PAC Contributions Help Advance Our Profession

By Bob Bush, Director



Your Nebraska Association of Nurse Anesthetists, like any other professional association, has a political action committee, NANA PAC. The PAC's purpose is to

provide financial support to candidates on behalf of our profession. It is the only legal means for the association to make political contributions to help advance our message and by law, the funds we use for these contributions must be voluntary contributions by our members to a PAC.

To me it seems these days that we are motivated by fear. I see it in the double locked doors of our homes all the way up to massive governmental watch dog agencies designed to keep us safe from terrorism. The news mentality of "If it bleeds, it leads" inundates us every day with stories and pictures that motivate fear.

Much to my chagrin I just can not seem to ignore a political survey or talking to those annoying pollsters that call during dinner. As a consequence I get PAC mailings from a lot of groups and I see fear mongering. They ask for donations to help keep what "we" have or block "them" from taking it. Obviously that is an emotional appeal. I would like to take a different tack, lay out the facts and let you decide what you would like to do in terms of financial support, without the emotional blackmail.

Two issues of critical interest are the federal "Opt out" and the ever present possibility of Anesthesia Assistant (AAs) in Nebraska. The Opt out is important because it reaffirms that you can work and be paid as a licensed independent provider (LIP), a legislated right that NANA fought hard for in the mid 1990's. The Opt out has been sustained by every Nebraska governor since 2002. In a personal conversation with past NANA presidents Tim Glidden and Sara Theoharis, Governor Ricketts referred to maintaining the Opt Out as, "A no brainer".

One of the questions I get asked is 'do you think AAs will ever be allowed to practice in Nebraska?' While there is no law prohibiting AAs, only Louisiana has done that. There is no mechanism to allow their practice either, that would necessitate action by the Unicameral. There are 13 states and Washington D.C. that allow AA practice and curiously two are our neighbors Missouri and Colorado. Additionally, both these states have in-state schools that prepare 15 to 20 Masters level AA graduates in about 27 months. Nationally, the AANA estimates there are about 1800 AAs in practice and when combined, seven AA schools on ten campuses graduate about 100-150 AAs per year.

Let me be crass and look at some financial facts. Case Western, one of the oldest and largest AA schools, states the average new graduate can expect an annual salary of about \$110-120,000. Figures for long time practicing AAs are hard to come by but periodic raises should be expected. In most AA-friendly states a single anesthesiologist can supervise up to 4 AAs or 2 student AAs and bill under CMS rules for supervised cases. Now ask yourself, 'what is the earning potential for an anesthesiologist supervising 4 AAs vs. the hospital/group

paying 4 CRNA's?' For those of us that work as employees of an anesthesia group, like myself, that has impact. Obviously there could be financial incentive to replace CRNAs with AAs.

Please realize the need is there. During any election cycle about one fifth (10) of our Unicameral Senators retire due to term limits. This places a continual duty upon us to educate new officials as to

who we are and the vital part we play in providing safe, effective care for their constituents.

Look for our coming PAC web page addition to your NEANA.ORG. homepage.

You can donate to NANA PAC by check or with an automatic monthly bank draft at any level:

*Governors Gold (\$500 - \$1000)*

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*Supervisors Bronze (\$100 - \$249)*

Contact the NANA office with questions (402.476.3852).

# Congress Urged To Support Veterans' Access to Quality Care

By Nancy Gondringer, CRNA

Over the past two years a major focus of the FPDs has been allowing Advanced Practice Nurses to work to their full scope of practice in line with the IOM report published in 2010. I again appeal to all NANA members to read my report and take a moment to write a quick note to your Congressmen and Senators urging their support regarding legislation which would ensure our Veterans Access to Quality Care.

## **Background Information**

To ensure our nation's Veterans have access to high-quality healthcare, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is considering taking an important step to update their Nursing Handbook, a guide for nursing services in the VHA, to allow advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) working in the VHA to practice to their Full Practice Authority. This updated policy, which is consistent with current healthcare delivery models for our nation's active duty service members, will reduce wait times for primary and surgical care, ensure patient safety, and give Veterans access to the timely, high-quality care they have earned.

There are currently more than 6,000 advanced practice registered nurses working in the VHA. Current VHA policy, however, restricts their ability to practice to the full extent of their education and training and often results in outdated and impractical practice models that do not and would not exist in other healthcare settings. By removing these barriers, the VA would align itself with recommendations from the Institute of Medicare and other evidence-based studies.

Recognizing all VHA APRNs to their full education and training provides a common-sense solution to the challenges associated with ensuring America's Veterans have access to the high-quality healthcare they need and deserve. Through this measure, the VHA can make optimal use of these critical members of the healthcare workforce across the entire care continuum.

Despite receiving the support of more than 100 veterans and veterans groups from across the country, thousands of healthcare providers, dozens of members of Congress and national patient advocacy groups, the effort to fully utilize advanced practice registered nurses in the Veterans Health Administration is under attack from special interests

who benefit from the current wasteful system and seek to put politics before policy when it comes to Veterans healthcare.

Your help is needed in writing your members of Congress and urging them to support providing Veterans' access to quality healthcare from all advanced practice registered nurses.

## **APRNs in the U.S.**

Advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) are a vital part of the health system of the United States. They are registered nurses educated at the Master's or Doctoral

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## President-Elect's Message

By Sean Scribner, President-Elect

I am pleased to announce that a new committee has been formed as part of your association - the Rural Anesthesia Committee. Its shape and direction are what we hope to determine as it grows.

The idea originated from Todd Luedeke (Providence Medical Center in Wayne, NE). Todd, like many of our members, is a sole provider at his hospital. This is a segment of our membership that the association feels needs a voice. Not only are these providers on the front lines in rural communities, but they represent all the ideals of a well trained independent CRNA. It is my fear that as our association grows in size, these under-represented providers will feel less and less connected. While it is true the most dense portion of our membership lies in the urban areas, some of our strongest assets may reside elsewhere.

If you are a solo provider or know of someone who is, please help me bring them into the fold. We need your input! The committee meetings will be 45 minutes every other month by teleconference and/or video conference. I hope for this to be a forum of discussion on rural issues, billing issues, and a general forum for networking. This is YOUR association, help us make it stronger!

Thank you to the early volunteers for this committee.

*Tim Johnson - Broken Bow  
Holly Talkington - Aurora  
Todd Luedeke - Wayne*

## Thank You To Our Vendors

NANA appreciates the continuing support from our vendors. The following vendors contributed to the success of the 2015 Fall Conference.

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level and in a specific role and patient population. APRNs are prepared by education and certification to assess, diagnose, and manage patient problems, order tests, and prescribe medications.

APRNs consist of nurse practitioners (NPs) who deliver primary, specialized, and community healthcare; certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) who provide the full range of anesthesia services as well as chronic pain management; certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) who are experts in primary care, maternal, and women's health; and clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) offering acute, chronic, specialty, and community healthcare services; as well as APRN students and the faculty who educate them.

### ***What You Need To Do Now***

Please contact your Congressman and ask him to sign on to HR 1247 sponsored by (Reps) Sam Graves (R-MO) and Jan Schakowsky (D-IL). We also need you to write or call your Senators and ask them to call or write VA Secretary and offer their support for advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) to function to their full scope of practice.

To support Veterans access to quality care by backing Full Practice Authority for CRNAs and other APRNs, see [www.Veterans-Access-To-Care.com](http://www.Veterans-Access-To-Care.com) and urge your Veteran colleagues and friends to do the same. (copy and paste this site into your web browser and follow either the "Become an Advocate" or "What's at Stake" buttons to find the letter and process).

Please take a moment to write your members of Congress and the VA and urge them to support recognition of APRNs to the full extent of their education and training. As a healthcare provider, you have an important voice in this matter.

It is essential that your letter is in your own words. The website has language to guide your letter, but please edit to include personal stories and other information. If you have questions or concerns, please call Nancy Gondringer, CRNA.

Thank you for taking action!

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### District 2

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### District 3

#### **REP. ADRIAN M. SMITH**

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Washington, D.C. 20510  
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## Report of Peer Assistance Training and Certification

*By Tim Glidden CRNA MS*

I am happy to report that I attended the AANA Peer Assistance Training and Certification at the Annual AANA Congress in Salt Lake City this past September. Prior to attending this conference was the completion of approximately 20 hours of modules and accompanying exams. The AANA goal of this process is to ensure that CRNA's who represent their state as a Peer Assistance Advisor have been trained according to the AANA standards and that consistent information is given out to those in need. One of the other goals is to ensure that state SPA's know the Rules and Regulations of their own state.



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In this workshop we were educated in the decision making process of helping one of our peers in need of help or in the middle of an acute crisis. The history of Peer Assistance indicates that most calls come from a fellow colleague and not always the CNRA who is in need of help. Frequently we are dealing with the colleague who is seeking help for their peer. Assisting with a proper intervention, removing the provider from their work environment and getting them into the proper treatment center is the primary goal. In the acute crisis, getting emergency help and keeping our colleague alive is the number one objective.

It is noteworthy that according to the Hazelden/Betty Ford Foundation, the "AANA is the leader in the Health Care Industry in advocating for their members". Other health care organizations are looking to the AANA to develop the same model. We are unique today because we not only look at treatment but also effective models of recovery to assist the CRNA to re-enter into practice with the appropriate safety nets in place to help them be successful.

Peer Assistance IS NOT a professional treatment or counseling program. SPA'S are not authorized to make a medical diagnosis, provide professional counseling or offer any type of legal advice. Our primary objective is to be supportive of the CRNA and connect them with the appropriate resources within their geographical area. The

more important objective is to get the CRNA connected with a facility that deals with Substance Abuse of a medical provider. There are currently seven centers in the United States that are recognized by the AANA.

Another objective of this committee is to obtain confidential data on the rate of Substance Abuse Disorders within our organization. In conjunction with this is obtaining confidential data on treatment, time away from work, re-entry plans, monitoring, relapse and successful return to work status. This information can and will be useful for our members. The current data today is that 10-15% of our members will experience Substance Abuse.

I would like to thank the NANA Board for making it possible for me to attend this workshop and become a certified State Peer Assistance Advisor. If you or any colleague is need of these services, the information can be found on the AANA Website, the NANA website or by calling the 24 hour Hotline provided by the AANA (800.654.5167). When calling this number, please realize that it may take a couple of hours to get a response. This number is connected to CRNA's who are currently in practice and they respond as soon as they are available. I currently serve as one of the members taking hotline calls from across the United States. My cell phone is listed on the NANA and AANA websites. Please do not hesitate to call me at any time with ANY question. Those who know me, know my phone is always on.

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## News From Clarkson College

*By Jayne Cromer*

Our new student representative for the Class of 2018 is Meagan Freml.

Clarkson College just had its Council on Accreditation onsite evaluation and happily received an outstanding review. We wish to thank our dedicated students and clinical site CRNA's who made this achievement a reality.