



To & Fro

A Publication of the Georgia Association of Nurse Anesthetists • Volume 68 • Winter 2012

Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists CRNAs

- Represent nearly 150 years of quality anesthesia
- Safely administer approximately 32 million anesthetics in the US every year
- Represented by 44,000 CRNAs nationwide and over 1100 here in Georgia
- Are the sole anesthesia providers in nearly 100% of rural hospitals throughout the country
- Practice in every type of clinical setting
- Provide high quality, safe, efficient and cost effective anesthesia care

Mission Statement

The Georgia Association of Nurse Anesthetists is a non-profit organization committed to advancing patient safety by supporting and furthering the practice of nurse anesthesia in Georgia.

Vision Statement

Recognized leaders who are committed to patient safety, practice autonomously to the fullest extent of their scope of practice, and are consummate professionals with 100% of its members belonging to the AANA/ GANA, and are fully reimbursed for all anesthesia services.

Report from the President

Teamwork is Sacrificing Personal Glory for the Collective Victory

by Brent DuBois, CRNA, MN



Teamwork is sacrificing personal glory for the collective victory ... this was a mantra I heard the Butler basketball coach out of Indiana say why his small college of about 2000 students went to the Final Four Basketball Championship for two years in a row. He has no stand out superstars, but all his players are dedicated to the TEAM. This statement humbles me as I realize how great a group of CRNAs we have on your GANA Board. We are in the beginning of the GANA year and have already hit the ground running.

My first task as President of GANA was to address the NBCRNA proposed Continued Professional Certification Program (CPC). The Board of Directors met with a representative from the NBCRNA during the 2011 Annual Fall Meeting in Atlanta. We learned that we share many of the same concerns that other state associations are expressing. Surprisingly, however, there has not been a large number of Georgia CRNAs who have expressed their concerns to us regarding the CPC. Truthfully, most of us are apathetic, until our way of doing things is threatened. The leadership of GANA felt that certain aspects of the proposed CPC would negatively affect the way CRNAs practice in Georgia. Therefore, we sent a letter to the NBCRNA expressing concerns on behalf of Georgia CRNAs. A copy of that correspondence is included in this issue of *To and Fro* on page 3.

In October several GANA representatives attended the Composite Medical Board Meeting in Macon where draft guidelines for office based surgery were discussed. The meeting was attended by Christy Dunkelberger, GANA Executive Director and Legal Counsel; Barry Cranfill, Steve Smith and Rose Synsmir, GANA Past Presidents; and myself. Barry Cranfill also represented of the Georgia Board of Nursing at this meeting. GANA was well represented and was able to make comments and suggestions to ensure that CRNAs' practice was not affected by the guidelines.

Rose Synsmir and I attended the Georgia Association of Nursing Students (GANS) convention in October. We were accompanied at our booth with a great representation of CRNA schools, Mercer and the Georgia Health Sciences University. We had many nursing students question us about applying to CRNASchool and the advantages of being a CRNA. Both Mercer and GHSU programs are graduating great people who represent the CRNA community well.

The GANA has continued to provide the AANA with great leaders from Georgia who help to shape the nurse anesthesia profession. We are proud to continue that tradition. GANA has nominated Leslie Jeter for Region 2 Director, and Steve Smith for the AANA Nominating Committee for the AANA 2012 ballot. Both are

(continued on page 11)

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Communication
www.gana.org

From the Executive Director

by Christy A. Dunkelberger, Esq.

Happy New Year to all Georgia CRNAs! Pain Management

The area of pain management has been receiving a lot of press lately. Just recently, the local news has carried multiple stories of ‘pill mills’ being shut down by legal authorities. DEA and GBI narcotics personnel have initiated a full court press to shut down these so-called ‘pill mills’ that are issuing prescription pain medications illegally. Additionally the Georgia Legislature and the Georgia Composite Medical Board (GCMB) are taking steps to fight this battle. The GCMB has published proposed Rules that authorize the GCMB to take action against licensees for unprofessional conduct related to pain management. The Rules set minimum standards for prescribing controlled substances for treatment of pain and chronic pain. Interventional pain management is excluded from these proposed Rules. On the legislative side, one of the top priorities of certain legislators for the upcoming legislative session is to adopt legislation that establishes controls on prescribing and dispensing certain controlled substances. HB 184 has been pre-filed by Representative Weldon of the 3rd legislative district. HB 184 deals with monitoring the prescribing and dispensing of Schedule II, III, IV and V controlled substances. If you are involved in pain management services, I urge you to review the proposed unprofessional conduct/pain management Rules and HB 184.

2012 GANA Capitol Day

Plan to attend the 2012 GANA Capitol Day at the Georgia State Capitol on January 25, 2012. CRNAs need to get to know their legislators on a ‘recognition’ basis; and GANA Capitol Day provides you an opportunity to meet and mingle with your representatives and discuss the issues that are important to CRNAs. One of the GANA goals for 2012 is to be more recognizable in the public eye as well as to the legislators. Come out and join us for Capitol Day and make “CRNA” and GANA easily recognized by the Georgia legislators.

Guidelines Adopted for Office Based Anesthesia and Surgery by the GCMB

The GCMB recently adopted Guidelines for Office Based Anesthesia and Surgery. These Guidelines place restrictions on physicians who offer surgery and anesthesia services in the office setting. Restrictions apply to the anesthesia services when neither an anesthesiologist nor CRNA administers anesthesia. The adopted Rules are currently posted at the GCMB’s website.

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Need Malpractice Insurance?

Contact AANA Insurance Services
at 1-800-343-1368
or obtain insurance information
from the AANA website.



November 10, 2011

NBCRNA Board of Directors
Attn: Mary Anne Krogh, CRNA, PhD, President
222 S. Prospect Avenue
Park Ridge, IL 60068-4001

RE: Proposed Continued Professional Certification Program

Dear President Krogh and Members of the Board:

On behalf of the Georgia Association of Nurse Anesthetists, and its 1039 CRNA members, I would like to provide you with several comments and concerns related to the proposed Continued Professional Certification Program ("CPC Program").

One of the concerns expressed by Georgia members is the requirement of thirty-five (35) continuing education credits per year. Some feel this amount is excessive and will cause undue hardship and expense for those CRNAs who do not live in close proximity to a metropolitan area. Those individuals, who for the most part reside in rural areas, will face the added burden of needing to plan for out-of-town overnight travel, on multiple occasions, to locations where continuing education courses are offered. They just simply do not have ready access to testing facilities and/or continuing education opportunities. They will also face the need to secure CRNA coverage during their times away and the loss of income from being away. CRNAs living in rural areas will have an added disadvantage over those who live in urban settings.

Another expressed concern originates with some CRNAs who have been in the workforce for multiple years. Their issue centers on the requirement to re-test for certification every eight (8) years. Older CRNAs feel at a disadvantage over their younger counterparts. They feel that this requirement of the CPC Program is an effort that will force them into early retirement.

Along the same lines as the above-stated concern and stemming from the same group of CRNAs is the concern regarding the failure to include a provision for grandfathering in the proposed CPC Program. Again the take away implication is that the older CRNAs are being penalized and being given no credit for their past experience.

Finally, the Georgia Board of Directors is concerned that some CRNAs may withdraw their membership from AANA as a result of the CPC Program. If there is a loss of members, the state budgets will be directly impacted. Georgia does not want to incur any financial losses.

Please give our comments your serious and careful consideration as you continue planning the CPC Program. We hope there will be revisions to the current proposal. Thank you for allowing us this opportunity to comment.

Very truly yours,

Brent L. DuBois, CRNA, MSN
President, Georgia Association of Nurse Anesthetists, Inc.

cc: Debra P. Malina, President AANA

2012 GANA Calendar

GANA Board Meetings:

February 4, 2012	At Mercer/MCCG in Macon
May 5, 2012	At GANA Headquarters in Fayetteville
August 25, 2012	At GHSU in Augusta

Other Meetings and Events:

January 25, 2012	Capitol Day
January 22-28, 2012	National Nurse Anesthetists Week
February 16, 2012	Georgia Rural Health Day at the Capitol
February 23-25, 2012	AANA Assembly of School Faculty in San Diego, CA
April 15-18, 2012	AANA Mid-Year Assembly in Washington, DC
Spring 2012 (TBD)	GPB-TV Telethon
August 4-8, 2012	AANA Annual Meeting in San Francisco, CA
October 5-7, 2012	GANA Annual Fall Meeting Hyatt Regency, Savannah, GA

Proposed Calendar for the To & Fro:

January 2012
April 2012
August 2012

We now have a hyperlink @ www.gana.org to our new GANA Facebook page. Please visit and Like Us on Facebook!

www.aana.com/peerassist.aspx

Hotlines
Peer Assistance
800.654.5167

Anesthetists in
Recovery (AIR)
215.635.0183

Report from the Executive Director

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Non Deductibility of Dues for 2011

As required by section 6033(e) of the Internal Revenue Code, GANA is required to inform you that \$34.00 of your state membership dues are allocated toward expenses incurred by the GANA for state lobbying activities. GANA receives \$232.50 from the AANA for each full dues paying member. This amount is not deductible for federal income tax purposes. All GANA members are also members of the AANA. The AANA will include correspondence about the amount incurred for lobbying activities from the national dues in the AANA President's letter.

2011 GANA Fall Meeting is Over ... Looking Ahead to 2012 and 2013

The 2011 Annual Fall Meeting was another success for GANA. We were fortunate to have the AANA President, Debbie Malina as well as the AANA Vice President, Janice Izlar in attendance. The NBCRNA was there to provide an explanation of and answer questions about the proposed Continued Professional Certification Program (CPC). Members had an opportunity to express feelings and opinions about the CPC. Your new Board of Directors was elected and assumed office. But that was all three (3) months ago. We are already well on our way to planning the 2012 Annual Fall Meeting. The Hyatt Regency located at 2 West Bay Street, Savannah Georgia, has been selected as the site for 2012. Save the dates of October 5-7, 2012, and plan to attend. We also want you to start thinking two (2) years. Plans for the GANA 75th Anniversary Celebration Meeting are underway to be held in the Atlanta area in October 2013. The GANA Archives Committee promises that this 75th meeting will be a memorable and extraordinary event. ■

GANA Board of Directors Meeting

**Saturday, February 4, 2012
at 10:00 am**

Medical Center of Central Georgia
777 Hemlock Street
Macon, GA 31201

Meeting is open to all GANA members.



Around the AANA

by Sharon Pearce, CRNA

*“You will never plow a field by turning it over in your mind.”
– Irish Proverb*

I have just returned from the AANA Fall Leadership Academy in Newport Beach, California. It was good to see so many committed CRNAs together in such a picturesque setting! For those of you who could not join us, it was an uplifting and energizing meeting. We all worked together to tackle some of our profession’s pressing issues, brainstorm ways of improving our state and national associations, and operationalize the “Fifty State Strategy.” This initiative is focused on better meeting the needs of our members through the state associations. The ground swell of information came from the state leaders in attendance. The AANA leaders will now use this information to enhance our national association. It became clear that we all are striving to create a user-friendly organization that is not only responsive to our members, but aims to advance safe anesthesia care for our patients.

Just a few examples of the actions taken by your Board of Directors in response to your feedback:

- Your Program Committee is creating the plan to hold the 2013 AANA Annual Meeting in Las Vegas at the Mirage. Remember – what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas!
- The Program Committee has heard you loud and clear: August is a difficult month to plan “time off.” The Board approved their recommendation to move the Annual meeting in 2014 to September. Neither the location nor the date has been confirmed yet. We realize, however, that many of you need to know so that your state meetings can be planned accordingly.
- Amid the storm of ideas generated by the Program Committee, the meeting schedule will be revised to make it easier for members to maximize their CE time while decreasing the meeting length by one day. Be on the lookout for some creative changes that will take our Annual Meeting far into the future!
- The new and improved AANA website will be going “live” on December 5, 2011. The search engine will be greatly improved and layout will be more user-friendly. The current site will

continue to work during this migration period, but no new information will be uploaded until the new site is active.

The Board of Directors also met for 4 hours with the NBCRNA board. The NBCRNA will be reviewing all comments received about the proposed CPC program through their website, the AANA website, and letters and phone calls made. An analysis will commence using a Delphi method. Three clinicians from the AANA Board of Directors will participate in the process. The NBCRNA Board of Directors is scheduled to meet again in mid-January to review the results of the analysis. They will present their findings to the AANA Board of Directors at the Board Meeting scheduled during the Assembly of School Faculty in February 2012. Both Boards have voiced a commitment to work together so that a solid process for validating continued competence is constructed and reflects member input.

The AANA BOD also met with the COA. The COA Board members are diligently working to increase efficiencies during this period of global economic uncertainties. They have assured us they are operating at full power and are becoming “lean and mean” (in a good way!). In the spirit of continuous improvement, the AANA Board also shared all feedback we have received from our members about our educational programs. The COA appreciated hearing our members input. A major revision of the COA Accreditation Standards for our Programs is in progress. The first call for written comments is planned to go out in March of 2012, following a hearing on the first draft of the Standards at the Assembly of School Faculty meeting in February of 2012. Please feel free to contact the COA at 847-655-1160 to let them know of your interest in providing feedback, or email Pauline McKenna of the COA at pmckenna@coa.us.com.

Our annual effort to achieve 100% membership renewal continues. What would it say to our healthcare colleagues and the general public if we could boast that 100% of the CRNAs in the U.S hold membership in the AANA? We have never been a complacent group that seeks to divide and conquer. Our history reflects a profession that is engaged, committed, and overcomes challenges by working together. With that said, the Board voted to waive late fees for renewals through January 6, 2012. In our desire to ensure that all of our state associations and our national association is both strong and robust, we are

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Shadow a CRNA

Contact the GANA office
by email at
ganaoffice@bellsouth.net

New Year = New Opportunities!

by Maegan Brass, CRNA, MSN

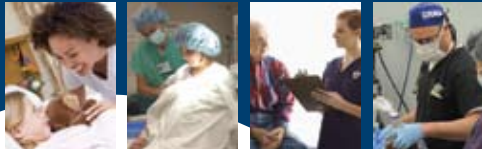


A new year almost always represents a great starting point for making changes! This year with the Public Relation's Committee, it is no different. We are going to be working very closely with the Government Relations Committee in fostering our relationships with each of our local legislators. With 2012 being an election year, there will be many opportunities for us as CRNAs to do our own PR for our profession. Many legislators will be available at fundraisers and local offices to meet and speak with us which presents us a great opportunity to have some face time with them outside of Capitol Day. Follow your local politics, find out when they are having meetings and fundraisers and make sure you attend; legislators love speaking with constituents. This year the PR Committee will be looking into some new venues for getting our profession into the mainstream! I'm looking forward to seeing what we can do in 2012!

We are very excited about our new GANA Facebook page. Please don't forget to "like us". Keep up with the most recent information and voice your comments and opinions. See the hyperlink at www.gana.org to click on.

CRNA Spouse runs for Senate

My husband, Matt Brass, recently ran for the Senate District 28, a seat vacated by Senator Mitch Seabaugh. In a special election with only 30 days to campaign, Matt received thousands of dollars in donations from CRNAs and anesthesia groups, not only in Georgia, but also nationwide! Matt and I would like to sincerely thank the CRNAs for supporting him in his efforts. Matt came in third out of nine candidates running, and lost his spot in the run-off by 2.9%. He plans to run again in the future. Matt is currently a district director for Congressman Lynn Westmoreland. ■



CRNAs



Quality & Excellence in Anesthesia Care

Every day Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) provide anesthesia with the professional quality and personal care patients expect and deserve when facing surgery or other healthcare procedures that require anesthesia.

Whether a CRNA is at the head of the surgical table, caring for trauma patients in the emergency room, or easing labor pains for new mothers, patients can rest assured that they are in the care of an anesthesia professional committed to providing the safest, most comfortable anesthesia experience possible.

For more information about nurse anesthesia, visit www.aana.com or call 847-692-7050.

Celebrate National
Nurse Anesthetists Week
January 22-28, 2012



Mercer School of Medicine and
Medical Center of Central Georgia
School of Nurse Anesthesia

Class of 2011 Graduation

By: Davida M. Hilton, GRNA

Wow, this is an amazing feeling to have graduated from Nurse Anesthesia School and preparing now to take boards. I believe this is a feeling all of my classmates have experienced over the last few days.

Our class is very pleased to announce that our hooding ceremony was exceptional. The class of 2011 graduated on Friday evening December 9, 2011. Our class of 14 students held a commencement ceremony in the Eversole auditorium at the Medical Center of Central Georgia with an amazing, standing room only, group of supporters. Everyone in our class has accepted positions and plans to sit and take boards within the next month.

Graduation is an event in life that is bittersweet in so many ways. It is a time to end a major chapter in one's life and begin an even bigger chapter. It is my privilege to share our class "thank you." We are all so very thankful for all the love and support from everyone along this long and difficult journey. As a class, we have all grown so much over the last twenty-eight months and now with anticipation and excitement will embark on our careers as Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists.

Around the AANA

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“tightening our belt” and seeking every opportunity to eliminate unnecessary spending. If you know a colleague who has not yet renewed, let them know the impact it has on all of us. We are only as strong as our weakest link.

Once again, Region 2 and Region 7 Presidents and President-Elects will “Retreat” during the Mid Year Assembly in Washington, DC. Last year’s joint conference resulted in many strategic ideas and new relationships. We look forward to sharing more ideas and successes this year.

OTHER NEWS OF INTEREST:

AANA Foundation

The AANA Foundation’s new fundraising campaign-- Proof is Power, or P²--highlights the impact of scientific research and shines a bright light on the landmark 2010 studies “No Harm Found When Nurse Anesthetists Work Without Supervision by Physicians” (conducted by Research Triangle Institute and published in Health Affairs, August 2010) and “Cost-Effectiveness Analysis of Anesthesia Providers” (conducted by the Lewin Group, published in Journal of Nursing Economic\$, June 2010). These important studies were supported in part by the AANA Foundation, whose mission is to enhance the science of anesthesia through education and research. To learn more about the P² campaign, the “No Harm Found” and “Cost-Effectiveness” studies, the AANA Foundation’s many programs, and how to help the Foundation continue its important work to improve patient safety and support CRNA practice, go to www.aanafoundation.com. Please donate today on behalf of your profession, yourself and your patients.

Take a Long Look at “CRNAs at a Glance.”

Recently updated, the AANA’s one-page fact sheet “CRNAs at a Glance” is available on the AANA website. This document is a great handout for lobbying, speaking with the media, and many other situations.

How Might the Congressional Deficit Supercommittee Affect CRNAs?

A powerful new congressional committee made up of equal numbers of Republicans and Democrats from the House and Senate could have great influence over CRNA reimbursement and practice as it begins work identifying at least \$1.2 trillion in federal budget savings over the next 10 years. The supercommittee has until Nov. 23, 2011, to present Congress with a budget reduction package, which Congress must then pass by Dec. 23 or trigger automatic federal spending reductions totaling about \$1.2 trillion, half from national security accounts. Because public benefit health programs like Medicare and Medicaid make up such a large segment of the federal budget and of anticipated federal spending growth, these programs are on the table for possible cuts that could impact CRNA reimbursement and practice.

AANA Urges CMS Action against Huge Medicare Payment Cuts

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) should take the lead in informing Congress about the huge impact that a 30 percent Medicare Part B cut to CRNA and physician payment would have on patient care in the United States, and should also fully recognize CRNA practice in every circumstance, said the AANA in a comment letter to CMS dated Aug. 30, 2011.

Medicare Agency Invites Providers to Apply for Bundled

Payments On Aug. 23, the Medicare agency issued a request urging healthcare facilities, groups and healthcare professionals including CRNAs to develop and submit to the agency requests for bundling payments for services to Medicare beneficiaries. A facility providing hip replacements, for example, could arrange to submit to CMS a single claim rather than four (facility, surgeon, anesthesia, physical therapy outpatient care). For CRNAs, the initiative provides opportunity to demonstrate to facilities and to Medicare the value of CRNA cost-efficiency in a way that can boost demand for CRNA services relative to those of more costly competitors.

Noteworthy

Infection Control in the News Surprise inspections of 21 Illinois surgery centers by the state’s department of public health revealed deficient infection control practices and resulted in citations for 14 of them. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has a new “Stop Sticks” campaign that focuses on raising awareness and motivating healthcare workers to make the changes needed to reduce sharps injuries

Noridian Medicare Contractor Approves Acute Pain Reimbursement for CRNAs

On August 19, the Noridian Medicare contractor serving several Western states released an update to its March 17, 2011, bulletin titled “CRNA Practice and Chronic Pain Management” stating that it will allow reimbursement for acute pain management services provided by CRNAs, but not for chronic pain management services by CRNAs. AANA continues to take action with the Medicare agency to restore reimbursement for all Medicare services within the CRNA scope of practice – a move that assures our patients access to necessary care.

AANA Requests Voting Position on AMA-RUC

The AANA, in conjunction with other advanced practice nursing organizations and the American Nurses Association, has requested a voting seat on the American Medical Association’s Specialty Society Relative Value Scale Update Committee (AMA-RUC). The AMA-RUC is the recommending body to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services on matters related to physician billing codes and their relative value. CRNAs bring extensive professional experience and insight into deliberations on anesthesia reimbursement and we look forward to contributing knowledge and expertise to the process.

In Closing...

“Thank You!” As new members of state association Boards of Directors are elected and take office, please join me in extending our appreciation to those who have served and continue to serve as state leaders. I would like to personally express my gratitude to every state leader who has worked tirelessly to lead our associations during the past year. The strength of our associations reflect your hard work and dedication! And to our new leaders that are taking office – welcome and thanks! As your Regional Director, I am here to support you in your leadership journey. Thank you for this incredible opportunity. ■

Counting Down to Our 75th Anniversary Celebration

by Mary P. Flister, CRNA

Your archives committee continues the countdown to GANA's 75th Anniversary celebration in 2013 by featuring the biographies of the signers of the GANA Charter in 1937. Ms. Hohenschutz and Mrs. Kimsey were the second and third (respectively) signers of the charter. These women had the prescience to realize the need for organization and communication that brought us where we are today.

At the Rosalie McDonald History Presentation in Seattle, WA 2010, noted AANA history buff, Patrick Downey, CRNA,

said the achievements were "so typical of those women who worked day and night. They didn't have MyPhone, YourPhone, OldFace, SomeFace, Skypeing, Skypeing, Skypeing. They had communication by pen and pencil and they did it so well.

We are grateful for our generous, talented, and expert collaborators, Barbara Smallwood Stock, Certified Genealogist, Marietta, GA and Eleanor Thompson, ARTS Printing, Suwanee, Georgia. They helped make this information available, complete and elegant. ■



Caroline E. Hohenschutz

BIRTH & DEATH

July 17, 1904 – January 18, 2001

NURSE TRAINING

St. Joseph's Infirmary, Atlanta, GA

ANESTHESIA TRAINING

Cincinnati, OH

PROFESSIONAL

Nurse Anesthetist, Saint Joseph's Hospital,
Atlanta, GA

GANA OFFICES

President: 1941
Vice President: 1941-44, 1948-49
Secretary/ Treasurer: 1937-39, 1945-1946

GANA COMMITTEES

Education: 1952-53, 1954-55
Revisions: 1939-40, 1940-41, 1941-44,
1950-51 Chair, 1953-54 Chair
Program: 1944-45 Chair, 1946-47,
1951-52 Chair, 1966
Nominating: 1949-50 Chair
Government Relations: 1960-61
Bylaws: 1961-62 Chair, 1962-63
Minutes: 1967 Chair



Halo H. Warman Kimsey

BIRTH & DEATH

September 3, 1911 – September 24, 1981

NURSE TRAINING

West Suburban Hospital, Oak Park,
Cook County, IL

ANESTHESIA TRAINING

Unknown

PROFESSIONAL

Nurse Anesthetist, Emory University Hospital,
Atlanta, GA
Nurse, 43rd General Hospital,
Camp Livingston, LA (1943)
Served overseas as a Nurse
with the rank of Lieutenant (1944)

GANA OFFICES

President: 1938-39, 1940-41

GANA COMMITTEES

Membership: 1937-38
Education: 1949-50 Chair
Publications: 1950-51, 1951-52

A Message from the President Elect

by James Masiongale, CRNA, MHS



Leaders of state nurse anesthetist associations gathered Veterans Day weekend at the AANA's 2011 Fall Leadership Academy to help improve the influence, effectiveness and operations of CRNA organizations in every state.

Formerly known as the Fall Assembly of States, the AANA Fall Leadership Academy took place Nov. 11-13, at the Newport Beach Marriott Hotel and Spa in Newport Beach, Calif. Far more than the name was changed; at the request of AANA members, the Fall Leadership Academy provided state nurse anesthetist association leaders the most current education on the best practices of effective state associations, plus four concurrent educational tracks on state association communications, finance, state government affairs, and federal government affairs.

Attendees gained all the benefits of a robust and targeted educational program focused on developing healthy state nurse anesthetist associations, and on building strong networks of state association leaders from around the country.

AANA President-Elect Janice Izlar, Region 2 Director candidate Leslie Jeter, Immediate Past-President Rose Synsmir, Federal Political Director and AANA Nominations Committee candidate Steve Smith and myself represented GANA at this extremely informative meeting. In order to obtain the most information as possible, we each choose a different tract to attend and then gathered to discuss the highlights of each. We each left the meeting feeling as though we had gained new information that would be of value to GANA and its members.

The GANA is proud to announce that **LESLIE JETER** and **STEVE SMITH** have been nominated for AANA positions for 2012-2013. Leslie will be running for AANA Region 2 Director and Steve for AANA Nominating Committee.

**Georgia
Association of
Nurse
Anesthetists
PAC**

*I am contributing \$ _____ to further
the legislative efforts of the GANA.*

*Thank you for
your contribution
to this worthy
cause for your
profession!*

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone # _____ Best time to call _____

Email _____ Fax _____

Do you work in an office based setting? a rural hospital? a surgery center? an urban hospital?

Nurse Practitioner _____ Other (specify) _____ (Mandatory for all donations greater than \$100)

Are you interested in lobbying with the GANA during the 2012 legislative session? _____

Are you acquainted with any of Georgia's legislators? _____ If yes, who? _____

Please clip and send to: **Robbie Pope, GANA-PAC Treasurer, P.O. Box 887, Tifton, GA 31793**

Forms available at www.gana.org



Federal Government Affairs Update

by Steve Smith CRNA, MA



From your Federal Political Director (FPD), greetings! I hope you all had a safe and wonderful holiday season and wish you all a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. I would like to give special thanks to all of you that ended up renewing your GANA/AANA membership after receiving phone calls from your GANA Board members. Without your support and membership the GANA would have a much more difficult time protecting our scope of practice here in Georgia. \$232.50 of your AANA annual dues money comes back to the GANA to help finance the Georgia Association of Nurse Anesthetists. Thank you Board and thank you members!

I had the good fortune to attend the 2011 AANA Fall Leadership Academy, November 11-13 in Newport Beach, CA along with my colleagues from Georgia: Janice Izlar, Rose Synsmir, Leslie Jeter and Jim Masiongale. I attended a special 3 hour session specifically designed for Federal Political Directors to review in detail our responsibilities as an AANA FPD for the upcoming year. This is a very important time for us all due to the upcoming November 2012 Presidential election and Federal Congressional and Presidential primary elections and caucuses taking place all year long. Two critical CRNA issues facing us this year are huge Medicare cuts and maintaining access to CRNA interventional pain management which includes protecting Medicare direct reimbursement of CRNA chronic pain services.

The threat of a 26.2% cut to Medicare Part B CRNA payments has been temporarily averted. There has been a two months' relief from Medicare payment cuts packaged with HR 3630 extending a partial payroll tax holiday, certain unemployment insurance benefits, other temporary Medicare payment provisions and expediting the decision for construction of an oil pipeline. The relief expires February 29, 2012, meaning that unless Congress acts and develops legislation providing longer relief from Medicare cuts and a method for funding relief, the cuts will become a reality. Other CRNA legislative issues for Capitol Hill include protection of the provider nondiscrimination law for CRNAs, support of CRNA workforce development and to reject attempts to use federal policy to impair access to high quality healthcare by CRNAs. As you can see, we all have a lot of work ahead of us.

Of interest, CMS Administrator Donald Berwick MD, resigned December 2 and of this writing is to be replaced by Marilyn Tavenner, a registered nurse, highly regarded hospital administrator, and current principal deputy administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). If she is confirmed by Congress this could bold well for both APRNs and CRNAs with respect to removing barriers to access to care.

Be one of 435 CRNAs serving as a Key Contact to Congress! I would like to encourage you all to consider joining the AANA Key

Contact program. I am in the process of updating and taking new volunteers to be a part of Georgia's Key Contact program. We currently have 13 Representatives and 2 Senators that we need Key Contacts for. As a Key Contact you will serve as a designated contact to your U.S. Representative member on behalf of the AANA to reinforce the legislative agenda of the profession of nurse anesthesia. Your job will be to localize and personalize the impact of issues affecting the profession of nurse anesthesia while building a strong ongoing relationship with your U.S. Representative. You must be willing to respond to CRNAdvocacy calls to action; provide updates to the FPD and the AANA D.C. office about contact with your legislator; assist with activities for CRNA-PAC; attend the AANA Mid-Year Assembly; and help mobilize other CRNAs into action.

There are many things you can do as a valued member of the GANA/AANA to help all CRNAs continue delivering accessible, high quality, safe and cost effective anesthesia care. First of all, become familiar with our issues. You can do this by visiting the AANA site www.caretobecounted.org (AANA member login required). Under the "CRNA Advocacy" tab you will find such information as CRNA legislative issues; taking action on the issues; studies from the IOM, Health Affairs and Nursing Economics; and becoming a Key Contact. Take time to read *Anesthesia E-essentials*, which is delivered to you bi-weekly and contains a wealth of information including a section on Federal Government Affairs. Always respond to the AANA e-alerts when asked to write or send a letter to Washington.

The CRNA-PAC Annual Campaign will begin in January. Please consider answering the call to join the CRNA-PAC so we can assure CRNA issues and concerns are heard in Washington, D.C. Your CRNA-PAC is a non-partisan group that supports U.S. House and Senate candidates and campaigns with influence over or commitment to the issues that affect us all. Please visit www.caretobecounted.org to join up now!

Don't forget to sign up for the 2012 Mid-Year Assembly in Washington D.C., April 15-18. You can sign up online either at www.gana.org or www.aana.com. AANA's Mid-Year Assembly is your chance to travel to the Nation's Capitol and let your elected US Representatives and Senators know about concerns with legislative issues important to the nurse anesthesia profession. During this important event, we seek to build valuable relationships in Congress and promote awareness about the quality of care and cost effectiveness of nurse anesthesia services. As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns related to Federal Government Affairs. ■

Report from the President

(continued from page 1)

GANA Past-Presidents. We will support these two Georgia CRNAs as they seek their respective AANA positions.

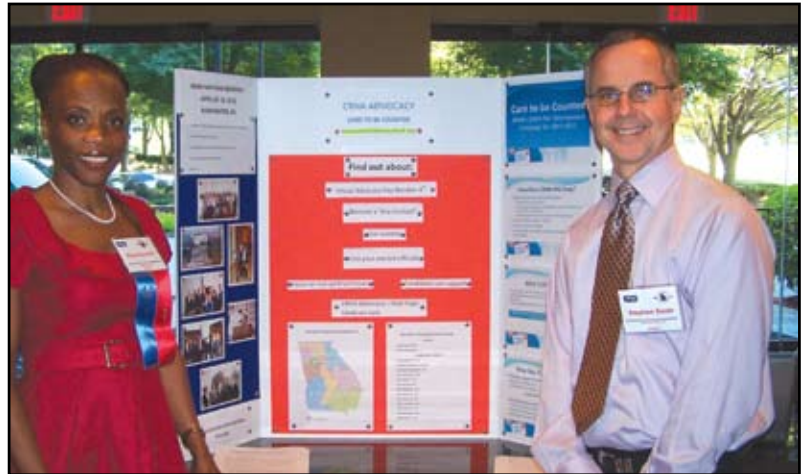
The GANA Board of Directors held a strategic planning retreat at Brasstown Valley Resort in October. It was a very productive session. Georgia's own, Janice Izlar, AANA President-Elect conducted the planning session. We identified goals and key points on which the Board will focus over the next year. These points include 1) Increasing Georgia CRNAs' presence in the public eye; 2) Increasing Georgia CRNAs' presence with the state legislature; and 3) Involving more of GANA members in GANA activities.

The area of increasing our presence in the public eye will be the focus of the GANA Public Relations under the direction of Maegan Brass. We have also conferred with the AANA public relations task force to learn about and share successful campaigns from other State Associations. If you have any ideas or events you would like to bring to us please email Maegan or myself with your PR idea.

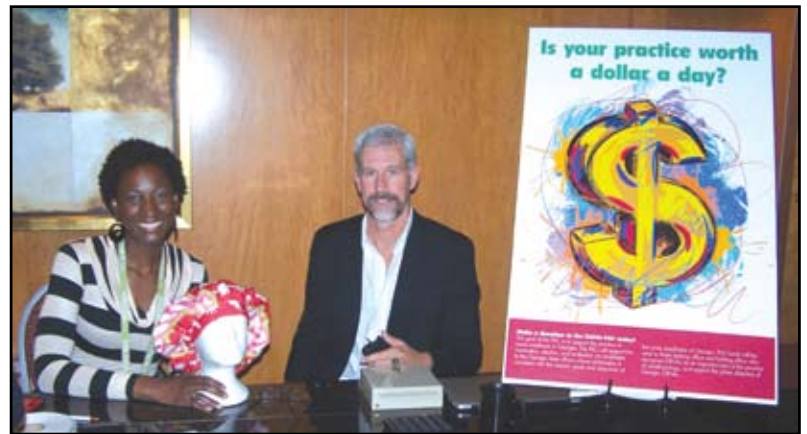
In order to increase our presence with the legislature, we need to involve all of the CRNAs in Georgia. Therefore, I charge each and every one of you to contact your Representative and Senator in your legislative district. Let them know who you are and what you do as a CRNA. Inform them of exactly what is a CRNA's role in the health care community, especially in the rural settings. Dewey Galeas and Daniel Dell are working on arranging a CRNA/Legislator key contacts list for Georgia. The goal is to have one CRNA contact for each state legislator. The CRNA contact will be someone who resides in the legislator's district. It is extremely meaningful to a legislator to receive a personal visit from a CRNA constituent. It is essential to establish that relationship in the home district rather than trying to introduce yourself in Atlanta during the legislative session.

Our final goal for the upcoming year is to focus on member involvement in GANA. One strategy to be utilized in this area is that each GANA Committee Chair has been charged with recruiting his or her peers to assist with the work of the committee. My hope is that this action will help recruit more CRNAs into GANA activity. It's important that we keep welcoming new ideas and new people who would like to be involved. Thank you for your support. ■

GANA Annual Fall Meeting



(L to R): Rose Synsmir and Steve Smith with the "Care to be Counted/Federal Government Affairs" exhibit at the 2011 GANA Annual Fall Meeting.



(L to R): Carmen Simmons and Richard Douberly, GANA PAC Chair, with the GANA PAC exhibit at the 2011 GANA Annual Fall Meeting



(L to R): Leslie Jeter and Mary Flister (GANAHistorian) with the GANA History exhibit at the 2011 GANA Annual Fall Meeting.

Mercer University/Medical Center of Central Georgia Nurse Anesthesia Program Report

by Sheree Wolfenden, CRNA, JD, Program Director

We graduated 14 seniors on December 9, 2011 in Macon, GA. The Graduation was well received and many in attendance said it was one of the finest ceremonies they had ever witnessed. There was standing room only in the large capacity Eversole Auditorium located in the Medical Center of Central Georgia for the Class of 2011.

The Keynote Speaker was Tom Kellogg, CRNA, a MCCG staff anesthetist who delivered a powerful and positive address to the students. Also, Brent Dubois, CRNA, GANA President and former MCCG Staff Anesthetist, delivered the GANA MCCG Award to Brooke Kesler, SRNA. Brent talked about his time serving his country in the armed forces in the Middle East, which was very moving, too.

As you may know the last class to graduate from this Program will be the Class of 2012, a class of 18 students. The Mercer University/ MCCG CRNA Program will teach-out this last class. It is indeed a very sad occasion knowing this class is the last Mercer University/ MCCG class; however, there is also reason to celebrate. Though the details are not public; we are in serious discussions with three universities that are interested in an affiliation with

our CRNA Program based in the Medical Center of Central Georgia. One interested party is in-state and the other two universities are located outside of Georgia. Discussions have been on-going for many months now with the universities. A formal and final decision is expected in mid to late January 2012. Our new class is expected to be smaller with a projected enrollment of 10 to 14 nurse anesthesia students.

I am also happy to report that to date we have 100% pass rate on the National Certification Exam for past classes and 100% Job Offers for all our graduates in all classes after graduation. We are hopeful the Class of 2011 will also produce a 100% pass rate on the NBCRNA Exam when they sit for this rigorous exam in the coming days to weeks. Also, even though the anesthesia job market remains tight and competitive in Georgia and nationally; all of the Class of 2011 have been successful in locating jobs prior to their graduation last week.

Congratulations to the Mercer University/MCCG Class of 2011 and the very best of success on your National Certification Exam. I will miss this class very, very much. You are some of the finest and most respectful students that I have had the privilege to know. ■

Mercer University/Medical Center of Central Georgia Class of 2011



(Bottom row from L to R): Lindsay Malone Llambes, Tonya Millions, Tracie Abplanalp, Jennifer Harrais, Anna Evans, Davida Hilton. (Top row from L to R): Roger Pierce, Catherine Buxton, Brooke Kesler, Kevin Roark, Jesse Kaiser, Chris Spivey, Julie Canada, William Parham.



(L to R): Jim Masiogale, Leslie Jeter, Rose Synsmir, Janice Izlar and Steve Smith at the 2011 AANA Fall Leadership Academy.

Georgia CRNAs in Action



Mark Schmitz Receives the 2011 GANA Rosalie McDonald Award

This year's winner of the prestigious GANA Rosalie McDonald Award is Mark Schmitz CRNA, BSN. The Rosalie McDonald Award was established in 1987 to honor an outstanding practitioner in Georgia. This award is based on a contribution of excellence to the practice of nurse anesthesia and sustained support for GANA. The award was presented to Mark during the GANA Annual Business Meeting in Atlanta on October 1, 2011.

Mark's service to GANA and AANA spans nearly two decades of involvement as an elected and appointed official, plus volunteer service to GANA as a committee member, and as a representative to the Georgia Board of Nursing Advanced Practice Committee.

He began his involvement with the GANA in 1993 when he was elected to the Board of Directors for the first time. His initial certification was in 1990 which showed an early realization of the importance of commitment to his professional organization. GANA offices held by Mark include Director, 1993-1995; President-Elect, 1995-1996; President, 1996-1997; Immediate Past President, 1997-1998; Vice President 1999-2000 and again in 2006-2007. Mark is currently serving as a member of the Board of Directors.

Mark has also served on the AANA Committee for Public Interest in Anesthesia as a member from 2001-2006. He served as Vice Chairman in 2004 and Chairman in 2005. Mark served as a GANA Representative on the Georgia Board of Nursing Advanced Practice Committee from 1994 to 1980.

All of us that know Mark are well aware of his capabilities as a CRNA and his unwavering sense of integrity and responsibility. His quiet manner and sense of humor combined with the aforementioned characteristics have made him an outstanding leader with the rare capacity to recognize the right and prudent path and then persuade others to take it.

Ms. Rosalie McDonald, founder and first President of the GANA and sixth President of the AANA, would be very proud of Mark and all of his wonderful accomplishments and commitment to the GANA. *Congratulations, Mark!*



(L to R): Mark Schmitz, Rose Synsmir, Whitney Huffman and Brent DuBois, 2011-2012 GANA President



(L to R): Bertha Onyemaobi, Rose Synsmir, Brent DuBois and Bridgett Reynolds.



(L to R): Your GANA Board of Directors for 2011-2012: Treasurer Dewey Galeas, President Brent DuBois, Immediate Past President Rose Synsmir, Director Richard Douberly, Secretary Maegan Brass, President-Elect Jim Masiogale, Director Traci Bryant, Director Mark Schmitz and Director Daniel Dell.

Georgia Health Sciences University Nurse Anesthesia School Report

by James Masiongale, CRNA, MHS
Director & Clinical Coordinator, Nursing Anesthesia Program

Fall semester is always the busiest time for the Nursing Anesthesia Program. It is the only semester where we have three cohorts of students all at the same time, 20 students are in the didactic phase, and 40 students are in the clinical phase. If that alone isn't enough, this time is also when we go through the 100 or so applications and send out invitations for interviews to be conducted soon after the New Year.

The Program underwent a scheduled accreditation visit from the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Programs (COA) in October. There is a tremendous amount of time and effort involved in preparation for this site visit. Nine months and over 1000 pages of written summaries and documents were compiled to demonstrate how the program meets the rigorous standards set forth by the COA. I am extremely pleased to announce the program did not receive a single citation during the visit. The lead reviewer stated that it was only the third time in his 17 years of doing site visits that he had issued zero citations. The final determination for the length of accreditation will occur this summer, but I anticipate the maximum 10-year accreditation will be awarded. I would like to thank all those who contributed to this successful endeavor.

The Convocation Ceremony for the Class of 2011 was held December 9th, 2011. All 19 students that began the journey 28 months ago have met the requirements for graduation and are eligible to take the National Certification Examination. All 19 students had job offers prior to graduation and most will be staying in Georgia. I look forward to seeing all the wonderful

contributions they make to the profession. Julie Jackson received the Director's Award presented each year in recognition of excellence in clinical practice, contribution to the profession, and commitment to the people of Georgia. Whitney Huffman was the recipient of the GANA Outstanding Student Nurse Anesthetist Award at the GANA 2011 Fall Meeting. The award is given yearly to a Georgia student nurse anesthetist for excellence in academics, superior clinical skills, vigilant service, and professional contributions. GANA Immediate Past President Rose Synsmir also presented Whitney with the GANA scholarship award at the convocation ceremony. We thank Rose for taking time out of her busy schedule to come join us during this occasion.

The Class of 2012 successfully completed their first semester of clinical and the Class of 2013 completed their first semester of didactic. Both are major milestones on their journey to becoming CRNAs.

As always I want to thank all of the clinical instructors. You are the heart and backbone of our program and without you we could not exist. Taking the time to share your knowledge, experience and skills is one of the greatest gifts you can give back to this wonderful profession. You are true hero's in the eyes of the students and didactic faculty, and we are forever grateful to you.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to send me an email or give me a call.
Nursing Anesthesia Program
Georgia Health Sciences University

GHSU Class of 2011



Front row (L to R): Lisa Stephens, Krissie Hoosan, Cassandra Walton, Alex Abraham, Whitney Huffman, Kellie Tinley, Stacy Staten, Britney Schmitt, Julie Jackson, Melvenia Blanchard (Office Manager), Mary Leary, Amy & Jim Masiongale.

Back row (L to R): Corey Peterson, Brandon Reddock, Tom Opilka, Maggie Williams, Pearce Cannington, Lee Owen, Cristy Cole, Rebecca Hok, Jennifer Rhodes, Jennifer Hayes.



The GANA exhibited at the Georgia Association of Nursing Students (GANS) annual convention in Athens on October 14, 2011. In attendance were (L to R): Whitney Huffman, SRNA, Davida Hilton SRNA, Ron Griffin SRNA, Jennifer Rhodes SRNA, Rose Synsmr CRNA, Leslie Garner SRNA, Brent DuBois, GANA President and Catherine Johnson SRNA.

Cheers to You in 2012

by Barb Waldron, CRNA



What's new in Peer Assistance? Well, we have added some new faces to the Wellness Committee, AND you can go to the AANA website and see that it has a whole new look ... you can find us under 'Resources'. Take a look! The HELPLINE is still 800.654.5167 24/7. This is manned by volunteers. Your state peer advisors, of which I am one, are also volunteers. I serve as a resource, and I can point you in the right direction for getting help, for you or for someone with whom you work. I have no interest in reporting anyone, only GETTING help for those in need.

These are difficult times, more so than when I was first entering anesthesia in 1980. The stressors in anesthesia and in everyday life have increased. Keeping one's self physically and mentally fit and alert is so important. I know I have said it many times, but it is worth repeating. So to keep myself physically fit I bought myself a recumbent trike, and with the weather being cooperative I have been able to be out 'triking' around. I was riding by some school children one of them said, "Oh look, an old fashioned bike." I just had to laugh. It really is a fun way to get outside and get some exercise without the fear of falling off a bike. I have already noticed a difference in my endurance, resulting in less napping, and that means more production, for me anyway. I still make sure I get at least 6-8 hours of sleep a night, and I try to eat right.

As this time of year rolls around my need to reevaluate my commitments to work, service to the GANA, family, and to ME come to mind. I have to ask myself how much time I am willing to devote to each of these areas. I need to put myself first, because if I am not fit, then all other aspects of my life suffer. And you know what? I am worth every second that I devote to my health and wellbeing.

I ask you that when you are evaluating the different areas of your life, please consider some service work for GANA. You have time and if you don't think you do, start small, by coming to, say, Capitol Day or maybe a Board Meeting. Take the opportunity to be with other CRNAs who are giving back freely of what they have received from their anesthesia careers. It definitely will put you in a state of gratitude.

At the Thanksgiving table, after my 11 year old granddaughter, Kaylee, said grace, Caleb, my 3 year old grandson, raised his sippy cup and said "CHEERS". So CHEERS to you in 2012, may it bring some changes for good in you. ■

2012 Legislative Events

by Daniel Dell, CRNA, MSN



Greetings! I would like to start by saying that it is an honor to be the Government Relations Committee (GRC) Chair for 2012. I would also like to thank my co-chair, Jim Masiongale, CRNA, for all of his help during my transition period. The new GRC includes: Daniel Dell – chair, Jim Masiongale – co-chair, Dewey Galeas, Traci Bryan and Mark Schmitz. We are proud to serve Georgia's CRNAs and protect OUR practice rights. We need your help to be successful. It is time for the CRNAs in this state to get involved in the protection of your career. There are always threats to narrow our scope of practice and prevent nurse anesthetists from practicing at the level of their training. Please email myself or one of the committee members and get involved in the government relations of GANA today!

If the end of 2011 is any indication of the Legislative year of 2012, we will have our work cut out for us. Your GRC will work hard to protect you in the coming legislative session. Remember that it is an election year and you will be inundated with election material. Please research your candidates and find out who is going to fight for your interest as a nurse anesthetist! Please visit these websites to stay informed: www.votesmart.org and Care to be Counted on the AANA Website.

2012 Capitol Day

One very important event being coordinated by the GRC for Georgia CRNAs is the 2012 Annual GANA Capitol Day. Please mark your calendars for January 25, 2012 and plan to participate at the Georgia State Capitol in Atlanta. We will start off at 7:30 A.M with a 'drop-in' breakfast for the legislators and their staffs. During this time it is important to have a CRNA constituent present to talk with each legislator. We are asking that you invite your legislator to this breakfast and then be there to greet them and talk with them about nurse anesthesia when they show up. The PR Committee is in the process of arranging a Georgia Nurse Anesthetist Week Proclamation signing by Governor Deal for the later that day. We will also make our best attempt to visit as many legislators in their offices as possible. It promises to be an exciting and valuable experience for CRNAs. Please make every effort to participate.

Also, it is important that you donate to the GANA-PAC. Your donation is vital to the success of our legislative purpose!

Important Dates to Remember

- January 22-28: 2012 CRNA Week
- January 25th, 2012: GANA Capitol Day-Room 216 State Capitol;
- February 16, 2012: Georgia Rural Health Association State Capitol South Wing
- April 15-18th, 2012: AANA Mid-year Assembly Washington, D.C.
- August 4-12, 2012: AANA Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA

Remember that Janice Izlar, CRNA, DNAP will become the President of the AANA at the AANA Annual Meeting in San Francisco! Please plan to attend in order for Georgia to show Janice our Georgia pride. Again, it is an honor to serve you this year! If there are any items you need to discuss or issues you would like to bring to the attention of the GANA, please email myself or one of the GRC members. ■

To & Fro

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I will participate in any area needed

Other: _____

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GANA Outstanding Student Nurse Anesthetist of the Year Award

Whitney Huffman, who graduated on December 9, 2010, from Georgia Health Sciences University, was this year's winner of the 15th GANA Outstanding Student Nurse Anesthetist of the Year Award. She was presented the award at the 2011 GANA Annual Fall Meeting in Atlanta. The award is based on excellence in academics, exemplary clinical practice, leadership capability in the GANA, potential for future contribution to the practice of nurse anesthesia and professional body of knowledge and contribution to the GANA/GANAS as a student nurse anesthetist. Whitney received \$250.00 and a plaque recognizing her for the award. In addition, a perpetual plaque with her name, alongside all past recipients, will be posted at GHSU until next year's award is announced.

Academically, Whitney successfully met the challenges and rigors of the nurse anesthesia program with a calm and confident attitude, allowing for sound critical thinking. She graduated with a 4.0 grade point average. She consistently received high praise from clinical preceptors during her rotations. Her love for the discipline of nursing is not only evident in her approach to her studies, but is clearly visible in her past professional performance as well as her ambitious goals of earning a doctoral degree preparing her to serve in the research and educational arenas. Whitney was instrumental in protecting the nursing anesthesia program when it was targeted for closure last April due to significant budget cuts inflicted on the Georgia University System. She organized her fellow classmates, contacting state legislators, Board of Regents members, and media outlets, enlightening them on the value of program, and educating anesthesia providers that will provide anesthesia services to the rural constituents of Georgia.

Whitney has decided to stay in Augusta where she has taken a job. ■