

Valisa Saunders Makes History as Clinician of the Year



Former NSNA president (1980–81) Valisa Saunders, MN, APRN, BC, GNP, has won the American Geriatrics Society (AGS) Clinician of the Year award. Saunders, a certified gerontological nurse practitioner, is the first nurse to receive the honor. The award was given at the American Geriatric Society's Annual Scientific Meeting in

Washington, DC on May 2, 2008.

According to the AGS website, the Clinician of the Year award “was established to recognize the great contributions of practitioners to the delivery of quality healthcare to older people, and the importance of the geriatrics clinician in our healthcare delivery system.” Saunders is renowned for her work improving the quality of care for the elderly community in Hawaii. She has spent 22 years in gerontological care at Kaiser Permanente Hawaii, a leading healthcare provider in the State of Hawaii. In 1988, she actively introduced the rounding concept in nursing homes, setting the stage for the official launch of the standard-setting nursing home rounding program in 1991. The program, comprised of various nurse practitioners and physicians caring for approximately 1,000 elderly patients in 20 nursing homes, has resulted in the decline of hospital visits for nursing home residents.

Saunders is also revered by the community for her other vital roles at Kaiser Permanente, including principle investigator in Hawaii for a Kaiser 6-Region post-diagnosis dementia research program. Additionally, she managed an outside contract to provide geriatric assessment clinics for native Hawaiians on the neighbor islands.

NSNA would like to congratulate Valisa Saunders for her tremendous achievements!

NSNA Board Appoints Fikile Mpofu to Fill Vacancy



The National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA) Board of Directors appointed Piedmont Technical College (Greenwood, SC) student, Fikile Mpofu, to the position of Director (Southern Election Area). Ms. Mpofu will complete the term vacated by Bonnie Klutz who resigned in September for personal reasons.

Bringing her experiences and leadership to the Board, Ms. Mpofu served in the role of Community Health Director for the Student Nurses' Association of South Carolina Board of Directors, 2007-08. Ms. Mpofu will serve as chair of the NSNA Bylaws and Policies Committee and as a member of the Legislation/Education Committee. Last August, Ms. Mpofu attended NSNA's Northeast Leadership Conference in New York City and visited NSNA Headquarters in Brooklyn where she met with staff and toured the offices.

“I am very excited to be serving at the national level,” Ms. Mpofu commented on her appointment to the Board, “and I look forward to making a contribution to the mission of the NSNA.” ☺