



Association for Leadership Science in Nursing

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member SPOTLIGHT



An interview with Sandra Galura, PhD, RN

What is your current professional role?

In my current role I am an Assistant Professor, Director of the Nursing Leadership and Management Program at the University of Central Florida College of Nursing. In addition to conducting research, I advise graduate students in both the DNP Executive program and PhD program, and currently serve as the Vice President of the Faculty Association. I am a member of ALSN's membership committee.

Tell us about your career path, background, and interest in advancing the science of nursing leadership.

My career path was largely rooted in industry. I practiced 32 years in a large, multi-campus hospital system where my leadership spanned from frontline leadership (assistant nurse manager, educator, manager, administrative nurse manager) to system-level leadership as Director of Clinical Excellence and Nursing Research. During my tenure as a frontline leader, I often felt trapped in the middle, understanding issues from the staff and organizational perspective, yet not feeling empowered to effect change. This rub followed me as I transitioned to academia and has driven my research interests which focus on further explicating these issues with the hopes of informing strategies to address them.

Have you published any articles on this topic?

Most recently I co-authored an article in JONA (2022), "A Survey of Interim Nurse Managers to Understand the Role and the Impact on Nurse and Patient Outcomes. In 2020, I published an article "On the Frontlines of Nursing Leadership: Managerial Dissonance and the Implications for Nurse Managers and Health Care Organizations" in Nurse Leader.

How did you hear about ALSN and what has been your experience with this organization?

I was introduced to ALSN by a current faculty colleague. Involvement has influenced my career trajectory immensely as an associate, tenure-track professor as this organization provided me with my first extramural grant award, launching my research trajectory. For that I will always be grateful.

What doors have opened to you as a result of your involvement in ALSN?

Doors to collaboration have opened since joining ALSN. I have been given the opportunity to contribute to a work group exploring authentic leadership – working /collaborating with leaders in both industry and research. The exposure to nurse leaders across the country has been invaluable. ALSN is a wonderful group of members that pulls out all stops in supporting the research of its members.

One of our goals is to create a better balance between academic and practice partners. What are your ideas on how this could be accomplished?

I think this balance can be created by setting a research agenda and creating workgroups around issues of importance to nursing leadership. These workgroups could be composed of both practice and academic partners with the focus on producing scholarly works (publications, position statements, research) that address key problems in nursing leadership.

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

Membership in this organization gives you current access to literal leaders, thought leaders in the field – both academia and practice. Access to this wealth of collective knowledge is incredible and the fact that you can tap into that knowledge and connect with these leaders in an organization that is small enough to support intimate connections is rarely found in today's professional environments.