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# Teaching and Learning in Nursing

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## President's Message

### Never say never. . .

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Retired Director of Nursing & Allied Health from Northwestern Michigan College Traverse City, Michigan



As I write my first message to you as your newly elected President, I feel excited and at the same time overwhelmed. I am truly humbled and honored to be representing Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (OADN) as President for the next 2 years. While I am not sure what challenges are on the horizon, I do hope there is some normalcy returning post-COVID-19.

I would like to share some background about myself. I reside in Michigan but was born and raised in Philly (AKA Philadelphia). I am an associate degree nurse (ADN) who completed my initial degree at Gwynedd Mercy (College) University and in 2014 completed my Doctor of Nursing Practice through Saint Louis University. Just over a year ago, I retired as the Director of Nursing at Northwestern Michigan College and currently work as a Family Nurse Practitioner. Additionally, I am a peer evaluator for the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing.

I began my role on the OADN Board of Directors in the fall of 2017 and was elected to the President-Elect position the fall of 2019. This past year provided the opportunity to learn about OADN's governance in preparation for my role as President. The focus of my work with OADN has been with the Academic Progression in Nursing Task Force where I began as a member and then served in the role of Chairperson the last few years. Academic progression is a passion of mine and I believe it is very important for all nurses to have the opportunity to continue their education.

During my ADN program, I planned to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, but never thought about further degree attainment. I recall learning about the nurse practitioner role and different practice opportunities while telling myself. . . *I will never be a nurse practitioner or work in the emergency room.* Those positions were very

overwhelming to me. Well. . . **never say never!** Over 44 years later, I am a practicing Family Nurse Practitioner and my favorite place to work was in the Emergency Department. I never dreamed of earning a doctoral degree but in May of 2014 on my 37th wedding anniversary, this first-generation college graduate defended her research project to graduate with a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree.

Academic progression provides the knowledge, clinical expertise, and confidence to reach dreams that seem unattainable. Advancing our education helps us develop the wisdom we need to work with our patients, their family and support systems, and our students and coworkers. As nurse educators, it is vital we work to develop partnerships to give our students the opportunities we have experienced. Developing consortium agreements or creative opportunities such as 2+2 or 3+1 programs for students to progress in their education are essential.

Before I close, I must thank all of you who participated in our first virtual convention and those who assisted in making this convention a huge success. It took many hours of hard work and I truly appreciate everyone who helped. Virtual was certainly not our preference. I wanted to see each of you to hear your stories and learn about your experiences!

Thank you again for trusting me to represent you as your OADN President. I will do my best to continue to move our organization forward. Becoming President of a national organization was also something I never thought I would do. It was never even on my radar; but once again. . . **never say never.** We have much to accomplish this year. Most important, remember to take care of yourself. We cannot continue to help others if we do not take care of ourselves!

Have a very happy and healthy New Year!

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