



THE NURSE PRACTITIONER ASSOCIATION
New York State • Chautauqua/Cattaraugus Chapter

Pride of the Profession

January, 2012

Dear Member of The NPA-NYS Chautauqua-Cattaraugus County Chapter,

I would like to thank the past President of The Nurse Practitioner Association New York State Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Chapter, Lynn Ouellette, for the outstanding job that she did during her term. She was the primary planner of our focal event, The NPA 7th Annual Region One Primary Care Conference in May 2011, and was a major contributor to the success of the event. She established the venue, and was key in obtaining speakers and sponsor support for the event. It was quite a success for our Chapter, and I thank her for her hard work, both at the Conference as well as during her term as Chapter President. Monthly meetings provided a wealth of new product information on topics such as diabetes, antibiotics, rheumatology, pain management, and many more, as well as providing networking and mentoring opportunities. Lynn led by example, and her Primary Care office in Salamanca has allowed her the independence in practice that she desires. She continues to strive to improve herself professionally as a clinician as she works toward a doctoral degree, and we wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors.

I would also like to thank the secretary and treasurer of the prior term as well as now the upcoming term, Mary McKenna and Danielle Jurczak. Their assistance with the Conference also contributed to its success, and their contributions in the past term supported and balanced the group of Officers. I would like to welcome Jennifer Hewson as the new Vice President of our Chapter, and look forward to fresh views that she can add as a new officer. As we look ahead to the future term, the Officers look forward to steering the Chapter as we progress not only as a group, but individually as Nurse Practitioners. The mission of our group continues to focus on promoting the role of the NP with professionalism through practice and services.

Many challenges are anticipated in the upcoming years as healthcare changes impact our day to day lives. Nurse Practitioners will continue to provide competent care, and we continue to pursue excellence and independence as clinicians. During the past year, the New York State NPA has accomplished many of its goals in expanding the Nurse Practitioner profession. New York State Nurse Practitioners may now sign death certificates, and are now recognized as providers on the Empire Plan Insurance Company's panel. Many past changes affecting NPs would not have occurred without the State organization representing us. We are proud to be a smaller component of the larger State organization, and we continue to support their efforts of advancing and protecting our profession.

The primary goal that I hope to achieve during this term of office is to expand relationships within our group. I had the pleasure of speaking with many of you during the planning of The NPA Region One Conference. We have wonderful people in our organization who do not hesitate to assist when requested. There is a wealth of clinical knowledge and expertise possessed by the members of our group. I feel that we need to utilize The NPA network more, starting with our own chapter's members. We need to develop a rapport and relationship with each other, and not think twice about communicating with each other, especially when it is regarding improving patient care. An example of this: I treated a patient with a GI cancer who was having side effects from radiation therapy. Many of the measures that I attempted were unsuccessful in improving these side effects, and the patient's quality of life was very much affected. I emailed a fellow NPA member who is in a GI specialty for other suggestions, and received a quick response with multiple suggestions. It was a win-win situation: I felt better because I had alternatives to offer the patient, the patient felt better because those alternatives were effective, and I assume that the NP who offered the assistance felt good at having helped both my patient and me. The relationship between our members can be fostered, and I hope that this can be accomplished through

meetings and other future events. How much easier is it to approach someone for collegial advice when you have a relationship with them, even if it is via a single previous conversation or email contact?

Additional goals during this term include increasing general membership and attendance at monthly meetings. We are a very small chapter compared to others in The NPA-NYS. Current Chautauqua-Cattaraugus County chapter membership includes 33 members, while other chapters include 200-500+ members. Our average meeting attendance is four to five members, most typically board members, and we hope to increase member participation. As a group, the large geographic area of our chapter is the single most challenge that we face. However, Nurse Practitioners inherently adapt and find creative solutions to challenges. We have attempted to overcome the geographical issue by holding meetings at various locations throughout both counties, and will continue to do so. I request that if you have new ideas that can add to or improve our group, please express those ideas. If you're unable to attend meetings, please consider sending an email with comments or suggestions. I wish to hear from you, and value your opinion as a Nurse Practitioner colleague.

Another factor that is impacting NPs includes the issue of a doctoral degree. For those members who have already obtained your doctoral degrees, and for those who are currently pursuing this goal, kudos to you! The sacrifices that you have made and/or continue to make to develop your professional role as an NP are recognized and applauded. I encourage others to consider the idea of a doctoral degree if the circumstances in your life allow it. In support of this, our group has established a scholarship fund for NP students registered in either a Masters or Doctoral program, and the criteria and application form is attached. Two scholarships will be awarded this year, and I hope that you will consider applying if you are currently a student.

I would like to thank you for maintaining your membership in The NPA Chautauqua-Cattaraugus County Chapter, and for your continued support. Perhaps you know of a colleague who is not a member, and attached is a membership application to pass on to them. We continue to strive to improve the organization so that it may effectively meet your professional needs.

Lastly, I would like to remind you of the gift that you give to your patients—the gift of yourself. Not only do you listen to your patients, you hear them. Nurse Practitioners are special, valuable individuals in the lives of their patients as well as in the lives of their families and friends. Nurse Practitioners are hard workers by nature, and many times the healthcare environment stretches us to our limits. I hope that you do not work so hard that you do not take care of yourself. Balance is empowerment, as is the decision to be in control of how hard you allow yourself to work. Take time for yourself, and be good to yourself, for many times no one else will.

Please refer to our website, www.npa-ccc.org, for up-to-date information. Announcements regarding dates and times of future meetings will be forthcoming. Thank you for your time, and I look forward to seeing or hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Tina Traber, ANP

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