

Thankful to Be a Nurse Practitioner!



As we enter the holiday season and round out 2022, I find myself eternally grateful to be part of such a beautiful and fulfilling profession. Many years ago, a dear colleague, Dr. Jean Aertker, told me that if I was ever in London, I should visit the Florence Nightingale Museum. Eventually, I did make that visit and realized that much of nursing history remains true today. Nurses, in all forms, are needed throughout the world, especially during difficult times. We stand on the shoulders of nursing giants, making it possible to evolve as nurses throughout the centuries.

We are fortunate to have many living legends among us. Recently, I had the tremendous honor of speaking with Dr. Loretta Ford. She shared her work co-founding the nurse practitioner (NP) role. We discussed how far NPs have come over the past 57 years, where we are today and how the more than 355,000 NPs across the U.S. will continue to advance health care delivery. She advised NPs to continue forth, never give up and find a way to provide health care for everyone.

Similarly, I am grateful for nursing giant, Dr. Jan Towers, who worked so hard to unite NPs through a national association. There, *under the apple tree*, Towers had a vision of all NPs standing together to advance health care. Today, with more than 121,000 members of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners® (AANP), we stand united as, together, we work to empower all NPs to advance accessible, high-quality, equitable health care for all.

Recently, I was able to meet with NP and other advanced practice nurse (APN) leaders from countries around the world. To listen and learn of their work to advance nursing practice was remarkable and strikingly similar to what we have seen domestically.

As we end this year, I am so grateful for the many nurses who have led us to where we are today, the myriad paths we can pursue and countless interprofessional and international opportunities to advance health care. Nurses, including NPs, find those in need and make high-quality health care possible, no matter where they are in this big world!

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The American Association of Nurse Practitioners® (AANP) empowers all nurse practitioners (NPs) to advance accessible, person-centered, equitable, high-quality health care for diverse communities through practice, education, advocacy, research and leadership.

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