

CANDIDATE FOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Stephanie Gregory,
MSN, RN, CCRN, NPD-BC, MLT (ASCP)

Critical Care Clinical Educator

*Med Center Health
Bowling Green, KY*



Experience and Activities

AACN Commitment and Involvement, 2022-present

Includes ways in which the candidate integrated the mission and work of AACN into their current role and practice. Local and national volunteer activities are listed, if applicable.

- Beacon Award Review Panel, 2025-present
- Clinical Advisory Workgroup, 2025-present
- Unit Beacon Application Champion, 2024-present
- Coordinator, Hospital CCRN, PCCN and CMSRN Review, 2023-present
- Ambassador, 2022-present
- South Central Kentucky Chapter
 - Treasurer, 2011-present
 - Member, 2010-present
- Lead reviewer, ECCO Module Review Panel Cardiac Modules ICU/PCU, 2025
- Fundamental Skills for Preceptors Pilot Testing Group, 2024
- Award Review Panel, 2024, 2023
- Speaker, National Teaching Institute & Critical Care Exposition, 2022-2024
- Chapter Advisory Team
 - Co-lead, 2021-2024
 - Member, 2018-2024

Key Professional Activities outside AACN, 2022-present

Includes involvement with other professional organizations, teaching and/or speaking engagements

- Member, Sigma Theta Tau, 2024-present
- Member, Association for Nursing Professional Development, 2022-present
- Adjunct faculty, Clinical instructor for Medical Surgical Nursing II, Western Kentucky University, 2021-present
- Gregory S, Waugaman S, Zeller S. Breathing easy: exploring pulmonary diseases and devices. *Crit Care Nurs Clin North Am.* 2025;37(3):461–478. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cnc.2025.05.008>

Issues Statement

One of the most pressing issues affecting acute and critical care nursing today is the ongoing challenge of nurse retention in the face of increasing patient acuity, staffing shortages, and burnout. These factors not only threaten the stability of our workforce but also have direct implications for patient safety, quality of care, and the professional fulfillment of nurses.

Retention is more than keeping positions filled—it is about sustaining a highly skilled, engaged, and resilient nursing workforce. In acute and critical care environments, where the complexity of care demands rapid decision-making, advanced technical skill, and strong interprofessional collaboration, turnover can destabilize teams and compromise outcomes. The loss of experienced nurses also erodes the mentorship and knowledge transfer essential for developing the next generation of clinicians.

I believe AACN and AACN Certification Corporation are uniquely positioned to champion initiatives that address nurse retention through professional development, recognition, and advocacy for implementation of healthy work environments. Certification plays a pivotal role in this effort by fostering pride, building confidence, and reinforcing a nurse's commitment to excellence. When coupled with meaningful recognition, leadership support, and access to resources for continued learning, certification can be a catalyst for retention.

Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach: advocating for staffing models that prioritize patient safety, expanding access to certification preparation and continuing education, and promoting organizational cultures where nurses feel valued, heard, and empowered to influence practice. AACN's Healthy Work Environment standards, evidence-based resources, and national advocacy efforts provide a strong foundation to lead this work.

By championing retention as a top priority, AACN can help ensure that acute and critical care nurses not only remain at the bedside but thrive there, delivering the highest standard of care to the patients and families who depend on us.