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This release is available online [here](#).

Nurses Learn Latest Advances and Celebrate Historic Accomplishments During American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing Conference

Pitman, NJ – Sparked by the pandemic, a wave of health care innovations and nurses' extraordinary accomplishments took center stage at the recent [American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing \(AAACN\) 46th Annual \(Virtual\) Conference](#).

More than 750 nurses registered; those attending the live events acknowledged the impact of COVID-19 with renewed resolve to support each other and use their knowledge and skills to build a safer, stronger health care system for their patients.

"The past year has been as incredible as it was challenging. What was reflected throughout the conference – during the education sessions and personal interactions alike – was that we are taking what we've learned from COVID-19 and tackling the big issues now," AAACN President Kathleen Martinez, MSN, RN, CPN, said. "These include priorities like health care equity, better infection control, and intensified support and safety for all health care professionals."

AAACN structured its virtual conference with expert speakers presenting 25 live education sessions April 8, 13, and 15. There were also seven Zoom networking chat lobbies during those days. Moving forward, attendees have unlimited and extended access via the [Conference Event Page](#) to view sessions they missed and continue their learning experience on their own schedules. In addition, those who missed the live sessions will soon be able to purchase on-demand conference packages.

The education sessions span [ambulatory care nursing practice](#) and are organized in several major categories: clinical, management, leadership, [Care Coordination and Transition Management](#) (CCTM), and [telehealth](#).

Conference Highlights

During her "Welcome and President's Address" on April 15, Martinez praised ambulatory care nurses for their courage during the pandemic.

"All of us in ambulatory care nursing have played such an important role over the past year, seamlessly navigating the chaos to ensure the health and safety of our patients," she said. "During the pandemic, ambulatory care nurses were always present, always available, and provided information, education, recommendations, and direction in a time of misinformation, anxiety, and fear. Your expertise and skills in Care Coordination and Transition Management and telephone triage were paramount."

Martinez also described some of the roles ambulatory care nurses took on during the COVID-19 emergencies.

“Many ambulatory care nurse leaders were tapped to take on unprecedented projects: to open, staff, and run a SARS-COV-2 testing center in an empty storefront. To find a way to keep homeless individuals safe under social distancing restrictions. And when the vaccine at last became available, to organize mass vaccination campaigns in ball parks, stadiums and parking lots. These are things you do not learn in nursing school,” she said.

On April 8, speaker and author Vicki Hess, MSN, RN, CTP, CVPC, delivered the Keynote Address, *“Becoming a Champion of Change: Your Checklist for Success.”* Popular blogger, podcaster, and coach Keith Carlson, BSN, RN, NC-BC, (Nurse Keith) spoke later that day on “Catching Our Collective Breath.”

On April 13, American Nurses Association (ANA) President Earnest Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN, joined 2020-2021 AACN President Anne Jessie, DNP, RN, for the conference Town Hall, “No Turning Back Now: What’s Next for Ambulatory Care Nursing.” Their conversation highlighted the future of ambulatory care nursing and opportunities to enhance leadership, adapt to evolving roles, conduct research, among other topics.

On April 15, actor, educator, and emergency nurse Tim Cunningham, DrPH, RN, FAAN, presented the closing Keynote Address, “To Pivot, Pivot and Then Pivot Some More: How We’re Growing, Shifting, Suffering, and Surfing through the Pandemic.”

Several more [featured speakers](#) presented during the conference and included some of the country’s most respected nurse leaders and experts.

In addition to the education sessions, AACN’s [Special Interest Groups](#) (SIGs) also convened during virtual sessions so the nurses could share information relevant to specific practice areas.

Attendees also enjoyed special events, viewed 50 poster presentations/recorded videos, and interacted with industry representatives in a virtual exhibit hall.

AACN’s annual Silent Auction was held virtually this year and raised [more than \\$4,000](#), with the funds earmarked for scholarships, grants and awards.

New Officers Inducted

Martinez, who is an Infection Prevention and Control Nurse, Children’s Hospital Colorado, Aurora, CO, was inducted during the conference as AACN 2021-2022 president. In this role, she will lead the [AACN Board of Directors \(BOD\)](#) in fulfilling the association’s strategic plan and steering the direction and vision of AACN.

Also inducted to the BOD as directors were Capt. Andrea Petrovanie-Green, MSN, RN, AMB-BC; and Rachel Start, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN.

[View current AACN BOD](#)

Scholarships and Awards

As in previous years, AAACN presented [scholarships and awards](#) to members during the conference. The [2021 award recipients](#) are as follows:

- President's Above and Beyond Award (highest award to AAACN members who exceeded the expectations of their volunteer roles): Jessie Jones-Bell, MSN, Ed, RN, PHN; Laurel More, MS, RN, CPN; and Kitty Shulman, MSN, RN-BC
- Administrative Excellence Award: Cynthia Murray, BN, RN, AMB-BC
- Carol Rutenberg Telephone Triage EBP Project Award: Kendra Sutton, DNP, AMB-BC
- Education Scholarship: Melissa Taylor, BSN, RN

[Learn more about AAACN scholarships and awards](#)

Continued Learning Available

Nurses who attended the conference have access to additional Nursing Continuing Professional Development (NCPD) contact hours in the [AAACN Online Library](#), which can be used for certification and licensure requirements. They are also able to attend the sessions they may have missed during the live broadcasts.

2022 Conference

The [AAACN 47th Annual Conference](#) will be held April 20-22, 2022, at Westgate Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV. Oral abstracts are being accepted through June 30, 2021. Poster abstracts are being accepted through November 15, 2021.

For more information about AAACN, visit www.aaacn.org; call: 1-800-AMB-NURS (1-800-262-6877) or email: aaacn@aaacn.org.

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The [American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing \(AAACN\)](#) is a welcoming, unifying community for registered nurses in all ambulatory care settings. Our mission is to advance the art and science of ambulatory care nursing.