



Submit your chapter activities and photos to *Imprint's* Happenings reporter Heather Vernillo at heathernjns@comcast.net. You can also visit her web page at www.nsna.org, under PUBLICATIONS/Imprint

State and School Activities

ARIZONA

Student nurses can make a difference, our voice counts. Students Nurses Association of Arizona (SNAAz), State President Kim Rigoli, proved this in April by testifying to the State House of Representatives Appropriations Committee on the need for more clinical instructors and nursing faculty. SNAAz partnered with the Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association (AzHHA) to support State Bill 1294. State Bill 1294 is asking Arizona to allot \$20 million toward increasing nursing faculty pay and upgrading facilities. The State will then ask the federal government for matching funds.

The hope is to attract more nurses to teaching, thereby allowing more nursing students to enroll in college and decrease the nursing shortage. State Bill 1294 passed both the Senate and House appropriation committees. The bill must now go before Governor Janet Napolitano. If you would like information on what SNAAz did in Arizona contact Bridget O'Gara of AzHHA at www.azhha.org. Have a voice – you can make a difference!

CONNECTICUT

The Bridgeport Hospital School of Nursing (BHSN) has started a mentoring program with Warren Harding High School, a health care magnet school in Bridgeport. Juniors and seniors interested in nursing as a career will spend a day with one of BHSN's students in the BHSN clinical lab and then continue the relationship on a monthly basis through conversations and email. The BHSN students obtained a donation from United States Surgical to purchase student nurse handbooks as a gift for the high school students. School president (and also state president) Christopher Jones would like to make this a state-wide effort for other high schools.

The remainder of the donation has allowed BHSN students to purchase an air hockey table for the inpatient adolescent unit and an air hockey table and ping pong table for the outpatient child/adolescent programs. They still have some extra monies to purchase inspirational books and logs for the psychiatric unit and to start up a school store to raise more money for their community projects and convention costs!

This summer the students worked at the CT Special Olympics in the Healthy Athlete Village doing assessments and health teaching. They obtained a donation from General Electric for \$500 for next year! This was not only a school project, but a state project as well!

FLORIDA

Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) Nursing Student Association is planning a busy year. It is continuing its relationship with Hammond Stadium in Fort Myers where FGCU NSA runs a concession stand throughout the year, for the seasons baseball games and for other events, including recent Nelson and Bob Dylan concerts. The stand helps the association raise money to fund community health projects, health education projects, and cover travel expenses.

The "Health Kits and Baby Bags" project begins in October when FGCU members run car washes to raise money for the initiative. The kits put together will include items necessary for the care of small infants in communities of need. The association hopes to involve community businesses in the project by requesting items for donations.

FGCU will also keep busy this year thanks to its new CAPS chair. The new position is held by Rebecca Kinsey, and the new committee plans to start its activities this fall. CAPS stands for Children Amblyopia Prevention Screening and it was created to prevent monocular blindness in children ages 3 to 5. If caught early, the disease can be treated more effectively. If a problem is detected in the child during screenings, parents are made aware of the problem and advised to seek an ophthalmologist consultation, which CAPS will pay for if cost is prohibitive.

GEORGIA

On May 20-21, 60 nursing students from Georgia attended the First Annual Council of State Leaders (COSL) Retreat in Amicalola Falls State Park in the northern Georgia mountains. With an understanding that a state organization is only as strong as the local chapters, and that open communication between the state board and the local chapters is essential, the District Directors of the Georgia Association of Nursing Students (GANS) facilitated a weekend of networking, team-building, and breakout sessions. The Executive Board of GANS changed the traditional Council of School Presidents' forum from a one-day meeting to a weekend retreat in the mountains this year. Various chapter board members were included to help form more cohesive school groups.

The weekend retreat answered many of the questions that newly elected school officers have when taking over a student group. A Chapter Resource Booklet was just one of the invaluable resources that students took home. It contains a wealth of information about how to make school chapters stronger as well as how to be active members in GANS. Scholarship and award applications, running for state office information and applications, and registration forms for Convention are all in the booklet.

Most of the nursing schools in Georgia were represented at COSL, and participants accomplished everything from developing ideas for a statewide community service project (Boys and Girls Club) to implementing critical thinking skills in Egyptian baseball (a team-building event that brought out everyone's competitive spirit). Two guest speakers were highlighted at the retreat: Dr. Judith Malachowski, Associate Professor at SouthWestern State University and Linda Easterly, the Georgia Nurses Association President. Cheryl DeForest, Public Relations Director for GANS, conducted a Public Relations and fundraising forum, and breakout sessions

included office specific talks as well as tips on how to increase recruitment. Along with the Chapter Resource Booklet, attendees were given a CD containing contact information for fundraising, PR, and networking.

At the end of the retreat, a roundtable discussion on a statewide community service project included discussion about legislative issues as well as possible Breakthrough to Nursing (BTN) projects. It was decided that GANS would focus on the Latino population in Georgia.

The District Directors already have plans for next year's retreat. Some of the ideas that have been discussed include recruiter tables for a mini career fair, more information and sessions for faculty advisors, and a statewide vote on the location of the next gathering. ☺

Heather Vernillo is a nursing student at Monmouth University, West Long Branch, NJ, and is the 2005-2006 Happenings reporter.

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