Immediate Past President’s Message

What a thrill it was to be in Sawgrass with advance practice nursing colleagues whose passion is the care of older adults! The celebration of NCGNP’s 25th anniversary was one those in attendance will long remember. The great educational opportunities, the presentation of outstanding research, the call to action on the political affairs front, and the networking among colleagues was unsurpassed! Promises to work together on research, co-write a book, make a job connection, or start a chapter happened at every gathering and should be followed up on so the greater healthcare community can even better realize our strength and important contributions. NCGNP has a legacy of leadership and clinical excellence built through our founders and pioneers that grows stronger each year. Each one of us has the ability to contribute to that legacy. As we embark on our 26th year, I am proud to turn the reigns over to a very capable new President, Anna Treinkman, and pledge as your Immediate Past President to continue working with the Board of Directors, Steering Committee Chairs, Chapter Presidents, and the general members to make this organization even better. It has truly been my pleasure to serve as the President of NCGNP during this very special year. Let’s all promise to meet again at every NCGNP conference so that at our 50th anniversary we can “remember when” together.

My Very Best Regards,
Sharon Roth Maguire, MS, APRN-BC, GNP, Immediate Past President

President’s Message

It is an honor and a privilege to begin my term as President of NCGNP. I want you to know that I take this responsibility very seriously. My vision for NCGNP is that we are the premiere organization for advanced practice nurses caring for older adults. NCGNP not only represents gerontological nurse practitioners but also welcomes adult nurse practitioners, family nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, nurse educators, and nurse researchers who work with older adults. We currently have over 850 members, and it is my goal that we reach 1,000 members by next year. With everything that NCGNP has to offer, I believe this will be easily achieved.

NCGNP recently celebrated its 25th anniversary at the annual conference held in September at the Sawgrass Resort in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL. It was a marvelous conference where we heard the latest updates in advanced clinical practice and offered our first ever certification review course. A monograph, compiled by Norma Small and the Historical Committee, chronicles the proud history of NCGNP and the visionary pioneers who launched this organization 25 years ago. We are truly proud of our legacy and plan to have the Pioneer Monograph available on the NCGNP Web site in the near future. And that is just the beginning...

The Board of Directors and committee chairs are planning many exciting new developments for the members. We know that in this fast paced age of technology, it is more important than ever to have up-to-date, research-based information at our fingertips. NCGNP will be working this year to make continuing education programs available on our Web site.

(continued on page 2)
President’s Message (continued from front page)

As busy professionals, it is frequently difficult to find time to keep abreast of current health affairs and research activities. NCGNP is committed to facilitating member access to what is happening in the political and research arenas. The Health Affairs Committee will be regularly updating the “Regulatory Environment” section of the Web available to members only. The status of bills that affect advanced practice nursing will be posted and e-mailed to members. The Health Affairs and Research Committees also plan to have regular columns in the newsletter.

NCGNP already has formal affiliations with many professional organizations for both networking and advocacy. Many of the members serve as liaisons to professional groups such as the American College of Nurse Practitioners, The American Geriatrics Society, the American Medical Director’s Society, the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, and the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculty. I would like to see us expand our affiliations to include consumer groups. NCGNP is in a prime position to contribute to the growing population of older adults and ensure that they get to live life to its fullest.

We currently have 12 local chapters and there are many more already being planned in areas such as Tennessee, Arizona, Delaware Valley, and North Florida. If you are not a current member, go to www.ncgnp.org and join today. You can check the Web site to see if there is a local chapter in your area. If there isn’t a chapter near you, grab a few colleagues and form one! Networking with other advanced practice nurses in your area is a great way to find jobs and keep abreast of what is happening professionally. Mark your calendars now for the 26th annual conference to be held September 12-16, 2007, in San Diego. The call for abstracts and presentations will be coming soon. Start thinking about running for office or joining a committee. There are so many ways to get involved in this great group. My door is always open. I welcome your ideas, suggestions, and feedback. Please feel free to e-mail me at Anna_D_Treinkman@rush.edu or call the National Office at (866) 355-1392 or (850) 471-7075.

All the best,
Anna Treinkman,
MSN, RN, GNP, President

Member in the Spotlight:
Mary Pat Rapp, DSN, RN

Mary Pat Rapp tells how positive experiences early in life have led to a lifetime career in advanced practice gerontological nursing.

Mary Pat Rapp, DSN, RN, began making home visits to older adult women in Bagley, MN, as a preschooler when her mother allowed her to cross the street on her own. Under the tutelage of Mrs. Jackson, Mrs. Honsted, and Mrs. Dudley, she learned to garden, cook, and embroider all the while appreciating the time, attention, and cookies these women offered her. In high school she lived a short time with her grandmother while her mother recovered from surgery. Given these early positive experiences a career in gerontological nursing was a natural career choice.

Since 1990 and following graduation as a gerontological nurse practitioner (GNP), Dr. Rapp has been on a mission to improve the quality of advanced practice nursing and medical care in nursing facilities. In partnership with her husband, Keith Rapp, MD, the two of them formed Geriatric Associates of America (GAA), a practice group of nurse practitioners (NPs) and physicians whose practices are devoted exclusively to nursing facilities. Without the distractions of an office practice and demands of making daily rounds in the hospital, the providers in GAA are able to devote 100% of their efforts to improving the quality of medical services to nursing facility residents.

The practice model for GAA incorporates collaboration on two levels: resident care and medical direction. Residents benefit from the strengths of both disciplines. Whereas physicians tend to be more focused on the diagnosis and treatment plan, the NP’s approach is more holistic incorporating biological, psychosocial, and professional aspects of care.

(continued on page 3)
Member Services Report

Marianne Shaughnessy, PhD, CRNP
Co-Chair, Member Services Committee

The Member Services Committee recently surveyed chapter presidents to ask about operations of individual chapters across the country. What we found is that state and regional chapters share many commonalities but have customized their structures and meetings to meet the needs of each chapter’s members. Ten chapter presidents returned the survey and reported active chapter membership ranging from 12-66 members. Average attendance at meetings ranges from 10-25 members and meetings are usually held quarterly. Local dues range from $10.00-$30.00 per year. Meetings are usually held with dinner and an educational speaker with chapter business added to the agenda as needed. Continuing education credits are usually awarded at meetings but obtained through NCGNP by only two chapters. The survey suggests that individual chapters are doing well with regular meeting attendance reflecting a healthy membership. From this survey, the Member Services Committee and the Board of Directors discovered that processes to assist chapters in recruitment, retention, providing continuing education credit, and bylaws revisions should be developed and implemented.

The Member Services Committee remains dedicated to serving the needs of national and local members. It has been a pleasure serving as Chair of this committee for the past three years. I am pleased to announce that Valerie Matthiesen, DNSc, RN, APRN,BC, former president of the Chicago Chapter, will be taking over as the new Member Services Chair in 2006-2007. Please contact Valerie with any questions, comments, or suggestions at matthiesenv@wscn.edu

Nominating Committee

Lois C. Hamel, PhD, NP-C
Chair, Nominating Committee
lois.hamel@maine.edu

THANKS TO ALL WHO RAN AS CANDIDATES FOR THE 2006 NCGNP BALLOT!

The Board of Directors for 2006-2007 are

PRESIDENT — Anna Treinkman, MSN, RN, GNP
PRESIDENT ELECT — Lynn Chilton, DNS, RN, GNP-BC
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT — Sharon Roth Maguire, MS, APRN-BC, GNP
SECRETARY — Charlotte Kelley, MSN, RN, GNP, ARNP
TREASURER (RETURNING) — Debra Bakerjian, PhD, MSN, FNP
BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE — Sandra Kamp, APN, GNP

(continued on page 4)

Member in the Spotlight (continued from page 2)

and cultural issues with an eye on improving or maintaining function or, when appropriate, comfort in dying. Federal rules and regulations requiring that the medical director be a physician have not stopped GAA from developing a model for NP collaboration on medical direction. The NP model for collaboration on medical direction has documented success in improving the quality indicators in the nursing facilities that have adopted the model.

In 1996, Dr. Rapp joined the faculty at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston and is currently the track director of the GNP program. Students may complete the GNP program as generic gerontology students, dual-track students with family or adult NP preparation, or obtain a post-master’s certificate. The post-master’s certificate was created as an accessible online program geared toward the experienced NP who recognizes the need for specialty education in geriatrics. Flexibility in options of completion, either as continuing education or academic credit, facilitate documentation of appropriate didactic educational training to meet eligibility to sit for the GNP certification exam.

Dr. Rapp is a past-president of NCGNP serving on the Board from 2000-2002. In 2002 she was honored by NCGNP with an Award of Excellence for her “exemplary leadership in the growth of the organization, advanced practice nurses, and the health care for older adults.” Dr. Rapp completed her doctoral studies at UT-Houston in May 2006 where she was awarded a John A. Hartford Foundation Building Academic Geriatric Capacity pre-doctoral scholarship. Upon graduation she was named the Outstanding Doctoral Student by the Zeta Pi chapter of Sigma Theta Tau. Most recently the Texas Nurses Association (TNA) honored her as the Clinical Practice Leader for 2006. She is an active member of NCGNP serving as the Web site coordinator and the TNA where she serves on the Competence Committee and the Nurse Friendly (NF) Nursing Facility Criteria Task Force. As the first GNP to establish a NF practice in Houston, TX, Dr. Rapp’s primary mission remains the same — improving advanced practice nursing and medical care to institutionalized older adults.
Nominating Committee (continued)

NCGNP has many committees such as Member Services, Education, Practice, Health Affairs, and Research. A chairperson for each committee is appointed by the Board of Directors, and the chairpersons comprise the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee reports to the Board about the activities of the committees either through the Board liaison or at joint Steering Committee/Board meetings. The exception is the Nominating Committee because its members are elected by NCGNP members. For a full listing and contact information of the Board and Steering Committee members, please go to the NCGNP Web site (www.ncgnp.org).

The three Nominating Committee vacancies were filled at this year’s business meeting and election. The person who attains the most votes becomes the Nominating Committee Chair and serves for two years. The other two members of the Nominating Committee serve a one-year term. Lois C. Hamel, PhD, APRN,BC, is the newly-appointed Chair. The other two members of the Nominating Committee are Valerie Matthiesen, DNSc, RN, APRN,BC, and Joyce Varner, MSN, GNP-C, GCNS. The Nominating Committee is responsible for filling the slate for Board vacancies to be voted on at the September 2007 conference in San Diego.

For 2007, the Nominating Committee plans to recruit candidates for office from the NCGNP membership and will also accept self-nominations. The positions to be filled are President Elect, which is a 3-year commitment; Treasurer, a 2-year commitment; and three Nominating Committee members. For a description of duties, contact a member of the Nominating Committee or a Board member. The goal of the Nominating Committee is to present a selection of candidates for each vacancy. For each slot, we would like to have four candidates with varied skill levels, educational preparation, and geographical distribution.

Here is a little information about the 2006-2007 Nominating Committee:

Joyce M. Varner, MSN, RN, GNP-C, GCNS, is a Clinical Assistant Professor in Adult Health Nursing and an Instructor in the Advanced Gerontological/Diabetes Manager Nursing program. She teaches at the University of South Alabama, Mobile. Her e-mail address is jvarner@usouthal.edu

Valerie Matthiesen, DNSc, RN, APRN,BC, is a Professor and Associate Dean Graduate Program and Research at West Suburban College of Nursing, Oak Park, IL. Her e-mail address is valerie.matthiesen@wscn.edu

Lois C. Hamel, Chair, PhD, APRN,BC, teaches and supervises the gerontological clinical components of the NP program at the University of Southern Maine, Portland. Lois received the 2006 NCGNP Excellence in Community Service Award. Her e-mail address is lois.hamel@maine.edu

Please start thinking now about getting involved in NCGNP by running for office in 2007. You may contact any member of the Nominating Committee for more information or view the 2007 Call for Nominations at www.ncgnp.org.

NCGNP Foundation

Erik Edward Joh, PA
NCGNP Foundation Director
Boynton Beach, FL

Every person and every organization wants to leave a legacy...be that a financial legacy or a legacy of leadership, a legacy of caring, or a legacy of elevating the skills of your profession.

This organization is no different. At your 25th anniversary, it is fitting to note that you are creating that legacy of nursing leadership, a legacy of advocating, and, more importantly, implementing improvements to nursing skills and patient care.

For 25 years you have been weaving the fabric of this organization through your continuing education seminars, the networking among your members, and the leadership you have demonstrated both in your profession and outside of nursing.

Now, as a part of the cloth which is the fabric of NCGNP, we add another thread to this weave: your Foundation.

Each one of you now has the personal opportunity of leaving a personal legacy for the next generation of gerontological nurses and for patient care through your Foundation.

Seven of you, so far, have elected to become founding members of your Foundation. I hope others of you will do the same before the end of this calendar year. Many more of you participated in the first fun fundraiser: the golf tournament. There will be more opportunities coming to enable you to participate with the Foundation, not only with your treasure but also with your time and talent.

This past year we have organized the Foundation, gone through many of the legal intricacies to form the corporation, and are ready to file our application with the IRS for public charity status.

Now is the time to invite you to join the Foundation and share your time and talent by volunteering to become a part of one of the first of three committees to be established: Financial Development (e.g., fundraising, public relations, and strategic planning).

Please contact Barbara Phillips (baphill@amgen.com), Barbara Resnick (barbresnick@aol.com), or Mary Pat Rapp (mprapp75@aol.com) and express your willingness to join in...before they come to you!

Editor’s note: The seven founding members of the NCGNP Foundation include one chapter — the Chicagoland Chapter.
Update Member Information

Is your member contact information updated in the database? Did you know that you can log on at the NCGNP Web site (www.ncgnp.org) to check the current contact information that is currently on file for you? Please update your e-mail address and mailing information to ensure you are receiving all mailings and e-mails that are going out to current members. You can either log onto the Web site with your e-mail address and password or contact the National Office at (866) 355-1392, (850) 471-7075, or by e-mail at ncgnp@puetzamc.com to update your information with a National Office staff representative.

Notice of Intent to Revise Bylaws

The NCGNP bylaws have been posted on the NCGNP Web site for review and comment prior to being presented to the membership for a vote. To view the proposed changes please log on to www.ncgnp.org and click on the button that says “Bylaws Revisions and Comments.” As you review the bylaws, you are invited to forward your comments of the proposed bylaws changes to the NCGNP National Office by Monday, January 15, 2006. The Board will review the comments at its January Board meeting, and the final bylaws revisions will be posted on the Web site for a vote February 1-15, 2006.

End-of-Life (EOL) Special Interest Group (SIG)

On September 30, 2006, the End-of-Life Special Interest Group (EOL SIG) gathered informally around the pool at the NCGNP Conference in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL. The group had met initially at the 2004 NCGNP Conference in Phoenix. Representing diverse roles and positions, about 12 individuals told of joys and challenges in their commitment to help patients experience a good death. One person shared information about new programs such as a federally funded demonstration “transitions” program in which patients could be followed across settings as they decline. Another national hospice administrator and GNP clarified that local hospices have much autonomy in deciding which services to pay for such as physical therapy, palliative radiation, or even short-term total parenteral nutrition, as they tailor plans to the individuals’ needs and circumstances.

Everyone agreed that we would like to continue as a SIG, so I presented this request at the business meeting. The Board was open to this suggestion and will discuss providing a structure for supporting such groups. Other NCGNP members expressed an interest in joining this SIG. Sandi Petersen (sandinurse2000@yahoo.com) graciously agreed to construct an online method for those interested in EOL care to collaborate and for members of the SIG to express our hopes, goals, and structure for the group. Contact Sandi if you want to join the EOL SIG.

Martha L. Henderson, GNP
Convener

NCGNP Foundation Celebrates Its Inaugural Year

Sharon Roth Maguire, MS, APRN-BC, GNP
NCGNP Immediate Past President

At NCGNP’s 25th Anniversary Conference, the NCGNP Foundation had a strong presence. The Foundation held its first major fundraiser at the Sawgrass Marriott Resort & Spa in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, in conjunction with the annual conference and business meeting of NCGNP. The Foundation Golf Tournament, co-chaired by MJ Henderson and Sam Daniels, was enjoyed by all and raised funds that will help the Foundation support NCGNP and its members through scholarships, research grants, and other venues.

This year the Foundation underwrote the Research Awards presented at the annual conference. Erik Joh, NCGNP Foundation Director, addressed members at the business meeting and encouraged all present to consider contributing to the legacy of NCGNP by becoming charter members of the Foundation. Charter membership is available until the end of 2006 and requires a donation of $1,000.00. Foundation Board members include NCGNP Past Presidents Barbara Phillips, Barb Resnick, and Mary Pat Rapp. Three key chairpersons were announced at the conference and include NCGNP Past Presidents Virginia Lee Cora-Strategic Planning, MJ Henderson-Fundraising, and Sharon Roth Maguire-Public Relations.
Northern California Chapter

Trudy Keltz, GNP, Redwood City, CA

The new President of the Northern California Chapter is Jennifer Serafin who took over early when Robin Bon Fredericks needed to step down. We had a joint meeting with the California Association of Nurse Practitioners (CANP) on October 18 in Emeryville, CA, and on November 4, a potluck, continuing education, and business meeting took place. We discussed the 2007 meeting schedule and planned our continuing education day for 2007. Volunteers are needed for the Planning Committee.

The Board of NCGNP has approved and posted our information sheet, *Artificial Nutrition & Hydration for the Person with Dementia.* The Northern California Chapter developed this sheet to help begin discussions with families of patients with end stage dementia who are thinking about tube feeding. It is posted on the NCGNP Web site for all members to use. You can access it by going to www.ncgnp.org, click on State Chapters, then click on Chapter News & Current Activities under California, Northern.

Great Lakes Chapter

Kathryn Cosgrove, MS, APRN-BC, Taylor, MI

The Great Lakes Chapter NCGNP met September 14, 2006, at the Fox and Hounds Restaurant in Bloomfield Hills, MI. The meeting was sponsored by Smith and Nephew, Inc. Carol Schlather, RN, CWCN, spoke about *Wound Bed Preparation and Time Principles for Healing.* The meeting was well attended. Our next meeting is December 7, 2006, at 6:00 p.m. at Maggiano’s Little Italy restaurant in Troy, MI. Mahalakshmi Honsage, MD, will speak about osteoporosis. A festive time is planned.

Michigan Senate House Bill 1245, Right to Write, did not get enough votes in the Health Policy Committee. It was too controversial for an election year, so we will start over again next year. Currently in the state of Michigan, prescriptive authority is delegated by a physician. Great Lakes NCGNP is a legislative chapter of the Michigan Council of Nurse Practitioners (MICNP) and has a representative on MICNP’s Public Policy Committee.

Our chapter meets quarterly in December, March, June, and September. New members are welcome. Please contact Kathryn Cosgrove, MS, APRN-BC at klcosgrove@earthlink.net for more information.

Ohio Chapter

Evelyn Duffy, ND, APRN,BC, Past President, Ohio Chapter

The Ohio Chapter of NCGNP, Ohio Gerontological Nurse Practitioners (OGNP), had a successful year planning and executing a joint conference with the Ohio chapters of American Medical Directors Association (AMDA), The American Geriatrics Society (AGS), and American Society of Consultant Pharmacists (ASCP). *Together We Make a Difference: Improving Care for Older Adults,* held in Columbus, OH, August 4-6, attracted nurse practitioners working with older adults in long term care from around the state. A total of 14.1 contact hours including 6.6 pharmacy hours were approved by the NCGNP Approver Unit. This joint meeting was the first for Ohio and possibly the nation. It received excellent support from pharmaceutical and equipment reps and provided the chapter a means of earning money to support its work. The collaboration is a work in progress, but all parties are committed to continuing the effort and working toward a truly interdisciplinary conference.

New officers of the OGNP include Alicia Wolf, President; Phyllis Atkinson, Treasurer; Sarah Gedeon, Secretary; Kathy Ferriell, Membership Chair: Evelyn Duffy, Past President.

Texas GNP Chapter (Lone Star)

Natalie Garry, BSN, CS, GNP, Dallas, TX

Teddy Talk

Ooooh, how I enjoyed my Florida work/vacation! The food was yummy and oh, those Bloody Marys! Did you see the alligator?

Perhaps you had the opportunity to meet me at the conference. I am “Teddy, GNP” who was lucky enough to be carried around by my Lone Star Chapter friends. You see, I am their new mascot. My big project following the conference is to put together a PowerPoint presentation about my experience at NCGNP so that others from our chapter will be encouraged to join us next year.

Now, this being my first conference, well, it was a whirlwind time from breakfast on Thursday to the last dance on Saturday. My brain is full of “stuff I can’t remember” (dementia); treatment from Gila monster spit (Bieta for diabetes); ways to keep them walking (PD); improvements in managing CHF (pro-BNP); and how to run my business and even better ways to bill for it—all done in the context of nurses who really, really care for older adults and shared their research to prove it. Plus, I picked up some mighty fine pens and enough sponsor sticky notes to last a lifetime. A special thanks to Johnson & Johnson for my new lab coat.

There was even time for me to lounge on the beach and sunbathe, and I even got in a little fishing. The most exciting adventure was being kidnapped by the Wisconsin Chapter (those cheese heads!). All together it was a great adventure for me and my colleagues (Eric, Natalie, Joyce, Kathy, and Patsy). I hope you won’t miss meeting me next year. I plan to have a new wardrobe to wear in San Diego. See you there....
Looking for a Chapter Near You?

California (Northern)
Jennifer Serafin (jserafin@jhsf.org)
Florida (Southern)
Kathleen Jett (kjett@fau.edu)
Illinois (Chicago)
Carla Tozer (cmttozer@gmail.com)
Maryland (Baltimore)
Rosemary Smith-LaMacchia (mcgnp@yahoo.com)
Massachusetts (New England)
Anne Marie Bourque (ambourque@verizon.net)
Michigan (Great Lakes)
Phil Rupp (puirrup@umich.edu)
New York (Rochester)
Pat Federico-Fields (pfedfields@yahoo.com)
Triad (North Carolina)
Lynn Chilton (lchilto@bellsouth.net)
Ohio
Evelyn Duffy (evelyn.duffy@case.edu)
Texas (Gulf Coast)
Elizabeth Godlove (elzgdl@earthlink.net)
Texas (Lone Star)
Joyce Danter (jhdanter@lonestargnp.com)
Wisconsin (Southeast)
Linda Culhane (lculhane@sbcglobal.net)

Chapters in Formation

Contact One Today!

Florida (North)
Lolita Massengill (lmassen@bellsouth.net)
Mississippi
Virginia Lee Cora (vcora@jam.rr.com)
Tennessee (Nashville)
Jennifer Kim (Jennifer.kim@vanderbilt.edu)

Interested in Starting a Chapter?

Contact NCGNP Chapter Services Specialist, Debbie Blanchard, at (866) 355-1392, (850) 471-7075, or e-mail her at dkblanchard@puetzamc.com

2006 NCGNP Award Winners

2006 NCGNP Awards for Excellence  Lisa Byrd, PhD, CFNP, Chair, Research Committee

This year, NCGNP offered excellence awards to members. We honored the recipients and celebrated their accomplishments at the Awards Dinner, September 29th, at the annual conference held in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL. Four nurses were honored:

Excellence in Clinical Practice Award was presented to Lolita Massengill, MN, ARNP-BC. This award recognizes Lolita’s demonstration of commitment to geriatric clinical practice through her private practice providing primary health care in long term care as well as her practice as a consultant. She consistently demonstrates advocacy for patients, nurses, and the long term care industry. Lolita established and maintains the Northeast Florida Gerontological Nurse Practitioner’s Group, represents the mayor’s office for Nurse Practitioner Week, and lobbies for accessible and affordable health care.

Excellence in Leadership Award honored Jenice Guzman, APRN,BC. This award recognizes her demonstration of commitment to geriatrics through direct care, education, research, and her advocacy for geriatric care and education. Jenice has led a number of projects at the Veteran’s Administration where she practices in Los Angeles. She takes a team approach to solving problems. One example is an initiative to prevent further injury to geriatric patients through a post fall events program. She also won the prestigious 2005 VHA Mark Walcott Award for Excellence in Clinical Delivery.

Excellence in Community Service Award celebrated Lois Hamel, PhD, APRN-BC. This award recognizes her for demonstrating a commitment to service in the community through her 25 years of offering free mobile screening which she worked to improve by upgrading written materials and developing a follow-up plan of care for identified problems. She is also seeking grants to pay the nurses assisting with the screenings. She has written articles concerning geriatric education for her local newspaper and for nursing journals. She serves as the Maine Director for Family Health and Hearing Committee and has worked with Medicare officials in Washington, DC, on the Medigrange event, in which NP students help elders enroll in Medicare.

Excellence in Education Award recognized Laurie Kennedy-Malone, PhD, APRN-BC, FAANP, FAGHE. This award honors her for her involvement in teaching and promoting gerontological nurse practitioner curriculum development and revisions while serving as the program director for this program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She has been responsible for a great influx of ANP/GNP students at the university and served as a great resource in helping initiate the NC Triad Chapter of NCGNP. She has written several books, published in a multitude of journals, presented at regional and national events, chaired over 60 advanced nursing projects, and pursued grants to focus on older adults and their care.

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2006 NCGNP Award Winners (continued from page 8)

2006 NCGNP Awards for Excellence

These nurses demonstrate excellence in practice in the nursing profession and in NCGNP. We are honored to have such esteemed members and are in awe of all of their accomplishments. Although we did not have a recipient for the Research Award, we know there are researchers within the members who have the qualities we seek. We look forward to continuing to honor members who demonstrate excellence.

From The Research Committee  Lisa Byrd, PhD, CFNP, Chair, Research Committee

Research this year for our annual conference was superb. The level of research and presentations has really stepped up this year, and we heard about it from members. Research began with a pre-conference workshop. There were 40 attendees and many lively discussions. The oral presentations during the conference were fantastic, and the poster sessions were informative and impressive.

Oral Presentation Winners:

1st place — Sensory Impairment and Associated Conditions in LTC Elders presented by Pamela Cacchione whose team also included Suwattana Kumsik and L. Willoughby

2nd place — Building a Safety Network for Skilled Nursing Home Patients presented by Brenda Bergman-Evans

3rd place — The Utilization of Nurse Practitioners: A Comparison with Physicians presented by Debra Bakerjian

Poster Presentation Winners:

1st place — Relationship of Urinary Tract Infections and Falls in a Nursing Home Population presented by Jacqueline Rhoads and Andrea Clayman

2nd place — The Nursing Home Service Agreement presented by Laura Allen whose team included Brenda Anderson, Barb Baier, Kimberly Giles, Laure Maki, and Lucinda Walker

3rd place — Challenges to Effective Treatment in Elderly Patients in Chronic Pain: Case Studies presented by Michaelene Jansen

Thanks to all of the Research Committee members and to all who attended and shared in this exchange of knowledge from the members. We look forward to bringing more research to next year’s conference and to sharing with you the ideas and expertise from the members of NCGNP. Please consider presenting next year and watch for the Call for Abstracts in early 2007.

Hawaiian Nurse, Roxanne Rowe Receives Suzanna Valerie Scholarship  Valisa Saunders, MN, APRN, GNP, Honolulu, HI

Roxanne Rowe, MS, APRN, GNP, of Hilo, HI, was selected to receive a travel scholarship for the NCGNP Annual Conference in the name of Suzanna Valerie, MS, GNP, of Volcano, HI. Roxie was present at the NCGNP 25th Anniversary Conference celebration in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, on September 29, 2006, to receive the award and a Hawaiian Haku lei.

Roxanne Rowe was selected for the scholarship for her excellence in graduate studies and contributions to the community. Ms. Rowe graduated from the University of Hawaii, Manoa, in December 2005 with her master’s degree in nursing in the Nurse Practitioner Program, Gerontological Nurse Practitioner track. She currently works in home health for the Veteran’s Administration in Hilo.

The scholarship was a donation from the family of Emmett Cahill in appreciation of Suzanna Valerie’s pioneer work in the Volcano and Hilo areas since 1997 when she graduated from the University of Hawaii GNP program. Ms. Valerie, dually GNP and FNP certified, was the first NP and only healthcare provider in Volcano Village (population 1,400) near the summit of Kilauea Volcano for many years. Suzanna made medical home visits to Mr. Cahill’s wife while he cared for her until her death. Suzanna later cared for Mr. Cahill until his death in 2004 at the age of 90.

Emmett Anthony Cahill was the author of several books on Hawaiian history and an activist in social causes. Cahill is best known for his books including Yesterday at Kalaupapa, relating 125 years of the leprosy settlement on Molokai, as well as a history of Hawaiian postage stamps, and a biography of the early Hawaiian settler, John Young, illustrated by artist, Herb Kane. He pushed to make Kalaupapa a national park which he accomplished with the aid of the late, U.S. Representative Patsy Mink.

Note: Roxanne is wearing a Haku lei made of statice, baby’s breath, carnation buds, hydrangea, berries, leather leaf ferns, tree ferns, and many yards of raffia. This is not the usual flora used in traditional Haku lei, but anything that is sturdy can be used. This was made by Valisa Saunders, MN, APRN, GNP, NCGNP member.
Influenza Vaccination Rates for Nurses Need a Boost

With all the news coverage in the last few years of people scrambling to find a flu shot, it is interesting to note that not everyone recommended for annual vaccination and able to access it chooses to do so. Surprisingly, one such group that avoids flu shots are the people administering the vaccines. In fact, only 40% of all healthcare workers were vaccinated in 2003 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2004a).

Healthcare professionals — and nurses in particular — are key to preventing the spread of influenza, a debilitating and highly contagious respiratory infection. It is caused by a virus and leads to an average of approximately 200,000 hospitalizations and 36,000 deaths in the U.S. each year (CDC, 2004b). Because of their frequent and direct patient contact, nurses can spread the virus to patients in their care (National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, 2004). This is problematic for the many patients at high risk for influenza-related complications that could lead to hospitalizations and even death. Influenza can also be spread from one healthcare worker to another or from patient to healthcare worker. In an era of nursing shortages, understaffing, and mandatory overtime, nurses do not want to burden their co-workers by taking sick days related to something as easily preventable as influenza.

The influenza vaccine remains the best way for nurses to protect themselves, their families, and the patients in their care during the annual influenza epidemic. An annual intramuscular vaccination, the influenza vaccine is one of few immunizations that is recommended for all healthcare professionals regardless of any special conditions such as pregnancy, HIV infection, severe immunosuppression, renal failure, asplenia, diabetes, and alcoholism/alcoholic cirrhosis (CDC, 2003). Another option for most healthcare providers is the live intranasal influenza vaccine. This live vaccine is approved for use by healthy persons 5-49 years of age who are not pregnant and do not provide care for severely immune-compromised persons requiring care in a protected environment.

Since 1984, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) have recommended that healthcare professionals inclusive of physicians, nurses, and other staff who work directly with patients receive an annual influenza vaccination. Because the vaccine is altered nearly every year to match the circulating strain and because immunity from the vaccine wanes over time, the vaccine must be given each year — ideally in October or November.

Vaccine Myths Abound

Despite the established benefits of the influenza vaccine, however, several misconceptions exist in the nursing community. The most common myth is that the influenza vaccine can actually cause influenza. In reality, the vaccine cannot cause influenza. Some nurses also mistakenly believe that they are automatically immune to influenza or have stronger immune systems merely because they work around sick people every day. Because influenza viruses are constantly changing, past exposure to influenza will not provide protection against newly emerged strains.

Yet another misconception is that the side effects of the vaccine are worse than getting influenza itself. The truth is that (continued on page 10)
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the most serious side effect is an allergic reaction in people who have a severe allergy to eggs (the vaccine viruses are grown in eggs). For this reason, the influenza vaccination is contraindicated for persons with an egg allergy. The most common side effects are redness at the injection site and a sore arm. These symptoms are mild and resolve in 1-2 days.

Finally, some people might argue that because the influenza vaccine is not 100% effective (it is 70-90% effective in healthy adults), they will get influenza anyway. Even if the vaccine does not prevent all individuals from getting influenza, they are still likely to be far less sick than they would have been without the shot. The vaccine also greatly reduces the chance of hospitalization and death. People at greatest risk for influenza-related complications include people 65 years and older, residents of nursing homes and other chronic care facilities, people with chronic pulmonary or cardiovascular conditions, people with diabetes mellitus, and children less than two years of age.

Influenza 101

Although influenza is primarily spread by droplet transmission, the virus can also live on objects such as doorknobs, telephone receivers, utensils and food trays, beds, and medical equipment for possibly up to one day. Some people infected with influenza may not develop symptoms at all but may be infectious to others. For infected persons who do develop symptoms, they can be contagious the day before they get symptoms. Nurses can transmit the virus even before they realize they are infected. The period of greatest contagion is during the first three days of illness and can last for 5-7 days in otherwise healthy adults.

Influenza usually starts suddenly and may include the following symptoms:

- Fever (usually high)
- Headache
- Tiredness (can be extreme)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Body aches

Diarrhea and vomiting also can occur infrequently but are more common in children.

General treatment for influenza includes bed rest, drinking plenty of fluids, and taking over-the-counter medicines such as acetaminophen. Children suspected of having influenza should not be given aspirin as this may increase the risk of a complication known as Reye’s syndrome. In addition, there are several prescription antiviral medicines (such as amantadine, rimantadine, and oseltamivir) that can help to prevent influenza infection and, when used within the first 48 hours of illness, can reduce duration and severity of the influenza illness. Some persons infected with influenza may also need antibiotics if the healthcare provider suspects a secondary or concomitant bacterial infection.

Nurses have long played a key role in preventing much influenza-related morbidity and mortality by ensuring that at-risk patients, particularly elderly patients and young children, are vaccinated against influenza every year. The time is long overdue for nurses to take care of themselves as well and protect against the influenza virus by getting a vaccination.

For more information about influenza and the influenza vaccine, visit www.cdc.gov/flu or call 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).

References


An Editor is being sought for *The NCGNP Newsletter*. This individual will be primarily responsible for ensuring the content in the newsletter meets the needs of NCGNP members. This individual will be expected to contribute to the newsletter and encourage others to contribute as well. Staff assistance for editing and contacting individuals as the Editor identifies will be available. The Newsletter Editor will report to the NCGNP Board of Directors.

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The Editor of *The NCGNP Newsletter* performs the following tasks:

1. Works with staff to develop a production schedule for the year and presents the schedule to the Board as part of the annual report.
2. Collaborates with staff regarding publication format, cover design, and number of pages per issue.
3. Identifies individuals to submit columns to *The NCGNP Newsletter*.
4. Develops ongoing plans and procedures for newsletter contributions.
5. Writes columns for *The NCGNP Newsletter* as needed.
6. Maintains regular communication with Board members as necessary.
7. Reviews and approves all content in *The NCGNP Newsletter*.

The Editor of *The NCGNP Newsletter* will be appointed to a one-year term renewable up to three years.

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5. Prefer candidates with current gerontological practice focus.

Are you interested? Submit a letter of interest and a CV by February 12, 2007, to:

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