Dr. Margaret Fitzgerald highlights the closing keynote

Closing out a busy few days can always be a challenge at a national conference. But when the closing keynote speaker is someone with the reputation of Margaret Fitzgerald, DNP, FNP-BC, NP-C, FAANP, CSP, FAAN, DCC, FNAP, the finale proves worth waiting for.

Dr. Fitzgerald, president of Fitzgerald Health Education Associates, LLC, will discuss ways that nurse practitioners can find their voice “to speak up for themselves and their patients,” she said.

An AANP member for more than three decades and an international provider of nurse practitioner certification preparation and continuing education, Dr. Fitzgerald knows her way around the clinical setting.

Nurse practitioners are faced with common interpersonal challenges, she believes. Finding their voices—individually and collectively—is crucial to personal and professional growth. When nurse practitioners find their voice as a profession, it can help “advertise for our great profession, our patients and ourselves.” She notes that these same interpersonal skills can help in salary and benefit negotiations, as well as working with lawmakers to advance NP practice.

Dr. Fitzgerald takes her role as closing speaker seriously, stating: “I am greatly honored to have been invited and hope people will stay around to hear me,” she said. The frank and inspiring discussion will help attendees “understand what makes a powerful voice and learn how to raise your voice.”

NPs know how to advocate for their patients in a clinical setting, she believes. “Many of these same principles apply to interpersonal communication as well,” she said.

Dr. Fitzgerald certainly has found her voice and has provided thousands of programs for numerous professional organizations, universities and national and state health care associations on a wide variety of topics, including clinical pharmacology, clinical assessment, laboratory diagnosis, health care and NP practice. Beyond being a renowned speaker, she is an experienced educator and has provided graduate-level pharmacology courses for NP students at a number of universities for more than 25 years.

The closing keynote session also will include the exchange of the gavel, with Sophia Thomas, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, PPCNP-BC, FNAP, FAANP, installed as AANP president; Joyce Kneestrick, PhD, APRN, CRNP, FAAN; and Bruce Jansen of Forbes.

Online or on-air: Media training prepares NPs for taking their messages to the masses

The media can be a portal to a larger audience, but getting the message out can be a challenge. Tough questions and misinformation by the interviewers and a lack of practice from the nurse practitioners can stand in the way of conveying the information and expertise.

Gaining polish through practice and role playing was part of the “Media Training for AANP Leadership” session Friday. The session was conducted by Barb Dehn, RN, MS, NP, FAANP, who makes frequent television appearances; Vlad Cartwright, president of SevenTwenty Strategies, AANP’s public relations partner; and Bruce Jansen of Forbes.

The invitation-only workshop was intended to “prepare advance practice nursing leaders or AANP leaders to deliver impactful messages and serve as spokespersons for the profession and the association,” Cartwright said.

The session began with an overview of the current media landscape. Cartwright helped attendees understand how to craft a message.

Participants were sent homework in advance, asked to bring in specific stories and to familiarize themselves with the details. A mock interview helped them learn to respond to media questions.

Those who were more experienced participated in on-camera training, working directly with Dehn. They were introduced to nuances like blocking and delivering a call to action. Those who were “brave” were recorded on-camera and watched the playbacks while the experts offered feedback.

“When public speaking and being in the media is fraught with so much anxiety, we try to make sure that we offer positive feedback,” Dehn said. “Nurse practitioners provide care to millions of people every day and it’s important that we have the same kind of visibility as our other health care colleagues. We can further the mission by being an engaging group of experts that can provide people the same kind of information through the media as we do one-on-one. Participating in media training—and in speaking publicly—is not for the faint of heart. But Dehn believes “it’s incumbent on use to be ready. We’re in the trenches and providing care to people day in and day out, in every possible venue. The media is just an extension of that. Participants learn to view a camera or a microphone as a portal to many more people, because you’re utilizing the same skills used one-on-one with patients.”

Dr. Margaret Fitzgerald

Practice helps prepare nurse practitioners for on-camera appearances.

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Dr. Margaret Fitzgerald

Practice helps prepare nurse practitioners for on-camera appearances.
As the national conference closes out, Sophia L. Thomas, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, PPCNP-BC, FNAP, FAANP, will take the leadership role as president of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP).

With the past year as president-elect, having been provided close mentorship by outgoing president Joyce M. Knestrick, PhD, APRN, CRNP, FAANP, Dr. Thomas is ready for the responsibilities of leading the organization and profession.

"Dr. Knestrick has really provided me a thorough and intensive mentorship. I've got a good grasp of what's going on in every facet of the organization."

During her two-year tenure, Dr. Thomas hopes to increase the visibility of AANP nationally and globally. "AANP is the voice of the nurse practitioner and the largest NP professional membership organization in the world, and as such, I see AANP as the global leader and resource for all nurse practitioners."

AANP members have a role to play, too, and Dr. Thomas encourages continued grassroots activity among NPs. "I want to get our grassroots NPs involved in public policy as well as regulatory issues. I'd like to increase our membership and our global voice as we work towards issues impacting nurse practitioner practice and patients' accessibility to quality health care provided by nurse practitioners."

Dr. Thomas works at a community health center, Daughters of Charity in Kenner, Louisiana. She is certified in family and pediatric practice and also works at a local children's hospital after hours urgent care.

"The most rewarding thing about working at a community health center is seeing health care issues that span every facet of health care and making the difference in the lives of patients of all ages," Dr. Thomas said. "Our patients don't have access to specialists. It's up to us to treat the many disorders that can be handled by primary care, and act as facilitator for patients to access more specialized care."

In her practice, she sees the impact of health professional shortages, particularly in rural areas and inner cities. "Access to care is a big issue," she said. "I'm fortunate that the patients who live in the rural and health professional shortage areas are impacted the most; they often have greater needs. For those patients, the rural health clinics and community health centers meet their health care needs. Many of these centers are staffed by NPs."

Nurse practitioners can help solve the health care shortages and raise the visibility of the profession at the same time, she believes. "We have nurses that live in rural and health professional shortage areas that decide to get their nurse practitioner education. They're already established in the community. Upon graduation and certification, they remain in those communities." That is largely her story, too. She lived in a small rural community, practicing as a registered nurse when she opted to pursue advanced practice 23 years ago.

"I always knew that once I became a bachelor's prepared nurse, that I'd continue on with my education. I valued education and pushed myself to be the best possible clinician I could be. I had a successful practice and had been practicing for more than 15 years before I pursued my doctor of nursing practice. It's important for individuals to reach their full potential."

As they do, they will continue to fill gaps in patient care, particularly with health care professional shortages. NPs are particularly suited to help with the challenges in access to care, Dr. Thomas believes. "In addition to taking care of the physical needs of the patient, we really delve deeper and make sure they understand their disease processes. We believe if a patient understands it, they're more likely to have more positive outcomes. More than fifty years of research shows that nurse practitioner care is high-quality, evidence-based, and cost-effective, and our outcomes are equal to and sometimes better than our physician colleagues. As we see physicians stepping back from primary care and pursuing the specialty areas of practice, nurse practitioners are there filling those gaps."

AANP doubling funds for grants and scholarships to $120,000

As AANP membership grows, so has the available funding for grants and scholarships. This year, the amount doubled from $60,000, where it had been for several years, to $120,000. In all, nearly $400,000 has been issued through the AANP Grants and Scholarship Program since 2014.

AANP members can use the members-only scholarships to further their education, said Diane Padden, AANP's vice president of Professional Practice and Partnerships and a nurse practitioner herself. She notes that the scholarships might be used for RNs who want to become NPs or NPs who want to pursue further degrees.

"It's really a way to foster the NP role for our members," Padden added. "We value the education of our members and the scholarship program provides resources for those who need that extra financial support to further their education. Ultimately, this means that we could have potentially more NPs in the workforce."

The grant program is intended to support AANP members in conducting research, advancing evidence-based care or implementing quality improvement projects. Grants up to $5,000 were available—double the previous cap.

Additionally, AANP and the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) have partnered on a grant program to further the understanding of substance use disorder, a growing concern and one in which NPs are on the frontline.

The NIDA Mentored Training Award allows an AANP member to pursue a project related to substance use disorder, with a grant of $10,000 (plus a stipend to the mentor). The NIDA Mentored Training Award application process will open in the fall.

2019 Scholarship Award Recipients

Leah Burt, MS, APRN, ANP-BC of the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Nursing from Chicago, IL
Mary (Beth) Comeaux, MSN, CRNP of the University of Alabama at Birmingham in Birmingham, AL
Leonie DeClerk, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences from Little Rock, AR
Aimee Chism Holland, DNP, WHNP-BC, FNP-BC, FAANP of the University of Alabama at Birmingham College of Nursing from Birmingham, AL
Pamela Mapstone, DNP, CPNP-PC of the University of Rochester M. John Fisher College from Rochester, NY
Michaela A. Maynard, MPH, MSN, NP-C, WHNP-BC of the Miriam Hospital from Providence, RI
Laura Spear, BSN, RN of Jacksonville University from Jacksonville, FL
Cara C. Young, PhD, RN, FNP-C of the University of Texas at Austin from Austin, TX

2019 Scholarship Award Recipients

Carrie Baker, MSN, FNP-C of Frontier Nursing University from Pearl City, HI
Rachel Brittanny Baker, RN, BSN, PHN, PCCN of the University of Southern California from San Diego, CA
Elizabeth Ballewage, BSN, CCRN, CNN of Frontier Nursing University from Boise, ID
April Daniel, BSN, RN of the University of Texas - Arlington from Texas - Arlington, TX
Lauren W. Deming, RN-BSN of Westminster College from Salt Lake City, UT
Elisa N. Echevarria, BSN, RN of Florida International University from Miami, FL
Angelica Ferrazzi, MSN, RN, BC, CNSBN of the University of Massachusetts Amherst from Amherst, VA
Luisa Clementia Garcia, APRN, NP-C of the University of Miami from Hollywood, FL
Marquita Grandola, FNP-C of Oregon Health and Science University from Portland, OR
Erica Lynch Grant, BSN, RN, CCRN of the University of Illinois at Chicago from Chicago, IL
Justin Henderson, BSN, CEN of Maryville University from Salt Lake City, UT
Heather M. Karem, BSN, RN, OCN of the University of Cincinnati from Cincinnati, KY
Jesse Michael Kay, BSN, RN, BC, CPN, CCRN, TCGRN of Duke University School of Nursing from Durham, NC
Adaya Kirk, BSN, RN of the University of Tennessee-Knoxville from Knoxville, TN
Jennifer Lackaye, RN, BSN of Stony Brook University from Poughkeepsie, NY
Shannon M. Lewis, MA, BSN, ACM-RN of George Mason University from Springfield, VA
Margot Miller, BSN, RN, CEN of the University of North Dakota from Grand Forks, ND
Christy L. Morris, RN, BSN of Harding University from Ardmore, OK
Colleen Reilly Moss, MSN, APRN, NNP-BC of the University of Tennessee Chattanooga from Franklin, TN
Jennifer N. Nguyen, BSN, RN of Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing from Baltimore, MD
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Courtney Taylor, BSN, RN of the University of Utah from Salt Lake City, UT
Tatiana Vasilishin, BSN, RN, PCCN of the University of Washington from Seattle, WA
Loy E. Watson, RN of Frontier Nursing University from Caldwell, TX

> see page 7
State issues continue to show progress; much work remains

While much of the state level advocacy work focuses on achieving full practice authority, AANP’s State Policy Team has been working on multiple fronts, said Dr. Mary Kopanos.

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**Open Access Award brings more insight to nurse practitioners**

Keeping up with the latest research can be costly, especially when it is published outside the two publications available free for AANP members, the Journal of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (JANNP) and the Journal for Nurse Practitioners (JNP). The Open Access Award can also be costly, especially when it is published outside the two publications available free for AANP members about to have work published in a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal. AANP will pay the open access fees so that the research is available to all AANP members.

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For information about the Open Access Award or the Open Access for AANP members, visit the AANP website or contact the Open Access Award Committee.

**Corporate Council Luncheon**

The AANP Corporate Council allows companies in the health care sector to showcase their support for the nurse practitioner role while gaining access into the minds of NPs as they make business decisions. The Corporate Council was thanked during a luncheon yesterday with AANP leadership. The Corporate Council can access exclusive opportunities to conduct market research and focus groups, meet with AANP leadership and utilize AANP marketing channels. The Corporate Council Spot light was a new addition to the conference, which allowed Optum, Astra Zeneca and new member Florida Department of Citrus to share information designed specifically for attendees.
Federal issues show forward movement, but engagement needed

Improving access to care and other patient-centered initiatives remain at the forefront of AANP’s work at the federal level. As part of Friday’s General Session: Annual Legislative Policy Update, MaryAnne Sapio, AANP’s vice president of Federal Government Affairs, offered an overview of the political atmosphere in Washington, D.C. Sapio provided insight into several bills that are currently making their way through Congress, all of which will benefit patients served by nurse practitioners.

The Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act has been introduced in both the House and the Senate and AANP is “gathering support,” Sapio said. The act would authorize NPs to certify the need for home health services for their Medicare patients. The Promoting Access to Diabetic Shoes Act has been introduced in both chambers and has doubled the support of cosponsors in the House from the previous congressional session, Sapio said. “Our collective education of members on this issue has allowed us to gain traction and support,” she said.

The ACO Assignment Improvement Act would allow NP patients to be counted in Medicare Shared Savings ACOs. It has been introduced in the House, but has no companion bill in the Senate, Sapio said. “Health care is one of those issues that is bipartisan,” Sapio said. “You do find common ground on the health care front, but the tipping point is constituent engagement.”

Sapio urged those attending the session to visit the Government Affairs booth in the AANP Plaza to send Congress messages of support for these pieces of legislation. She also encouraged participation in the 2020 AANP Health Policy Conference, to be held in March in Washington, D.C. Participants will receive two days of education about various bills and hot topics in health care. Armed with that education, AANP members can visit their congressional representatives and their staff on the third day of the conference to share their stories and urge support.

“It is a great way to put stories into action and talk about what you’re seeing every day,” Sapio said. “You can convey the problem that these barriers cause and help convince your representatives to retire them.” Sapio also urged attendees to connect with the health policy team at the booth to talk specifically about other legislative issues.

Some of the courses available:

- Comprehensive Care in COPD: Strategies for Nurse Practitioners
- Next Generation Diabetes Management: Titratible Fixed-Ratio Combination Therapy with Basal Insulin/GLP-1 RA to Better Manage Type 2 Diabetes
- Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease: The Shifting Paradigm of Individualized Care with SGLT-2s and GLP-1RAs
- Updates in Psoriasis and Psoriatic Arthritis Management: Best Practices for Effective Care
- Managing Heart Failure: Implications of Guideline Changes for Clinical Practice
- Best Practices in Obesity Management: The Role of New and Emerging Therapies
- NP/PA 24-Hour Buprenorphine Waiver Training
- Introductory Certificate of Obesity Management in Primary Care

Ongoing CE opportunities available through AANP Education & Accreditation

The AANP National Conference is entering its final days, but continuing education goes on all year long through AANP’s Education & Accreditation department. With more than 160 sessions available in the AANP CE Center, NPs can learn at their own pace on topics of most interest or based on practice needs. Of the courses available, almost all are free with AANP membership; the few that do incur an additional fee are deeply discounted for AANP members. Also, some CE programs are available to all NPs.

“We hope that even non-members will take a look at the CE Center and take these free courses open to all so they have a better understanding of what a great benefit we offer our members related to CE activities,” said Anne Normann, DNP, FNP-C, FAAANP, AANP’s vice president, Education & Accreditation. “We know that NPs aren’t just coming to the CE Center to earn their CE credit. Sometimes they are just looking for information to assist them in caring for a specific patient.”
Exhibits

- Johns Hopkins School of Nursing
- Journal for Nurse Practitioners
- Judge Healthcare
- Kaneka Nutrients
- Kansas Instruments
- Kimberly-Clark
- KVK Tech
- LabCorp
- Laclede Inc
- Landmark Health
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- Michigan State University
- MinuteClinic
- Mount Carmel Health System
- Mylan Inc.
- National Association of State Boards of Nursing
- National Council of State Boards of Nursing
- National Headache Foundation
- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- National Kidney Foundation
- National Nurse Practitioner Entrepreneur Network
- Nature Made Nutritional Products
- Nephrology Nursing Certification Commission
- New Mexico Nurse Practitioner Council
- Noble Medical
- Northern Kentucky University
- Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation
- Nordik Nordisk - Diabetes Care
- Nordik Nordisk - GLP - 1 Disease Awareness
- Nordik Nordisk - Obesity Care
- Nordik Nordisk - Rethink Obesity
- NP Outreach/TPI Marketing
- NPACE - Nurse Practitioner Associates
- For Continuing Education
- NPAP, LLC
- Nursing Outside the Box
- Nutra Biogenesis/Nutracutical
- Obesity Medicine Association
- OBP Medical
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- Olympia Pharmaceuticals
- Oncology Nursing Society
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- Optum
- Orthopaedic Nurses Certification Board (ONCB)
- Otsuka Pharmaceutical Development & Commercialization
- OurHealth
- Pain Medicine News
- Para Pro
- PARO Robots
- Pediatric Nursing Certification Board
- Penn State Health
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- Titan Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
- TOPS Club Inc., (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)
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- UC San Diego's Price PMHNP Fellowship
- UCLA Health
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- Women's International Pharmacy
- Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic
- Zarfeo Laboratories
- Zarski's Naturals

—List as of June 20, 2019—
Safeguard from complexities of NP practice

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.

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 state 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 account-ability where all healthcare professionals are encouraged to report, discuss, and learn from mistakes in order to improve patient safety and avoid lawsuits.

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3. Receive a three month extension (50% savings) on your AANP membership here when a new member joins using your member ID.
4. Win $1,000 if your member ID results in the highest number of new member registrations.

New AANP Members:

1. Visit aapn.org/100k.
2. Enter this referral number.
3. Complete the join process before July 31, 2019.
4. Use coupon code AANP100K at checkout to instantly save $25.
5. Add your voice to the NP movement—making a measurable difference in the strength of our profession and the health of this country!

Learn the movement today and save $25 at aapn.org/100k.

*The monthly extension will be applied to your account for the duration amount who completes registration using your member ID as a referral code. Additional new members must complete registration with the use of your member ID as a referral code. New members must complete registration with the use of your member ID as a referral code by 11:59 PM CT on July 31, 2019. Recruitment numbers will be finalized at this point. The member ID with the largest number of new member registrations, winner will be determined by a random drawing of all tied participants.
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