Elizabeth Smart: ‘I had something worth living for’

Elizabeth Smart is best known for the horror that happened when she was just 14. Kidnapped from her bed in the middle of the night, she was held captive for nine months and raped repeatedly.

She recounted much of those harrowing nine months in a detailed opening keynote session Wednesday.

“People always ask, ‘Doesn’t it traumatize you telling your story?’ Normally it would. When I speak, I am looking at a room full of people who are caring, who are kind, who are trying to make the world a better, safer place than they found. Yes, this has affected my life, but I’m not going to let it stop me or stand in my way.”

Smart held the audience’s rapt attention, detailing a “shy and quiet” wallflower who was looking forward to her junior high graduation the next day. That night, she went to bed in a room she shared with her younger sister “just feeling safe. Feeling happy. Feeling like I didn’t have a care in the world.”

The next thing, “I remember hearing a voice, saying, ‘Get up and come with me.’ I remember being terrified.”

She complied, worried that if she didn’t, her younger sister might be taken instead. She wondered if her parents and four brothers had been killed. After walking for “forever,” into the mountains near her home, the two ended at a landing carved out in a stand of trees. “I remember seeing a woman appearing. It was that feeling like when you meet someone for the first time, and you know that you click and could really get along? It was the exact opposite. I knew she wasn’t there to help me.”

Her captor pronounced they were now married and “of everything I expected to hear, that was not one of them. Every reason I gave him why that couldn’t be, he had the same response. ‘We’re now married. It’s time to consummate our marriage.”

Smart detailed how she’d led a “sheltered life” and didn’t know much about sex

The military presentation included American flag, as well as those representing the U.S. Navy, U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force and U.S. Public Health Service, with all flags presented by nurse practitioners and a performance of the National Anthem by former AANP President Cindy Cooke.

Two national award winners noted for moving the NP practice forward

Two of AANP’s highest honors were presented at the annual membership meeting, showcasing the evolving work of nurse practitioners (NPs), and advocacy for the important role that NPs play in health care.

Joyce Pulcini, PhD, PNP-BC, FAAN, FAANP, was presented the 2019 Towers Pinnacle Award for her work in policy, development, and international support of the NP role. She was noted for her expertise on “the evolving roles of NPs throughout the world, focusing on NP education, reimbursement, political advocacy and removal of barriers to practice.” Her nomination letter noted she was “instrumental in establishing one of the first international journals for nurse practitioners.”

“Becoming a nurse practitioner and educator was the best decision I’ve ever made,” Dr. Pulcini said. “It’s brought...
Welcome to Indianapolis! While the city may be best known for its oval racetrack and the drivers who come here to stake their fortune at breakneck speeds, the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) will deliver our own winning race as well.

I know that the next few days will be busy and productive. The conference committee has spent countless hours ensuring a well-rounded conference, whether you are at the start of your career or well in to advanced practice.

Thanks to your input, we've ensured a more robust tract for those in acute care. We've added more topics that are aimed across the experience level of nurse practitioners (NPs).

Taken holistically, I think you will find a national conference that will include insights that you can put in to practice immediately.

Take advantage of the educational opportunities to learn more about the latest research. Your patients certainly are. It can be a challenge to keep up as a partner in combating the disease. Because NPs are patient centered, we must be able to listen to our patients' concerns and see the evidence that their research has provided. We must not forget that while we may manage hundreds of patients, all with their own unique challenges, each patient is focused only on one disorder: theirs.

Consequently, they have time and interest to research the latest information. We find it difficult to devote the same amount of time. I saw a study recently that said an average provider could spend 29 hours daily exploring the latest evidence and data out there. In other words, we never will be able to keep up.

Yet here, all in one place, you will be able to explore the latest evidence on treating specific disease processes. And we will help you find ways to ensure you always are kept abreast of the latest research.

I for one am looking forward to our opening keynote speaker, Elizabeth Smart. She will bring a different perspective to our meeting, focusing on healing and hope in the most unimaginable circumstances. She will set off a few days of inspiring speakers, wrapped up by Margaret Fitzgerald, DNP, FNP-BC, NP-C, FAANP, CSR, FAAN, DCC, FNPAP. Dr. Fitzgerald, our closing keynote speaker, needs no introduction to many of you.

Her discussion of finding our voice as a profession begins on page 41. Dr. Fitzgerald brings a unique perspective and experience to her role as keynote speaker, providing insights on the importance of our collective voice in navigating the complex landscape of healthcare.

If you are interested in learning more about her and her work, please feel free to reach out. Dr. Fitzgerald is an expert in the field of healthcare leadership and has contributed significantly to the advancement of the profession.

As we move forward through the conference, we have a variety of sessions and workshops designed to help you find ways to ensure you always are kept abreast of the latest evidence and data out there. Whether you are at the start of your career or well into advanced practice, this is your opportunity to connect with your peers and learn from experts in the field.

The conference will offer a range of educational opportunities, including lectures, workshops, and panel discussions, to help you stay informed about the latest research and trends in the field.

In addition to the educational sessions, we will also have a variety of networking opportunities to help you connect with other professionals and learn about new career opportunities. From workshops on networking strategies to sessions on leadership and career development, we have something for everyone.

So, what are you waiting for? Join us in Indianapolis and take advantage of this opportunity to connect with your peers and learn from experts in the field. We look forward to seeing you there!

Margaret Fitzgerald, DNP, FNP-BC, NP-C, FAANP, CSR, FAAN, DCC, FNPAP
Earn CE and advance career through AANP Education & Accreditation Department courses

The AANP Education & Accreditation department works to keep nurse practitioners up to date on the latest information to improve patient care and clinical practice. With more than 4,200 NPs in one place, the National Conference is an ideal location to provide CE programming.

“Nurse practitioners are on the frontline of the most pressing health issues,” said Anne Norman, DNP, FNP-C, FAANP, vice president, Education & Accreditation. “AANP provides ongoing education to meet those needs.”

In addition to the many sessions provided at the AANP National Conference, the AANP education team developed several CE activities. Here are the sessions that our education team is providing Thursday:

**Thursday, June 20**

**8:00 – 11:00 AM**

**Pain Management and Opioids: Balancing Risks & Benefits**

This presentation will be a 2019 update. The most recent nationally vetted standards for safe opioid prescribing are presented based on the FDA Prescriber Education blueprint and developed by Collaboration for REMS Education (CoRE). Content discusses the four phases of safe prescribing standards: (1) pain assessment and screening tool use; (2) opioid trial definition and expected components including UDT, PPA & Informed Consent; (3) long-term therapy, UDT and screening tool use frequencies, and (4) aspects associated with termination of care. Concepts of Red Flag behaviors and problem cases are reviewed. Pharmacology information includes CoRE content on immediate release and long-acting opioids, dose and drug family changes, equal analgesic drug conversions and abuse deterrent medications. Completion of this program and its evaluation meets many state-based requirements, including Boards of Nursing, for opioid prescriber education.

**Speaker:** Randall Hudspeth, PhD, MBA, MS, APRN-CNP, FAANP

**Peeling Back the Layers: A Best-Practice Approach to Managing Atopic Dermatitis**

Thursday, June 20

1:15 – 2:15 PM

In this presentation, NPs with expertise in dermatology utilize an innovative approach to discuss best-practices in the evaluation, treatment and management of this common but complex skin condition.

**Speaker:** Susan Tofte, BSN, MS, FNP-C

**Ask the Expert**

The Ask the Expert talk is an opportunity for NP conference attendees to ask subject matter experts questions in specific therapeutic areas utilizing a more informal setting. This inaugural event will take place during unopposed exhibit hall times on Thursday and Friday at the Education & Accreditation booth. Dates and times are based on the therapeutic area. Here is the Thursday schedule:

- **Opioids and Pain Management**
  - 2:45 – 3:15 PM
  - **Speakers:** Theresa Mallick-Searle, MS, RN-BC, ANP-BC; Brett Snodgrass, FNP-C, CPE, FACNP; FAANP

- **Cardiovascular**
  - 3:30 – 4:00 PM
  - **Speakers:** Leslie Davis, PhD, RN, ANP-BC, FAANP, FPCNA, FAHA; Margaret (Midge) Bowers, DNP, FNP-BC, CHSE, AACCC, FAANP

### AANP National Conference overview from one who knows it best

**Nobody knows the plans** of the 2019 AANP National Conference as well as Major Brandon Lee, MSN, APRN, FNP-C, Chair of the National Conference Committee. He and Vice Chair Angela Thompson, DNP, FNP-C, BC-ADM, CDE, FAANP and the rest of the committee have planned several exciting events offered:

- The opening Welcome Reception last night at the Indianapolis Zoo provided an opportunity to network with colleagues in a casual setting. It also allowed families to participate in AANP’s annual event. “Indianapolis also has the world’s best children’s museum. That, along with the Zoo event provided a chance to bring the families to the event while you get the education you need for CEs,” Major Lee said.

Wednesday’s highlights included the opening keynote, Elizabeth Smart, who was abducted at age 14 and held captive for nine months before finding freedom and hope.

Closings out the event is Dr. Margaret Fitzgerald, DNP, FNP-BC, NP-C, FAANP, CSF, FAAN, DCC, FNAP. “She’s a dynamo in the field,” Major Lee said.

In terms of education, Major Lee noted the choices will be fairly easy based on specialty.

For posters, the competition was tough. “There were so many good abstracts that did not make it last year that we asked to bring back some specific ones,” Major Lee said.

### Stay on message when dealing with critics

As nurse practitioners play an increasing role in patient care and fill gaps in access, the critics have come out in full force, questioning training and expertise in traditional and online media as well as in public hearings. “What is the real reason your role is being challenged? It’s because you’re winning,” said Pam Fielding, CEO of SevenTwenty Strategies at the NP Organization luncheon and panel discussion. “I’m going to make your blood boil. Then we’ll take a deep, cleansing breath together and talk about how to combat this information.” The panel discussion included examples of some of the opposition that has been occurring online and in the media.

Panelists also included SevenTwenty’s president Vlad Cartwright; AANP’s vice president of State Government Affairs, Tay Kopanos; and Michelle Karns, associate vice president of Marketing. “We need message discipline to stay on message,” Cartwright said. “It’s easy to go out there and respond directly to something somebody has said. We look far better if we stay on message.” AANP has developed a tool where NPs can report negative messages they see on social and traditional media. It is available at www.aanp.org/reportnow.
Day in and day out, nurse practitioners give to their patients and their communities. The national conference is no different. AANP has selected the Indianapolis location of Dress for Success.

All attendees need to do to participate is visit the donation bins through the conference. Donated items will be displayed in a boutique setting before being given to Dress for Success Indianapolis.

Dress for Success has some specific needs, all with a goal of allowing the item to be ready for a woman’s job interview. That means it should be clean, neat and new. Donated items will be displayed for sale through the conference.

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The Suits for Success program—which provides interview suits and accessories for women on their job search—is very specific for anybody who has questions about what is accepted.

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Three Risks that Increase the Liability of Nurse Practitioners

As a nurse practitioner, you show up each day to give your very best to each person you care for. At times you may also stay awake at night wondering if you completed all of the appropriate care, tasks, communication, and other professional accountabilities for each of your patients. If so, you are not unlike many other health care providers.

Risks are rising in the complex practice of NPs, any of which could potentially lead to a liability or malpractice claim. First, medication-related claims are common, and NPs prescribing opioids face particular risk. Accuracy in dosage might prevent overdose, but in the ambulatory setting, patients don’t always take the medication as intended. Phone contact with patients taking opioids to determine the effect and ongoing need is one strategy to minimize use. Monitor patients carefully prior to refills and consider alternative medications and therapies that may also reduce pain.

Second, NPs face risk when performing new procedures and treatments. One of the most frequent allegations in professional liability claims against NPs is practicing outside the scope of their license relative to the new procedure/treatment. Education and training to do new procedures, along with competency validation by another appropriately competent provider must be documented. When competence is achieved and validated, many new things can readily be added to the scope of NP practice as long as the procedure or treatment is within the state Nurse Practice Act for NPs and organizational policies and privileges allow for the new practices.

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Third, telemedicine is becoming more widely used in many settings. When practicing telemedicine, NPs need to be licensed in their state as well as the state where the patient is receiving care. This includes being certain of the scope of practice limits in the states where they are located as well as the scope of practice boundaries for NPs in the state where the patient is located, which may be different. And, NPs need to validate that their professional liability policy covers the practice of telemedicine in both states and can help with any issues that might be reported to licensing agencies.

Employing strategies to reduce your professional liability can facilitate safe care and positive patient outcomes. General risk mitigation strategies such as practicing within the scope of the APRN license, fostering positive relationships with patients and families, following accepted standards and procedures, complete and timely documentation, and ongoing training reduce NP liability risk.

Despite the true privilege of practicing as an NP, the responsibility is immense. As the provider, you must ensure the coordination of care and that staff and systems are effective in delivering the outcomes intended. You depend on technologies, processes, systems, other health team members, staff, and volunteers to help manage the health of your caseload. NPs take risks every day. You are human, and humans can make mistakes. It’s important to promote a culture of transparency and accountability where all healthcare professionals are encouraged to report, discuss, and learn from mistakes in order to improve patient safety and avoid lawsuits.
Awards

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me such joy and fulfillment.”

The award was presented by its namesake, Jan Towers, PhD, NP-C, CRNP, FAAN, FAANP. Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN, FAAN, was presented the 2019 Sharp Cutting Edge Award by the award’s namesake, Nancy Sharp, MSN, RN, FAAN. Dr. Wakefield was hailed as a “champion of advanced practice nursing and as a staunch advocate for the NP role.” She was administrator of the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and later Acting Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), both under President Barack Obama. At HRSA, she played a key role in aspects of the Affordable Care Act focused on strengthening the health care workforce and improving inequalities, particularly for vulnerable populations. She also served as a consultant for the Global Programme on AIDS at the World Health Organization.

“I consider this award a high honor and I am so appreciative of it,” Dr. Wakefield said. “I have recognized that AANP has been and continues to be a strong and much-needed voice for the health of the public. Truth be told, I’ve always been a little in awe of you knowing how difficult the work can be, but of the difference you make.”

Smart

from page 1

at the time. “When he was finished, he stood up, smiled like it wasn’t a big deal, turned around and walked out of the tent. For me, it was devastating. I felt like I was no longer worth saving. I really thought that my parents would think that too if they knew what had happened.”

She thought about her mother, how she made school lunches and sat through so many music lessons. “When I thought of my mom, I remembered what it felt like to be loved. I didn’t want to forget that once upon a time, I had truly been loved. She still loved me, even though I had been kidnapped, chained up and raped. When I realized that, I realized I had something worth living for.”

Smart survived for nine months before police found her with her captors. Once separated from her captors, she was quickly reunited with her family and back at home. After evening prayers, she headed for the stairs to go to bed. “My parents both looked at me with this panicked look on their faces. They said, ‘Elizabeth, don’t you think you want to stay here tonight? We’ll have a family campout.’ I remember looking them and saying, ‘No, I’ve done my time on the floor. I’ll sleep in my bed.”

The next day, she was talking with her mother, giving some details about what had happened. “She turned to me and said, ‘Elizabeth. What these people have done is terrible and there aren’t words strong enough. The best punishment you could ever give him is to be happy, to move forward. By holding on to what’s happened to you, by reliving it over and over it is allowing them to steal more of your life from you. They don’t deserve a single second more.”

While she admits there are times when she still feels angry, Smart is also grateful. “I’m not sorry that it happened because of what it’s allowed me to do. I’m so grateful for the good, kind, wonderful people that I’ve met in my life and the many people that I call on rather frequently in the medical field.”

Keeping it real: Marketing looks to NPs as photo models

In the past, when AANP needed a photo of a nurse practitioner (NP) at work, it turned to stock photos featuring a generic clinical setting. No more.

“We want to feature real NPs,” said Trevor Delling, marketing director for AANP. “In order to do that, we need pictures of real members in clinical settings, office environments, legislative meetings, and more. What better place to get those than when we have more than 4,000 NPs in one place?”

A giant photo shoot will be occurring during the conference, using realistic sets in the AANP Central area (Hall F). The shoot will occur from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. through Saturday. AANP has assembled exam rooms, office settings, academic settings, and advocacy backdrops, along with an area to capture professional head shots.

All that is needed are the NPs. Dozens signed up in advance to take part, but Delling notes he is happy to take walk-ins: “We want everybody to stop by at their convenience and we will fit them in. We’re always happy to do pictures with multiple NPs. We can feature two NPs talking to each other in an exam room or in an office setting. If we get an influx of people, we can simply walk to the other side and do some advocacy shots.”

AANP has thought of everything. A number of white coats and props, like stethoscopes, will be available. “Wear your normal work clothes,” Delling said. “You don’t really need to wear or bring anything special, other than professional clothes. If you wouldn’t go to work in flip flops, you wouldn’t want to be photographed in them.”

Those who want can explore multiple settings. “But if all you have time for is one photo, stop in for that one photo,” Delling said. “If you have a half hour, we can get you in every setting. We want everybody who is willing to participate.”

All participants will be given access via email to view and download their photos several weeks after the conclusion of conference.

In that same area, AANP will be conducting video interviews, where attendees can address a range of topics. Participants will be able to share their thoughts on life as an NP, their favorite part about AANP and conference, words of wisdom for the next generation of NPs and anything else that’s on their minds.

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