



CONTACT: Nancy McMurrey
Director of Communications & Member Services
nmcmmurrey@aanp.org
(512) 276-5906

Kelly Kass
kkass@webershandwick.com
(617) 520-7274

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nation's Largest Organization of Nurse Practitioners Marks 25th Anniversary *American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Represent Interests of 135,000 Professional Patient Care Providers*

AUSTIN, Texas (JUNE 7, 2010) – Leaders and members of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) will commemorate 25 years as the national voice of the Nurse Practitioner (NP) at the organization's 25th National Conference in Phoenix from June 23-27, 2010. Closing keynote speaker will be award-winning CBS news correspondent Peter Van Sant.

As the largest and only full-service professional membership organization in the United States for NPs of all specialties, AANP is focused on increasing the visibility and credibility of NPs through a sustained and vigorous education and outreach effort aimed at patients, fellow health care practitioners, decision-makers and policy-makers.

25 Years of Achievements

"From day one of our existence, AANP has been instrumental in defining and upholding the highest standards of the profession," said Jan Towers, AANP director of health policy and one of the organization's founding members. "We had to fight to evolve the role of the nurse practitioner over the years from a supportive role to a physician to the primary care and specialty care practitioner of today."

Towers adds that AANP has worked tirelessly to ensure that the best interests of NPs are reflected in legislative and policy initiatives throughout five presidential administrations, including the recent health care reform measures. Most recently, AANP advocated to ensure NPs were publicly recognized as a solution to the health care provider shortage. With their advanced clinical training and education, NPs have experience that is critical in helping to solve the growing shortage of access to primary care. In fact, many NPs have years of clinical experience as RNs before earning graduate degrees and NP certification.

The NP Advantage

Nurse Practitioners have earned the respect and trust of patients across the country. In fact, results from a recent national survey* conducted by KRC Research indicated that when it comes to health care reform and a potential shortage of doctors, patients who were personally seen by a nurse practitioner (or know someone who has been) are much more likely to be confident in nurse practitioners' ability to fill the shortage gap in care.

"AANP continues to raise awareness of the 'NP Advantage' as a reliable approach to revolutionizing health care and patient care," said Diana "Dee" Swanson, AANP president. "There are 140,000 nurse practitioners today who are a vital part of the solution for increasing access to high-quality health care."

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Revolutionizing the Profession

In 1965, Loretta C. Ford, EdD (an RN with a doctorate in Education), and Dr. Henry Silver, a pediatrician, pioneered the first Pediatric Nurse Practitioner educational program at the University of Colorado, forever expanding the role of nursing. Today, the profession stands 135,000 strong.

As the profession has grown, its role has become more defined. In 2000, AANP established a Fellows program (FAANP) to recognize nurse practitioner leaders who have made outstanding contributions to health care through NP clinical practice, research, education or policy. A primary focus is the development of leadership and mentorship programs for nurse practitioners and nurse practitioner students.

“The Nurse Practitioner profession has certainly come a long way since its inception 45 years ago,” said Ford. “And it couldn’t have grown to its current size and significant national influence without organizations such as AANP. They have been critical to the success of the profession and will continue to champion the profession’s mission of providing the best patient care possible.”

Ford will address the AANP National Conference assembly during the Opening Session to celebrate both the accomplishments of AANP and the transformation of the profession from its roots to the public health providers of today.

** KRC Research omnibus study commissioned by AANP. Interviews were conducted by telephone between December 11 - 14, 2009 among a national random sample of 1,024 adults age 18 or older. The estimated margin of error is +/- 3.1 percentage points for the entire sample and is higher for subgroups.*

About AANP

AANP was founded in 1985 and is the oldest, largest and only full-service national professional organization for nurse practitioners of all specialties. AANP represents the interests of approximately 140,000 nurse practitioners around the country and advocates for NP issues at the local, state and national levels. AANP has continually served as a resource for NPs, their patients and other health care consumers to promote excellence in practice, education and research; to provide legislative leadership to advance health policy; to establish healthcare standards and to advocate for access to high-quality, cost-effective, comprehensive, personalized, patient-centered health care. For more information about AANP, visit www.aanp.org. To locate an NP in your community, go to www.npfinder.com.

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