



member SPOTLIGHT



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1. How has your involvement in ALSN changed, improved, or otherwise served an interesting role in your career trajectory? Have any other doors opened to you as a result of your involvement in ALSN).

Shortly after graduating from my undergraduate program, I became a nurse manager with limited clinical experience and no leadership experience. At that time, I did not have mentors, nor did I feel like I could ask for help. I finally admitted I needed further development and mentors to help me grow. This desire prompted my decision to advance my education in leadership science and I pursued a master's and a doctorate. Fast forward about 25 years when I moved into an academic setting, I discovered ALSN (formerly known as CGEAN). As an academician, I wanted to ensure that that I was prepared as a leader and more importantly, I needed to know how to educate and develop future leaders so that they did not face the same hurdles I did when I accepted my first management position.

Once I became actively involved with ALSN, I was fortunate to work very closely with Dr. Pat Yoder-Wise and Dr. Karren Kowalski. Both helped me immensely in my development. It's through the connections I made in ALSN and the work we did collaboratively that I became more involved at the local, state, and national level. Through TONE (Texas Organization of Nurse Executives), I participated in the development of an academic-practice collaborative where we brought together nurse leaders from practice settings along with Deans and Directors from academic programs for ongoing discussions about our mutual issues around nursing education and transition to practice; I remain very involved with this organization. I have also become involved with the Nurses on Boards Coalition as the voice of the nurse remains paramount to improve health care.

2. What would you say to nurse leaders in academia or practice who are considering joining ALSN right now?

ALSN is a unique, smaller organization that creates an opportunity for networking for nurse leaders to interface with local, national, and international researcher, scholars, and practitioners. ALSN provides a meaningful platform for nurse leaders to exchange ideas and connect with other scholars and researchers with similar interests. One of my ALSN colleagues, Dr. Mara Shirey, described ALSN best when she said, "We are small, but mighty!"

3. Specific to nursing leadership, how can we create a better balance between academic and practice partners and how can ALSN assist with this partnership?

Because we cannot do this alone, collaborative partnerships are essential. Ideally, academic partners reach out to form these relationships. To assist with building these partnerships, AACN (American Association of Colleges of Nursing) provides a toolkit for academic and practice partners. I envision partnerships between academia and practice creating opportunities to improve the educational preparation for future nursing students and leaders while generating additional opportunities to develop research and evidenced-based practice projects together with a focus of improving outcomes and care across the continuum. Through this collaboration, advantages occur for both partners. In my educational setting, we have multiple practice partners including Texas Children's Hospital, University Health System and other sites across Texas.

4. What is one thing you would like ALSN members to know?

ALSN has propelled my career in multiple ways. Involvement in ALSN created the opportunity for me to network with other nurse leaders, researchers, and scholars who have similar interest. Our organization is committed to improving the scholarship of nursing leadership and we hope that you join us to be a part of this dynamic organization.



Which ALSN member do you think we should highlight?
Let us know by emailing office@nursingleadershipsience.org