



Association for Leadership Science in Nursing

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An interview with

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

I started my nursing career as a diploma graduate. About a year and half after graduation, I joined the Navy and completed a career in the Navy, working stateside, overseas and on board the hospital ship in just about every nursing specialty. With each new assignment, there were increased leadership opportunities.

Eventually I completed my doctorate from George Mason University. I teach across the curriculum, am responsible for all clinicals, and coordinate the administrative track in the graduate division. In addition to my responsibilities at GMU, you can find me working prn in either the ICU or the Operating Room in various hospitals in Washington, DC and Northern Virginia.

My first leadership position happened without notice. On Friday, I was a member of the staff and on Monday, I was the nursing manager. I had no understanding how the budget worked or how changes were made within the unit. As I took over the leadership role, I was tasked with developing and

implementing a same day surgery unit. It was the first such unit in the Navy Healthcare system and I quickly gained meaningful experience! I found I was not alone as my peers were in the same position with no experience in nursing management or leadership.

It was during this period that I knew I needed more knowledge on how to lead and manage individuals and groups. I had taken many courses in leadership but I knew that I needed formal education in Leadership and Administration.

I have been honored to have worked with great leaders during my Nursing career -- and I also have learned from some of the “not so great” leaders. The individuals that I meet at meetings give me hope that nursing will be able to turn this nursing shortage around with strong leadership. I believe that nurses should be at the table with executives and be a major part of the conversations and decisions. It gives me great hope that we have more nurses at the top levels of health care organizations and academia.

How did you hear about ALSN and what has been your experience with this organization? What committee are you a member of?

I had no knowledge about this organization until I attended a CCNE conference and ALSN had a table. I spoke with the individual at the table and was very excited about an organization for nursing leadership. I am currently a member of the membership committee and on the subcommittee developing the ALSN mentor program.

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

We, as an organization, need to be visible everywhere – such as at professional meetings and in ads in major nursing journals. The organization offers many great opportunities to meet other nursing leaders in all areas of practice -- this is the strength of our organization.

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

Just do it -- you will never regret your decision. Becoming involved in the organization’s committees is a great way to meet other leaders and know more about the vision and goals of the organization.

What are 3 things that others may not know about you that you would like to share?

1. I like to scuba dive, more specifically in the Pacific Ocean doing wreck diving.
2. I love baseball (Baltimore Orioles in the American League and Washington Nationals in the National League).
3. I am very involved in helping veterans.