EMORY | NELL HODGSON WOODRUFF SCHOOL OF NURSING

EMORY

July 31, 2023

Jessica S. Wells, PhD, RN, WHNP-BC, FAAN (she/hers)
1520 Clifton Road NE,
Office 230
Atlanta, GA 30322-4201

Re: Letter of Interest to serve for National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH) President-elect position

Dear Dr. Shawana Moore, DNP, APRN, WHNP-BC, PNAP and Mrs. Heather Mauer, MA, CAE, CEO,

The purpose of this letter is to announce my interest for the position of President-elect for NPWH's Board of Directors (BOD). I am an Associate Professor with tenure at Emory University's Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing (NHWSN). I received my BSN from Howard University in 2006 and my PhD in Nursing with a graduate certificate in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies from NHWSN in 2012. I also completed a post-doctorate fellowship in 2015 and a Women's Health Nurse Practitioner post-graduate certificate in 2017 from NHWSN. By way of this letter, I would like to highlight my expertise and qualifications that I bring towards the continued growth and success of NPWH's strategic goals and mission.

Research contributions to advance women's health

As a nurse researcher, I advance the state of women's and gender health by leading and conducting innovative research to support the optimal care of women across the spectrum. My overarching area of expertise is addressing cancer disparities among vulnerable populations, specifically people living with HIV. I have been funded by national and federal agencies such as NIH and the American Cancer Society to lead numerous studies in efforts to increase HPV vaccination and HPV-related cancer awareness among people living with HIV. I was awarded a NIH-funded grant to the large, national cohort study, Women's Interagency HIV Study, to address a public health gap regarding knowledge and awareness of the risk of anal cancer among HIV+ women. This study showed significant gaps in knowledge and awareness of the risk for anal cancer among this high-risk group. Only 42% of HIV+ women were aware that HIV was a significant risk factor for anal cancer, and many women could not identify other important risk factors for anal cancer. This work led to the dissemination of educational resources tailored to the HIV community and shared through HIV organizations such as Sister Love, Inc. and the Women's Interagency HIV Study's community advisory board.

Furthermore, I was recently awarded a $1.25 million R01 grant from NIH to implement an evidence-based intervention to promote the uptake of the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine among adults living with HIV. Findings from this award has the potential to further shape and

change clinical practice by extending cancer prevention strategies (i.e., HPV vaccination) to the high-risk HIV population. As a nurse scientist, I have garnered an invaluable skillset to recruit and retain a vulnerable population, build trust and ties with historically-excluded communities, and how to effectively communicate and lead a multidisciplinary research team. I will translate these skills to successfully serve as the President-elect and to advance NPWH's strategic priorities in the areas of effective governance, program excellence, and purposeful policies.

Clinical and academic contributions to advance women's health

As a women's health nurse practitioner, I have the opportunity to connect my research and clinical practice-- my scholarly work and clinical practice in women's health mutually informs one another. I have a personal commitment to serve my community, specifically the community in which I perform research. I have built a meaningful, long-term, mutually beneficial partnership with our community partners. I have been invited to speak at several community-based rallies and health expos, including American Cancer Society's Relay for Life. Additionally, I consistently strive to engage the community outside my research agenda. I volunteer at the Center for Black Women's Wellness (CBWW), including their breast screening events, health expos, and at their Wellness clinic. In addition to my volunteer service at the CBWW, in 2018-2020, I practiced as an APRN at their Wellness clinic two Fridays a month.

As an Associate Professor, I enjoy training the next generation of nurses and advanced practice nurses in women's and gender-related health. My teaching responsibilities are detailed in the attached CV, but relevant teaching responsibilities include co-faculty for NHWSN's women's health NP specialty track. Furthermore, mentorship has been instrumental in my professional journey thus I am committed to returning the gift of mentorship to our next generation of nurses, especially nurses from underrepresented or historically disadvantaged backgrounds. I have advised several undergraduate and graduate nurses in the areas of women's health, HIV, and cancer. In recognition of my enthusiasm and commitment in mentorship and education, I was awarded the 2022 NHWSN Faculty Excellence Award. My experience and drive to train and mentor the next generation of nurses and leaders in women's health aligns with NPWH's strategic priority of membership engagement, specifically fostering a pipeline for WHNP students and early career WHNPs into the organization.

Leadership experiences

Currently, I serve on the Board of Directors for NPWH (2022-2024). In this capacity, I co-chair the Research Committee and serve the organization through annual national conference planning and conference abstract review. In this role, we made significant revisions in streamlining the abstract review process and selection criteria to increase the rigor of our abstract selection process. Additionally, I co-chair the Student Ambassador committee and co-lead the initiative to provide mentorship to WHNP students across the country. Along with the co-chair, we revived and revised the Student Ambassador program to increase its impact and engagement with WHNP students. During the first year as co-chair, we collected feedback from the student ambassadors and used the data to assess and improve the program for the following year. We anticipate growth and increased student engagement with the revised programing. Lastly, I represent NPWH for American Cancer Society's HPV vaccination roundtable as an advocate of collaborative efforts to raise HPV vaccination rates and prevention of HPV cancers.

I am a member of the Association for Nurses in AIDS Care (ANAC). I serve as co-chair of the research committee where my service includes reviewing abstracts for the national annual

conference and pre-conference workshop planning. I also serve on the Advocacy Campaign Committee for the International Papillomavirus Society (IPVS). This committee is devoted to developing a global campaign to raise awareness and education about HPV and to inspire people to take action to mitigate the risk of HPV-related cancers. This global initiative can be viewed at www.AskAboutHPV.org. As the only nurse on this international committee, I provide an invaluable nurse's perspective that advances the work of the committee.

In recognition of my impact in the HIV community, I was awarded the 2021 Barbara Vicks Impact Award in HIV Research, presented by Emory's CFAR Community Liaison Council. Additionally, for my work in conducting research to improve the health care of minorities and under-represented groups in the South, I was awarded the Research in Minority Health Award by the Southern Nurses Research Society. The culmination of my contributions was recognized in 2021 when I was inducted as a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing-- nursing's highest honor bestowed upon those who bring tremendous expertise to the nursing profession.

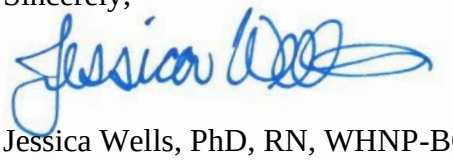
In 2023, I completed a competitive fellowship from Emory University's Woodruff Leadership Academy (WLA). The goal of the WLA fellowship was to foster development and interpersonal proficiencies of organizational leaders in healthcare. This leadership fellowship gave me the training and resources to develop and advance my principals, qualities, and responsibilities as a leader. In addition, I have been closely mentored by NPWH leaders, including NWPH president, Dr. Shawana Moore. I believe these personal and professional experiences have prepared me to pursue the position of President-elect for NPWH.

In summary, as a women health nurse practitioner and a nurse researcher, I have gained a valuable and unique skill set that I am eager to bring to NPWH as President-elect to carry out the organization's mission and vision. Core qualities that I bring to the organization includes being a forward thinker, a conscious and equitable leader, and a cultivator of community. As President-elect, I will use these qualities to carry out goals that I have for the organization:

- Increase the visibility of NPWH as the premier organization for experts in specialized and individualized care of women's and gender-related health; as leaders in policy advocacy; and as an organization that leads and supports data-driven evidence that supports the quality and rigor of healthcare provided by its members.
- Increase membership engagement and community within our organization to facilitate, support, and highlight the strengths of WHNPs.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at jholme3@emory.edu or at 678-579-2090. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Jessica Wells, PhD, RN, WHNP-BC, FAAN
Associate Professor
Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing
Emory University