

LETTERS *to the editor*

The "Write On" column is intended as a forum for students to respond to articles in *Imprint* as well as issues in nursing today. Please send your letters to: *Imprint* Editor, c/o NSNA, 45 Main Street, Suite 606, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, or e-mail to nsna@nsna.org, att. WRITE ON.

Making It Count

I wanted to let you know that I had a great time at the American Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA) Convention as a Janssen Scholar. I met so many amazing individuals from all over the United States.

Thank you again for informing me about the Janssen Scholarship. I have already encouraged several students to apply for next year.*

I was appointed to the APNA Disaster Preparedness Task Force after I let several key APNA Leaders at the convention know that I was interested in the role (including the President of APNA over a Janssen Scholars Breakfast). The second day of the Convention, I received a call from the Executive Director of APNA who told me that I had been appointed to the committee!

The closing key note Speaker canceled at the last minute so APNA decided to conduct a Disaster Preparedness Task Force Panel Discussion. I was able to sit on the stage and be part of the panel discussion. (I was so psyched.)

I share this story with you because many of the skills I needed to be able to make this happen I learned through my direct involvement with NSNA. As I have said on numerous occasions, NSNA has changed my life. I also thank you for all of your continued support. It means so much to me that you have taken the time to help me maximize my leadership potential as well as further my professional growth.

Thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,
Angela Retano, MA, BSN, RN

A Growing Problem

The prevalence of childhood obesity in the United States is increasing at an alarming rate, resulting in immediate and long term risks to physical health for our nation's youth. The number of children diagnosed with serious diseases associated with obesity, such as diabetes and hypertension, has created a public health crisis. Recent initiatives and legislation have started to address this trend in children and teenagers, and the media touches on the issue at least weekly. The American Beverage Association, in partnership with the American Heart Association, other anti-obesity advocates, and the William J. Clinton Foundation reached an agreement in May 2006 that will stop the sale of most sodas in schools by 2010. Some critics say that this is not early enough to address the severity of the situation.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) also has standards requiring schools to plan menus that meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, but these standards do not apply to "a la carte" foods; foods sold in snack bars, foods sold in school stores, or food sold in vending machines. These standards may hinder the nation's goals regarding childhood obesity.

We encourage you to read a paper submitted to *Imprint* and that unfortunately, the editors were unable to publish. It is on www.nsna.org/pubs/publications under the February/March issue of the magazine. It is our belief that the legislation and discussion that surrounds childhood obesity needs to be discussed in the classroom and that we must be aware of its effects throughout our nursing careers.

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* *Editor's note:* The APNA-Janssen Scholarship, made possible by the generous support of Ortho-McNeil Janssen Scientific Affairs, LLC, has just been announced for 2007 and the application is posted on www.nsna.org. See page 20 for more information.