



DR. RICHARD LEVIN
BEDNASH LECTURESHIP
AWARD RECIPIENT

FOUR PROMINENT SPEAKERS TO BE FEATURED AT DEANS ANNUAL MEETING

AACN looks forward to welcoming members to the [2023 Deans Annual Meeting](#), which will take place at The Fairmont Hotel in Washington, DC, March 25-27. Those who prefer to join virtually are welcome to participate online. This event is open to the primary dean/director of AACN member schools. This year's meeting will feature four prominent speakers who will focus on humanism, innovation, and new horizons in nursing education and practice.

The Geraldine "Polly" Bednash Lectureship Award will be presented to Dr. Richard Levin, president and CEO of The Arnold P. Gold Foundation. Dr. Levin's address will focus on health care and relationship-centered care.

Lee Woodruff is a journalist, media specialist, and *New York Times* bestselling author. She will provide members with an inspiring session about strength and compassion, respect and kindness, and a reminder that what brings value in health care is free and takes little time.

In addition, Dr. Elizabeth Fowler, deputy administrator and director of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation will offer a stimulating discussion on national efforts to advance value-based care at the federal level and achieve equitable health outcomes through high quality, affordable, and person-centered care.

On Monday, March 27, best-selling author and physician Dr. Rana Awdish, director of the Pulmonary Hypertension Program at Henry Ford Hospital, will share her story of her personal healthcare crisis, the lessons learned from that experience, and how she changed her approach to medicine as a result.

A new dean and member orientation will be held on the first day of the meeting (March 25), as will a meet-and-greet for first-time attendees. Like-schools discussions, exhibits, and an evening welcome reception will take place on Sunday, March 26. Networking opportunities will be offered each day of the meeting. For more details and information, and to register for the meeting (either in-person or virtual), visit the [Deans Annual Meeting](#) page of the AACN website.

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JONAS PHILANTHROPIES ESTABLISHES AACN AS NEW HOME BASE FOR ITS NURSING DIVISION

[Jonas Philanthropies](#), one of the nation's leading sources of support for doctoral nursing education and other critical healthcare priorities, will establish the new home base for its nursing programs at AACN. This strategic move will position Jonas Philanthropies to amplify its work to address inequities in health care and support nursing, including the development of a diverse cadre of nurse faculty, advanced practice registered nurses, and nurse leaders.

"Preparing a well-educated, representative nursing workforce is essential to ensuring access to quality health care and keeping communities safe," said John Jonas, Co-President of Jonas Philanthropies. "By expanding our long-term partnership with AACN, we are looking forward to sustaining the next phase of our work to develop nurse leaders who are able to transform today's healthcare system into one that is rooted in equity, and reshapes the future of nursing education, practice, and research."

"In collaboration with AACN, and with this new chapter of our nursing program, we will continue to invest in the legacy of reformative healthcare practices, setting quality standards for education and servicing in the healthcare field. Playing a major role in impacting the nursing community has been the foundation of the Jonas Scholars program since its inception," said Lendri Purcell, Co-President of Jonas Philanthropies.

Founded by Donald and Barbara Jonas in 2006 to address the shortage of professional nurses, Jonas Philanthropies has thrived and expanded its reach to support solutions to address a range of high-need issues, including investments in low vision and blindness, children's environmental health, and climate health. The Jonas legacy of innovation and action continues under the leadership of family members John Jonas, founder and CEO of the Jonas Group and Co-President of Jonas Philanthropies, and Lendri Purcell, Co-President of Jonas Philanthropies, founder of Trees for Climate Health, and co-founder of Families Advocating for Chemical and Toxics Safety (FACTS).

For more than 50 years, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing has played a major role in preparing nurse leaders at all levels. One of AACN's signature initiatives has been its partnership with Jonas Philanthropies to administer the Jonas Scholars program. Through this groundbreaking initiative, Jonas Philanthropies has invested more than \$25 million over the last 15 years to prepare more than 1,400 doctoral nursing program graduates for leadership roles in academia, practice, research, and policy. Program leaders were intentional about funding students in all 50 states and ensuring that at least half of all Jonas Scholars were from communities of color.

"AACN applauds the Jonas family for their steadfast commitment to

supporting nurses and addressing significant unmet needs in health care," said Dr. Deborah Trautman, AACN President and Chief Executive Officer. "We look forward to strengthening AACN's connection with our trusted colleagues and providing a higher level of service to the Jonas Scholars and the larger academic nursing community."

Since 2012, AACN has worked closely with the leaders and staff at Jonas Philanthropies to administer the Jonas Scholars program, which has resulted in scholarship funding and leadership development for doctoral students from 157 schools of nursing, the hosting of five national conferences for Scholars, and the development of an alumni program. AACN will continue to administer the Jonas Scholars program, which includes providing services to the current cohort of Scholars through August 2023 and launching a new student cohort in 2024. Under the new partnership agreement, AACN will offer additional services to Scholars, including arranging subject matter experts to provide a tailored mentoring experience to Scholars, developing leadership-focused programming for current and alumni Scholars, and amplifying communication efforts.



AACN RELEASES NEW VISION TO GUIDE THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN ACADEMIC NURSING

AACN has released a new [Vision for Sharing Data and Information Across Nursing Education, Practice, and Regulation](#). Approved by the AACN Board of Directors, this document calls for developing an integrated information system—supported by technology, people, and processes—that facilitates the sharing of data and information among schools of nursing, healthcare settings, and regulatory bodies. The new statement provides recommendations for schools to consider when evaluating technologies, including those focused on the implementation of the AACN *Essentials*, as well as for companies looking to offer solutions to meet the needs of nursing schools and the larger healthcare community.

Transitioning to competency-based education and assessment in nursing has sparked a new wave of innovation focused on assisting nursing schools in adapting their programs to meet contemporary standards and quality expectations,” said Dr. Deborah Trautman, AACN President and Chief Executive Officer. “AACN offers this new vision to help guide the development of new technology and digital tools, while providing guidance to schools looking to discern which solutions are best able to meet their program’s specific needs.”

The new vision was developed by AACN’s [Technology Working Group](#), an interdisciplinary group of experts, who were charged with developing recommendations on the use of technology within academic nursing, including for the association, accreditation, nursing education programs, and students. A key emphasis in this work was on existing or needed technology to support the transition to the 2021 AACN *Essentials*, such as for curriculum mapping, data collection and reporting, and competency attainment/tracking.

The overarching vision calls for developing an interoperable system that supports the needs and promotes the best use of resources for schools of nursing, faculty, students, practicing nurses, employers, and regulators, including licensing, accrediting, and certifying bodies. The resulting statement identifies the goals and purpose of this preferred system, provides scenarios to illustrate the new vision, identifies products that would support *Essentials* implementation, and offers criteria for the development and modification of technologies to meet the needs of academic nursing.



AACN CONFERENCES

Registration is open for AACN’s remaining 2023 conferences! Join us to explore innovative content unique to your role and responsibilities.

[Clinical Nurse Leader Summit](#)

February 23-25, 2023
Lake Buena Vista, FL

[Nursing Advancement Professionals Conference](#)

March 24-25, 2023
Washington, DC

[Executive Development Series for Deans](#)

March 24-25, 2023
Washington, DC

[Deans Annual Meeting](#)

March 25-27, 2023
Washington, DC

[Graduate Nursing Admissions Professionals Conference](#)

April 10-12, 2023
Nashville, TN

[Business Officers of Nursing Schools Annual Meeting](#)

April 26-28, 2023
Cape Coral, FL

EXPLORE AACN’S NEW ESSENTIALS MICROSITE AND TEACHING RESOURCE DATABASE



THE ESSENTIALS



Used to define quality in nursing education, *The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education* outline the necessary curriculum content and expected competencies of graduates from baccalaureate, master’s, and Doctor of Nursing Practice programs. AACN has recently released a [new teaching resource](#) database that provides an easy way for faculty to advance their *Essentials* implementation efforts. This database includes learning strategies, suggested resources, recommended content, and assessment measures for each Domain. The content was developed by more than 75 faculty members and subject matter experts who served on our Domain and Concept Working Groups. All resources will be reviewed regularly for currency and relevance with new resources added on an ongoing basis.



CHIEN CHEN, MSN, RN, PMH-BC, NPD-BC, NEA-BC
National Nurse Executive, Department of Veterans Affairs Central Office, Office of Academic Affiliations

Chien Chen, MSN, RN, PMH-BC, NPD-BC, NEA-BC is a board-certified nurse executive with diverse leadership

experiences in advancing healthcare operations, nursing education, and clinical practice. He is a national nurse executive within the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Central Office, Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA). As a key leader, Mr. Chen collaborates with a team overseeing the OAA nursing portfolio in upholding VA's mission "to educate and train clinicians for VA and the Nation." OAA provides oversight of the nation's largest nurse training programs impacting over 17,000 trainees and 700 nursing school affiliations. Prior to joining OAA, he served within VA Central Office to lead efforts supporting VA's Electronic Health Record Modernization Program. He also previously served in a variety of senior leadership roles impacting education, leadership, and informatics. He currently serves on several committees within national professional organizations, including the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professions Education, and Asian American Pacific Islander Nurses Association. Mr. Chen also holds a faculty appointment at Duke University School of Nursing. Through ongoing national and international presentations in key nursing leadership forums, he is committed to influencing the nursing professions with a focus on workforce development, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Department of Health and Human Services. She always treated me as an individual and respected me as a colleague despite my student role at the time. Over the years, we stayed in touch; she impacted and elevated my values as a nurse. She continued to ignite my passion for giving back to the profession, whether it be for students, staff, colleagues, mentees, etc. She was a stellar role model in demonstrating how impactful providing a safe, respectful, and non-discriminatory environment was to any learner. Today, I gratefully carry forward these pearls of wisdom as I strive to support others. I have committed to reflecting on those meaningful experiences that have made an impact on my nursing and leadership journeys. As such, I regularly garner input from relevant key stakeholders as I strive to improve and implement innovations impacting future nurses through their professional journeys. I strongly value the elements of collaboration and teamwork with a focus on helping others excel and grow. It is a great honor to now work with a team to oversee the largest nurse training program in the nation as we serve our Veterans.

What is the mission and core work of the Office of Academic Affiliations' Nursing Education program?

After World War II, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) was confronted with caring for the increasing population of Veterans. In response, the VA partnered with academic institutions to increase its capacity to care for Veterans and improve the quality of care. This fostered one of the organization's foundational missions at the [VA Office of Academic Affiliations](#) (OAA), to educate and train healthcare professionals for both the VA and nation. For over 75 years, the VA partnered with more than 1,400 academic institutions, providing interprofessional clinical experiences to up to 120,000 health professions trainees annually in over 60 different disciplines.

When did you first get involved working in health care?

My journey in health care began when my family immigrated to the United States, where I grew up in a humbling environment. The challenges and obstacles that my family and I faced amplified my passion for helping others. My life experiences have shaped my nursing journey. To me, nursing was never just a job but an integral part of who I am. Nursing complements my personal values to make a meaningful impact while giving back to the community.

Early in my career, my mentors encouraged me to apply for an invaluable opportunity as a corporate-level staff consultant for a large hospital system. I was excited to be competitively selected as

one of two nurses to regularly collaborate with corporate executives. This experience, combined with my knowledge of clinical practice, launched my greater involvement for working in the healthcare sector. I learned to adapt these unique leadership and operational experiences into my ongoing nursing practice. I better understood that there were many ways nurses can impact health care. The important lesson is to cherish every opportunity and experience you are presented with, as those become the essential building blocks of your nursing journey.

Did you have any mentors early in your career?

My first memorable mentor was a senior nurse executive at the U.S.

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This mission includes the nursing profession where the VA proudly partners with more than 700 nursing schools nationwide. These academic partnerships support the OAA nursing goals to: (1) develop competent, confident, practice-ready registered nurses (RNs) and nurse practitioners (NPs) equipped with the knowledge and skills to address the specific needs of our nation's Veterans in the VA and community, and (2) enhance recruitment and retention of nurses by providing a pipeline of the highly qualified nursing workforce.

The VA offers high-quality interprofessional clinical experiences for (pre-degree) nursing students and (post-degree) residents, supporting nurses in their unique pathways to professional practice.

- For students, the VA provides in-person, experiential rotations for more than 20,000 students annually, even during the height of the pandemic.
- For residents, the VA offers the OAA academic-based, centrally funded, nurse residency programs. This groundbreaking residency structure offers: 100% protected training time and clinical supervision, where residents are not counted in staffing matrices, and profession-specific rotations based on a competency-based curriculum. Implemented in 2011, this innovative OAA nurse residency model provides new graduate nurses the same opportunities for training as those available for other health professions. Through ongoing expansions, the VA is pleased to offer over 150 nurse residency programs for more than 700 RNs and NPs each year.

These pathways create a seamless progression across different learner roles: from student, to resident, to new graduate employee. By establishing these training programs, the VA defines and supports an educational culture focused on meeting the

needs of these unique learner roles.

What are the program's top priorities?

According to AACN and other national professional organizations, the nursing workforce shortage is expected to intensify as the population ages and the demand for health care continues to grow.¹ As the nation's largest employer of nurses and leading provider of health professions education, the VA is committed to preparing a diverse and practice-ready workforce. OAA accomplishes this through its various innovative nursing training initiatives, shaping and guiding RNs and NPs through their professional journey.

OAA Nursing Education priorities:

1. Facilitating stronger and mutually beneficial partnerships between VA facilities and nursing schools across the nation to advance nursing education and practice.
2. Offering nurses at various levels and scope of practice, the same training opportunities as other health professions through its pre-degree and post-degree nurse training programs.
3. Developing and training a pipeline of practice-ready nurses to care for Veterans for the VA and the nation.

What is the value of postgraduate nursing residencies?

Historically, residency programs have been the standard for medical school graduates and other health professionals (pharmacy, dental, psychology, etc.) prior to entering clinical practice. However, that has not been the standard for nursing. The nursing community has traditionally utilized an employee-based, on-the-job model to support new graduate nurses. Literature and research continue to indicate that newly graduated nurses benefit from additional experiential training, such as the OAA nurse residency program that provides protected training time in a safe and supportive clinical environment.

The Institute of Medicine 2010 landmark report: *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*, calls for nurses to achieve higher levels of education and training through a system that promotes seamless academic progression.² This report recommends residency programs as an important component in the preparation of nurses and nurse practitioners, ensuring a successful evolution from new graduate to confident and competent provider. As highlighted in the most recent report: *The Future of Nursing, 2020-2030: Charting a Path to Achieve Health Equity*, federal organizations, including the VA, have provided funded for nurse residency programs, improving interprofessional education and successfully creating a pipeline of practice-ready nurses.³

Typically, residency programs provide new graduate nurses an opportunity to continue their training, preparing them for success and ultimately improving the care they provide to patients. The unique OAA academic-based nurse residency model ensures that VA nurse residents have the dedicated training time and are appointed as trainees, not employees, to focus on training for the entire program.

In summary, the OAA nurse residency programs are distinct from employee-based, transition-to-practice training models offering residents the following benefits:

- 100% clinical supervision during the 12-month residency
- 100% protected training time where residents are not counted in staffing numbers
- A competency-based curriculum emphasizing Veteran-specific health care with 80% experiential and 20% didactic activities
- Profession-specific rotations to support residents in exploring their strengths and interests, facilitating their career trajectory

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Can you tell us about some of OAA's innovative nursing workforce training programs implemented to enhance education and practice?

OAA is committed to implementing ongoing and future innovations to enhance nursing education and practice for VA and the nation. Some of our examples include:

- Established and expanded OAA's academic-based centrally funded [nurse residency programs](#) nationally:
 - Post-Baccalaureate Registered Nurse Residency
 - Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Residency
 - Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Residency
- Developed a new nurse training program with the pilot of the Geriatrics and Extended Care Nurse Practitioner Residency (GEC-NPR) programs. This is in response to the growing aging population and provider shortages. OAA dedicated funding for eight facilities to establish pilot GEC-NPR programs to develop practice-ready providers equipped with the knowledge and skills to care for the complex health needs of our geriatric community.
- Formalized a partnership with the [VA Health Professions Scholarship Program \(HPSP\)](#) to provide additional pathways to prepare scholarship recipients for professional practice through OAA's nurse residency programs. The HPSP scholarship program provides full-time students financial support and federal employment opportunities through the completion of a VA service obligation. To ensure new graduates have adequate training, the collaboration established a pathway for HPSP students to attend the OAA nurse residency program prior to independent nursing practice. This also supports the VA in recruiting qualified

practice-ready nurses at hard-to-recruit and/or rural VA facilities.

- Implemented the Spring Cohort Initiative that significantly increased resident training opportunities across the nation. This innovation offers flexibilities for VA facilities to implement additional OAA nurse residency cohorts within the academic year and/or larger training cohorts to meet the needs of the community.
- Initiated and approved a proposal to fund VA's first national nurse residency coordinating center. The coordinating center dedicates a team of experts to optimize, standardize, and sustain high-quality nurse residency programs nationally.

How can nursing schools partner with OAA to meet workforce needs?

Per AACN, academic-practice partnerships support the advancement of the nursing profession.⁴ In collaboration with nursing schools nationwide, OAA is invested in preparing the next generation of nurses. OAA's unique nursing training programs create a seamless pathway preparing nursing students and residents for clinical practice. Academic partnerships with the VA creates a joint effort in providing Veteran-specific experiences and competencies to equip the future nursing workforce with the knowledge and skills to address the unique needs of Veterans of the VA and the nation.

To establish or strengthen VA academic partnerships, nursing schools are encouraged to explore these opportunities at VA facilities of interest. Academic affiliations are established at the individual VA facility or VA healthcare system level. To facilitate this process, contact the individual VA facility asking to speak with the Associate Chief of Staff for Education/Designated Education Officer and/or the Associate Director for Patient Care Services/Nurse Executive.

Facilitating mutually beneficial VA academic-practice partnerships advances

nursing education and workforce development, by:

- Expanding professional development for students, residents, and rural faculty
- Creating joint faculty/preceptor appointments at the nursing school and VA facility
- Diversifying training opportunities for students and residents
- Integrating interprofessional education, demonstrating the impact of the nursing profession within the interprofessional healthcare delivery team
- Encouraging education and practice innovations to improve patient care
- Enhancing local recruitment and retention of students and residents

How important are nursing faculty to meeting veterans' healthcare needs?

Nursing faculty are crucial to meeting Veteran's healthcare needs, both within the VA and nation. As previously discussed, academic-practice partnerships provide a platform, structure and opportunity to increase Veteran-focused objectives within nursing education. Faculty play a vital role in developing nurses to be confident, competent, and practice ready.

Faculty can leverage the resources from robust academic-practice partnerships to expand Veteran-centric training opportunities for nursing students and residents. Refining the nursing curriculum to include Veteran-specific competencies enables our future nursing workforce to provide high-quality care to over 16 million Veterans nationwide.⁵ The VA provides a number of publicly-available resources on [military exposures](#). The [Military Health History Pocket Card](#) is a quick and comprehensive resource to support faculty and trainees. OAA values the importance of faculty and preceptors in advancing VA's training mission while serving America's heroes.

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What challenges do you see ahead for professional nursing?

An ongoing challenge for professional nursing is nurse staffing shortages. According to the American Nurses Foundation approximately half of the nurses surveyed are considering leaving their positions in the next six months.⁶ Additionally, 30% of new graduate nurses felt underprepared to practice.⁶ OAA is committed to developing a practice-ready workforce for the VA and the nation through our innovative pre-degree and post-degree nurse training programs. The OAA nurse residency program is a major initiative in addressing these challenges where over 91% of RN and 64% of NP residents choose employment at the VA following residency completion.

The aging population is also putting additional demands on the healthcare system and, subsequently, the need for nurses. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, by 2033 the population over the age of 65 is expected to grow by 45.1%.⁷ As the population ages, there will be an increased need for nurses who are equipped with the knowledge and skills to address the complex health needs of the geriatric population. OAA proudly piloted the GEC-NPR program in 2022 to increase the number of practice-ready providers to meet the needs of older Americans.

What is the best way for AACN member schools to stay informed of the activities of OAA's Nursing Education program?

AACN member schools can stay involved in a variety of ways, such as:

1. Accessing the OAA Nursing Education website at: <https://www.va.gov/oa/nursing.asp>
2. Establishing academic-practice partnerships with local VA facilities. Through these collaborative

partnerships, schools of nursing can stay informed through joint appointments for nursing faculty (both at the VA and school of nursing), as well as school of nursing faculty participation in VA-related projects.

3. Collaborating with a VA facility to establish or participate in an Affiliation Partnership Council/Committee.
4. Forming relationships and regularly meeting with key local VA facility leadership including the Associate Chief of Staff for Education/ Designated Education Officer and/ or the Associate Director for Patient Care Services/Nurse Executive

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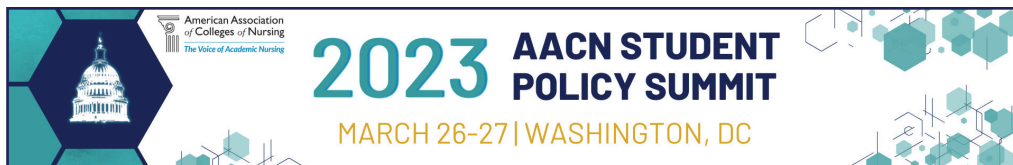
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LICENSING USE OF THE AACN ESSENTIALS

AACN supports the efforts of companies to develop products and services to assist schools of nursing in the implementation of the new *Essentials* and the move to a competency-based approach to education. Though AACN has not endorsed any products or services related to the *Essentials*, we are requiring all companies, organizations, and individuals offering products using content from the *Essentials* to sign a licensing agreement and comply with all terms as outlined. To find out more about the no-cost licensing agreement, please contact Sandra Maroa, *Essentials* Program Assistant, at smaroa@aacnnursing.org.



BECOME AN ADVOCATE: ATTEND THE 2023 STUDENT POLICY SUMMIT

[AACN's Student Policy Summit](#) (SPS) is going bigger and bolder in 2023! This exclusive event, held March 26-27 in Washington, DC, in conjunction with the Deans Annual Meeting, is open to baccalaureate and graduate students enrolled at AACN member institutions. Up to two students can attend per institution with approval from the dean of that school. Students who attend SPS are immersed in didactic program sessions focused on the federal policy process and nursing's role in professional advocacy. Want to send more than two students? Sponsor today!



EVOLVE AS A LEADER: APPLY FOR ELAN

[Elevating Leaders in Academic Nursing \(ELAN\)](#) is a program designed for aspiring deans and senior faculty in leadership roles. This program provides participants with a focused assessment experience, a range of content and exercises related to successful executive leadership, and the opportunity to establish a peer network that fosters long-term partnerships and collegial support.

ELAN is a year-long fellowship that kicks off with an in-person week-long workshop. ELAN participants will take advantage of a leadership immersion, which includes peer coaching, team-building, and advanced simulations. After the on-site event, participants will have access to an online community, two 4-hour e-learning workshops, and peer group discussions. Additional services that will support the fellowship may be added to the experience, such as coaching and mentoring, at an additional cost.

Who Should Apply

The purpose of ELAN is to enhance the executive leadership skills of individuals in administrative and leadership positions who aspire to lead the nursing academic unit.

[Applications are due March 15.](#)

ABOUT SYLLABUS

Syllabus is published bimonthly by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). Address Changes: Send to Syllabus, AACN, 655 K Street, NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001.

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Deadlines: *Opportunities* is published bimonthly beginning with the January issue. Deadline for including, changing, or cancelling ads is the 15th of the month preceding publication date. Advertisers are invoiced with proof of publication.

Send Copy To: All copy must be submitted electronically, preferably in Word format (or PDFs for display ads) to Max Garrison (mgarrison@aacnnursing.org)