



2026
Chapter Award
Recipients

AMERICAN
ASSOCIATION
of CRITICAL-CARE
NURSES



About AACN Circle of Excellence Awards

At AACN, we believe that acute, progressive and critical care nurses deserve recognition for all they do every day for patients, families and our profession. That's why we created the Circle of Excellence awards: to honor and inspire our members through programs focused on excellence and innovation. This booklet showcases the exceptional efforts of our 2026 Chapter Circle of Excellence award recipients. These chapters deserve recognition for all they have achieved, which exemplifies our mission, vision and values.

We hope the achievements detailed in this booklet inspire you as much as they inspire us. We also hope they motivate you and your chapter to apply for next year's awards.

For details, please visit <https://www.aacn.org/nursing-excellence/excellence-awards/circle-of-excellence-chapter-award>

Thank you for everything you and your chapters do to further AACN's mission. We are a community of exceptional nurses!

Honorable Mentions

All chapters are vital to the success of AACN, and your work in our community of exceptional nurses helps achieve our mission. Although the following chapters were not selected to receive a Circle of Excellence award this year, we want to acknowledge them and share our appreciation for their continued commitment to excellence.

AACN Chapter at UCLA, Region 17
California

Broward County Chapter, Region 7
Florida

Denver Chapter, Region 15
Colorado

Greater Long Beach OC Chapter, Region 17
California

Greater Miami Area Chapter, Region 7
Florida

Greater Raleigh Area Chapter, Region 5
North Carolina

Greater Richmond Area Chapter, Region 4
Virginia

Hawaiian Islands Chapter, Region 16
Hawaii

Metropolitan Orlando Chapter, Region 7
Florida

Northern New Jersey Chapter, Region 2
New Jersey

Northwest Georgia Chapter, Region 6
Georgia

Ocean State Chapter, Region 1
Rhode Island

Oklahoma City Area Chapter, Region 13
Oklahoma

Palm Beach County Chapter, Region 7
Florida

San Diego Area Chapter, Region 17
California

Southeastern Pennsylvania Chapter, Region 3
Pennsylvania

West Houston Chapter, Region 13
Texas

West Michigan Chapter, Region 9
Michigan



Excellence in Chapter Collaboration



New York City Chapter

New York

The New York City (NYC) Chapter exemplifies purposeful collaboration — teamwork grounded in a shared vision, respect and a commitment to improving patient and community outcomes. Aligned with AACN’s theme “On Purpose,” the chapter fosters partnerships that connect nurses, interdisciplinary teams and community organizations to drive innovation, inclusion and excellence in care.

Purposeful collaboration extends beyond working together; it means aligning actions with values, finding meaning in service and staying steadfast through challenges. The NYC Chapter embodies this spirit through initiatives that advance clinical practice, strengthen professional growth, and support the health and well-being of diverse communities across the city.

A defining example of collaboration was the Harlem Day Health Fair, a joint initiative with the Men in Nursing organization, Mount Sinai Community Outreach Team, Greater NYC Black Nurses Association, LiveOnNY and the Abyssinian Church Health Ministry. The event addressed health education and food insecurity in underserved communities. Educational booths focused on managing risk factors for hypertension, diabetes, prostate cancer and high cholesterol, emphasizing prevention and early detection. Attendees participated

in interactive demonstrations on accurate blood pressure measurement and engaged in discussions with healthcare professionals.

An advanced practice nurse led a session on nutrition and diet management, discussing portion control, balanced eating and overcoming barriers to healthy food access. Participants shared challenges and received practical, culturally sensitive solutions to support sustainable lifestyle changes. This initiative demonstrated how shared expertise and compassion can empower communities and improve their health — an embodiment of collaboration “On Purpose.”

Each year, the chapter extends its outreach through seasonal fundraising and service initiatives that bring tangible support to families facing hardship. Through collective volunteerism, members provide full holiday meals during Thanksgiving and Christmas, ensuring that no family goes without nourishment or companionship. Toy drives and toiletry distributions further promote dignity and joy for children and adults. These acts of service reflect a holistic approach to nursing — one that extends beyond the bedside into the heart of the community and reaffirms the purpose that drives nurses to heal, serve and lead with compassion.

Collaboration has also strengthened the professional growth of critical care nurses. Partnering with LiveOnNY, the city's organ procurement organization, the chapter bridged hospital teams and community agencies to enhance understanding of organ donation processes. Together, they hosted interprofessional lectures across major hospitals, engaging nurses, physicians, social workers and transplant coordinators in discussions about ethics, communication and best practices.

Through site visits to LiveOnNY's facilities, nursing teams observed donation operations firsthand, fostering empathy, respect and interdisciplinary trust. These experiences enhanced nurses' advocacy skills, improved coordination and supported better patient outcomes — illustrating how purposeful collaboration can transform systems of care.

Recognizing the role of cultural competence, the chapter partnered with the Jamaican Civic & Cultural Association of Rockland to promote health awareness in Caribbean communities. Campaigns addressed amyloidosis, breast cancer and menopause — topics often underserved in traditional outreach. Educational workshops equipped nurses and community members with tools to recognize early signs, seek timely care, and support one another through shared experiences. By leveraging cultural insight and community trust, these initiatives strengthened health literacy and empowered nurses to deliver equitable, patient-centered care.

To further address health disparities, the chapter collaborated with AstraZeneca to raise awareness and improve management of amyloidosis in the African American community. Educational sessions highlighted advances in diagnosis and therapy while tackling barriers such as limited access to specialists and under-recognition of symptoms. AstraZeneca provided resources to strengthen nurses' confidence in managing this complex disease, and future community discussions

aim to close the knowledge gap. This partnership demonstrated the power of aligning with industry leaders to promote health inclusion and improve outcomes.

Understanding that the future of nursing relies on developing new professionals, the NYC Chapter launched initiatives to mentor and empower early-career nurses. Orientation and networking sessions introduce graduates to AACN membership benefits, including continuing education, leadership development and mentorship. Upcoming workshops focus on career progression, advocacy, and transitioning from student to professional practice. By fostering inclusion and collaboration early, the chapter ensures the next generation of nurses remains committed to purposeful practice and collective advancement.

Across all initiatives — community outreach, education, advocacy and professional growth — the NYC Chapter demonstrates that collaboration is not a single event but an ongoing process of connecting, learning and serving together. Each partnership reflects values of integrity, excellence, inclusion and transformation, reinforcing that purposeful collaboration is the cornerstone of progress in nursing.

Looking ahead, the NYC Chapter remains steadfast in its mission to lead with purpose, unite through shared goals, and collaborate for the betterment of patients, nurses and communities. Through innovation, empathy and service, the chapter continues to embody what it means to deliver excellence in care — On Purpose.



Excellence in Chapter Collaboration



Shellcoast Chapter

Florida

Throughout the past year, the Shellcoast Chapter, Fort Myers, Florida, exemplified the impact nurses can have through meaningful community engagement. Our members have been intentional about fostering partnerships that extend beyond hospital walls, reaching individuals and families in our local community who need support the most.

This year marked the second consecutive year that Shellcoast collaborated with Premier Mobile Health, a nonprofit mobile health organization that provides accessible medical services to underserved populations. Together, we supported their annual back-to-school sports physicals event, where families receive free health screenings and essential resources before the new school year. This collaboration reflects our ongoing commitment to advancing community health through partnership and service.

Building on that initiative, our members organized a back-to-school supply drive that garnered generous contributions from both Shellcoast members and community supporters. Through this collective effort, we raised over \$1,200 and purchased school supplies based on the specific needs provided by the partnering school. The collected supplies were delivered to a

local school, where the principal said they would begin distributing them to displaced and unhoused students, some of whom had just arrived the day before our delivery. Knowing that these children will start school without worrying about basic supplies was both heartwarming and deeply impactful for our team.

As we approach the holiday season, Shellcoast is proud to announce another partnership with Premier Mobile Health for their annual “Breakfast with Santa” event. Now in our second year of participation, this celebration brings together families from across the region to enjoy a day of health screenings, food, holiday cheer and gift-giving, all made possible through the generous support of our members and community partners. Beyond the holiday excitement, this event provides a unique opportunity for nurses to engage with the community in a meaningful and joyful way.

Through our ongoing collaboration with Premier Mobile Health, Shellcoast also remains committed to supporting their health fairs, which serve underrepresented communities. During these events, our Creole- and Spanish-speaking nurses play a vital role in bridging language barriers and ensuring that every individual has access to the care and support they need.

As part of our commitment to serving underrepresented areas, Shellcoast Chapter is partnering with Nova Southeastern University's (NSU's) School of Nursing, in partnership with the NSU Physician Assistant Program to join their Project SEED (Serving Everyone, Embracing Diversity) in Immokalee, Florida. This initiative focuses on promoting health and wellness by offering free health screenings, distributing hygiene products, and providing children with a fun-filled day of engaging activities. Through this collaboration, we aim to support the well-being of the community while fostering inclusion and compassionate care.

Additionally, Shellcoast plans to repeat last year's successful Valentine's Day outreach, where members collaborated with a local memory care center to share kindness and connection with residents. The positive outcomes and emotional impact of the event reaffirmed our chapter's belief that small gestures of compassion can make a lasting difference.

Through these partnerships and initiatives, Shellcoast continues to exemplify the vital role of nurses as catalysts for meaningful change, both inside and outside hospital walls. In doing so, we uphold AACN's mission of driving excellence in acute and critical care nursing while uplifting the health and spirit of the broader community.



Excellence in Chapter Collaboration



Wasatch Front Chapter

Utah

The Wasatch Front Chapter, Midvale, Utah, has continued to build on the power of collaboration “On Purpose” through authentic partnerships that connect critical and acute care nurses and leaders from hospitals, clinics, universities and professional organizations. Our goal is to advance community spirit in clinical excellence, nursing leadership and belonging through meaningful engagement. Guided by AACN’s values of integrity, inclusion, transformation, leadership and relationships, our efforts this year reflect a shared commitment to health, heart and human connection.

Community Service and Fundraising Collaboration

In fall 2025, we hosted our fifth annual Pulse Dash 5K Run/Walk, an inclusive event that united nurses, students, families and community members in both movement and meaning. Designed to promote wellness and symbolize the collective pulse of our nursing community — strong, steady and resilient — the event has become a beloved tradition.

We proudly partnered with the Iota Iota Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International, as well as nursing programs at Utah Valley University (UVU), University of Utah (UofU), Weber State University (WSU), Provo College and Brigham Young University (BYU), along with hospitals and medical clinics throughout the Wasatch

Front. Nursing students aspiring to enter critical care joined AACN chapter members in planning, organizing and volunteering, gaining hands-on experience in leadership and community health promotion. These collaborations fostered mentorships that will benefit both students in their transition to practice and nurses refining their mentoring and leadership skills.

Local clinics, hospitals and gyms supported the event by recruiting participants and building enthusiasm. At the finish line, winners were celebrated with Swig gift cards, upbeat music and strong community camaraderie. The 5K continues to show how collaborative spirit becomes collective impact by raising funds for chapter programming, student engagement and membership while strengthening ties among professional nurses, students and community members.

At this event, we shared information about AACN membership, certification, the Circle of Excellence, micro-credentials and laminated Healthy Work Environment (HWE) Standards. Many participants took these resources back to their units, spreading awareness of AACN’s HWE model and starting conversations about workplace culture and well-being.

Educational Offerings and Mentorship

Building on these partnerships, our chapter recognized and is now developing both new educational sessions and mentorship opportunities to elevate clinical knowledge and leadership capacity. We are curating a list of clinical experts and willing mentors from our events to offer workshops and professional guidance for chapter members.

Through these collaborations, students and early-career nurses are gaining exposure to AACN's standards for excellence and are encouraged to pursue certification, engage in HWE initiatives and commit to lifelong learning. Hospital educators have shared how new graduates and experienced nurses alike benefit from AACN's national resources and local connections. These partnerships continue to bring fresh perspectives and future leaders to our chapter who are deeply invested in professional nursing.

Impact and Measurable Outcomes

We've already begun to see the impact of these collaborative efforts on our chapter and our acute and critical care nursing community. Chapter membership has more than doubled since our fundraising event, with many student and nurse participants joining AACN after attending the Pulse Dash or educational sessions. We have formalized partnerships with five nursing programs (UVU, UofU, WSU, Provo College and BYU) and strengthened collaborations with four hospital systems across the Wasatch Front. Our initiatives were featured in social media, local newsletters and institutional communications, amplifying AACN's mission to promote excellence in acute and critical care nursing. Feedback from our students and early-career nurses shows increased awareness of AACN resources, certification pathways and HWE concepts. We believe these efforts have the potential to enhance the sustainability and growth of our nursing workforce. Our chapter has seen how collaboration uplifts not only our reach but also

the professional identity, team dynamics and work environments of nurses in our region.

Future Directions (Through June 2026)

Looking ahead, the Wasatch Front Chapter plans to expand our collaborative network and deepen community impact. Our upcoming initiatives include:

- Using our Annual Awards Dinner to formally recognize emerging nurse leaders at all levels. This dinner draws on community partnerships with eight universities, four hospital/medical systems, and three professional nursing organizations to provide meaningful recognition of acute and critical care nurse leaders (and those who aspire to become such).
- Launching a "Critical Care in the Community" series to bring AACN education and certification awareness to hospitals and nursing schools.
- Developing a formal mentorship bridge between AACN members and nursing students for mutual leadership skill development and professional growth.
- Expanding our annual 5K Run/Walk into a statewide event with additional community sponsorships.

Through these efforts, we aim to sustain a culture of collaboration, compassion and clinical excellence "On Purpose," ensuring that the chapter continues to embody the heart of AACN's mission.

Conclusion

The Wasatch Front Chapter's collaborations with hospitals, universities and nursing organizations have helped us reach AACN's mission to drive "excellence in acute and critical care for nurses, patients and families." Together, we are building bridges across practice, academia and the community to celebrate nurses, advance knowledge and strengthen the community connections that help our nurses thrive.



Excellence in Chapter Community Education and Public Service



Greater Phoenix Area Chapter

Arizona

The Greater Phoenix Area Chapter (GPAC) embodies the spirit of service, advocacy and education central to AACN's mission and values in order to drive excellence in nursing and transform healthcare through compassion and collaboration. GPAC has advanced community health and engagement through a series of monthly volunteer initiatives designed to extend the reach of critical care nursing beyond hospital walls. Our efforts have established a framework of consistent community involvement, empowering members to volunteer, educate and support local populations across the Greater Phoenix Area while strengthening the visibility of AACN's mission and values.

Each month, GPAC provides at least one structured volunteer opportunity for members. Through collaboration with local organizations, hospitals and public health groups, the chapter has contributed meaningfully to community well-being while fostering professional connection and pride among members. Highlights include volunteering in medical tents at major community events such as the Phoenix Rock 'n' Roll Marathon and Ironman Arizona, where GPAC nurses provided first aid and emergency response care for

participants and spectators, while educating the public about hydration, injury prevention and recognition of exertional illnesses. These high-visibility events not only offered opportunities for community education but also showcased the expertise, leadership and compassion of critical care nurses in dynamic, real-world settings.

GPAC's dedication to addressing social determinants of health has been evident in its regular service with local food banks, including St. Mary's and United Food Bank. Members have participated in sorting and distributing more than 4,000 pounds of food since July, supporting families experiencing food insecurity and promoting nutritional awareness. Recognizing Arizona's extreme summer heat as a significant public health hazard, GPAC organized a water drive that collected and distributed water to local shelters and unhoused populations. During distribution events, members provided brief community education sessions on recognizing and responding to heat exhaustion, the importance of hydration and emergency measures for heat-related illness.

Furthering the chapter's impact, GPAC partnered with Maggie's Place and Family Promise to provide essential supplies, including hygiene kits, diapers, formula and infant care items for unhoused mothers and families. Volunteers offered health education on infant safety, infection prevention and hydration while engaging compassionately with recipients to ensure care extended beyond material needs. These activities illustrated the chapter's belief that critical care nurses play a vital role in promoting community health inclusion and supporting vulnerable populations.

GPAC defines community education as the intentional sharing of evidence-based health knowledge and preventive strategies that empower individuals to improve well-being, prevent illness and respond to emergencies. Each chapter event integrates a structured educational component tailored to the audience. The overarching goals of these initiatives are to engage members in ongoing volunteerism, improve public understanding of health and safety, and elevate the image of the critical care nurse as a compassionate leader in the community.

The chapter's outcomes over the past year demonstrate the success and sustainability of these efforts. More than 100 volunteer hours have been logged since July 2024, with increased participation from our active GPAC members. Collectively, the chapter has reached approximately 1,200 individuals through direct education, service and resource distribution. Engagement within the chapter has also increased, with members frequently citing the volunteer opportunities as a source of motivation, professional renewal and pride in belonging to AACN. The chapter's

efforts have also generated qualitative outcomes that reinforce a healthcare system driven by collaboration and compassion. Volunteer feedback consistently emphasizes personal and professional fulfillment derived from community service. Similarly, recipients of GPAC's outreach have expressed gratitude for the chapter's compassion and approachability, reinforcing the importance of nurses as trusted community educators.

GPAC's commitment to community education and public service continues through June 2025, with a robust plan to expand outreach and deepen partnerships. Activities include a "Summer Safety and Hydration" campaign in collaboration with the City of Phoenix Office of Heat Response and Mitigation, focusing on water distribution and public education on heat-related illness prevention.

Through consistent volunteerism, meaningful partnerships and intentional education, the Greater Phoenix Area Chapter of AACN exemplifies how critical care nurses advance public health, compassion and professional excellence in their communities. GPAC's members continue to live the AACN mission every day by bringing critical care knowledge, advocacy and human connection to the heart of Phoenix, ensuring that excellence in nursing extends beyond the bedside and into every corner of the community.



Excellence in Chapter Community Education and Public Service



Greater Twin Cities Area Chapter

Minnesota

The Greater Twin Cities Area Chapter (GTCAC), Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota, has thoughtfully and On Purpose dedicated itself to community education of the nurses in our area and committed to public service as a pillar of our identity. Educational dinners are offered regularly for members of the critical care community. In addition, we offer annual educational offerings for members of the critical care and progressive care nursing community. They include CCRN/PCCN and CMC/CSC certification review courses and an annual two-day critical care symposium where leaders in the community and national speakers who are subject matter experts come together to present current topics in our discipline. These opportunities help our community of nurses, thoughtfully and On Purpose, be equipped to deliver the best care to our Twin Cities population.

This past April, chapter members, along with other community and healthcare volunteers, screened 138 kids and taught 145 kids/parents CPR and AED awareness as part of the Play for Patrick program, which brings heightened awareness to the community about children and heart disease. We screened 218 kids, and 196 kids and parents were taught hands-only CPR and AED awareness in September 2024, while assisting

the same community outreach program. Adolescents and young adults ages 14-24 have their height, weight and blood pressure recorded. A 12-lead EKG and an echocardiogram are also performed. All tests are read on the spot, and consults are done with a cardiologist or other advanced practice provider. This screening helped to identify heart abnormalities that otherwise would have gone undiagnosed. Abnormal results included mild bileaflet MVP with mild-moderate mitral regurgitation, inferior T-wave/ICRBB, patent foramen ovale, LV enlargement, two with high pulmonary pressure, and two enlarged coronary sinuses with possible LSV. In addition, at our annual symposium, Play for Patrick was our featured nonprofit where GTCAC matched the donations of symposium attendees. A total of just under \$5,000 was raised.

GTCAC collected 250 pounds of food for Hope4Youth, a food bank for local homeless teens. When members of our chapter delivered the food, it was at the right time as the food bank was running very low on supplies. We have also gathered nonfood items for this organization, including diapers, wipes, personal hygiene supplies, backpacks, underwear and T-shirts. This year, Hope4Youth will be GTCAC's featured nonprofit

organization during the annual symposium in November. Our goal is to increase their funding to continue their work with the underserved homeless youth in our area. Period Kits MN is another organization that GTCAC has helped by gathering supplies during our monthly meetings. Donated supplies are made into kits that provide a 30-day supply of feminine products for those experiencing homelessness or unstable housing and poverty.

In addition, we provide public service and community education featuring local nonprofit organizations at our annual symposium each fall. Every nonprofit has a display table, and nurses visit the tables during designated break and lunch times. This highlighting of community and public service organizations brings heightened awareness and funding to their causes. Some organizations also use it for volunteer recruitment. This November some of our nonprofit groups will include Wishes & More, which helps provide wish experiences for children battling devastating medical conditions; NAMI,

an organization dedicated to improving the lives of children and adults with mental illness; Domestic Abuse Project, which brings awareness to this growing problem in our area; and Nursing Peer Support Network (NPSN), which provides support to nurses battling alcohol or drug addiction. These are examples of our culture of being fully engaged with serving in various aspects of our local population's well-being.

Part of our mission statement is to create an environment that engages our membership through knowledge and service. We strive to do this by creating opportunities throughout the year for members to increase their knowledge through access to cutting-edge education on the best practices in our field. In addition, we provide ample opportunities to make a difference through volunteering and providing public service to the underserved populations in the Twin Cities area.



Excellence in Chapter Community Education and Public Service



San Antonio Chapter

Texas

Public Service Contribution

In 2025, the San Antonio Chapter (SA AACN) upheld AACN’s mission to promote nursing excellence and serve the community “On Purpose.” The chapter improved community education, public health and professional involvement through volunteer efforts that affected hundreds of lives across South Texas.

Members partnered with several organizations to address urgent community needs. The chapter participated in the International Nursing Student Association’s Food Drive to fight hunger in Southwest Texas. We supported the National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN) San Antonio Coat Drive, collecting warm clothing for families in need. In collaboration with the Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses (AMS), members took part in the Jolly Day fundraiser, supporting local community projects and a back-to-school supply drive. They gathered backpacks and supplies for elementary students. Members also volunteered at an elementary, middle and high school, conducting physical exams and blood pressure screenings for over 150 children to prepare them for the upcoming school year.

Following flash floods in the Texas Hill Country, members participated in recovery efforts and partnered with therapy-animal groups to provide emotional support for families and first responders. The chapter checked on members in the region to ensure their safety and address their needs. SA AACN members are dedicated to supporting communities affected by natural disasters, even beyond Texas. Members supported the World Central Kitchen through monetary donations to aid the I Relief Team in Jamaica with flood response efforts after Hurricane Melissa.

Community Education Component and Program Goals

SA AACN aims to promote public education, boost professional visibility and strengthen community resilience through evidence-based outreach and partnerships. Members continued to conduct Stop the Bleed training with University Health’s Trauma Program and South Texas Regional Advisory Council (STRAC), teaching lifesaving skills to over 200 community members. A “Meet and Greet” event connected acute care nurses with AACN membership benefits and highlighted the importance of specialty certification for better patient outcomes.

In partnership with Cast Medical High School on San Antonio's South Side, chapter representatives delivered career talks, mentorship and ICU shadowing experiences. This underserved area faces socioeconomic challenges that limit access to healthcare careers. Educational support was also provided to St. John Paul II Catholic High School with classes on nursing opportunities in the military. By focusing its outreach efforts, the chapter helped close educational gaps and motivated students to pursue nursing and allied health professions, aligning with AACN's values of inclusion, advocacy and compassion.

The chapter continued working with the San Antonio Nursing Consortium (SANC) as they hosted the annual Patient Safety Conference. This year's event, "AI in Nursing: Revolutionizing Patient Safety and Practice," attracted 150 participants from across South Texas, highlighting the role of artificial intelligence in improving decision-making, safety and workflow in clinical care.

SA AACN launched a Beacon Award Preparation Initiative, supporting three hospital units in understanding AACN Beacon standards, reviewing best practices, and aligning outcomes with evidence-based criteria. This project improved local hospitals' quality improvement efforts and established sustainable frameworks for nursing excellence.

In response to the 2025 government shutdown, the chapter is launching a food and gift card drive for nurses and families facing hardships. We plan to partner with the Texas Nurses Association, District 8, on a GoFundMe campaign to expand relief efforts, reflecting AACN's core values of advocacy, community and compassion.

Outcomes and Demonstrations of Success

Community Impact: Over 400 volunteer hours were contributed through eight service projects, reaching

hundreds of families. Food, coats, school supplies and health screenings directly addressed essential needs in underserved communities.

Educational Reach: The Patient Safety Conference engaged 150 nurses and allied health professionals, promoting an understanding of AI and technology in patient safety. High school mentorship increased awareness of nursing as a career pathway.

Professional Development: The Beacon Award mentorship initiative supported three units in applying AACN's excellence standards, thereby enhancing their quality improvement frameworks.

Collaborative Partnerships: Joint efforts with TNA District 8, NAHN, AMSN and the International Nursing Student Association expanded the chapter's community presence and strengthened AACN's network of collaboration.

Community Recognition: Partner organizations commended SA AACN for its responsiveness and leadership during flood recovery, as well as its ongoing engagement in public health and education initiatives.

Alignment With AACN Mission, Vision and Values

Every initiative embodied AACN's national theme, "On Purpose." Through deliberate collaboration, volunteer efforts and education, the San Antonio Chapter enhanced public health and professional nursing practice across the region. The chapter shows that critical care nurses serve not only at the bedside but also as leaders, educators and advocates for community well-being. SA AACN's outreach reflects AACN's vision of a healthcare system improved by nursing excellence and compassionate care, promoting knowledge, service and hope throughout the community.



Excellence in Chapter Educational Programming



Central Ohio Chapter Ohio

Educational Assessment

The Central Ohio Chapter conducts a yearly comprehensive educational needs assessment to guide the development of an impactful program. We first evaluate the needs of our chapter members with a thorough targeted yearly survey and monthly evaluations. This survey includes a list of topics for the following year's educational offerings and an opportunity to add a topic if they have an educational need/desire to learn more about. The registered members complete the survey on Microsoft Forms; our assessment survey is posted on Nursing Network, the Chapter Facebook page, and via a provided QR code at the monthly event.

Our educational assessment has helped us pinpoint the critical learning needs and educational interests directly from our members, ensuring our initiatives are highly relevant and engaging. The board members evaluate the educational assessment, identifying the education gaps to include in planning the following year's educational offerings. This information has become the cornerstone for setting up our program goals. Based on these findings, we create targeted, measurable and achievable goals that reflect our learners' priorities, ensuring our

future educational offerings will directly address the diverse needs and aspirations of our chapter members.

The board members identify content experts for each of the topics selected. Sourcing content experts from the three major adult health systems in our area, OhioHealth, Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center and Mount Carmel Health System, provides an unbiased approach to the education provided to our members.

Planning

The Central Ohio Chapter conducts a learner needs assessment by gathering feedback from our participants to assess their gaps in knowledge and practice. We then conduct an analysis of our assessment survey to develop educational programs that meet the needs of the learners' priorities.

Last year, we identified a knowledge gap on oncological emergencies in the ICU; therefore, we provided a one-hour educational offering on this topic. Based on the findings of the education survey, our chapter established specific, measurable program goals and desired outcomes to address this need. We created an educational program that best supported our desired

outcomes. In this case, a clinical nurse specialist who specializes in oncological critical care delivered this offering. We incorporate interactive strategies to keep our learners involved by using audiovisual components and an engaging speaker. Each part of our program intentionally connects to our desired outcomes, ensuring that our learners can integrate their new knowledge into practice.

As a result, our program effectively met the education needed to close the education gap on oncological emergencies and support the professional growth of the learners. Our post-program survey confirms the results.

Evaluation

After each monthly educational offering from September to May, our regional committee performs a session evaluation. To receive the continuing education hours for each session, the member must complete this evaluation. The participant evaluation ensures the objectives are met, the speaker had no bias, the methodology was effective, any changes were made and input on future activities was included.

At the end of each fiscal year, we ask for specific topics in each category of Cardiac, Pulmonary, Trauma, Professional Development, Neuroscience, Advanced Hemodynamics, Oncology and other areas of interest. This process enables our chapter's board members to plan future education activities. The evaluation of the educational needs assessment ensures that each topic relates to critical care/acute care nursing; it is evidence-based and reviewed by the chapter nurse planner.

Implementation

After evaluation of the educational needs assessment, the program coordinators begin to plan the topics chosen by the members. The program coordinators work with the subject matter experts (SMEs) on the topics chosen by the members. The program coordinators collaborate with the SMEs, sponsors and venues each month to finalize the monthly educational dinner event. Based on the monthly evaluation feedback, the board members review positive feedback and areas for opportunities on the topics and venues.

An example of a change we made was related to a venue. The venue is located on the university campus with distant parking lots, a long walk that posed challenges to members with mobility challenges, and members notified board members they were unable to attend. Our members' learning needs are the priority of the board members, who decided the venue would no longer be a choice for future events. This decision allows all members to access our events without challenges related to mobility, parking or safety concerns.

The Central Ohio Chapter runs at approximately 92% attendance for each monthly event. Positive feedback from the membership on content delivery, venue space, speaker quality and ongoing assessment ensures everything we do is On Purpose.



Excellence in Chapter Educational Programming



Greater Kansas City Chapter

Missouri

Board Kickoff and Activities Update

The Greater Kansas City Chapter (GKCC-AACN), Missouri, officially launched its 2025-2026 board term in July with an ON PURPOSE-driven and engaging kickoff meeting. Both new and returning board members participated in a dynamic session, setting a collaborative tone for the months ahead. The board outlined a series of exciting initiatives designed to support local critical care and progressive care nurses, foster professional growth and strengthen community engagement. Key programs for the year include vendor-sponsored educational dinners, Trivia Night, the Vision Symposium, scholarship opportunities and a renewed commitment to community outreach.

Educational Dinner Series

The chapter's first vendor-sponsored educational dinner on Aug. 13, 2025, was a resounding success. The event drew nurses from multiple area hospitals and several pharmacists. The dinner provided a unique opportunity to connect across institutions while hearing directly from board members about the chapter's vision and initiatives for the upcoming year.

The momentum carried into the second vendor-sponsored dinner on Oct. 20, 2025, which followed a similar format. Attendance broke previous records, with 46 nurses in attendance. These dinners have quickly become valuable opportunities for professional networking and continuing education.

Publication Feature

In August 2025, *Critical Care Nurse* featured an article authored by several GKCC-AACN board members titled "Collaboration Over Competition." The piece highlighted a successful multi-institutional effort among nurses to co-develop certification review questions. The article underscored the strength and benefit of breaking down institutional silos in favor of knowledge-sharing partnerships. This publication reinforced GKCC-AACN's commitment to professional collaboration and innovation in nursing education.

NTI 2025 Poster Presentation

At NTI in May 2025, GKCC-AACN presented a poster titled "Chapter Resuscitation." The presentation attracted considerable attention from attendees eager to engage with chapter representatives. Many expressed

appreciation for the revitalization strategies showcased and indicated plans to incorporate similar initiatives in their own chapters. The positive reception validated the board's efforts and reaffirmed the value of sharing local successes on a national platform.

Community Outreach

GKCC-AACN continues to prioritize service beyond the bedside through meaningful community outreach initiatives. The chapter's first outreach event of the term on Sept. 30, 2025, partnered with Newhouse KC, Kansas City's first domestic violence shelter. By collaborating with this organization, GKCC-AACN contributes to the broader mission of caring for our community.

The chapter's second outreach event is scheduled for Nov. 13, 2025, with Harvesters, a regional food bank focused on combating food insecurity. GKCC-AACN volunteers will assist in sorting and packaging food, helping meet the needs of families in the community.

History and Evolution of the Vision Symposium

Planning is underway for the next Vision Symposium, scheduled for March 6, 2026. A venue is secured, and the event promises an exciting lineup of expert speakers, poster presentations and vendor exhibits. This symposium addresses a wide range of acute care topics, spanning pediatric and adult populations. Attendees can expect valuable continuing education aligned with AACN's Core Curriculum and CERP categories.

When COVID-19 disrupted in-person learning in 2020, the chapter pivoted to a virtual format. In 2024, the event triumphantly returned to a live, in-person format, reestablishing its reputation as a must-attend gathering for local critical care and progressive care nurses. Attendee feedback has always played a vital role in shaping the event. In early 2025, the board distributed a comprehensive online survey to members, collecting

input on content preferences, delivery methods and interest in certification preparation topics. This feedback guides the planning team in curating relevant and engaging content.

Additionally, each year's symposium includes a charitable component. Participants are encouraged to bring donations for a local cause:

- 2024: feminine hygiene products to support a menstrual period poverty program
- 2025: gloves and socks for a homeless shelter

Both efforts exceeded expectations, demonstrating the generosity of our membership and our shared commitment to social responsibility.

Annual Trivia Night

A favorite tradition among members, Trivia Night is held annually in a private venue at a local restaurant. Teams from local hospitals compete in five rounds of trivia, with topics ranging from certification exam content to pop culture. Board members are easily recognized in their matching Trivia Night shirts, helping create an inclusive and fun environment for attendees. The evening concludes with an awards ceremony where the winning team receives a humorous homemade trophy, adding a playful and memorable finish to the event. Trivia Night has become a cherished way to connect with fellow nurses, promote teamwork and unwind in a friendly, relaxed setting.

Looking Ahead

With a strong start to the 2025-2026 term, GKCC-AACN is proud of the progress already made and energized for what's ahead. Through high-quality educational offerings, a spirit of collaboration and a heart for community service, the chapter continues to serve On Purpose for critical care and progressive care nurses across Greater Kansas City.



Excellence in Chapter Educational Programming



Greater Tampa Bay Chapter

Florida

Education is a vital and integral part of any nursing practice — whether at the bedside, in leadership or management, or in the role of nurse educator. Lifelong learning remains essential across all specialties but is especially crucial for those caring for acutely and critically ill patients. With the constant introduction of new medications, technologies, regulations and policies, continuing education enables nurses to stay informed, deliver optimal patient care and improve outcomes. It also reinforces professional accountability and highlights behaviors that reduce the risk of litigation.

A major responsibility of the chapter leader is facilitation of educational offerings for members. The Greater Tampa Bay Chapter (GTBC) has prioritized education since its inception and counts its annual conferences among its greatest accomplishments. The chapter collaborates with community leaders from healthcare facilities, local universities and colleges, and medical corporations in alignment with AACN’s mission, vision and values, while drawing on the expertise of its talented members to deliver high-quality educational content.

Education Assessment

GTBC intentionally designs its educational programming

On Purpose, guided by systematic needs assessments and member feedback. In 2025, the chapter conducted a comprehensive Needs Assessment Survey to identify the evolving learner priorities of active, lapsed and potential members. Distributed via email and social media, the survey gathered data on satisfaction levels, preferred event types, participation barriers, volunteer interest and CE programming needs.

Findings showed members preferred shorter, high-yield CE opportunities, flexible scheduling, and topics reflecting current trends in critical care nursing, leadership and professional resilience. In response, the chapter strategically refined its flagship annual educational seminar and introduced targeted learning sessions designed to meet members where they are — both professionally and geographically.

Planning

Drawing on assessment findings and prior program evaluations, the board and education chair established clear goals to:

1. Deliver relevant, evidence-based content supporting professional growth.
2. Enhance accessibility through hybrid and in-person events.

3. Integrate leadership and advocacy topics aligned with AACN’s vision of a healthy work environment (HWE).

The annual “Critical Trends: Tides of Tampa Bay” seminar was redesigned to reflect member preferences. Initially an eight-hour, hotel-based conference until 2019, it was streamlined to a four-hour format post-pandemic to encourage attendance and maintain engagement – addressing feedback for concise learning experiences that fit demanding clinical schedules.

The 2021 in-person seminar, featuring a keynote speaker who contextualized the pandemic’s impact on critical care, was particularly meaningful, providing emotional renewal and professional reconnection after months of isolation. In 2022, GTBC hosted a virtual conference that attracted participants from three other states, expanding educational reach and inclusion.

In 2024, to ensure fiscal sustainability, the chapter partnered with a local hospital venue, a collaboration that showcased community support, program quality and reduced costs. This partnership continued in 2025, reinforcing mutual trust and engagement between local hospitals and AACN members.

Implementation

The chapter applied adult learning principles by incorporating interactive case studies, Q&A sessions and clinical scenario discussions. Speakers were selected for their subject matter expertise and dynamic presentation style.

To cultivate the next generation of nurses, the chapter continues to invite nursing students, who actively participate in leadership and legal sessions that fulfill academic requirements. Between two and 12 students attend annually, fostering an early professional connection to AACN’s mission.

Vendor partnerships further support educational dinners and seminars, ensuring member access to quality programming. Each event is guided by clear learner outcomes — such as improving understanding of emerging clinical trends and reinforcing leadership behaviors consistent with AACN’s HWE standards.

Evaluation

Systematic evaluation remains central to GTBC’s success. Participant surveys assessing relevance, speaker effectiveness and achievement of learning objectives are reviewed at board meetings to guide future planning.

Consistent trends in evaluations show high satisfaction with speaker quality, topic relevance and the interactive four-hour format. The decision to continue this structure and local venue was directly guided by these data-driven findings. Participant comments such as “I left refreshed and inspired to bring new practices back to my unit” and “I appreciated how leadership and clinical topics were woven together” highlight the program’s success in bridging clinical excellence with professional purpose.

Outcomes and Impact

Through a deliberate and data-driven educational design, GTBC continues to advance AACN’s mission by cultivating excellence and fostering community among critical care nurses. This adaptive approach — rooted in feedback and purposeful planning — has increased member engagement, strengthened partnerships with local institutions and expanded student participation.

By aligning education with AACN’s values of integrity, innovation and excellence, GTBC ensures that every program imparts knowledge and reaffirms the “why” behind what we do — to advocate for patients and elevate the profession, On Purpose.



Excellence in Chapter Leadership Development



Greater Rochester Area Finger Lakes Chapter

New York

The Greater Rochester Area Finger Lakes (GRAFL) Chapter has made leadership development, transition and succession a central focus to ensure sustainability and growth while advancing AACN's mission, vision and values.

The GRAFL Chapter promotes smooth leadership transitions through intentional planning and shared accountability. Outgoing and incoming board members participate in a structured transition meeting each June, which functions as both a celebration and an orientation to new roles. During this meeting, new board members are welcomed, expectations are reviewed, and outgoing officers share guidance and lessons learned. Practical matters such as meeting schedules, communication expectations and budget planning are clarified. The chapter also provides access to shared resources, including leadership handbooks, digital archives and historical financial records, to ensure each officer has the tools needed to succeed. This structured approach minimizes disruptions, encourages continuity, and prepares new leaders to carry forward ongoing initiatives.

Succession is treated as an ongoing process rather than a once-a-year event. Emerging leaders are identified throughout the year at chapter events and educational offerings, and through volunteer engagement. Strategies include mentorship by current officers, opportunities for members to join our Education Planning Committee and recognition of active volunteers. For example, members who support a successful event are often invited to join the Conference Planning Committee and consider future board positions. The chapter also utilizes tools such as DISC personality assessments to understand individual strengths and encourage leadership pathways that align with members' skills. This intentional focus on mentoring has yielded a consistent pipeline of leaders willing to step into board roles, thereby ensuring stability and inclusion in leadership.

Strategic planning is vital to our chapter's work. Each year, the board holds a strategic planning meeting guided by the annual theme. For the fiscal year, we divided our plan into Act on Purpose, Transform Our Practice and Follow the Path. This is how the board comes together to build ownership and ensure

alignment with the vision of creating a chapter where everyone feels seen. Recent strategic goals have included:

- Enhancing member engagement through social media storytelling, spotlighting certifications and career milestones
- Rebranding via a logo competition with submissions from our membership

This process fosters accountability, ensures continuity across boards and keeps the chapter mission-focused and forward-looking.

Clarity of responsibilities is ensured through formalized job descriptions for every board role. These documents outline expectations, responsibilities and succession timelines. They are revisited annually during the transition meeting and updated to reflect current practices. This process helps new leaders understand their scope of responsibility, ensures consistency across the years and prevents role ambiguity. Additionally, expectations such as attendance, professional conduct and communication are clearly explained to all board members at the start of their terms.

Past leaders are intentionally engaged in the chapter to foster continuity and mentorship. Former presidents and officers are asked to weigh in on the strategic plan for the year to provide perspective. They often serve as mentors to new leaders, offering guidance on leadership challenges and sharing their organizational knowledge and experience. Past leaders also contribute by supporting chapter initiatives such as the Linkages conference, assisting with vendor partnerships, and serving as liaisons to AACN national initiatives. This multigenerational leadership model ensures that the wisdom of past leaders informs the vision of current and future ones.

These leadership practices have yielded measurable and meaningful outcomes:

- **Sustainable Leadership Pipeline:** For the past three years, all primary board roles have been filled without vacancies, demonstrating the effectiveness of succession planning.
- **Membership Engagement:** Through active engagement strategies, membership engagement has increased, with record attendance at chapter events this year. We sold out our September educational dinner for the first time.
- **Program Innovation:** Leadership continuity has allowed the chapter to sustain and grow signature initiatives, including the annual Linkages conference, community partnerships and recognition programs.
- **Member Development:** Emerging leaders mentored through planning committee roles have advanced to regional and national AACN leadership opportunities, extending the chapter's impact beyond Rochester.

The GRAFL Chapter is proud of its commitment to intentional leadership development and succession planning. By fostering smooth transitions, mentoring emerging leaders, engaging past leaders and grounding our work in a clear strategic plan, we continue to uphold AACN's definition of leadership as the ability to influence oneself and others to achieve defined outcomes. In honoring former AACN Director Sharon Connor and her legacy, our chapter demonstrates that thoughtful leadership development not only sustains chapter success but also inspires future generations of critical care nurses to lead with purpose.



Excellence in Chapter Leadership Development



Houston Gulf Coast Chapter

Texas

The Houston Gulf Coast Chapter (HGCC) embodies leadership through intentional planning, structured transitions and a steadfast commitment to developing future nurse leaders. We believe leadership is both an individual and a collective responsibility — anchored in communication, mentorship and continuity.

One of the chapter's priorities has been ensuring smooth leadership transitions and maintaining operational consistency. HGCC developed standard operating procedures for officer and committee transitions, including clear guidance for transferring financial records and bank signatories, and the creation of new board position email accounts. These formalities outline expectations, timelines and responsibilities, ensuring every handoff is seamless. By implementing email addresses tied to leadership positions rather than individuals, HGCC preserves communication history and organizational memory. Together, these efforts have created a strong foundation of stability, allowing each new leader to build upon the progress of their predecessors rather than beginning anew.

This spirit of intentional continuity is further reflected in our annual Strategic Planning Meeting (SPM), a

cornerstone of HGCC leadership. In July 2025, SPM was held in person and included new leaders following prescheduled role transition handoffs. This deliberate approach allows incoming officers to connect directly with outgoing leaders, fostering mentorship, collaboration and shared understanding. The strategic plan — developed annually from member survey data — guides chapter priorities, ensuring initiatives remain aligned with member needs and community impact.

As the chapter continues to grow, it is establishing a Succession Planning Subcommittee, led by the president-elect as part of their defined role in 2026. This committee focuses on identifying, recruiting and mentoring emerging leaders through structured engagement and intentional relationship-building. It also facilitates leadership encounters between board members and potential leaders, creating a welcoming and transparent pathway for involvement. To strengthen succession planning, the elect positions for the president, education chair and treasurer have been created to provide mentorship and continuity for future leaders. To enhance functionality and engagement, HGCC introduced new board positions in October,

including webmaster and board member-at-large, to improve communication and digital presence. Additional roles such as community outreach chair, membership chair and symposium chair extend the chapter's reach and enhance professional development in the nursing community.

Our chapter's influence also extends beyond our own walls. In August 2025, HGCC launched supportive quarterly recruitment initiatives at area hospitals to engage in professional development and encourage AACN participation. Furthermore, our commitment to leadership excellence and advocacy — while amplifying the voice of our chapter nationally — has been exemplified through a President-to-President collaboration among the Sacramento, San Antonio, Louisiana, West Houston and North Montgomery chapters. These partnerships have created cross-chapter mentorship networks focused on strengthening community relationships, sharing resources, and securing sponsor support to sustain chapter vitality. In March 2026, HGCC will spearhead the first Certified Nurses Celebration with both the North Montgomery and West Houston chapters, further expanding our leadership reach.

As HGCC looks ahead, leadership development remains central to our mission. In August 2025, the chapter launched the Heart to Lead Leadership Series — an interactive forum bringing together nurse leaders from across AACN to share lessons in influence, authenticity and impact. Recent topics have included “The Courage to Lead – Embracing Boldness in the Face of Challenges” and “The Servant Leader's Path: Purpose, Impact and Professional Excellence.” In 2026, the series will expand

to partnering chapters and feature “The Ripple Effect of Leadership – How Small Acts of Leadership Create Big Change” and “Inspiring a Shared Vision – Motivating Others to Rally Around a Common Goal.” These topics capture HGCC's belief that leadership is not defined by title, but by the ability to inspire others toward a shared purpose. In May 2026, HGCC will sponsor board members to attend the Chapter Leadership Development Workshop (CLDW), continuing our investment in professional growth and leadership readiness.

Equally vital to our success is honoring those who paved the way. HGCC values the wisdom and experience of past presidents and maintains an active communication thread that includes them alongside the current president-elect. Their insights guide chapter development and the future of nursing, as past leaders support strategic planning, event facilitation and committee initiatives. In September 2025, their insights guided future nurse development at a local symposium, continuing our legacy of mentorship and advocacy. In 2026, all past presidents will be invited to join this communication network, representing nearly 50 years of HGCC leadership history. This bridge between past, present and future reflects the chapter's enduring respect for its legacy and its commitment to growth.

Leadership in the Houston Gulf Coast Chapter is not defined by position, but by influence, collaboration and purpose. By investing in people, systems and partnerships, the Houston Gulf Coast Chapter exemplifies the goal to inspire excellence, drive meaningful change, and improve outcomes for nurses, patients and the healthcare community.



Excellence in Chapter Leadership Development



Sacramento Area Chapter California

The Sacramento Area Chapter, California, embodies this year's national theme, "On Purpose," by developing leaders with intention, mentorship and heart. Every initiative, meeting and transition is carried out deliberately to strengthen leadership capacity and ensure the chapter's continued success in advancing AACN's mission of promoting excellence in acute and critical care nursing.

Each June, the chapter hosts its annual transition meeting, which serves as both a reflection on the previous year's accomplishments and a strategic planning retreat for the new fiscal year. Outgoing and incoming board members collaborate to review prior achievements, assess progress toward chapter goals, and establish new SMART goals aligned with AACN's mission and theme. The meeting also includes a detailed orientation for new and continuing board members to clarify expectations, responsibilities and leadership roles, ensuring a unified understanding of the chapter's strategic direction.

Leadership continuity is a hallmark of the Sacramento Area Chapter. Each year, a president-elect and a treasurer-elect shadow current officers throughout the

fiscal year. This intentional mentorship process allows future leaders to gain hands-on experience in event planning, budgeting and governance before formally assuming their roles. Clear role descriptions and defined expectations provide accountability and consistency, while the shadowing model ensures preparedness and confidence when transitions occur. Through this structured approach, the chapter has built a strong leadership bench and maintained steady growth and stability over time.

Recognizing that leadership development begins well before licensure, the Sacramento Area Chapter launched a Student Ambassador Program to bridge the gap between nursing education and professional practice. The new program represents a purposeful investment in succession planning and the sustainability of the chapter. Each partnering nursing school in the region now has two to three student ambassadors who serve as liaisons between their campuses and SAC AACN. These students help introduce AACN's mission and values to their peers, promote local events, and encourage engagement among the next generation of nurses.

The board works directly with these ambassadors throughout the year, inviting them to participate in planning sessions, chapter meetings and volunteer initiatives such as CPR training booths, community outreach and symposium coordination. In these settings, student ambassadors gain early exposure to leadership collaboration, professional networking and project planning. They learn how a professional nursing organization functions, and they begin to develop their own sense of purpose as future leaders in critical care.

This Student Ambassador Program is now a central component of the chapter's succession plan. The long-term goal is for ambassadors to transition into official board positions once they graduate and become registered nurses. By cultivating leadership interest and engagement at the student level, the chapter ensures a consistent influx of fresh energy and perspective while strengthening the bridge between academia and clinical practice.

Strategic planning guides every chapter decision. For fiscal year 2025-2026, the board established two SMART goals reflecting intentional growth and engagement. The first is to increase member participation by hosting biannual membership meetings and achieving engagement from at least 2% of total membership. The second is to increase overall membership by 10% through expanded outreach, stronger student partnerships and ambassador involvement. These goals were developed using data from the chapter's annual Healthy Work Environment survey and SWOT analysis, ensuring that efforts align with both member needs and AACN priorities.

Sustainability is reinforced through the ongoing engagement of past leaders. Former officers remain actively involved as mentors and advisors, participating

in planning retreats and providing guidance to new board members. Their continued presence ensures historical continuity while modeling servant leadership. The mentorship culture now spans three levels: past leaders mentor current officers, who in turn mentor student ambassadors. This intergenerational model fosters belonging, empowerment and shared purpose across the chapter.

These leadership development strategies have produced tangible results. Officer transitions occur smoothly due to shadowing and mentorship, and the Student Ambassador Program has created a visible and sustainable leadership pipeline. Membership engagement continues to increase through targeted outreach and purposeful programming. Partnerships with local schools have strengthened, and students are gaining early exposure to AACN's professional network and values. The chapter's meetings and events reflect consistent collaboration, clear communication and collective accountability — all rooted in the belief that effective leadership happens intentionally, not by chance.

The Sacramento Area Chapter's approach to leadership development exemplifies excellence through its structure, sustainability and alignment with AACN's mission. By deliberately mentoring current officers, investing in future leaders and engaging past leaders, the chapter creates a culture where leadership thrives On Purpose. This model ensures that AACN's vision of nurses leading from where they stand continues to flourish in Sacramento and beyond, carried forward by leaders who act with clarity, compassion and intention.



Excellence in Chapter Leadership Development



Tidewater Chapter

Virginia

The Tidewater Chapter's reawakening began in late 2023, when a single mass email to nurses in the region's largest health system reignited interest in local professional engagement. Building on momentum from local Beacon Award recognitions and meaningful connections made during a spontaneous group photo of Tidewater-area nurses at NTI, enthusiasm grew into action. Relationships formed at that moment would soon shape the leadership core that brought the chapter back to life.

By July 2025, the Tidewater Chapter, Chesapeake, Virginia, officially relaunched with a full slate of officers and chairs — each role filled by an engaged leader eager to contribute. Elections were held, succession planning was established, and the team immediately committed to building a sustainable framework grounded in AACN's Healthy Work Environment Standards. During our first six-hour board and transition meeting, the team defined its purpose and created a strategic plan that included one monthly board meeting, one community service project per quarter, one fun or social engagement event per quarter, and dedicated officer development and succession planning.

From that foundation, the chapter experienced rapid and remarkable growth. Officers participated in a comprehensive orientation to the AACN chapter portal, exploring every available tool to guide operations, strengthen communication and enhance member engagement. Our board members embraced the principles of shared leadership and accountability, understanding that effective leadership begins with alignment, structure and purpose.

Between January and October 2025, the chapter's efforts produced tangible, measurable outcomes: Membership increased by over 350%, from 11 members to 50 in less than 10 months, financial stability increased revenue through board-approved membership fee adjustment and successful vendor partnerships, and community engagement efforts secured partnerships with six major vendors for dinner programs, and we launched our first collaborative community service initiative — the 2025 American Heart Association Heart Walk at the Virginia Beach Boardwalk.

For professional development, we established a long-term plan for leadership attendance at NTI 2026 and the Chapter Leadership Development Workshop to ensure

continued growth and mentorship. For branding and recognition, we redesigned the chapter logo, launched new member shirts and promotional materials, and expanded our online platform from 43 to over 100 digital followers. For future vision, we formed a conference planning committee with a goal to host the Tidewater Chapter's first multiday regional conference by February 2027, in collaboration with neighboring AACN chapters and critical care vendors.

Our chapter's leadership team has been intentional in its approach — pairing structure with innovation. Each officer's role has a clear set of expectations and responsibilities, and a designated mentee or "elect" counterpart to ensure seamless succession as recommended by AACN's structure. Board members are encouraged to bring creativity and new ideas to the table, leading to initiatives such as AI-generated flyers, social media marketing and consistent online event visibility. Every event is posted at least three months in advance to help members plan, and our monthly meetings are held on a consistent day and time to maintain accessibility and predictability.

Beyond our internal growth, the chapter has prioritized community and collaboration. We plan to carpool as a unified group to other chapter events in our region — symbolizing solidarity, support and cross-chapter partnership. These shared experiences foster belonging and expand professional networks across hospital systems and practice areas.

Our board culture embodies AACN's belief that leadership is not about position; it is about purpose. Many of our officers hold leadership positions across hospital units, system councils and community organizations, and each officer contributes their expertise toward advancing a unified mission: to create a professional home for acute and critical care nurses. Together, we have created a chapter that reflects innovation, inclusion and intentional growth.

Perhaps the most defining moment of our journey was realizing that leadership development is not a single event — it is a culture. The Tidewater Chapter now models a living system of mentorship, empowerment and engagement. Our board members are developing future officers, our members are discovering their voices, and our region is witnessing what can happen when a few determined individuals commit to building something meaningful — On Purpose.

Today, the Tidewater Chapter of AACN stands as proof that even the smallest ember can reignite into a bright and lasting flame. What began as a hope has evolved into a model of collaborative leadership and strategic renewal. Our work is not complete — we have only begun to reach half of the hospitals in our service area, and our 2026 plan includes outreach to local nursing schools to inspire the next generation of AACN leaders.

There are no limits to where we can go. The Tidewater Chapter has rediscovered its purpose, rebuilt its foundation and reignited its spirit — intentionally, collaboratively and On Purpose.



Excellence in Promoting the Value of Certification



AACN Chapter at Keck Medical Center

California

The AACN Chapter at Keck Medical Center, Los Angeles, demonstrates excellence in promoting the value of certification through creativity, collaboration and a sustained commitment to removing barriers for nurses seeking professional certification. Guided by AACN Certification Corporation's vision that all nurses caring for acutely and critically ill patients and their families are certified, the chapter focuses on initiatives that increase access, confidence and support for nurses throughout the certification process.

The chapter partnered with a local medical center to identify and address barriers preventing staff from seeking reimbursement. Identified barriers included a lack of preparation, a lack of reimbursement for the review course, and a fear of failing the certification exam. To address these barriers, the chapter collaborated with the medical center to provide dedicated space to hold CCRN/PCCN review courses, the first in November 2023 and the second in July 2025. Each was a two-day review course designed to not only deliver comprehensive content but also to inspire and empower nurses to take the next step to certification.

Recognizing that lack of employer reimbursement for certification preparation was a barrier for staff at the partner medical center, the chapter intentionally focused on addressing this financial barrier. The chapter developed a unique and motivating incentive to accompany these review courses: full reimbursement for the certification review course for its members if the exam was taken within three months of review course completion, regardless of the certification exam outcome. This was the chapter's attempt to incentivize nurses to take the certification exam soon after the review course.

A main marketing point was to emphasize that exam results do not affect reimbursement – the message was come to class, take the test and we'll handle the rest. While the initiative was designed to assist one medical center, it was promoted broadly to all chapter members across the Los Angeles area through the chapter's website, Nursing Network, and direct outreach to local hospitals and AACN chapters.

During the review sessions, contracted course instructors noted that the chapter's reimbursement

model was a unique and innovative approach among AACN chapters. Following each review course, chapter leadership reminded attendees to complete their exams within three months to take advantage of the reimbursement, fostering both motivation and accountability through a clear timeline. This creative strategy effectively met member needs, reduced financial barriers, and maintained a financially sustainable model for the chapter, ensuring continued support for certification advancement.

The two certification review courses have been highly successful. The November 2023 review course drew 80 nurses, of whom 40% took the certification exam within three months. Of those, 63% obtained certification (four PCCN and 16 CCRN). The July 2025 review course built on that momentum, attracting 50 nurses. Of these, 44% took the exam within the three-month window, and 91% of them successfully obtained certification (nine PCCN and 11 CCRN). Both the percentage of people taking the certification exam and the percentage

obtaining certification increased from the first review course in November 2023. Combined, the two courses have supported more than 130 nurses and resulted in 40 newly certified nurses, demonstrating measurable success in increasing the number of certified nurses in the chapter and in the local nursing community.

Given the strong results and positive feedback from participants and partner medical centers, the chapter plans to continue offering review courses. In addition to review courses, future initiatives for the chapter include tracking certification renewals to improve the retention of certified nurses. Additionally, the chapter is considering offering reduced exam fee vouchers to further drive efforts by leveraging partnerships with local medical centers and accessing organizational discounts available through AACN. The chapter is inspired by their members' and nursing community's drive to seek certification, and excited to continue to encourage and support certification efforts!



Excellence in Promoting the Value of Certification



Northern Illinois Chapter Illinois

The Northern Illinois Chapter of AACN (NIAACN) is working on rebuilding a powerful culture of certification by intentionally promoting awareness, strengthening preparation pathways, celebrating credentialed excellence, and supporting long-term retention of acute and critical care nurses. Through collaborative community engagement, public advocacy and innovative learning experiences, NIAACN will make certification not only attainable — but aspirational.

NIAACN’s core strategy centers on the belief that certification is a mark of clinical credibility, professional pride and commitment to excellence in patient outcomes. To make certification approachable and sustainable, the chapter will focus on three key areas:

- Creating visibility and purpose for certification
- Supporting nurses from curiosity to exam readiness
- Elevating public recognition and community pride

This approach honors AACN’s mission by promoting certification as a symbol of advanced practice, resilience, professionalism and patient-centered accountability.

To inspire more nurses to pursue certification, NIAACN will strategically embed certification promotion in all educational programming. During chapter events, “Certification Spotlights” will showcase CCRN, PCCN, CSC and more certified members, sharing real stories of how certification strengthens their bedside decision-making, leadership confidence and influence on shared governance.

To help certified nurses maintain their credentials, chapter programming strategically aligns CE topics with AACN certification renewal categories, including trauma, complex hemodynamic management, neurocritical care, postoperative complications and transport considerations. By making CE hours easily accessible at chapter events, NIAACN helps reduce the burden associated with renewal requirements.

Certification is further supported by intentional recognition. During chapter meetings and events, recently renewed or certified nurses will be acknowledged, reinforcing certification as a professional identity rather than a one-time achievement:

- CCRN Trivia Night is a gamified event using case-based, AACN domain-driven questions in a relaxed environment designed to reinforce clinical reasoning while building study confidence.
- CCRN preparation initiatives are being intentionally designed to make certification feel less intimidating and more community supported.

To elevate certification visibility beyond hospital walls, NIAACN is proactively engaging civic leaders and secured a Mayoral Proclamation officially declaring March 19, 2026, as Certified Nurses Day across Northern Illinois. This public acknowledgment validates certified nurses as vital contributors to critical care safety, optimal patient outcomes and healthcare excellence.

In conjunction with the proclamation, NIAACN will host a Certification Celebration Event, inviting certified nurses throughout the region, hospital leaders, community

partners and local officials. This event will highlight the value of board-certified expertise in lifesaving care and foster community advocacy for certification as a benchmark of clinical excellence.

NIAACN is creating an environment where certification is not viewed as an intimidating exam, but as a supported journey, a celebrated achievement and a meaningful symbol of professional commitment. By combining celebration, mentorship, structured preparation and community visibility, the chapter will successfully foster a culture of certification-driven excellence that empowers nurses, strengthens care quality, and honors AACN’s mission of driving clinical practice to the highest standard.



President's Award for Chapters



Greater Richmond Area Chapter

Virginia

The Greater Richmond Area Chapter (GRAC), Virginia, was introduced to the AACN theme at NTI 2025. With a 50-year history, our chapter purposely fosters leadership growth and the abilities of our members. It is a cornerstone of our success.

In August, members joined a strategic planning meeting to incorporate the AACN theme, "On Purpose," in identifying goals and establishing an operational plan to meet these goals. Each subcommittee chair and our members created SMART goals with action steps for chapter collaboration in the coming year. A spirit of inquiry has guided chapter operations to include increasing member engagement through recruitment, enhanced onboarding, improved communication, and program and service offerings; meaningful recognition of current members; enhancing collaboration with area chapters and the community through joint programs and involvement; and creating a solid financial standing for the future.

Our chapter of 194 members has committed to intentionally recruiting and engaging new-to-practice

nurses and nursing students from area nursing schools, thus contributing to nursing leadership in the future. The chapter hosted a regional networking session in October 2025 featuring a panel of speakers, including the AACN president-elect and other AACN national board members, who offered their insights on leadership, certification and the evolving critical care landscape. The session showcased inter-chapter synergy, featuring collaboration with the Tidewater Region, and welcoming participants from the Monticello and Blue Ridge chapters.

GRAC has also maintained partnerships with local nursing schools to promote professional development through student membership and engagement. Students are encouraged to be curious by attending monthly educational offerings and networking with new and seasoned nurses and other nursing students, while learning about the evidence-based care of acute and critical care patients. The chapter has recruited new board members to inspire a shift in chapter communication through increased social media presence, improved website communication, a

relevant quarterly newsletter, and engagement of AACN ambassadors to address previously identified gaps.

The Programs Committee met in the summer to review chapter member needs assessment results and develop a calendar of monthly educational programs offered free of charge and open to all nurses in the community. This year's programs encompass a variety of topics, including "Care Coordination From the Hospital to the Community," "Sepsis Update 2025," "Standardizing the Approach to Maternal Sepsis Using an Evidence-Based Electronic Medical Record Screening Tool," "Critical Care Nursing: Pearls and Pitfalls," "Leadership Development Through Clifton Strength Assessments," and "Critical Care Transport, Monitoring, and Resources." The programs thus far, offered in person and virtually via Zoom, have averaged attendance from 35-40 nurses, composed of chapter members, nonmembers and nursing students. As a part of these programs, chapter members support community engagement through activities such as the "Socktober" drive and the "Contribute on Purpose" drive for a local food bank. The chapter will also serve a meal in the spring at "The Doorways," which offers free or low-cost lodging and support to patients and families in Richmond. Our full-day annual conference, "Odyssey on Critical Care," typically averaging 180 attendees from across the mid-Atlantic region, will be held again this year and include a keynote address from the AACN president. GRAC will also offer a PCCN/CCRN review course this spring, where clinical content experts from the chapter teach the course, thus reducing the cost to attendees. We will encourage participants to notify us when they pass the exam, so we can celebrate with social media posts and newsletter announcements.

GRAC identified a goal to intentionally recognize nursing excellence and accomplishments through several forums. Chapter members are encouraged to nominate peers for a 2025-2026 GRAC "On Purpose" Award, detailing how the nominee demonstrates the AACN theme through their practice. These nurses will be honored at Extravaganza, a GRAC annual awards celebration dinner in May, with certificates and one-year memberships to GRAC and AACN. GRAC is promoting an awards program for members to earn merit points for chapter and national AACN involvement. The points can be redeemed to reimburse educational and conference expenses to support professional development. GRAC is also offering an annual scholarship honoring AACN past president Denise Thornby that recognizes nurses who demonstrate the principles of authentic leadership.

GRAC continues to ensure a solid future through fiscal management. The chapter's board of directors demonstrates effective stewardship and transparency of chapter resources, and involves the entire membership in financial decision-making. During a fiscal planning session, a group decision was made to transfer chapter funds into a certificate of deposit to ensure future financial stability. We plan to focus on intentionally allocating current funds to support our mission of offering outstanding educational opportunities, rewarding and recognizing members, and supporting scholarships for further education.

Through our efforts, GRAC promotes AACN's mission and vision by providing opportunities for engagement, mentorship and networking, and professional development to transform our practice and act On Purpose.



President's Award for Chapters



Greater Tampa Bay Chapter

Florida

During the National Teaching Institute & Critical Care Exposition (NTI) in May 2025, members of the Greater Tampa Bay Chapter (GTBC) were introduced to AACN's 2025-2026 theme, "On Purpose." The message — living with intention, practicing with presence and pursuing purpose-filled nursing — resonated deeply with our leadership team. Upon returning home, the message was shared, and the board committed to integrating the theme deliberately and consistently throughout the year.

As soon as the official artwork became available, it was incorporated into our strategic planning meeting attended by returning and newly elected board members. The theme served as a symbolic bridge between leadership transitions and guided goal-setting discussions focused on intentional engagement, member empowerment and professional growth. This visual helped our board **be present** for our chapter. The artwork is prominently displayed at chapter dinner meetings, community events and educational offerings, reinforcing the theme's meaningfulness and relevance.

The theme is actively used during chapter meetings as a framework for discussion and reflection. Board

and general meetings incorporated theme-based prompts such as, "How are we being On Purpose for our members?" and "How can the chapter help you be present in your practice?" We laid the groundwork for another successful year by asking our constituents how we could empower them to **transform our practice** and **inspire a shift**. At a dinner meeting, we asked, "What do chapter members need from the chapter?" Members were encouraged to share ideas verbally, through Nursing Network postings and direct communication with board members. Feedback gathered during these meetings informed chapter priorities and programming decisions, demonstrating intentional responsiveness to member needs. As a chapter, we are committed to being intentional and acting on the suggestions of our members to **follow the path** we set during our strategic meeting.

GTBC effectively embedded the theme into ongoing communications with members. The On Purpose artwork and messaging were used consistently across social media platforms, the Nursing Network chapter page, email communications and event promotions. The theme was included as a watermark on continuing education recognition point (CERP) certificates

distributed at dinner meetings, reinforcing its relevance to professional development. Posters, stickers and themed door prizes also helped maintain engagement and visibility throughout the year.

Educational offerings were intentionally aligned with the theme by emphasizing purposeful practice, curiosity and professional excellence. The chapter's annual educational event, Critical Trends: Tides of Tampa Bay, continues to serve as a cornerstone of learning and reflection. Planning for the Feb. 28, 2026, event focused on content that supports critical thinking, leadership development and evidence-based practice — empowering participants to **transform our practice** with intention.

In addition, Certified Nurses Day will be celebrated with a themed dinner event, **Allowing Space for Daily Joy**, recognizing certification as a purposeful commitment to excellence. This event reinforced pride in certification and aligned directly with AACN's emphasis on lifelong learning and professional accountability. This is our chapter's way of honoring certified nurses' commitment to excellence. As our national president states, "maintaining her CCRN is one of her proudest accomplishments;" it is one of ours too. Nearly 60% of our members currently hold national certification.

Community service initiatives were also guided by the theme of purposeful action. GTBC's longstanding "Pass the Urinal" donation program continued at every dinner meeting, ensuring consistent and intentional support of community needs. Funds and supplies were collected for The Spring of Tampa Bay (a women's shelter), school supplies for underserved elementary schools, toys for hospitalized children, and self-care items for teens in foster care. Each initiative reflected the chapter's commitment to being present and responsive to the community we serve.

Integrating the theme throughout the year yielded meaningful outcomes. Member engagement increased through active participation in meetings, educational events and service activities. Feedback demonstrated that members felt heard, valued and inspired to reconnect with the chapter. Partnerships with community organizations and professional sponsors were strengthened, and collaboration with other AACN Region 7 chapters expanded through shared communication platforms.

Importantly, the theme fostered a renewed sense of professional pride and intentionality among members. By aligning education, service and leadership with AACN's mission — to drive change and innovation that improves the lives of patients, families and nurses — GTBC demonstrated that purposeful action can positively impact work environments, professional fulfillment and the broader community.

Through deliberate planning, consistent communication and **intentional service**, the Greater Tampa Bay Chapter exemplified AACN's 2025-2026 theme — On Purpose — not just in words, but in sustained action.



President's Award for Chapters



Susquehanna Valley Chapter

Pennsylvania

AACN's theme, "On Purpose," is the guiding inspiration of the Susquehanna Valley Chapter, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Our chapter's mission and vision symbolize our commitment and play a key role in providing educational opportunities, promoting certification, encouraging Beacon Award recognition, and recognizing healthy work environment standards.

The theme assisted our team in developing our yearly strategic plan to meet the needs of our members and local community. We incorporated the theme into monthly meeting agendas, educational offerings, meaningful recognition and the selection of community service initiatives. Our chapter embraced On Purpose, which provided our leadership team with an organizational structure when developing our yearly goals and objectives. This year, we have embraced the theme as our commitment to be intentional and inspire our chapter members to meet the challenges of today's healthcare environment and to transform our nursing practice.

During the opening of each chapter meeting, we embrace the theme by recognizing and celebrating the accomplishments of our chapter and members.

Celebrations have included both professional and personal accomplishments such as certifications, Beacon status, publications, presentations, graduations and participation in national AACN work groups. Some of the accomplishments include development of a regional nurse honor guard to celebrate colleagues when they pass away, participation in an AED at-home program to facilitate earlier use to improve cardiac arrest survival, and membership in a palliative partners committee that embraces palliative care and helps patients and their families meet their needs related to end-of-life care. Additional accomplishments include the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to help facilitate healthier work environments, the facilitation of a clinical nurse specialist team to improve nursing sensitive indicators at an eight-hospital system, advancing certification, presentations at regional and national conferences, and recognition of five Beacon units.

These meaningful recognitions have led to a positive working relationship with our board and chapter members. Our agenda focuses on reviewing our strategic plan to make sure we are on target with chapter goals. It has led to better meeting productivity and chapter yearly goal attainment.

In developing our chapter educational programs, we looked for guidance in the AACN theme, “On Purpose.” Our membership helped our education team develop program agendas. They selected topics of interest that would increase knowledge of evidence-based practice when caring for acutely and critically ill patients. Also included were topics of interest for healthy work environment standards, such as safe staffing, meaningful recognition and Beacon recognition criteria. Our chapter sponsors spring and fall conferences, and we collaborate with the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Society of Critical Care Medicine (PASCCM) to provide a multidisciplinary conference. Over 350 people have attended or are registered to attend our educational events so far this year. A CCRN/PCCN review course is offered by one of our regional hospitals and is supported by our chapter. Over 100 participants have either attended or are registered to attend this year. We also offered a CCRN/PCCN trivia night that served as chapter recruitment and helped prepare staff for certification.

In selecting our community service projects, we reflected on the On Purpose theme. We selected projects that helped assist victims of weather-related disasters, local hospitalized children at Christmas, medical assistance during a local marathon, and meals for a local women’s shelter. Other volunteer activities for our members include volunteering with local fire departments/critical care transport teams, medical missions, item writing for RN licensure, AACN’s Virtual Item Review Committee, the Beacon Award Review Committee, cardiac ECCO module review and the NTI Program Planning Committee.

Focusing on the theme has provided our chapter the opportunity to be more productive, provide better leadership, meet our goals and objectives, and give back to our local and national community. Our chapter has provided our membership with the opportunity to win a scholarship to attend NTI and aid scholarly research. Focusing on the theme has provided our chapter with the opportunity to lead and mentor our nursing community with determination and guidance to foster a strong foundation for the future of nursing excellence, continuation of our mission and advancement of our vision.



President's Award for Chapters



Tidewater Chapter

Virginia

Like a racehorse coming out of retirement, the Tidewater Chapter, Chesapeake, Virginia, surged forward in 2025 with renewed strength, clarity and resolve. After more than eight years of dormancy, a pandemic, a nursing exodus and an unprecedented strain on the profession, our chapter answered President Rebekah Marsh's call to become architects and gardeners of AACN's future. We did not simply restart. We rebuilt, On Purpose.

That purpose was ignited during the 2025 Chapter Leadership Development Workshop. A small group of Tidewater nurses arrived hoping to learn but left with a mission: to restore a chapter that had been silent while its nurses carried the weight of critical care through some of the hardest years in healthcare history. By the time suitcases zipped up Thursday night, it was clear, this chapter was being called back to life.

Our first visible step happened at NTI 2025. Nurses from the same health system, who had worked alongside one another for years, realized they had never truly connected as a professional community. We intentionally gathered Tidewater nurses around one of our own during her NTI presentation, then captured the moment with a systemwide photo in front

of the AACN theme backdrop. That single act of unity sparked something powerful: belonging. It became the cornerstone of everything we would do On Purpose.

By June 2025, those relationships became action. With a fully recruited board, formed almost entirely from connections made at NTI, we held our first retreat in a public library. Over eight hours of focused collaboration, we created a 12-month strategic plan that prioritized education, community service, professional development, membership growth and student mentorship. We left with a clear road map: quarterly education, service and social connection, a relaunch of the chapter brand, a signature CCRN/PCCN review course, and intentional partnerships with nursing schools to grow the next generation of acute and critical care nurses, all On Purpose.

We knew visibility fuels engagement, so we relaunched our brand with intention. A refreshed, vibrant logo became the visual anchor of Tidewater AACN across the region. New longsleeved shirts, table skirts, flyers and signage made us recognizable inside hospitals and at events. Our social media presence expanded with a LinkedIn page and a revitalized Facebook group,

growing from 70 to 125 followers in just months. The message was clear: Tidewater AACN was back, and here to stay.

Momentum followed. Monthly dinners grew larger. Vendors began calling us. Nurses brought colleagues. Then we took our boldest step yet: advancing professional excellence through certification. In partnership with Regent University School of Nursing, we hosted a two-day, Purpose-Powered CCRN/PCCN Review Course on campus. Thirty-five participants from three states attended, generating more than \$4,000 in net revenue while expanding access to high-quality exam preparation. To ensure this investment also grew our chapter, we offered a registration discount equal to the cost of a one-year membership. Twelve participants joined Tidewater AACN as a result, transforming education into sustained engagement, On Purpose.

But purpose without service is incomplete. We mobilized our members for the 2025 American Heart Association Heart Walk, raising more than \$1,200 to support cardiovascular research and patient care. Building on that success, we launched a future partnership with Operation Blessing International to assemble over 300 disaster relief, hygiene and meal kits that will serve communities across the region and around the world. In addition to leading in their ICUs, our nurses wanted to lead in their communities, On Purpose.

The impact has been measurable. In just six months, membership grew from 30 to 72. Dinner programs are fully sponsored. Chapter revenue has more than doubled. Dozens of nurses are now pursuing CCRN and PCCN certification. We have already presented to three nursing schools and are scheduled to speak with four more, creating a robust pipeline of student members grounded in mentorship, professionalism and acute care excellence.

And this is only the beginning. Looking ahead, Tidewater AACN is planning a two-day regional conference in 2027 focused on the ICU A-F bundle, delirium reduction techniques and reducing post-intensive care syndrome across our region. We are building a future where certification, evidence-based practice, healthy work environments and interprofessional collaboration are not aspirational, they are expected.

The Tidewater Chapter did not simply return in 2025. We came back transformed. We came back united. We came back On Purpose to serve nurses, strengthen patient care, and ensure that the voice of critical care in our region is never silent again.





For details, please visit

[https://www.aacn.org/nursing-excellence/
excellence-awards/circle-of-excellence-chapter-award](https://www.aacn.org/nursing-excellence/excellence-awards/circle-of-excellence-chapter-award)

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