Celebrating an Anniversary: A Decade in Review

The Fellowship Program of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) is celebrating its 10th birthday this year during the 25th anniversary of AANP. For many years, leaders within the Academy were determined to recognize the many members of AANP who make outstanding contributions to health care and the NP profession. Influential members created, in 2000, the Fellowship program of the AANP that was designed to recognize members’ involvement in healthcare clinical practice, research, education, and policy. Over the following decade, 222 members of AANP have been given the distinction and honor of joining the Fellows.

This virtual issue of the journal is a tribute to these leaders and a celebration of their accomplishments. The editors of this virtual issue utilized the four cornerstones of the Fellows program to categorize and review articles written by Fellows and published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (JAANP)* demonstrating dedication to practice, research, education, or health policy. The articles in the virtual issue represent a wide spectrum of the Fellows’ interests, ideas, and expertise, and are only a snapshot of the many fine contributions Fellows have made to *JAANP* and other professional and lay publications prior to and after their designations as Fellows. Selecting the articles to show case in this virtual issue was not an easy process and our selections were drawn only from publications after the designation of Fellow, leaving out many wonderful contributions.

Frank Cole and Eileen Hayes, two outstanding Fellows died in 2006 (Cole) and 2010 (Hayes). Both contributed extensively to each cornerstone area of the Fellows program and nationally to NP endeavors and achievements. Cole published articles on men’s health and quality improvement and Hayes’s investigations on mentoring made significant contributions to practice, education, and the Fellows’ mentorship program. Authors writing about mentoring programs in other disciplines frequently cite her work. The Fellows embrace the work of these practitioners and acknowledge that the NP world has lost two remarkable individuals. Their works are emphasized in our choices for this anniversary issue.

The leadership and mentorship of the Fellows remain primary initiatives. To paraphrase Resnick and colleagues (2002), the AANP Fellowship Program was created to mentor nurse practitioners who will continue to provide leadership in clinical practice, research, education, and policy for the next generations of nurse practitioners. Fellows have taken a leadership role and carried out many major projects under the auspices of AANP that have added to the national and international database on NPs. The AANP supports the work of NPs and takes an active role in helping NPs to excel as a population in general and particularly through the Fellows. Towers, Dempster, and Counts, in numerous articles, have reported on the Think Tank work of the Fellows to address the health care needs of the nation in 2012 and how NPs can play a vital role in meeting those needs.

Nurse practitioners in their roles of researchers and health care providers have expanded the knowledge and interventions of NPs through their observations, critiques and significant research. Researchers have utilized research methods ranging from surveys to predictive correlational studies; from Level one to Level four research; have included a variety of cultures; and incorporated all age groups. Goolsby reported on studies related to NP demographics. In one study, she focused on the antibiotic prescribing practices of NPs. Resnick, a well-known expert in the field of geriatrics, plays a role in guiding the care of the older adult and providing guidance to practitioners. Her 2001 exercise article is noted. A number of authors illustrate the symbiotic relationship of research and practice. Harvan and Cotter (2006) and Hayes (2006) are key examples that are included.

Investigations by Berg (2010), and Abel (2006) feature women’s health concerns and provide guidance for health promotion. Longworth (2003) and Dela Cruz (2004) address cultural issues in the Hispanic and homeless populations. Articles specific to practice are by Burnett and Tucker (2005), who described a collaborative practice model to assure continuity of care for “snow birds”, and management of illness in a child by Pongmarutani, Alpert, and Miller (2006). Towers, McArthur, Counts, Hayes, Kalmakis, Resnick, and colleagues have written on nurse practitioners as leaders, mavericks, visionaries, and change agents as they help to inform, challenge and change health care policy for the nation. For additional information on the Fellowship Program, read Hicks, Bray, Green, and Olson (2009).

We think our selection of articles illustrates how the Fellows have contributed to the four cornerstones of the program and exemplifies what the Fellows have accomplished for NPs, our patients and families, and for health care in general. We look forward to the next ten years with enthusiasm for all that can be achieved. And we congratulate the forty-four outstanding NPs inducted into the Fellowship Program in this, the tenth anniversary year.