

Stepping Out Globally

ICN Student Network: The Grapevine, TX Meeting



**Jennifer Davis,
BSN, RN**
*Immediate-past NSNA
President*

along with Alison Webel, a past vice-president of NSNA. Together we brought a great deal of experience to the

In 2007, the International Council of Nurses (ICN) met in Yokohama, Japan, and students from all over the world met to discuss the formation of the first international network for students. The meeting itself generated a great deal of excitement, but few decisions were made as to the formation and structure of the newly formed network. I had the privilege of being selected as the Student Network's (SN) first co-chair

table, but we lacked the perspective to design a network structure for an international audience. The only way to really achieve this goal was to bring our international peers together once again for a meeting to collectively design the future governance of the Student Network. The 2008 NSNA Annual Convention provided such an opportunity.

The 2007-08 NSNA Board of Directors developed a plan to invite student leaders from all over the world to attend and invited state associations to each sponsor one student. The international students would not only have the opportunity to attend the SN, but also to see a NSNA convention first-hand and network with U.S. students. We were fortunate to have a diverse cross-section of students in attendance.

During the day-long meeting following the NSNA Convention, the SN's Core Steering Group (CSG) – and invited international guests – addressed all of the pressing issues facing the SN. The SN made great strides and accomplished a great deal. Topics of discussion included the creation of a newsletter, network governance (including

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Nursing students from South Africa, Ghana West Africa, Sultanate of Oman, Poland, Norway, Denmark, Canada, Trinidad and Tobago, joined students from the USA at the 56th Annual Convention in Grapevine, Texas last March. In addition to attending the Convention, the international students participated in the International Council of Nurses Student Network Planning Meeting. The next Student Network meeting takes place in Durban, South Africa at the International Council of Nurses Quadrennial Congress, June 27-July 4, 2009.

Attendees at the Grapevine ICN Meeting

Sponsors:

- 07-08 NSNA Board of Directors
- The National League for Nursing
- The Commission on Graduates of Foreign Schools of Nursing
- Arkansas Nursing Students' Association
- California Nursing Students' Association
- Nursing Student Association of New York
- Oklahoma Nursing Students' Association
- Ohio Nursing Students' Association

International Attendees:

- Odirile Khonkhobe, President, South Africa
- Opoku Frederick Kofi, President, Ghana W. Africa
- Piotr Goworek, President, Poland
- Malgorzata Durka, Poland
- Stian Starke, President, Norway
- Mads Dippel Rasmussen, Denmark
- Stephanie Williams, President, Canada
- Sarah Painter, Canada
- Susan Harrison, President, Trinidad and Tobago
- Brenda Lee Suduma, Trinidad and Tobago
- Samantha Calbio, Trinidad and Tobago
- Clivia County, Trinidad and Tobago
- Valerie Duke, Trinidad and Tobago
- Natalie Astudillo, Trinidad and Tobago
- Darcel Saunders, Trinidad and Tobago
- Sybil Raymond, Trinidad and Tobago
- Jennifer M. Davis, Immediate Past NSNA President; SN Co-Chair, USA
- Jenna Sanders, NSNA President, USA
- Allison R. Webel, BSN, RN, SN Co-Chair, USA
- David Benton, ICN Chief Executive Officer

bylaws and election procedures), increasing involvement in the SN, establishing and utilizing a budget and developing an agenda for the ICN's next meeting in Durban, South Africa in 2009.

Also noteworthy was the discussion of defining the membership of the student network. While this would seem like a simple decision within the U.S., defining membership among countries with different educational programs, points of entry, and scope of practice was no easy task. When we left Japan last year the only criteria for membership was "anyone with an interest in nursing student issues." This had the potential to open the door to those outside of the student role assuming leadership positions. ICN Consultant, David Benton, brought word to the CSG that the ICN Board of Directors hoped that we would ensure a student led-membership model. After a careful discussion of all the issues the following membership definition was voted on unanimously by the CSG:

"Full membership is open to individuals who are currently undertaking a program of education leading to initial qualification as a nurse in their country or who have qualified within the last two years."

The CSG meeting could not have been more productive. Those in attendance worked hard on a very ambitious agenda and addressed all of the CSG's most pressing issues. Our resounding success could not have been possible without the generous support of those that sponsored the international students and the meeting itself.

For more information on the ICN-SN or to join the Network visit our website at www.ich.ch, click on Nurse Networks and look for the Student Nurse Network.

Stepping Up to The Plate



Melissa R. Snow
Southern Election
Area Representative

One common question surrounding running for a position with the National Student Nurses Association is: *Why do you pre-slate?*

The best way to explain the answer to this question is to compare pre-slating with baseball spring training. In baseball, all the professional players gather in the spring to prepare for the upcoming season. This does not mean that they are being screened to make sure they are professional material nor is it a tryout to be on the team. Simply put, it is time to prepare and practice.

The athletes prepare their minds and bodies. They must be mentally ready to play ball three to five times a week. They study, analyze and learn how the opponent plays. They prepare for all situations that might arise. They must be physically prepared as well. Their arms must be capable of throwing and catching ball after ball. Their running speed must be increased to reach the base before the ball does. Their endurance must be high. The more they prepare the more confident they are. Prep work is required to have a successful baseball season and to be a successful, confident professional baseball player.

When you decide you are interested in running for a national office, you, too, must prepare. The more you prepare, the more confident you will be. By pre-slating, you

are giving yourself the sufficient time to prep for campaigning.

Talk to your local Student Nurse Association (SNA) advisors and board officers as well as your state board members. Let them know you are interested in running for NSNA office. These students already know what it takes to hold an office and they can clue you in on the time and effort required when you are an officer.

Next, you need to create a vision of what you want to accomplish and goals for your term in office. You also need to clearly understand NSNA's vision and goals. When coming up with your own, the two should be in alignment. This preparation is imperative because you will be asked some really tough questions and if your goals are the same as NSNA's you will have an advantage.

You also want to prepare yourself for public speaking. Write your speech and have others proofread it. Once you have a final version, memorize it and practice giving your speech in front of the mirror. This is important to eliminate any "ums" and "likes" from your vocabulary. It also helps you to focus on your facial expressions and body language. Is the message you are sending through facial expressions and body language the actual message you want to send? If not, then you need time to change these habits. They took years to develop and will not change overnight.

Advertising must also be prepared in advance. Decide what forms of advertisement you want to include keeping in mind your budget. Some of the more common forms of advertising

are poster boards, business cards, fliers, stickers, pins, pens and highlighters. It takes time to create a design. It takes time to get business cards printed. It takes time to order pins, pens and highlighters from specialty print companies. These advertising methods are helpful and will be used by your competitor.

Campaigning is really fun, but you cannot be in all places at one time. Your local and state SNA may be able to volunteer or suggest someone to be your campaign manager. A campaign manager is critical. If you have one, you can get your message across to two audiences at the same time. You should not simply choose

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your best friend; but rather someone who is a people person and is confident speaking in front of others. This person will be representing you. Often, the right person for the job may not know you or your vision and goals. This takes time to teach them. They need to get to know you.

You may not need to play five baseball games in a week, but you will need endurance to last through five days of campaigning from morning until night. You may not be required to have perfect form, but you will need to have a good speech and present yourself accordingly. You may not be in a stadium of twenty-five thousand people, but you will be up in front of several hundred. You may not have billboards and extra large high definition screens to advertise on, but you still have to sell yourself to others. Your goal may not be to hit the ball with the bat or to reach the base before the ball, but ultimately you still want to compete and reach home base.

There are many similarities between baseball and running for national office as you have just read, but the biggest similarity of them all is preparation. For baseball, prep is done in spring training, and for national office, it is accomplished by pre-slating. It is only to your advantage to do so—the only way you can have adequate time to prepare is to pre-slate!

If you or someone you know is interested in running for national office, please contact the Nominations and Election Committee (NEC) Member in your region and request the paperwork to pre-slate. This information is available at **www.nsna.org** under “Elected Officials.” Alternately, call the NSNA office at (718) 210-0705 to get an application or simply complete the form on page 9. Just as it takes practice to prepare for convention, it takes practice to hit a home run. So, come out for spring training—the NEC is here to help! ☺