Excellence
Integrity
Innovation
Collaboration
Leadership
Compassion

Igniting
OUR PASSION
TO LEAD

ACNL
Association of California Nurse Leaders

2013 ANNUAL REPORT
Igniting Our Passion to Lead!

Dear ACNL Members and Colleagues,

It has been an honor and delight to serve as your 2013 ACNL President! ACNL is the organization for nurse leaders in California. Throughout the year, I have had the privilege of experiencing firsthand how passionate and caring our ACNL members are—working diligently to develop nurse leaders, advance professional practice and influence health policy, while making quality health care and patient safety a priority.

ACNL: A Powerful Voice for Nurse Leaders!

Our members are dynamic participants, not only in the work of ACNL, but also as leaders in organizations impacting nursing and health care on local, state and national levels. As ACNL President, I am a voting member of the California Hospital Association’s Board of Directors. Collaborating with leaders in health care through CHA has been an enlightening and energizing experience. I have had tremendous opportunities to share nursing issues and initiatives with CHA Board members and provide a voice for nurse leaders at this influential table.

ACNL members continue to be actively involved in the work of the California Action Coalition, California Institute for Nursing and Health Care, Collaborative Alliance for Nursing Outcomes (CALNOC), CHA’s Medication Safety Committee, Californians for Patient Care and advisory committees to the California Board of Registered Nursing. Our strong partnership with academia continues through our work with the California Association of Colleges of Nursing (CACN) and the California Nursing Students’ Association (CNSA). The development of the Quad Council, composed of ACNL, CACN, the American Nurses Association California (ANA/C) and the California Organization of Associate Degree Nursing Program Directors (COADN), provides a forum for collaboration as we tackle issues in nursing, health care and academia together.

In 2013, we focused a great deal of effort in developing new ACNL chapters after the Hospital Association of Southern California/Nursing Leadership Council transitioned from a membership organization to an advisory council. The six newly formed ACNL chapters are: Ventura/Santa Barbara, San Gabriel Valley, Los Angeles/Coastal, San Fernando Valley, Orange County/Long Beach and Inland Empire. To help launch these chapters and provide support for other ACNL chapters, we created a liaison position on the Board of Directors. In 2013, Mary Wickman, Board Member-South, capably filled this role, and along with the Member Services Committee has provided excellent support to newly formed and existing ACNL chapters.

Other ACNL chapters across the state are: San Francisco/Marin, East Bay, South Bay, North Central, Central Coast, Far North, Central San Joaquin Valley, Kern County and San Diego. We now have a total of 16 ACNL chapters within our state and I have had the pleasure of visiting several of them. To stay connected with the work of the chapters and keep them updated on ACNL programs and plans, we hosted quarterly conference calls between the Member Services Committee and chapter leaders. Through chapter involvement, ACNL members positively impact their local communities and provide a two-way communication conduit for sharing issues at the local and state levels.

Together We Make a Difference!

2013 has been an incredible year as we worked collaboratively to advance the mission and vision of ACNL. Our direction and goals for the year were set when our Strategic Planning Committee refined the 2012-2014 Strategic Plan to meet the evolving needs of nurse leaders. Much of the work and accomplishments of ACNL are actualized through our committees. Here are some of our achievements:

On New Year’s Day 2013, nurses throughout the world watched with pride as the first float honoring nursing was part of the Rose Parade. Nurses and supporters generously made contributions to fund the float. When it was determined that donations exceeded float costs, the Bare Root Board of Directors, who spearheaded the float project, created the Nurses’ Float Scholarship Fund, an endowed scholarship fund to be administered by ACNL through our Philanthropic, Scholarship and Awards Committee. The first annual Nurses’ Float Scholarship will be awarded at the 2014 Annual Conference.
The Communications/Voice Committee provided direction for ACNL’s new program: Using Your Voice to Influence Change, which utilizes simulation to help nurse leaders improve their high performance communication skills. The Voice team also collaborated with the Leadership Development Committee to bring back ACNL’s Education Cruise. While relaxing on a four-day cruise, ACNL members examined and discussed health care reform and primary care access issues.

The Quality and Patient Safety Committee developed several strategies to share best practices in quality and patient safety with members, including two webinars, numerous articles in DirectLink and development of Hot Topics in Patient Safety newsletters. The team also worked diligently to update the comprehensive resource, the Quality and Patient Safety Primer.

In 2013, we re-established the Research Committee as a stand-alone committee. Formerly a workgroup of the Nurse Leadership Development Committee, the team has created and is now testing a psychometric instrument to measure the effectiveness of ACNL’s Foundation for Leadership Excellence program. Feedback from Foundations participants has always been excellent, but this valuable tool will help us objectively quantify the value of this course.

Speaking of Foundations, 2013 marked the 10th year of this program for emerging and aspiring nurse leaders. We held two well-attended courses this year and added several new faculty members to the program. To provide additional preparation and guidance for course participants in 2014, the Foundations program will expand from four to five days.

I’m also pleased to announce that ACNL has published its first book, Surviving and Thriving: Your 1st Job as an RN. Authored by ACNL CEO Patricia McFarland and consultant Brenda Brozek, Surviving and Thriving was created to help nursing students and new graduate RNs effectively transition to their roles as professional nurses. More than two years in the making, the book also contains inspirational stories from several ACNL members. Surviving and Thriving is an excellent resource for nursing schools and residency programs. Pick up a copy of Surviving and Thriving at ACNL’s Annual Conference or through the ACNL website.

These are just a few of ACNL’s accomplishments in 2013. I invite you to read this Annual Report and learn more about the achievements of our organization and committees over the past year.

Igniting Our Passion to Lead

The Affordable Care Act will provide access to health care for over 32 million people in 2014. It’s imperative that we develop effective strategies to meet the upcoming demands for primary care services. We will need to create a new model of primary care delivery that covers the birth to end of life continuum, and centers around the patient and family. Recommendations must take into account the financial, staffing and facility resources needed for this new delivery system. Traditional hospitals must partner with community organizations to provide the infrastructure needed to deliver quality care.

Nursing must be at the forefront when these important decisions are made. Encourage colleagues to join ACNL and share in our important work. As you Ignite Your Passion to Lead—keep the fire burning brightly as we enter this exciting phase of nursing and health care.

2013 has truly been an exceptional year. It takes all of us working together to make a difference!

I wish to especially thank all committee chairs, co-chairs and committee members for their many accomplishments. I admire your tenacity and passion in achieving the outstanding work to further our mission, vision and values in 2013.

A special thank you to our ACNL staff for their hard work and assistance throughout the year. I would also like to acknowledge Patricia McFarland for her dedication, support and longevity in continuously moving ACNL to the forefront of our nursing profession.

A special thank you to our outstanding 2013 Board of Directors for your thoughtful leadership, hard work, innovative ideas and passion over the past year.

I would like to thank my dedicated interdisciplinary leadership team at San Gabriel Valley Medical Center, who continues to provide excellent leadership while I travel to carry out the work of ACNL.

And, I send a heartfelt thank you to our ACNL members for your support and friendship in 2013!
ACNL: Positioning Nurse Leaders at the Forefront of Change

As we reflect on the past year, we can look back with pride knowing our work continues to position nursing leadership at the forefront of health care reform and the delivery of safe, quality patient care. As we work together to make a difference, we Ignite Our Passion to Lead!

Through this Annual Report, it is our pleasure to share with you ACNL’s activities over the past 12 months that have increased our voice and influence, supported the development of nurse leaders at all levels, promoted evidence-based practice and engaged our membership. In 2013, many nurse leaders were actively involved in the work of ACNL through committee and chapter participation. Our members are also major contributors to the work of other important nursing and health care organizations throughout the state.

Besides using our voices at tables where health care decisions are made, ACNL members offered their opinions through surveys we conducted in 2013. In addition, nurse researchers sought the insights of nurse leaders through other important surveys that ACNL supported.

More than 25 percent of our membership responded to ACNL’s biennial member survey conducted in October. Analysis of survey results provides opportunities to improve services and understand the direction members believe we must take to ensure that ACNL remains the premiere professional organization for California nurse leaders.

Respondents overwhelmingly rated networking, information and resources, and educational programs as their primary reasons for belonging to ACNL. This reinforces our goals of developing new regional chapters and creating strategies to effectively align the chapters with ACNL. Six new chapters were formed this past year, helping to expand not only our sphere of influence, but to provide opportunities for members to network with colleagues, share information and best practices, and discuss critical issues impacting their practice, communities and regions.

In addition to our very successful 2013 Annual Conference with over 500 attendees, ACNL offered several educational events this past year. These included two successful Foundation for Leadership Excellence programs, three outstanding free webinars and a high performance communication course utilizing simulation. And, back by popular demand—the fall educational cruise. Each of these programs was rated very highly by participants.

Feedback from members regarding ACNL communication strategies was of particular interest to our staff, Board and the Communications/Voice Committee. On the survey, nearly 100 percent of our members ranked ACNL’s email blasts as our most effective form of electronic communication. While we are encouraged that survey respondents find our email blasts extremely valuable, we must ask ourselves if this type of communication is the most effective for younger nurse leaders, since 60 percent of survey respondents were in the 50+ age group. To more effectively engage our younger colleagues, we are hosting focus groups of our Generation X and Y members at the 2014 ACNL Conference.

To further strengthen our regional connections, the Nurse Leadership Development Committee surveyed the membership regarding the development of a speakers’ bureau. Having access to speakers with expertise on topics pertinent to nursing, health care and leadership is of great interest to chapter leaders. Over 150 members interested in sharing their knowledge through speaking engagements completed the survey, indicating their areas of expertise and presentation preferences. In 2014, the Nurse Leadership Development Committee will use the survey information to finalize and launch the speakers’ bureau.

ACNL nurse leaders continue to be active members of the California Action Coalition, responsible for implementing recommendations from the Institute of Medicine’s Report, The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health. I have had the privilege to co-chair Recommendation 7 (prepare and enable nurses to lead change to advance health) with ACNL Board Member Myra Lang and academic member Peggy Hodge. With its heavy emphasis on leadership, what better organization to advance Recommendation 7 than ACNL?

Our work on Recommendation 7 is divided into four key areas: leadership competencies, student connection, mentorship and voice. Each of these subcommittees is chaired by an ACNL member. I would like to thank Linda Searle Leach, Susan Herman, Anita Zuniga, Stephanie Leach and Dennis Kneeppel for providing the leadership for these workgroups. It was Anita Zuniga and Stephanie Leach who spearheaded the adoption and roll out of our LifeMoxie mentoring program. Not only did these two members provide their leadership, they found funding for year one and recently secured funding for year two. The program is built on AONE’s leadership competencies and includes a robust website with tools and resources to help both the mentor and mentee. To learn more about this program, visit www.acnlmentoring.org.

Our ACNL staff has been extremely busy with the work of our organization throughout the past year. In addition to supporting the educational offerings I mentioned earlier in my report, assisting members and conducting the day-to-day
activities of ACNL, our dedicated staff also manages and provides support for CNSA and CACN programs.

In July, Cathy Novaresi retired after 14 years of service to ACNL. Cathy will continue to work with ACNL in a consulting role to provide support to our industry partners. Longtime staff member Wendy Smolich has assumed the administrative manager position and is doing an excellent job organizing and directing office activities and workload.

ACNL’s voice has been greatly enhanced through our collaboration with Brenda Brozek, our communication and education consultant. She is a gifted communicator, collaborator and writer. Thank you, Brenda, for sharing your expertise with ACNL.

As we prepare for the challenges and opportunities ahead, ACNL will continue to be the organization for nurse leaders in California. Thank you for your dedication to ACNL and the nursing profession!

Patricia L. McFarland, MS, RN, FAAN
ACNL Chief Executive Officer

ACNL STAFF
Patricia McFarland, MS, RN, FAAN
Chief Executive Officer
Wendy Smolich
Administrative Manager
Dena Fisher
Communication Assistant/Graphic Designer
Brian Carrick
Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper
Brenda Brozek, MAOL, RN
Communication/Education Consultant
Cathy Novaresi
Meeting Management Consultant

ACNL Financial Report

We began 2013 with the largest membership in our organization’s history and a very successful Annual Conference—attracting a large attendance and strong support from our industry partners. Unfortunately, the high cost of hosting a conference in San Diego and our inability to meet the hotel’s room block resulted in a much lower net profit for the Annual Program than budgeted. In addition, our goal of reaching 1300 members in 2013 fell short. As a result, our challenge throughout 2013 was to control costs and investigate alternate sources of revenue.

We continue to work closely with our investment consultants at Morgan Stanley Smith Barney. We realized a substantial increase in our investment income in 2013. Since 2008, the ACNL Board has chosen a conservative investment approach. The 2014 Board will consider more aggressive strategies for our growing cash reserves, including opportunities to strengthen our philanthropic program.

While ACNL does not meet the threshold for an IRS Annual Audit, the Board decided that we will voluntarily participate in a full audit review every two years. The audit ensures that we are compliant with current accounting principles, and allows us to examine our internal systems and implement improvements. I am pleased to report that our audit team at Damore, Hamric and Schneider found that we were in compliance with all generally accepted accounting principles.

Over the past 10 years, our membership dollars have remained fairly stable. However, with our successful 2012 recruitment campaign, we saw a significant increase in membership dollars. After consultation with our audit team and our CPA consultant, the Board elected to implement a new process that annualizes membership dollars. Although this new process requires additional staff time to monitor, it positions us for future membership growth.

Year-End Financials

Operations

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*Estimated

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Professional development for nurse leaders is a key component of ACNL’s mission. In 2013, ACNL presented several programs and utilized a variety of venues to help experienced, emerging and future nurse leaders advance their knowledge and skills.

**Annual Program Committee**

Providing a valuable conference experience for nurse leaders is the goal of ACNL’s Annual Program Committee. Charged with planning the 2014 Conference in Monterey, the Committee began their work as the 2013 Conference drew to a close. After reviewing evaluations, gathering feedback from members and considering the latest trends in nursing practice, health care delivery and leadership, the committee developed an outstanding program for nurse leaders at all levels. *Oceans of Opportunity: The Next Wave of Nurse Leadership* features exceptional presenters, sharing of best practices through more than 70 poster presentations and plenty of opportunities for networking and camaraderie.

The 2013 Conference, *Courage to Lead: Igniting Our Passion*, held in San Diego, received accolades from many who attended. At the 2013 Conference, ACNL debuted a mobile conference app, which was well received by participants, and can be used as a resource throughout the year. Due to the popularity of the app at the 2013 Conference and our continued efforts to “go green,” ACNL will utilize a new and improved version at the 2014 event.

The 2013 Annual Program Committee at their planning meeting in Sacramento.

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**ACNL’s 2013 ACNL Conference in San Diego**

ACNL presidents gather at the President’s Reception.

Weaving music throughout his presentation, keynote North Wood unraveled the mystery of talent.

Nurse leaders from White Memorial Medical Center share a best practice during the poster session.

ACNL members Kimberly Horton, Mary Lopez and Pilar De La Cruz-Reyes during ACNL’s Business Meeting.
Voice/Communication Committee

The goal of the Voice/Communication Committee is to strengthen ACNL’s voice and influence by utilizing effective communication strategies and consistent messaging. Several Voice team members joined meetings of other committees to learn about their work and look for opportunities to communicate important information to the membership and external audiences. The group made suggestions to increase the effectiveness of the website, DirectLink and other communication tools. Committee members also provided input in the development of the Using Your Voice to Influence Change course and the ACNL Education Cruise.

Using Your Voice to Influence Change: New Program Helps Nurse Leaders Build Their High Performance Communication Skills

As a nurse leader, one of the most important and effective tools at your disposal is your ability to communicate. Expert communication isn’t just about presenting information and data—it’s about creating an experience for the listener to educate, persuade and/or move them to action. Like most skills, communication proficiency improves with practice.

To help nurse leaders advance their communication skills, ACNL created the program, Using Your Voice to Influence Change. What makes this course unique is the use of simulation to provide individualized training and constructive feedback to help each participant improve their skills. Simulation also builds reflective practice—the ability to objectively evaluate your own performance and identify ways to improve.

The inaugural course of Using Your Voice was presented on March 12 at Sacramento State University’s School of Nursing. Attendees consisted of ACNL Board and committee members who were asked to participate and test the effectiveness of the course.

Presenters for Using Your Voice were media expert Lisa Yates of ACS Quantum Strategies, ACNL CEO Patricia McFarland and Brenda Brozek, communication and education consultant. Associate Professor and simulation guru, Dr. Debra Brady, was instrumental in setting up the simulation experiences, which included a legislative hearing, presentation to a community board and an interview with a reporter. In 2014, ACNL will be offering this course across the state.

“A well-organized event that stretched me out of my comfort zone. The simulation experiences and reflection methods helped me improve and modify my approach to public speaking/communication while under fire.”

Mary Bittner, DNP, MPA, RN, CENP
Vice President, Nursing, Barton Health

“Having the opportunity to participate in the Using Your Voice course was very worthwhile and fun! As a nurse leader, I learned how to make my voice heard in a more powerful and effective way.”

Susan Herman, DNP(c), MSN, RN; Magnet Program Director; Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital

ACNL Brings Back the Education Cruise

The skies were blue and the waters calm as 14 ACNL members and their guests cruised the Pacific Ocean while participating in ACNL’s Educational Cruise in November. The four-day cruise departed from San Pedro and visited ports at Catalina Island and Ensenada, Mexico.

During the first of two educational sessions, participants viewed and discussed the documentary, Escape Fire: The Fight to Rescue American Healthcare. This informative film provided an excellent overview of the health care crisis involving primary care services and the need to focus on wellness and prevention to improve the health of our nation. During the second session, nurse leaders discussed the positive potential impact of nursing under the Affordable Care Act, and strategized ACNL’s role in supporting nurse leaders in the new health care paradigm.

In addition to the formal education sessions, there were many opportunities to network and share ideas, as well as time for fun and relaxation. Because of the positive feedback from cruise participants, the ACNL Board of Directors has approved a cruise in 2014. Potential dates and locations are under consideration. More information will be provided to members as soon as it’s available.
Nurse Leadership Development Committee

The Nurse Leadership Development Committee began 2013 by evaluating results from the Emerging Nurse Leader Survey that was developed by the 2012 committee and conducted at the 2013 ACNL Conference and beyond.

Survey results, review of evaluations from the ACNL Annual Conference and other programs, as well as feedback from members, indicated that nurse leaders want timely, reliable information about health care reform and the Affordable Care Act. As a result, the NLD Committee in partnership with the Health Policy Committee, sponsored the December webinar, Nurse Leaders: Key Players in Health Care Reform. A recording of this webinar can be found on the ACNL website. Webinar presenter Dr. Kimberly Horton also wrote an article about value-based purchasing for the spring issue of DirectLink and will discuss the nurse leader’s role in Health Care Reform at ACNL’s 2014 Annual Conference.

2013 marked the 10th year of the Foundation for Leadership Excellence course, a four-day intensive program for emerging and aspiring nurse leaders. Courses were offered in the spring and fall, and this year ACNL expanded the faculty roster to meet the growing needs of attendees. Nurse leaders completing the program consistently rate the Foundations course as excellent. Based on requests from participants for more leadership information and assistance, the ACNL Board voted in December to expand the 2014 Foundations program to five days.

Recognizing the vast knowledge and expertise of the ACNL membership, the NLD Committee also conducted a speakers’ bureau interest survey to identify members interested in participating in a speakers’ bureau. More than 150 members completed the survey, expressing their interest in sharing their expertise through a speakers’ bureau. The committee will use the survey results in 2014 to develop and launch the speakers’ bureau.

Research Committee

In recognition of the benefits and value of research to nursing practice, the Research Committee, formerly a work group of the Nurse Leadership Development Committee, became a stand-alone committee in 2013. The committee has been working to develop and test a psychometric instrument to measure leadership development outcomes for the Foundation for Leadership Excellence course.

The instrument measures knowledge and practice competence and “growth outcomes” among Foundations attendees. There is currently no published literature documenting the use of psychometrically sound (valid and reliable) instruments to measure leadership development program evaluation outcomes. This positions ACNL to significantly contribute to the knowledge base about leadership development and provide a meaningful instrument that can be used to describe the benefits of the Foundations program.
ACNL Publishes Resource Book for New Grad RNs

According to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, the turnover rate for new graduate nurses in their first year of practice is approximately 25 percent. Although some of these RNs seek other nursing employment opportunities, too many leave the nursing profession entirely.

In 2011, ACNL’s Board of Directors committed to developing a resource to help new graduates more effectively transition to their new roles as nurses, and the work on Surviving and Thriving: Your 1st Job as an RN began. Authored by ACNL CEO Patricia McFarland and consultant Brenda Brozek, Surviving and Thriving provides nursing students and new graduates with practical information vital to success in the health care workplace.

Topics include: the RN’s authority, responsibility and accountability; novice to expert stages of development as a new nurse; mentors, role models and preceptors; positive communication and conflict resolution strategies; effective delegation techniques; building clinical and critical thinking skills; the RN’s role in quality and patient safety; successfully coping with change and career planning beyond the first job. In addition, the book features more than 40 inspirational stories from ACNL members and other experienced nurses about their first jobs as RNs. Surviving and Thriving can be purchased on the ACNL website at www.acnl.org.

JONA Publishes Results from ACNL’s Experienced Nurse Leader Survey

Using the results of ACNL’s 2012 Experienced Nurse Leader Survey, Research Committee Chair Dr. Linda Searle Leach and ACNL CEO Patricia McFarland have published an article in the January 2014 issue of the Journal of Nursing Administration.

The objective of the study was to identify topics that experienced nurse leaders at the executive level believe are important to their professional development and continuing education. General categories examined included leadership, knowledge in health care, professional development, advancing the profession and key business skills. More than 150 nurse leaders responded to the survey. Survey results have been used by the Nurse Leadership Development, Annual Program and other ACNL committees to plan and refine educational offerings.

Developing Future Nurse Leaders Through CNSA and CACN Partnerships

For ten years, ACNL has been committed to growing the next generation of nurses and leaders through our partnership with the California Nursing Students’ Association. In addition to coaching and mentoring CNSA leaders, ACNL provides association and convention management services, while ANA/C provides guidance for parliamentary procedures and CNSA’s House of Delegates.

In October, CNSA hosted a successful convention at the Fairmont Hotel in San Jose. More than 550 students attended the convention that featured several ACNL members as presenters. Employment after graduation continues to be a major concern for California’s nursing students. To help these future nurses prepare for the difficult job market, several nurse leaders volunteered to review resumes during the convention. Over 200 students received feedback on their resumes and tips to help them secure their first job as RNs.

Advisors to CNSA are: ACNL members Donna Kistler, Susan Herman, Patricia McFarland and Brenda Brozek, along with Susan Bowman and Kathy Meltzer from ANA/C.

ACNL’s partnership with the California Association of Colleges of Nursing (CACN) has provided outstanding opportunities to strengthen collaboration between service and academia. CACN represents nursing schools that offer baccalaureate and higher degree programs. ACNL’s CEO manages CACN operations and conferences.

ACNL members Kathy Harren, Kimberley Horton and KT Waxman were the featured presenters for the 2013 CNSA Convention.
ACNL members have made significant strides in advancing professional practice in 2013. Much of our success comes from developing partnerships and coalitions with other nursing organizations and health care professionals. Together we are making a difference!

The California Action Coalition (CAC) was formed to implement the recommendations from the 2010 IOM Report, The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health. ACNL members continue to serve on each of the eight recommendation work groups, as well as the Executive Advisory Board. Mary Dickow is the CAC Statewide Director and Mary Foley serves as Co-Chair of the Executive Committee. Major accomplishments for the CAC in 2013 included expanding the number of newly licensed RN residencies, streamlining educational pathways and establishing a virtual mentorship program.

ACNL, through our work on Recommendation 7, took the lead in developing and implementing the mentorship program utilizing LifeMoxie. In the first phase of the program, launched in May, pairs of mentors and mentees were matched and began their journeys. Over the course of the 6 month program, 36 couples undertook projects to enhance each mentee’s professional development. The second phase began in November with an additional 34 pairs of mentors and mentees. LifeMoxie features a dynamic website with tools and resources to enrich the experience.

Over the past few months, we have had the opportunity to evaluate the program and are exploring opportunities to strengthen the deliverables and ensure that the online tools support both the mentor and mentee. ACNL was fortunate to receive a $30,000 grant from the Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., to support this project in 2013. We are delighted to report that they will also fund the program in 2014. If you have not had the opportunity to participate in LifeMoxie, we invite you to visit www.acnmentor.org to learn more about the program and enroll as a mentor or mentee.

In the legislative arena, CAC worked closely with Senator Hernandez, the author of SB 491. This important legislation would have allowed nurse practitioners to provide services consistent with their training and education without the involvement or supervision of a physician. This bill clearly supports the work of the CAC’s

Recommendation 1 workgroup (remove scope-of-practice barriers). However, the real champion behind SB 491 was the California Association of Nurse Practitioners (CANP). CANP created several outstanding documents to educate and explain how expanding the scope of practice for NPs would be beneficial to patients and communities as we move forward with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Unfortunately, this bill did not make it out of committee in 2013. CANP, CAC and the coalition that formed to support this bill have not given up. Look for future legislation that will expand the NPs scope of practice in California.

Additional funding for CAC infrastructure and initiatives has been secured from the Betty Irene Moore Nursing Initiative. This funding will help support the statewide director and a communication consultant, who will assist in developing strategies to engage California’s nursing workforce and our local communities in this important work.

**New Graduate RN Survey**

This past year, ACNL again partnered with the California Institute for Nursing and Health Care (CINHC) on the Newly Licensed RN Employment Survey. 2013 marked the fourth year we have conducted this project in collaboration with the California Board of Registered Nursing, University of California, Los Angeles, and the California Nursing Students’ Association. ACNL member Dr. Suzette Cardin served as the principal investigator with Carolyn Orlowski serving as the project coordinator. Results will be shared with the membership during ACNL’s 2014 Annual Conference and through articles in ACNL’s DirectLink.

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**Supporting Lifelong Learning**

In support of our commitment to lifelong learning, ACNL has partnered with eight universities who have agreed to provide stipends or tuition reductions for ACNL members attending their programs. We will continue to seek opportunities to partner with our academic colleagues to provide this member benefit and support nurse leaders who continue to pursue their education and additional degrees.

**PARTNER SCHOOLS**

- American Sentinel University
- Chamberlain College
- Drexel University
- Grand Canyon University
- Georgetown University
- Walden University
- Western Governors University
- University of San Francisco
Bare Root Continues Its Legacy Through the Nurses’ Float Scholarship

Bare Root, Inc., the organization founded by five nurse leaders to raise money for a float honoring nursing in the 2013 Rose Parade, has partnered with ACNL to create the Nurses’ Float Scholarship Fund with surplus donations from their fundraising efforts. The endowed national scholarship of $5,000 will be awarded annually through ACNL to an RN pursuing an ADN to BSN or BSN to MSN degree.

The founding members of Bare Root are: Monica Weisbrich, Judy Dahle, Paul Wafer, Pat Spongberg and Suzanne Ward. They conceived of the idea to enter a float in the Rose Parade in 2007, when they learned that Sally Bixby, a nurse, would be President of the Tournament of Roses. The float, entitled A Healing Place, honored nurses worldwide. It was the first time in the more than 100 year history of the Rose Parade that a nursing float was entered in the event.

At ACNL’s 2013 Awards Celebration, Bare Root was presented with ACNL’s Friend of Nursing Award and members Monica Weisbrich and Suzanne Ward were recognized with the Best Practice in Recruitment, Retention, Outreach Award. The Nurses’ Float Scholarship will be administered through ACNL’s Philanthropic, Scholarship and Awards Committee. The first scholarship will be awarded at the 2014 Annual Conference.

The founders of Bare Root, Inc., (from left to right) Monica Weisbrich, Pat Spongberg, Paul Wafer, Suzanne Ward and Judy Dahle.

A Healing Place, the nurse’s float in the 2013 Rose Parade.

Philanthropic, Scholarship and Awards Committee

The Philanthropic, Scholarship and Awards Committee had a busy year in 2013. In addition to the Nurses’ Float Scholarship of $5,000, ACNL will award $24,500 in scholarships at the 2014 Annual Conference. In addition, ACNL awarded $7,000 to nursing students at the CNSA Convention, including the second Annual Katie Bray Inspiration Award.

The committee is dedicated to expanding ACNL’s current scholarship and fundraising program. To maximize effectiveness, they sought expert advice in 2013. Committee co-chairs, the group’s board liaison and ACNL’s CEO met with two philanthropic consultants to learn more about strategies related to fundraising. From these conversations, it was clear that the time for ACNL to create a dynamic philanthropic program is NOW! The subcommittee presented the ACNL Board with an action plan to engage and strategize with a consultant in December. The proposal was accepted by the Board and philanthropic consultant, Gary Leo, was selected to work with the subcommittee in early 2014.

ACNL Awards 2nd Annual Katie Bray Inspiration Award

The Katie Bray Inspiration Award is presented to a nursing student who has been nominated by faculty for their intellectual curiosity, passion for nursing, tenacity and commitment to quality patient care. The award is named after longtime ACNL member Katie Bray who, upon her death, provided an endowment to fund scholarships for nursing students. The 2013 Katie Bray Inspiration Award was presented posthumously to Kristina Chesterman, who was a first year nursing student at California State University, Chico. Kristina was tragically killed by a drunk driver in September while riding her bicycle home after a study session at the university library.

In submitting the nomination, the faculty at CSU, Chico wrote that: “Kristina was not only incredibly bright, she demonstrated exceptional intellectual curiosity. Kristina was a leader in her class and the first to volunteer for any community or university service project.” Kristina’s parents accepted the award and expressed their appreciation to CNSA for recognizing their daughter with this prestigious honor.

2013 Industry Sponsors: Supporting the Work of ACNL

Industry partners support the work of our organization and make it possible for ACNL to offer quality educational and professional development programs for affordable costs.

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Health Policy Committee

The primary purpose of ACNL’s Health Policy Committee is to educate members about current legislation and proposed regulatory changes. To streamline this process, the committee developed a tool to assist with the tracking and prioritization of new legislation and proposed regulations. The committee plans to share this tool with ACNL members in 2014, with the goal of engaging nurse leaders in educating elected officials about legislation and regulations impacting nursing practice, health care delivery and patient safety.

The 2013 Health Policy Committee utilized documents created by the California Association of Nurse Practitioners to inform ACNL members about nurse practitioner scope of practice legislation. The committee encouraged nurse leaders to educate their local officials about the positive impact expanding the nurse practitioner scope of practice would have on the health of our communities.

Members of the Health Policy Committee are available to serve as health policy ambassadors to local chapters. In 2013, several committee members participated in discussions related to the nurse leader’s role in health care reform. They collaborated with the Nurse Leadership Development Committee to present the December webinar, Nurse Leaders: Key Players in Health Care Reform. Members of the committee also participated in CHA’s Legislative Day, visiting the state capitol to discuss health care issues with legislators.

ACNL members have been recognized by CHA for donating $39,710 to the California Hospital Association Political Action Committee (CHPAC) in 2013.

ACNL Participates in Rally to Protest Cuts in Medi-Cal

They came by bus, train, plane and car from across the state. More than 7,000 Californians descended on the state capitol on June 4 to attend a rally protesting proposed cuts to Medi-Cal and support legislation to ensure adequate funding for health care services reimbursed through the Medi-Cal program. These concerned citizens included physicians, dentists, hospitals, first responders, health workers, caregivers, insurers and patients. Representing nursing – was ACNL.

The event was organized by We Care for California, a coalition of the state’s largest organizations directly involved in the delivery or financing of health care services. Members of the We Care for California coalition are: the California Hospital Association, California Medical Association, California Primary Care Association, Dignity Health, SEIU-UHW, California Association of Physician Groups, the California Dental Association, Blue Shield of California, Anthem Blue Cross, Kaiser Permanente, Health Net and Molina Healthcare.

Following the rally, the CHA-led coalition continued to work with the administration and legislative leaders to resolve this issue. Ultimately, a comprehensive agreement eliminating future Medi-Cal payment cuts to hospital-based skilled nursing facilities was reached. In addition, this agreement will also bring in more than $10 billion in new federal Medicaid funds to California hospitals and provide the State General Fund with an additional $2.4 billion.
Quality and Patient Safety Committee

2013 was a successful and productive year for the Quality and Patient Safety Committee. One of the major goals of the committee was to share information, resources and best practices with ACNL nurse leaders. To accomplish this, the committee divided into workgroups that were extremely prolific in developing, synthesizing and sharing information.

One of the workgroups was charged with updating the Quality and Patient Safety Primer. Originally developed by the committee in 2010, the Quality and Patient Safety Primer is a series of six comprehensive modules in the form of power point presentations. These modules detail quality and patient safety initiatives on the state and national levels, industry and regulatory requirements, the nurse's role in quality and patient safety, history about the quality movement, resources, references and much more. Each module also contains links to more information about many of the subjects discussed. This past year, the team worked tirelessly to update this resource.

Another workgroup produced two Quality and Patient Safety Hot Topics newsletters, while several committee members wrote DirectLink articles. Because of its importance to nurse leaders, the focus of the Winter issue of DirectLink was on quality and patient safety topics.

The Quality and Patient Safety Committee also produced two webinars in 2013. The first webinar, The Role of Nutrition in Never Events and Preventable Readmissions, was presented in March and co-sponsored by Abbott Nutrition. The second webinar, Passing the Baton: Best Practices in Handoff Communication was in October. This webinar featured nurse leaders from three healthcare organizations who presented posters at ACNL’s 2013 Annual Conference in San Diego.

The Quality and Patient Safety Primer, recordings of the webinars and the DirectLink and Quality and Patient Safety Hot Topics newsletters can all be found on the ACNL website at www.acnl.org.

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee presented a strong slate of candidates for the 2014-2016 Board of Directors. 27 percent of the membership voted in the election.

Election results for 2014-2016 Board of Directors:
President-Elect............................ Susan Herman, DNP(c), MSN, RN
Secretary/Treasurer....................... Ellen Waxenberg Zoschak, MPH, MS, RN, NEA-BC
Board Member North ............... Kimberly Horton, DHA, MSN, FNP, RN, FACHE
Board Member Central............... Anita Williams, DNP(c), MSN, RN, CCRN
Board Member South............... Katie Skelton, MSN, RN, NEA-BC
Board Member San Diego.......... Laurie Ecoeff, PhD, RN, NEA-BC
Board Member Academia............ Judy Karshmer, PhD, RN, PMHCNS-BC

Bylaws Committee

In 2013, the Bylaws Committee reviewed ACNL's bylaws to ensure that they reflect the activities and needs of the organization. Three clarifications of bylaws language were submitted to the ACNL membership for review and will be voted on at the 2014 Business Meeting.

As a founding member of the Collaborative Alliance for Nursing Outcomes (CALNOC), ACNL continues to support the work of this nurse-sensitive database. Each year, members of the CALNOC research team present findings and best practices at ACNL's Annual Conference. Dr. Diane Brown and Dr. Joanne Spetz provided an update on the work of CALNOC at ACNL's 2013 Conference in San Diego.
Member Services Committee

The Member Services Committee had a busy year as they collaborated with the Board of Directors, staff and ACNL colleagues to recruit and retain members. Committee members made monthly renewal reminder contacts and conducted the Each One, Reach One campaign to attract new members to our organization. Although ACNL fell short of its goal to recruit 1300 members, the committee continues to develop strategies to increase ACNL’s ranks.

On the chapter level, the Member Services Committee and Board spearheaded activities to reach nurse leaders on local levels. When the Hospital Association of Southern California/Nursing Leadership Council moved from a membership organization to an advisory council in 2013, ACNL formed six new chapters in Southern California to provide nurse leaders in those areas with venues to share information and discuss important issues. To provide support for new and existing chapters, the committee, through the leadership of Board Liaison Mary Wickman, created a comprehensive chapter toolkit with several resources for chapter leaders.

In 2013, the committee conducted a membership survey to gauge member satisfaction with ACNL programs and identify opportunities for expansion of new and existing services. Approximately 25 percent of the membership responded, providing valuable feedback and suggestions.

ACNL’s strength is in its membership! By growing our membership, we amplify our voice and influence. Recruiting nurse leaders to ACNL should be the work of all members. As you can see by the graphic to the right, 95 percent of ACNL members surveyed said that they would recommend ACNL membership to others.

Spread the word about the benefits of membership in ACNL. There are several resources on the ACNL website to assist members in recruiting colleagues. Encourage a colleague to join ACNL today.

Together We’re Stronger!
2013 ACNL Committees

Annual Program
Maureen Casamiquela, Chair
Duayna Pucci, Co-Chair
Robyn Nelson, Board Liaison

Members: Nika Carlson, Jami de Santiago, Patty Garcia, Beth Gardner, Lucy Glaze, Susan Herman, Naomi Juan, David Loose, Daman Mott, Alison Riggs

Bylaws
Margarita Baggett, Chair

Members: Richard Brock, Kathy Dawson, Vicki Sweet, Peggi Winter

Health Policy
Dennis Kneeppel, Chair
Lorie Shoemaker, Co-Chair
Beth Eichenberger, Board Liaison

Members: Teresa Acosta, Katherine Bullard, Paige Burtsom, Nicole Casalenuovo, Charisse Cassell, Beverly Fick, Cindy Garrett, Kathy Harren, Myra Lang, Stephanie Leach, Denise Perry, Heather Sebanc, Nicole Sevilla-Zeigen, Katie Skelton, Barbara Van Amburg, Susan Wilder

Member Services
Carol Stern, Chair
Donna Kistler, Co-Chair
Cheryl Odell, Board Liaison

Members: Mary Abbott, Ryan Hodges, Mary Lynn Knighten, Betsey Newby, Bob Patterson, Jennifer Perisho, Ryan Rickely, Phyllis Snyder, Mary Wickman, Anita Williams, Kathy Wojno, Anita Zuniga

Nominations
Ginger Manss, Chair

Members: Kathy Cocking – North, Jami de Santiago – Central, Suzette Cardin – South & Academia, Maryann Cone – San Diego

Philanthropic, Scholarship and Awards
Stephanie Robinson, Chair
Anne Tanner, Co-Chair
Beverly Quaye, Board Liaison

Members: Martha Disposto, Josephine Ettinger, Gail Freeman, Patricia Hines, Chris Latham, Eleanor Martinez, Shannon McSweeney, Stephanie Means, Kim Tomasi, Ellen Zoschak

Nurse Leadership Development
Joyce Eden, Chair
Mary Gish, Co-Chair
Susan Stone, Board Liaison


Quality & Patient Safety
Tim Gilmore, Chair
Curt Cabral, Co-Chair
Mary Contreras, Board Liaison


Research
Linda Searle Leach, Chair
Virginia Terra Hodge, Co-Chair
Rae Charos, Board Liaison

Members: Judee Berg, Peggy Kalowes, Ann Mayo, Sally Morgan, Alaina Schauer, Sherry Shoemaker, Loreta Tolentino, Linda Urdan

Strategic Planning
Karen Price-Gharzeddine, Chair

Members: Margarita Baggett, Suzette Cardin, Rae Charos, Pilar De La Cruz-Reyes, Peggy Diller, Susan Herman, Dennis Kneeppel, Linda Searle Leach, Susan Odegaard-Turner, Beverly Quaye, Carol Stern

Voice/Communication
Karen Flaster, Chair
Mary Bittner, Co-Chair
Myra Lang, Board Liaison

Members: Elizabeth Bigby, Deb Crist-Grundman, Tim Fish, Lynn Forsey, Joy Gorzeman, Michelle Gringo, Rhonda Martin, Dora Noriega, Susan Odegaard-Turner, Linda Ruggio, Marilyn Stephens, Bonnie Tann-Dermmin, Susan Walczak

ACNL 2013
Board of Directors

President
Karen Price-Gharzeddine, MS, RN

Secretary/Treasurer
Dennis Kneeppel, MPA, RN, FACHE, CPHQ, NEA-BC

Chief Executive Officer
Patricia Lenihan McFarland, MS, RN, FAAN

President-Elect
Margarita Baggett, MSN, RN

Past President
Ginger Manss, MSN, RN, AOCN

Director – North
Myra Lang, MS, RN, CCRN, CNML

Director – North
Beth Eichenberger, MPA/HSA, RN

Director – Central
Rae Charos, MSN, RN, FNP

Director – Central
Mary Contreras, MHROD, RN, NE-BC

Director – South
Beverly Quaye, EdD, RN, NEA-BC, FACHE

Director – South
Mary Wickman, PhD, RN

Director – San Diego
Cheryl Odell, MS, RN, NEA-BC

Director – San Diego
Susan Stone, PhD, RN, NEA-BC

Director – Academia
Robyn Nelson, PhD, RN

2014 President Margarita Baggett and 2013 President Karen Price-Gharzeddine.
2014 ACNL Recognition Awards

**Contributions to ACNL**
Awarded to an ACNL nurse leader who has made significant contributions to the organization.

**Beth Gardner, MS, RN**
Chief Nursing Officer
Hemet Valley and Menifee Valley Medical Centers

*Known for her passion and enthusiasm, Beth leads with style and grace no matter how difficult the situation.*

An ACNL member since 1980, Beth is an energetic, action-oriented leader, who is a champion for the nursing profession. Her compassion, bubbly personality and excellent communication skills make her an expert at building effective teams and collaborating to achieve results. As 2011 ACNL President, Beth’s leadership mantra was: *Clarity, Commitment, Collaboration and Communication*, as she led ACNL and the Board of Directors to successfully address several difficult issues. As a past president, Beth continues to support and mentor ACNL leaders to carry out our organization’s mission and vision.

Beth has chaired and served on several ACNL committees and is currently a member of the Annual Program Committee. She has been very active in several ACNL chapters, including Inland Empire, San Diego, South Bay and Sacramento-Sierra. As a faculty member for ACNL’s Foundation for Leadership Excellence program, Beth shares her practical knowledge and expertise with emerging nurse leaders.

**Contributions as a Humanitarian**
Awarded to an ACNL nurse leader who has made significant contributions to the promotion of human welfare, improvement of health services for those in need and advancement of humanitarian efforts through research, service and/or education.

**Linda Coy, MSN Ed, RN**
Project Manager III
Kaiser Permanente – Southern California

*Linda’s compassion and service to others has no boundaries as she positively impacts people’s lives here and abroad.*

Linda’s compassion and contributions to others honors the nursing profession and is an inspiration to all who know her. While making her 12th annual medical mission trip to Jamaica, Linda met Kim, a disabled teenager who was born with one leg shorter than the other. After enduring five unsuccessful surgeries, Kim was relegated to life on crutches. Arrangements were made to bring Kim to the United States to undergo another surgery to correct the problem. Linda and her family welcomed Kim and her Aunt Sonia into their home for the duration of their stay.

It was determined by surgeons that Kim’s best course of treatment would be an above the knee amputation and a prosthesis. Throughout their more than six month stay, Linda and her family provided constant support, both physically and emotionally—helping Kim gain weight prior to surgery, assisting in her recovery and physical therapy, and helping the child learn to walk without crutches. As Kim grew stronger and more confident, her goal was to complete a 5K walk just three months after her surgery. With Linda coaching her and training her every step of the way, Kim completed the race!

Linda also introduced Kim and her Aunt Sonia to life in California. There were several site-seeing outings, including a trip to San Diego during ACNL’s Annual Conference, where Kim and Sonia attended the Tuesday night celebration. Kim and Sonia are two of the many people Linda has touched through her compassion and generosity.

**Friend of Nursing**
Awarded to an individual or organization demonstrating significant contributions and support for the nursing profession.

**David A. Pyle**
Executive Chairman of the Board
West Coast University

*Making a difference in people’s lives through access to quality health care and educational opportunities is David’s mission.*

For more than 30 years, David has been a leader and innovator in the private, postsecondary education community. At West Coast University, he is committed to serving students advancing their education and pursuing careers in health care. He is a renowned philanthropist, with the goal of making a measurable difference in people’s lives, David is especially supportive of programs that increase access to quality health care and create educational opportunities.

In 2012 under David’s leadership, West Coast University donated more than $2.2 million to establish a Center of Nursing Excellence at Children’s Hospital of Orange County. This included creation of a nurse researcher position, professional development programs and scholarships for CHOC nurses to return to school for their BSN or MSN degrees. Other donations include financing the purchase of exam equipment for a mobile medical clinic and funding for local health fairs, programs for autistic children and service dogs for wounded military veterans.
Excellence in Leadership Awards
Awarded to a nurse leader from each geographic region who has made a significant contribution to nursing leadership.

Excellence in Leadership – North
Mary Bittner, DNP, MPA, RN, CENP
Vice President, Nursing and Ancillary Services and Chief Nursing Officer
Barton Health

An advocate and voice for change, Mary consistently puts the patient at the center of decision-making.

Mary is an expert in optimizing health care delivery for rural communities. She provides a voice for nurses and patients by collaborating with other nurse leaders to develop innovative programs. She has provided testimony and advocated for rural health access, long term care and perinatal services at state and national levels. Identifying a gap in her local community between patients and access to primary care, Mary developed the Transitions in Care Program – a team of nurses to promote health care literacy and self-care management for high risk populations. At Barton Health, Mary encourages practice excellence through the creation of a clinical ladder program to reward nurses for professional advancement, certification and committee participation.

An active member of ACNL and AONE, Mary is Co-Chair of ACNL's Voice/Communication Committee.

Excellence in Leadership – South
Katherine Bullard, MS, RN, NEA-BC
Regional Chief Nursing Officer
Providence – Southern California

A visionary leader, Katherine led the metamorphosis of the Nursing Leadership Council to meet the evolving needs of nurse leaders in Southern California.

This well-respected, articulate leader has made many significant contributions to the nursing profession. As chair of the Hospital Association of Southern California’s Nursing Leadership Council, Katherine proposed and led a transformation of the 23 year-old organization to better equip nurse leaders to face the challenges of today’s rapidly changing health care system. The newly formed HASC-NLC Advisory Committee will advance the recognition of nursing through advocacy, thought leadership and regulatory influence. ACNL was a partner in this redesign process, which has also resulted in an increase in ACNL membership, development of additional local ACNL chapters and strengthening ACNL’s presence and voice in Southern California.

Katherine serves on ACNL’s Health Policy Committee. She is currently enrolled in the DNP program at USF.

Excellence in Leadership – Central
Elvira Miller, EdD, RN
President and Executive Director
Xavier College School of Nursing

When Elvira sees a need, she acts – no challenge is too big, no task too small for this dedicated nurse leader.

Elvira is an accomplished leader with a long list of achievements. After relocating to the Stockton area ten years ago, Elvira recognized the need for quality, affordable basic nursing education and opened Xavier College in 2006. Known for providing quality education for LVNs, Xavier is often a starting point for many nurses to begin their careers and later articulate to other nursing programs. Elvira is currently working with the BRN to develop an associate degree nursing program at Xavier.

A key member of the North Central ACNL Chapter, Elvira serves as the organization’s 2014 president. Since 2008, she has been instrumental in planning the chapter’s Nursing Leadership Symposium, a very popular annual event for local nurse leaders. At last year’s program, Elvira organized a panel of experts to share diverse educational practices from other countries.

Excellence in Leadership – San Diego
Beverly Kress, BSN, RN
Director of Nursing, Emergency Department/Progressive Care Unit
UC San Diego Health System

A results-oriented leader and successful influencer, Beverly transforms challenges into opportunities.

As her Emergency Department evolves to meet the challenges in the rapidly changing health care delivery system, Beverly provides exceptional leadership in clinical decision-making, staff development, physician collaboration, nurse-patient/family interaction and shared governance. She developed a unique staffing model by hiring five assistant nurse managers, who work 16 hours per week in their management role, and spend the remainder of their time as charge nurses. This model provides consistent leadership in the ED. As leader of the ED Workflow Committee and a member of the hospital’s Revenue Cycle Team, Beverly has spearheaded several strategies to achieve cost savings in supply utilization, sitter usage and overtime reductions.

Beverly has strong communication skills and frequently mentors others. She is well respected by those who have the pleasure of working with her.
Best Practice Awards
These awards are presented to recognize, document and communicate best practices in specific areas of nursing.

Best Practice – Administration

Elvie Sevilla, BSN, RNC, NE-BC
Manager, Medical-Surgical/Transplant Unit
UC San Diego Health System

Elvie’s passion is delivering quality patient care – her unit’s outcomes reflect her leadership and dedication.

Elvie embodies the essence of nursing by always keeping the patient and family in the center of nursing practice. On her nursing unit, Elvie focuses on providing holistic care to meet the unique needs of each patient. Her unit’s outcomes are phenomenal – it has been more than three years since a patient has acquired or worsened a pressure ulcer, the fall rate is well below the CALNOC benchmark, the unit has the lowest rate of sitter utilization in the hospital’s acute care division and consistently high patient and employee satisfaction scores. These outcomes are achieved through frequent rounding, building a culture of team ownership for each patient and Elvie’s commitment to shared governance that engages nurses in improving their practice.

Always willing to share information and best practices, Elvie presented a poster at ACNL’s 2013 Annual Conference describing her unit’s successful diabetes education program.

Best Practice – Clinical Nursing

Gail Freeman, MBA, BS, RN
Assistant Chief Nursing Officer
Director of Education and Nursing Operations
San Gabriel Valley Medical Center

A skilled caregiver, devoted teacher and inspirational leader, Gail is committed to providing optimal patient care.

For more than four decades, Gail has served the nursing profession with distinction. She strongly believes that collaboration and communication are essential factors in ensuring optimal outcomes. As chair of San Gabriel Valley Medical Center’s Clinical Practice Committee, Gail inspires professionals across all patient care disciplines to share their knowledge and expertise. As director of education, Gail imparts her philosophy of patient-centered care to the hundreds of nurses she teaches. An innovative educator, she uses music and song to emphasize essential skills such as proper hand washing and CPR chest compression rhythm.

Gail frequently goes beyond hospital walls to enrich the lives of members of her community. She has conducted CPR training, educated the public about fall prevention and has delivered speeches about the importance of advanced health care decision making. Gail is a member of ACNL’s Philanthropic, Scholarship and Awards Committee and is secretary of the Hospital Association of Southern California’s Nursing Leadership Council Advisory Committee.

Best Practice – Innovation

Stephanie Mearns, MN, RN
Vice President, Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Officer
West Hills Hospital & Medical Center

A resilient and resourceful leader committed to practice excellence, Stephanie creates innovative solutions for complex issues.

Prior to her current assignment at West Hills, Stephanie was chief nursing officer for a not-for-profit hospital in Daly City. During her tenure there, she designed a system to assess and build staff nurse competency in a wide range of metrics, from customer service to clinical assessment and professional judgment. Actors were employed to simulate patient experiences. Building on the QSEN competencies, Stephanie and her team created a Learning Needs Portfolio for every RN and identified opportunities to build practice excellence. This exemplary work was recognized in July 2013, as Stephanie and another colleague presented their innovation to nurse leaders at Sigma Theta Tau International’s Research Conference in Vienna, Austria.

Stephanie has been a member of ACNL since 1990. She is a past president, former secretary treasurer and has chaired several committees. For many years, she has been the mistress of ceremonies for ACNL’s Annual Awards Celebration.

Best Practice – Education

Maureen Casamiquela, PhD, RN
Director, Professional Education
Kaiser Permanente – Southern California

Through her commitment to lifelong learning, Maureen inspires and empowers health care professionals to strive for excellence.

An exceptional educator, mentor and collaborator, Maureen’s career has been devoted to ensuring that patients receive the highest quality of care. Maureen sets the strategic direction for educational activities in Kaiser-Southern California facilities to ensure that RNs are well-prepared to deliver quality care. She is a skilled coalition-builder whose proven ability to bring together diverse teams has resulted in several successful initiatives. Through her innovative leadership, BSN and MSN distance learning programs have been established for Kaiser nurses; clinical video conferencing and web-based programs allow staff to attend educational sessions within their hospitals; and inventive educational partnerships and student loan agreements ensure a continued pipeline of BSN-level RNs for Kaiser facilities.

Maureen also shares her vast educational expertise with ACNL. She provided input in the development of ACNL’s Foundation for Leadership Excellence program. A member of the Annual Program Committee for three years, Maureen served as 2013 chair.
Best Practice – Nursing Research

Carolyn Orlowski, MSN, RN
Southern California Regional Coordinator
California Institute for Nursing and Health Care

A leader guided by evidence, Carolyn is a key collaborator and champion for the collection and analysis of new graduate workforce data.

Carolyn is a logical and methodical leader who has achieved many significant accomplishments in her distinguished nursing career. For four years, she has been a key organizing force behind the development, utilization and analysis of a survey tool to collect new graduate workforce data and gauge employment trends for new RNs in the difficult job market. Conducted in partnership with the BRN, ACNL, CINHC, CNSA and UCLA School of Nursing, this survey has provided valuable data about the difficulty new graduate nurses are facing as they attempt to secure their first jobs as RNs.

Striving to build on existing best practices and utilize evidence-based results, Carolyn spearheaded efforts to replicate two highly successful Northern California programs in Southern California. She led a two-year project to develop the Southern California Simulation Collaborative and worked with service and academia to create 12 community-based RN transition programs.

Best Practice – Recruitment/Retention/Outreach

Josie Clevenger, RN
President, Northern California Association of Health Care Recruiters

Promoting the image and value of nursing, Josie is a consummate cheerleader for our profession.

Wearing her Proud to Be a Nurse tee shirt, Josie can be found anywhere young people with an interest in health care are gathering. She is a tireless and passionate advocate for the nursing profession and has spoken about the benefits of nursing careers at schools, conferences, career fairs and graduation ceremonies. Committed to ensuring that California’s future nursing workforce better reflects its population, Josie focuses many of her outreach efforts on encouraging members of diverse cultures to choose nursing as a career.

Josie also recruits and trains RNs to serve as ambassadors for the nursing profession. Armed with a power point presentation and other resources Josie has created to promote nursing, these RN Ambassadors reach out to young people in their communities. Over the past five years, Josie and her RN Ambassadors have informed more than 17,000 people about careers in nursing. Countless RNs can say that they were encouraged to enter the nursing profession through Josie’s efforts.
Creating and Influencing the Future of Health Care