

## **PhD Pipeline Initiatives January 2020**

This report outlines the steps AACN staff have taken to address the PhD Pipeline since the October 2019 Board Meeting. AACN's four priority areas related to this initiative include:

**Continuing the Conversation:** AACN recognizes the central role the organization can play in bringing members together to address this important issue.

- AACN will continue the D3 – Deep Dive Discussion sessions at this month's Doctoral Conference to facilitate dialogue on both challenges and opportunities in bringing more students into PhD programs and careers in nursing science. Planned sessions will focus on *Feasibility, Sustainability, and the PhD Pipeline* and *Shaping the BSN to PhD Student: Rewards and Lessons Learned*.
- Addressing PhD pipeline issues will be threaded throughout the sessions offered at the PhD Pre-Conference planned for January 29, 2020. This year's theme is *Doctoral Education for 2030: Tailoring Approaches for the Needs of the Profession and Population*. Sessions include *Opportunities and Challenges to Research Doctoral Education in Nursing for 2030; Metrics for Assessing Research Doctoral Education; Energizing and Creating Faculty Champions for Research Doctoral Programs;* and *Preparing Tomorrow's Leaders of Research Doctoral Programs*.
- Plans for a cross-sectional invitational focus group to explore successful hallmarks of high enrollment PhD Programs at the 2020 Doctoral Education Conference have been finalized. The focus group will consist of 7-10 attendees who will share institutional practices of high enrollment PhD programs sustaining the Pipeline. Informants will represent all four types of member schools.
- *AACN Connect* launched the PhD Pipeline Community in September 2019 to coincide with the start of the fall semester. This online community seeks member engagement on issues germane to students, faculty, and programs conferring the research-focused doctorate. To date, 54 faculty have joined this discussion group and contributed to 25 discussion threads.

**Enhancing PhD Program Marketing:** AACN is committed to creating resources to help member schools generate strong interest in the PhD.

- The Graduate Nursing Student Academy is partnering with GNAP to present a webinar this spring on best practices for engaging undergraduate students in nursing research.
- AACN's data team has updated AACN's interactive webpage containing the latest data on the PhD in nursing, including trends in enrollment and graduations.
- AACN presented a session at the Sigma Convention in Washington, DC in November 2019, which focused on faculty careers and the value of the PhD. A similar session is planned for the National Student Nursing Association Conference in April 2020.

**Identifying Data Gaps:** AACN is working to identify the data gaps related to this issue and how we can bridge these gaps. The association will work to keep the known data front and center.

- Di Fang, AACN Director of Research and Data Services, is developing a manuscript for publication focused on PhD program graduation rates, attrition, and time to graduation. Co-authors of this paper include Board Member Lin Zhan and AACN's Director of Nursing Education Rick García.
- In early February, AACN will issue a new press release announcing the latest data from our 2019 annual survey, including enrollment and graduation trends in PhD programs.

**Engaging Partners:** AACN has been in touch with many potential partners with an interest in working together to address the PhD pipeline issue, including federal agencies, national associations, foundations, and corporate partners among others.

- On January 14, 2020, President/CEO Deb Trautman presented on the PhD Pipeline at the next meeting of the National Advisory Council for Nursing Research, which is convened by the National Institute of Nursing Research.
- At the request of Board Chair Ann Cary, who was appointed to serve on the National Advisory Council on Nursing Education and Practice (NACNEP), Di Fang will present AACN's latest data related to the faculty shortage and the PhD pipeline at the next NACNEP meeting on February 4, 2020. The theme of the meeting is *Preparing Nurse Faculty and Addressing the Shortage of Nurse Faculty and Clinical Preceptors*. Content presented will be incorporated into NACNEP's 17<sup>th</sup> report to Congress.
- AACN will focus some of the work of its existing advisory groups with practice representatives, including the AACN-AONL Advisory Committee and the AACN-COTH Collaboration on strategies to enhance the PhD pipeline.

AACN is proud to lead this effort and is committed to working collaboratively with member schools and external stakeholders to champion the PhD and inspire the next generation of nursing scientists.